

BEAUTIFUL LAWN ALTERNATIVES P.41

Sunset

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RECIPES**
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BOOK!

2014 Camping Guide



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MENDOCINO COAST,
CALIFORNIA

**SECRET
CAMPSITES**
**FAMILY
DESTINATIONS**
**Gorgeous
hikes**



**BEST RENTAL
CAMPERS**

P. 71

A Bright
HOME MAKEOVER

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May

“Western chefs are taking street food as their muse to create Indian restaurants that are pure fun.”

BEYOND CURRY, p. 80

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2014 CAMPING GUIDE

Are you an absolute beginner? Ready to camp with kids? Whatever your skill set, we're going to make you a better camper than you've ever dreamed of. And we'll show you 30 ideal Western places to follow your own call of the wild.

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BEYOND CURRY

Explosively flavorful and addictively snackable, Indian street food is the West's newest edible phenomenon.

By Margo True

← A modern twist on sev puri, served with cilantro lemonade, at Juhu Beach Club in Oakland.

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May

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BREAKFAST

Nopales Scramble
LC/LS/V94

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Bruschetta LS/V96

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Black Cardamom Beef Sliders*
Chai (Spiced Indian-
Style Tea)*
Cilantro Mint Chutney*
Crisp Chile-Lime Okra*
Double Cucumber
Raita (Spiced Yogurt)*
Lamb Samosas*
Sesame, Almond &
Cherry Granola*

*Get these recipes on sunset.com and our interactive tablet editions.

RECIPE GUIDE

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LS: Low sodium; V: Vegetarian;
VG: Vegan

Our full guide to nutrition, ingredients, and techniques:
sunset.com/cookingguide.

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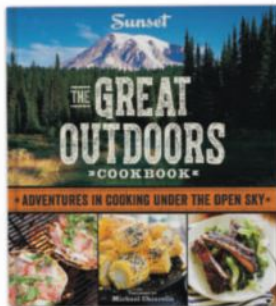
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ALL FIRED UP



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

It took six people one day and about \$400 in materials to build this adobe oven. (Above, layers of clay are laid over a sand form.) You'll find directions and photos in our new cookbook, below.



IF SUNSET HAD a blooper reel, last year's Debacle of the Adobe Oven would be its undisputed star.

It started innocently enough. Food editors Margo True and Elaine Johnson wanted to update *Sunset's* directions on a classic DIY project: using earth and sand to build a wood-fired adobe oven. The technique was ancient, and the magazine had published popular stories on it three times beginning in the 1940s. How hard could it be?

"I blame ourselves for having a grandiose vision," says Elaine. "We wanted a long countertop and a huge oven. We didn't realize how important it was to test your materials, or that the bigger oven you made, the more material you had to make."

Wine editor Sara Schneider had volunteered her backyard, and an army of volunteers descended. Soil was dug and mixed and shaped atop a fireproof base. "Almost immediately after we put the thing together, things started to go south," says Elaine ruefully. Firing the adobe is meant to harden the material. Instead, massive cracks appeared in the dome, while the earth plaster covering the base slid off like skin—"a dermabrasion gone horribly wrong." Then it started raining. "We covered it with a tarp, and the next time we checked, it had gotten all moldy. Poor Sara just wanted it gone!"

This spectacular failure (some of which was indeed caught on tape, though no one will show me) informed our hapless first-timers' next move. "We called in an expert," Elaine says. "Kiko Denzer from Oregon has written a little book called *Build Your Own Earth Oven*. He designed something for us that someone with minimal skills could do. We started with a muffin-size oven for practice, and then built the real thing." The oven was completed in "one magical day" in Elaine's backyard and is now the centerpiece for regular pizza parties and barbecues. As for Sara's oven: It's been dismantled and recycled, with a promise from us to stay clear of her patio for at least the next decade.

You'll find the expurgated story of the adobe oven in our new *Great Outdoors Cookbook*, out this month, which has clear and complete directions on how to tackle all sorts of adventurous live-fire techniques. Whether you want new recipes for your next camping trip or have ambitions to tackle a pig roast, this book has you covered. (For sample recipes, see pages 96 to 100.) And trust us: We've worked out all the kinks, so you'll never risk starring in your own barbecue blooper reel.

PEGGY NORTHROP, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

[@Peggy_Sunset](https://twitter.com/Peggy_Sunset) | readerletters@sunset.com



Watch us cook!

Cinnamon buns over a campfire? It can be done—you can learn how directly from the masters in our video companion course to *The Great Outdoors Cookbook*. Sign up at [Curious.com's](http://Curious.com) *Sunset Seminars* for in-depth lessons, recipes, teacher Q&As, and a special deal on the book. curious.com/sunsetmagazine.

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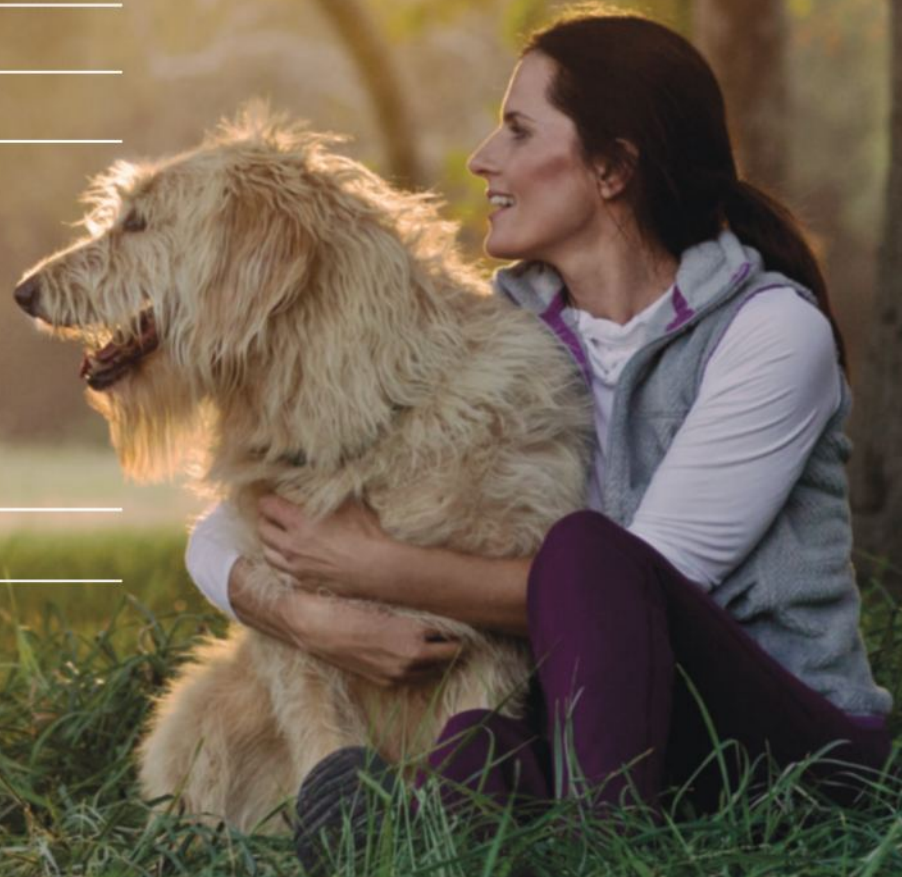
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BEST OF THE WEST

MAY 2014

← ||| OUR 12 FAVORITE THINGS THIS MONTH ||| →

1 MAIZE CRAZE

The garden world's gone wild for a multicolored ornamental corn called 'Glass Gem'. It was brought to market in 2012 by Tucson nonprofit Native Seeds/SEARCH, which last year had a wait list of 7,500 orders. Seed kernels were being hawked for a buck apiece on eBay, and there were rumors the corn was a Photoshop hoax. This season it's more widely available, although corn, being wind pollinated, is prone to genetic drift, so it pays to buy from a reputable grower. Native Seeds/SEARCH is one; another is California's Living Seed Company, which operates in a remote valley, far from stray 'Silver Queen' pollen. Plant now, and you'll have gorgeous ears for fall. About \$8 for 50 seeds; nativeseeds.org or livingseedcompany.com.

 Blipp this page to shop online.

2

FRESH COAT

Harley Farms, a goat dairy in Pescadero, on California's San Mateo County coast, is already well-known as a purveyor of delicious chèvre and a family-friendly destination (kids do love to visit kids). Now it's branching out into home decor. Using milk from its own goats, the dairy is producing nine mellow hues of biodegradable, no-VOC FarmPaint that—unlike many other versions of milk paint—is as nontoxic as any pigment can be. Its suedelike effect is especially suited to refinishing old wooden furniture. (And given that it runs \$34 for a quart, let's face it—you probably aren't going to use it to repaint your house.) harleyfarms.com.

 Blipp this page to shop online.



3

Design for living

Room by room, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, has been restoring Richard Neutra's VDL Studio and Residences, in L.A.'s Silver Lake district, which the school inherited 34 years ago in a state of gentle disrepair. In 2008, architectural students from the school quietly began giving tours of the modernist masterpiece to drop-in visitors. The latest section completed is the penthouse level, which includes a rooftop reflecting pool. To get a fix on the Austrian émigré's place in the firmament of design stars who fled Europe for the West (and often the West Coast) before World War II, head to San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum, which includes Neutra—along with Marcel Breuer and László Moholy-Nagy—in the exhibition *Designing Home: Jews and Midcentury Modernism* (through Oct 6). *VDL Studio*: \$10; 11–3 Sat; neutra-vdl.org. *CJM*: \$12; thejcjm.org.



4

Lights, camera, popcorn!

Last fall, Honda—which, true, has a vested interest in car culture—offered to buy digital projectors for the U.S.'s most beloved drive-ins. (A new one can easily cost \$65,000.) Of the nine winners, only one was in the West: The 99W Drive-In, in Newberg, Oregon. Run by the Francis family since 1953, the 99W debuted its new projector, and much improved picture, earlier this spring. The old Motiograph remains in service, though, showing the ever-popular dancing-hot-dog concession reel at intermission. \$8; 99w.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: JEFFERY CROSS; DAVE LAURIDSEN; STEVE SWANSON (2)



SOME MOMENTS DESERVE AN AUDIENCE

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8



Here's the there

Is Oakland a gritty scene of urban decay? Or is it a hipster playpen, infested with fixie-riding artisanal beard-growers? Melissa Davis would say it's neither, and she's out to prove it. *This Is Oakland: A Guide to the City's Most Interesting Places*, due out in May, contains the 90 shops, restaurants, and cultural institutions she really, really wants to share with visitors to her adopted hometown. Organized by neighborhood (from Jack London Square to Piedmont Avenue, from Temescal to Grand Lake) the softcover is small enough to fit in a backpack. And, swears Davis, "You will not find the word hipster in this book." Actually, we did find it once, but it was in a direct quote, so we'll overlook it. (This time.) Acorn Publishing, \$35; www.thisisoaklandbook.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THOMAS J. STORY, JEFFERY CROSS

5

Field of dreams

Even a deck can feel like a meadow. Bay Area grasses expert John Greenlee created the water-wise Northern California combo shown above—blue-eyed grass and *Carex texensis* with columbine hybrids, woodland strawberry 'Yellow Wonder', and woolly yarrow 'Maynard's Gold'—which you can buy already planted in a faux stone vessel from San Francisco's Urban Farmgirls (from \$75; urbantfarmgirls.com). Or sow your own: Greenlee has blends for each region of the West (find them at sunset.com/meadow).

6 All aboard!

Even for an experienced cyclist, the streets of L.A. can be daunting. That's what former Brooklynite Nona Varnado discovered when she moved to the city in 2012 and tried commuting on two wheels. "I was totally overwhelmed," she says. "I started having panic attacks!" Because she worked in a bike shop, she had coworkers to teach her the ropes, but she realized that most would-be commuters weren't as lucky. So she dreamed up a network of bike trains—like the ones popularized by Safe Routes to School, only for adults. On the L.A. Bike Trains website, you'll find 7 to 10 routes (Hollywood to downtown, say), each with a "conductor" who has volunteered to lead groups of riders once a week. Soon, they hope to launch a mobile app, says Varnado, "like Next-Bus, so you can see when the 'train' is coming." labiketrails.com.



7 SHORE THING

Were we the only ones who caught that short-lived HBO series *John from Cincinnati*? About a clan of surfers in a shabby but charming SoCal beach town? It was filmed in Imperial Beach, which has been trying to reinvent itself ever since its shot at small-screen stardom fizzled. Now those efforts are paying off. In January, Pier South Resort opened right on the sands of Imperial Beach. The 78 rooms are big and stylish, and each one's balcony has a rad view of the famed Boca Rio surf break—way better than watching it on TV. From \$239; piersouthresort.com.

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9

Cold fingers

Since we last checked in with the duo behind L.A.'s Coolhaus ice-cream-sandwich truck, Natasha Case and Freya Estreller have opened two L.A. stores; expanded their fleet to Austin, Dallas, and NYC; and started selling their architecturally inspired creations in supermarkets. And now, a cookbook! *Coolhaus Ice Cream Book* offers recipes for the cookies (from snickerdoodles to vegan ginger molasses) and the ice creams (Guinness chocolate chip, for instance), so you can invent your own sandwich combos, whether they're low-rise or skyscraping. Available May 20; \$25; hmbco.com.



10 SEAL OF APPROVAL

A Seattle-based nonprofit called Seal Sitters has been getting the word out that seal pups seemingly stranded on a beach might not be in actual peril ... except, that is, from well-meaning "rescuers." Young seals spend up to half their time on land, resting while their moms forage for food. Each spring (pupping season), volunteer Sitters young and old keep watch on Puget Sound beaches. When they spot a pup, they'll monitor it, sometimes even putting up barriers to keep onlookers a safe 100 yards away. Seeing pups on your beach? Ask Seal Sitters how to start your own program. sealsitters.org.



11 Wild at art

How strong is the West's grip on the American psyche? Just look at the statuettes in the Denver Art Museum show *The American West in Bronze, 1850–1925* for a clue. Such romantic works as Paul Manship's *Indian Hunter and His Dog* (left) were madly popular with East Coast collectors hungry for a frisson of the frontier. At Jackson Hole's National Museum of Wildlife Art, the surprise of *Harmless Hunter: The Wildlife Work of Charles M. Russell* is that the cowboy artist wasn't idealizing the noble beast in the wild but depicting the daily interactions of man and animal. This is life in Montana as Russell experienced it—often funny, sometimes tragic, and very real. Denver: \$13; May 11–Aug 31; denverartmuseum.org. Jackson Hole: \$12; May 17–Aug 17; wildlifeart.org.

12 Golden doors

Sea Ranch, 50 years old? That seems both too brief (wasn't the colony always part of this windswept Sonoma coast?) and too long (the original houses look as innovative as anything built today). The celebrations start Memorial Day weekend and continue for 12 months. Download an audio tour—narrated by founding architect Donlyn Lyndon—that guides you along public trails, stopping at new historic markers. Or rent a house (hundreds are available at such sites as vrbo.com; rates from about \$120/night) and roam the entire 5,200 acres at will.tsra.org.





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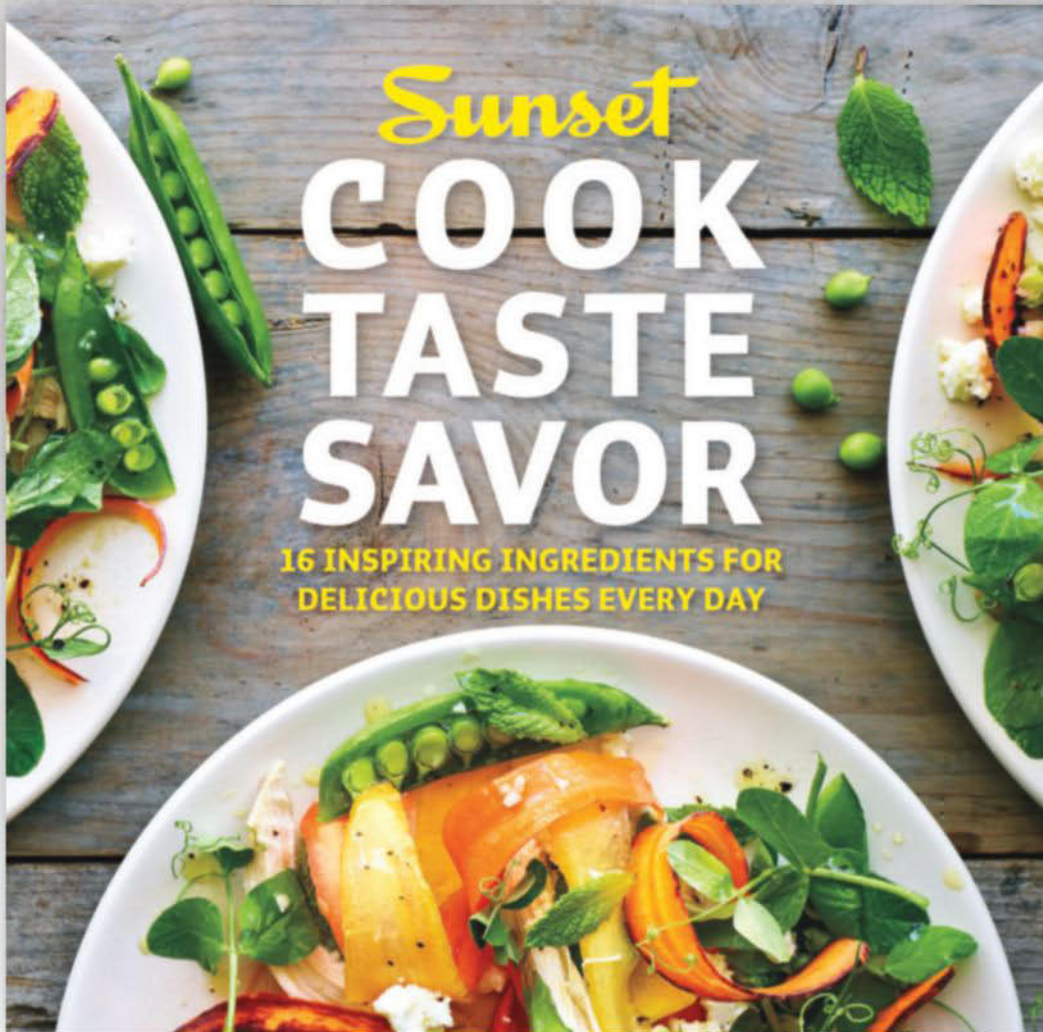


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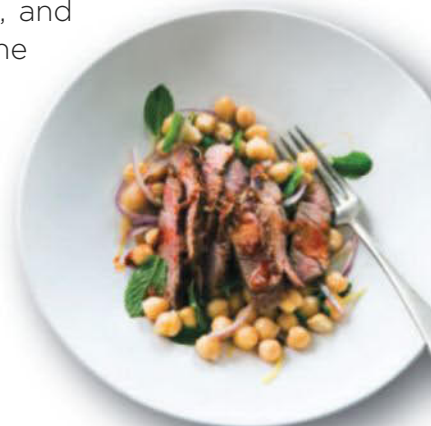


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In *Cook Taste Savor*, you'll learn the secrets to selecting, cooking and enjoying 16 of the West's most versatile — and iconic — foods, from avocados and artichokes to berries, chiles, fresh lamb, crab, and more. With guidance from the editors of *Sunset* magazine, the region's premier lifestyle resource, you will discover the secret to 'Western chefs' and home cooks' success in the kitchen: starting with the freshest ingredients is the easiest way to delicious meals.

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“For this year’s Lantern Floating remembrance ceremony, we’ll have 6,000 lanterns. Each has a candle and parchment paper so people can write the names of loved ones. It consoles the spirit.”

—CRAIG YAMAMOTO, SHINNYO-EN HAWAII BUDDHIST TEMPLE



DISCOVER



1. The beehive-shaped oven at Full of Life Flatbread produces buzz-worthy bites. 2. Specialty olive oils and vinegars line the shelf at Global Gardens. 3. Co-owner Sonja Magdevski pours a Belgian ale at Babi's Beer Emporium. 4. Olive oil-and-strawberry ice cream at Caliterranean Café. 5. A sign of the times.



A PERFECT DAY IN

LOS ALAMOS, CA

A former stagecoach stop in Santa Barbara County is back on the map with new watering holes and farm-to-table cafes. *By Christine Ciarmello*

Bankable meals

Angelenos have long made the 140-mile drive north to taste wine in Los Alamos's backyard. (Hollywood famously made the trip too; the 2005 hit *Sideways* was filmed here.) But it wasn't until **Full of Life Flatbread**

opened in 2003 that Los Alamos landed on the culinary map as well. Full of Life's herby, cheesy flatbreads, fired in a wood-burning oven, are topped with bounty from the local farmers' market. The town's gourmet cred was further

cemented in 2011, when **Bell Street Farm Eatery & Market** opened in a 1916 bank building with tin ceilings and a dog-friendly patio. Owner Jamie Gluck mans the deli in his trademark Stetson and hosts tastings of regionally sourced

wines, olives, and cheeses, which are all for sale. He also serves heartier fare, such as pork shoulder wrapped in crisp pork belly on ciabatta. *Full of Life*: \$\$\$; 225 Bell St.; fulloflifefoods.com. *Bell*: \$\$; 406 Bell; bellstreetfarm.com. —>

Scientific evidence suggests, but does not prove, that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as almonds, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. A one-ounce handful has 13g of unsaturated fat and only 1g of saturated fat.

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CRUNCH ON



GETTING HERE

Los Alamos is 50 miles north of Santa Barbara, via U.S. 101.

A taste of history

It's not uncommon to spot an A-lister among the 1,890 residents of Los Alamos: Goldie Hawn, Kurt Russell, and Emilio Estevez operate businesses here. Little L.A., as it's now known, hasn't seen this much swagger since the late 19th century, when the Pacific Coast Railway arrived and the regal **1880 Union Hotel** opened its doors. Today the inn is something of a time capsule. A GARFIELD FOR PRESIDENT poster hangs in the lobby kitted out in lace, velvet, and floral wallpaper. Up a creaky wooden staircase are 14 guest rooms, which make up in quirk what they lack in modern conveniences. On the ground floor, signs of change are evident: In late 2013, hotel owners Dan and Ana Thompson opened **The Union Full Bar and Lounge**, where Ana serves homemade Argentine empanadas. And through a set of swinging doors, you'll find **The Saloon**, which just reopened after a

major renovation with help from Russell and Hawn. *Hotel: From \$135; 1880unionhotel.com. Lounge: \$\$; 362 Bell. Saloon: \$.*

One-stop shopping

Until 1933, the Pacific Coast Railway used a 25,000-square-foot wooden barn as its Los Alamos station. These days the sprawling space, **The Los Alamos Depot Antique Mall**, is a retail paradise, with 60 rotating vendors selling rarities (19th-century guns and saddles); oddities (a booth from Solvang Restaurant, which was featured in *Sideways*); and everything in between. *515 Bell; (805) 344-3315.*

Happy-hour options

The most surprising thing on the menu at Little L.A.'s newest hot spot is what's *not* there: wine. **Babi's Beer Emporium**, which opened in December, focuses solely on suds. Co-owned by Estevez and his partner, winemaker Sonja Magdevski, Babi's stocks 40 to 60 bottles of craft brew, along with six beers on tap. A few doors down, at Estevez and Magdevski's **Casa Dumetz Wines**, glasses of their honeyed-citrus Viognier and spicy-cherried Grenache are poured at a redwood bar lit by tin lanterns. *Babi's: 448 Bell; (805) 344-1911. Casa: 388 Bell; casadumetzwines.com.*

Two ways to sample

The olive oil tastings at **Global Gardens** are always served with a bit of advice on the side.



6



7



8



9

6. What's old is new: The Saloon at the 1880 Union Hotel is freshly remodeled. **7.** Roast chicken at Bell Street Farm. **8.** A former Pacific Coast Railway station houses the Los Alamos Depot Antique Mall. **9.** Olive oil soaps at Global Gardens.

Owner Theo Stephan, who bottles her own extra-virgin oils and natural-fruit vinegars and sells them alongside her line of mustards and olive oil soaps, admits she can't help offering recipe suggestions to customers. "After a tasting," Stephan says, "people would always ask, 'Can I come to your house for

dinner?'" **Caliterranean Café** is her answer. The eatery, which opened in October, shares space with Global. Patio tables are tucked into the on-site garden between herbs, edible flowers, and strawberries, all snipped daily for kitchen use. *Global & Caliterranean: \$\$; 380 Bell; globalgardensonline.com.* ▾

THE LOCAL LOWDOWN

"The town has an edge, an indelible pioneer spirit. Even if it gets big, it'll always feel small."

—JAMIE GLUCK, OWNER, BELL STREET FARM

S Find wine editor Sara Schneider's recommendations for the best bottles from Los Alamos at sunset.com/losalamoswine.

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THE REAL NORTH BEACH

In San Francisco's neighborhood of poets, thinkers, and coffee drinkers, two locals show us the beat. *As told to Josh Sens*



ANNA WEINBERG
Co-owner of Park Tavern restaurant, parktavernsf.com.

JERRY CIMINO
Founder of the Beat Museum, kerouac.com.

Where's the heart of North Beach?

JERRY CIMINO: I do walking tours, and the first place we go is **City Lights** bookstore. In my mind, it's the best bookstore on the planet. There's a good chance you'll see owner-poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti there; he's in his 90s now and keeps a low profile. And even though he's grown the store in size over the years, the spirit is the same. It still feels radical. You want progressive, out-there books and magazines, you'll find them in City Lights.



CITY LIGHTS BOOKSELLERS & PUBLISHERS
261 Columbus Ave.; citylights.com.

"THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE YOU'LL SEE OWNER-POET LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI THERE."

The Godfather in Trieste. I'm not a fancy coffee person. I usually get a latte. They'll see me in line and have it ready for me. They might not know your full name, but that's the way North Beach is. You'll know someone as "that guy who always wears the funny shoes." Or the "lady in the big hat." 601 Vallejo St.; caffetrieste.com.

A great coffee shop?

ANNA WEINBERG: I'm a fan of **Caffé Roma**. There are groups of Italian guys who have been meeting there every morning for coffee for decades. North Beach is kind of classic that way. You're not going to find any Blue Bottle here. Places like Roma, they still roast their own beans. Always have.

CAFFÉ ROMA
526 Columbus; cafferoma.com.

"There are groups of Italian guys who have been meeting there every morning for coffee for decades."



FILBERT STEPS

"The views from the steps are really special. They look out over the bay, Treasure Island, and the Bay Bridge."

Neighborhood park?

JC: Right in the heart of North Beach is **Washington Square Park**. It's the community gathering place. You're guaranteed to see someone you know. You'll see the local cop, kids playing a beanbag game, elderly Chinese people doing tai chi. There's also a statue of Benjamin Franklin. No one seems to know why that's there. **AW:** The park is in front of our restaurant, and I always think of it as an anchor for North Beach. It's small and usually crawling with people. There's an art festival in the park on Sundays where you can sometimes find eclectic stuff.

Your favorite neighborhood walk?


JC: You've got to climb the **Filbert Steps**, which lead all

JC: And you can't forget **Caffé Trieste**. On any given day, you'll see writers and artists drinking coffee and working intently. The legend is that Francis Ford Coppola wrote a good chunk of the screenplay to

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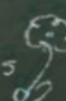


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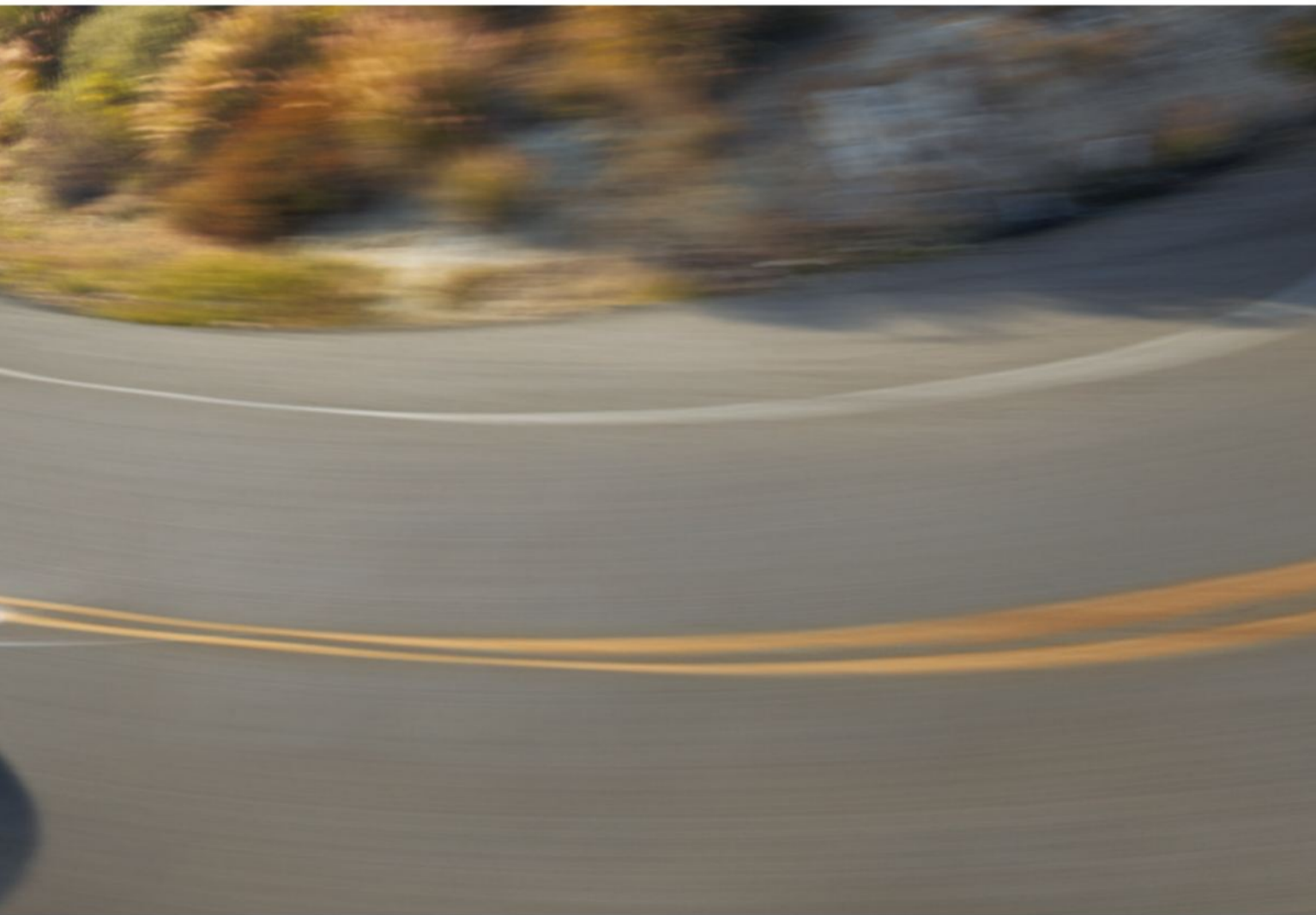
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Travel

the way up to Coit Tower. There's a famous shot from the movie *Dark Passage* of Humphrey Bogart climbing those steps. So many movies have been shot in this area. But the views from the steps are what's really special. They look out over the bay, Treasure Island, and the Bay Bridge.

AW: I'll start from Washington Square Park, then head up to Coit Tower, and walk down the Filbert Steps on the other side. Beautiful views and homes to see, and you get some exercise along the way.

Best dive bar?

JC: I like bringing people to **Vesuvio** and showing them all the photos on the walls. The place is just dripping with culture. There's a photo of Neal Cassady shaving in a mirror. You can see his reflection, and taped to the mirror is a drawing of a nude man and woman. It says, "Clothed or Nude, We Are Not Obscene." That pretty much sums up the vibe at Vesuvio.

And for something a little more upscale?

AW: I love **Tosca** for a cocktail. They're famous for the brandy hot chocolate. But that's never been my thing. I order the Suffering Bastard. Armagnac, gin, some ginger, and lime. I go there to get a drink, and then they do that great bar sandwich with prosciutto and truffled cheese.

One-of-a-kind shop?

JC: A lot of celebrities get clothes custom-made at **Al's Attire**. Super little shop, and the stuff is well made. I know Al, but typical of North Beach, I don't know his last name. The guy's a real artist. He uses the best leathers and fabrics, and



TOSCA CAFE
 \$\$; 242 Columbus;
 toscacafesf.com.

"I go there for a drink, and then they do that great bar sandwich with prosciutto and truffled cheese."



WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

"In the heart of North Beach, it's a community gathering place. You're guaranteed to see someone you know."



DON PISTO'S
 \$\$; 510 Union St.; donpistos.com.

"MIGHT BE MY FAVORITE MEXICAN PLACE IN THE CITY. THEY DO AN AMAZING PORK CHOP."



TONY'S PIZZA NAPOLETANA
 \$\$; 1570 Stockton St.; tonyspizza-napoletana.com.

"Tony's won the World Pizza Championships a bunch of times. The thing to get is his Margherita pizza."



VESUVIO CAFE
 255 Columbus; vesuvio.com.

"I like bringing people to Vesuvio and showing them all the photos on the walls. The place is just dripping with culture."

everything's made to measure. Overcoats, hats, suits, incredible shoes. People come from all over to buy clothes from Al. 1300 Grant Ave.; alsattire.com.

What are your favorite restaurants?

AW: One of our dinner go-tos is **Don Pisto's**. It might be my favorite Mexican place in the city. They do an amazing pork chop. They make nice fish tacos. Carnitas too. Their kitchen closes late, so our manager will call over there and get takeout and bring it back over to our place.

JC: For pizza, **Tony's Pizza Napoletana**. Tony is relatively new to the neighborhood, but he feels like he's part of it. I actually know his last name—Gemignani. Friendly guy. He's won the World Pizza Championships a bunch of times. The thing to get is his Margherita pizza. He only makes something like 70 of them a day. Simple but delicious. Fresh ingredients. Sit at the tiny bar and watch him make pizzas. It's dinner and a show.

A place to see art?

JC: One of my favorite North Beach galleries is called **Live Worms**. It's set up in what was once the neighborhood hardware store. Turns out they used to sell bait in the hardware store. So that's what they named the gallery, Live Worms. The owner shows his own abstract acrylic paintings. But he'll also let a local artist hold a show there. 1345 Grant; sflivewormsgallery.com.



DIGITAL BONUS Watch a video shot on the streets of North Beach: Blipp this page or go to sunset.com/northbeach.



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 LODGING

HOMES AWAY FROM HOME

By Andrea Minarcek

CALLIE HULSLANDER COOPER, 45, and her sister, Cristin Hulslander, 43, hoped to surprise their parents with a family trip to Hawaii in December. “We knew we wanted something private,” Cooper says, “something unique—not your typical hotel or resort.” The gallery owner from Bigfork, Montana, found just that on HomeAway (homeaway.com): a secluded, three-bedroom house rental in Hilo (above).

A new take on Hawaii: A Hilo hideout from HomeAway.

“It felt completely isolated and serene in the jungle,” Cooper says. “We woke up to the sound of birds, not the neighboring room’s door slamming shut.” The house was big enough to accommodate her family group of eight—for just a fraction of what they would’ve spent on a Big Island hotel.

Not that long ago, Cooper’s wish list would’ve been harder to meet. But in the past few years, home- and apartment-rental services like HomeAway have boomed in popularity, and now it’s easier than ever for travelers to get custom-fit accommodations. Here, we provide a playbook for finding your ideal escape.



L.A. is a city of stories. Not just screenplays and novels. But real life stories that can only happen here. A close encounter with dolphins. A brush with a celebrity. A cupcake from a vending machine. It could be an event, an exhibit, a song. It could happen at any moment. But it can only happen in Los Angeles. Create your own L.A. story with a trip at discoverLosAngeles.com.

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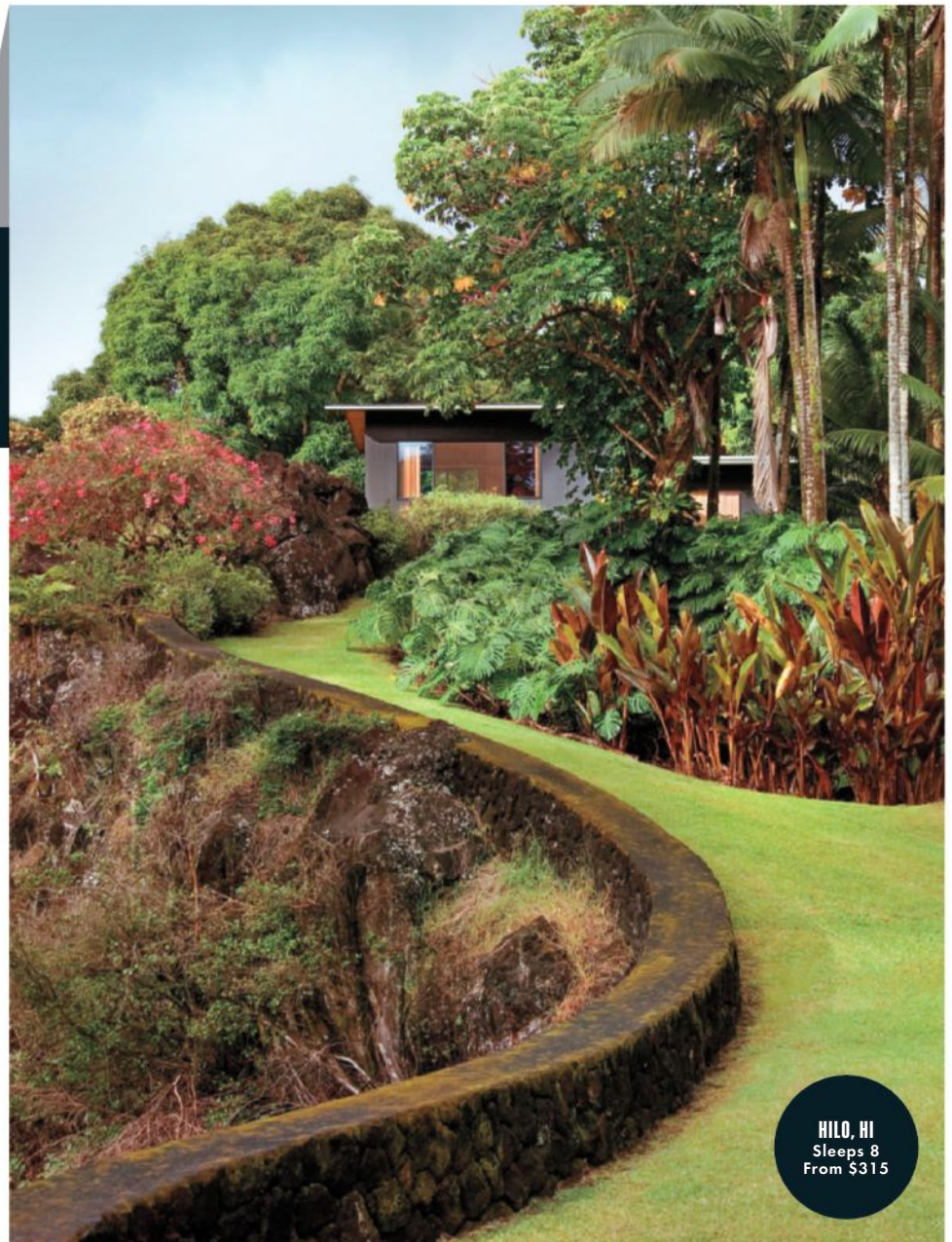
HOMEAWAY.COM; VRBO.COM

 625,000 LISTINGS

 163 COUNTRIES

If you don't like the notion of lodging in a stranger's personal space, HomeAway has two sites (*homeaway.com* and *vrbo.com*) that may be just right for you. "These are homes specifically outfitted for guests," says HomeAway's Jaime Dito. "They're not someone's primary residence." So what's the difference between these rentals and those run by an agency? Personal attention. Take the Hilo house that Cooper rented: Owners Jack and Jane Stevenson live nearby to maintain the house for guests. "We want visitors to walk through the door and feel like no one's ever been there before," Jack says. The Austin, Texas-based company is in the process of combining listings for *homeaway.com* and *vrbo.com*.

BEST FOR Travelers who really don't want to see anyone else's clutter.



HILO, HI
Sleeps 8
From \$315

SUNSET TIP

Most of the company's properties are listed on both sites. Each is easy to use, with interactive maps that allow you to browse rentals by region, as well as standard search engines for researching specific destinations. But we prefer the simpler design of *homeaway.com*.



TUCSON
Sleeps 2
From \$90

THE HIGH-DESIGN DESERT COTTAGE

Glass walls provide views of the Sonoran Desert and Catalina Mountains from this 1-bedroom, 1-bath house (left), built in 2013. Details include a 2-person glass shower, bamboo ceilings, and quartzite decks. From \$90 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in Tucson: \$88); 7-night min.; \$95 cleaning fee; homeaway.com/vacation-rental/p3591063.

THE TROPICAL RETREAT

Surrounded by rain forest above the Wailuku River, this 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath home (top) is a 1.4-mile stroll to the farmers' market in friendly Hilo. There are hot and cold soaking tubs and a 25-foot waterfall in the front yard. From \$315 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room on the Big Island: \$214); 6-night min.; \$200 cleaning fee; homeaway.com/vacation-rental/p309336. →

FROM TOP: HOMEAWAY.COM; LIAM FREDERICK

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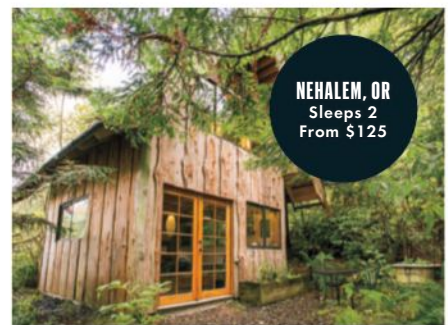
192 COUNTRIES

SUNSET TIP

Airbnb's Social Connections feature allows hosts and potential guests to use Facebook to correspond—and, say, check to see if they share any mutual contacts—before booking.

Why stay in a cookie-cutter hotel when there are tree-houses, train cars, and yurts to rent? Airbnb, which is based in San Francisco, specializes in unconventional accommodations, though it has plenty of traditional apartments and homes in its database too. Unlike HomeAway, most of Airbnb's rentals are listed by residents; some rent a spare room, while others offer up an entire apartment when they leave town. That means you may get to stay in neighborhoods that downtown hotel-goers can't access. It also means close interaction with hosts—a turnoff to some, but clearly not all. "Having a local contact feels so welcoming," says Ali Drennan, who rented an Airbnb apartment in San Francisco last summer. "Our host tipped us off to some amazing spots in the Mission, like Four Barrel Coffee."

BEST FOR People who like a bargain and prefer being house-guests to hotel guests.



THE PALM SPRINGS VILLA

Once owned by Bing Crosby, this 1934 hacienda (top) has 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, and a heated pool framed by lush bougainvillea, palms, and stunning views of the San Jacinto Mountains. From \$675 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in Palm Springs: \$123); 3-night min.; \$200 cleaning fee; airbnb.com/rooms/722266.

THE URBAN ESCAPE

A classic 1885 Victorian in San Francisco's hip Liberty Hill Historic District, this 2-bedroom, 2-bath (left) was recently renovated. There are 2 fireplaces inside and a spacious, shaded patio out back. Dolores Park, along with some of the city's

hottest restaurants and bars, is within a few blocks' walk. From \$400 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in San Francisco: \$176); 2-night min.; \$180 cleaning fee; airbnb.com/rooms/1516545.

THE JAPANESE-STYLE TREEHOUSE

Set amid redwoods on a working organic farm near Nehalem, Oregon, this solar-powered 1-bedroom cabin (above) was built from salvaged cedar. A wood-burning stove, Japanese paper lanterns, and local artwork decorate the simple interior. Manzanita Beach is a 15-minute drive west. From \$125 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in the area: \$179); airbnb.com/rooms/921289. →

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179 COUNTRIES

Consider it a combo of HomeAway and Airbnb: FlipKey (*flipkey.com*) lists vacation properties owned *and* used by individuals. In other words, when the hosts aren't staying in these places on their own getaways, they're yours. The Boston-based company is owned by TripAdvisor, and its properties are listed on that site (*tripadvisor.com*) as well.

BEST FOR Comparison shoppers who want a side-by-side look at vacation rental *and* hotel options, which they can get by going to TripAdvisor's website and searching by destination.

SUNSET TIP

Every week, FlipKey lists a handful of deals (30 percent off select Maui rentals, for instance) on its home page—ideal if you want to get away but don't have a specific destination in mind.



WHIDBEY ISLAND, WA
Sleeps 8
From \$190



BRECKENRIDGE, CO
Sleeps 8
From \$150



BOZEMAN, MT
Sleeps 12
From \$375

THE ISLAND MANOR

This 5-bedroom, 3-bath New England-style home on Whidbey Island (top left), one hour north of Seattle, has private beach access to Puget Sound. A bird sanctuary borders the property. From \$190 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room on Whidbey: \$114); 2-night min.; \$50 cleaning fee; flipkey.com/clinton-vacation-rentals/p642170.

THE MOUNTAIN CHALET

The slopes of Breckenridge Ski Resort are just down the road—and wooded trail—from this 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath A-frame (top right). The wrap-around porch and second-story balcony each have clear views of the Rockies, and there's a private

cedar sauna in the yard. From \$150 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in Breckenridge: \$197); 3-night min.; \$100 cleaning fee; flipkey.com/breckenridge-vacation-rentals/p680540.

THE RIVERFRONT CABIN

The fly-fishing-friendly Gallatin River frames this 3-bedroom, 3-bath cabin (left), set on 30 rural acres near Bozeman. The porch offers views of the jagged Gallatin Range, and Yellowstone National Park is a 1½-hour drive to the southeast. From \$375 (the average cost of a 2-person hotel room in Bozeman: \$95); 2-night min. during high season (Apr 1–Oct 31); flipkey.com/bozeman-cabin-rentals/p597272. 🏠

S DIGITAL BONUSES Ready to pack your bags? For more Airbnb recommendations from *Sunset* editors, head to: sunset.com/airbnbwishlist.

Want to rent out your own place? Read about features editor Christine Ryan's first attempt at renting out her apartment on Airbnb: sunset.com/hosttips.

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BEFORE &
AFTER



FRESH START

By ditching the lawn and turning their yard into a series of outdoor rooms, a couple finds themselves living alfresco.

Cozy!
INDOOR LIVING,
OUTDOORS
p. 44

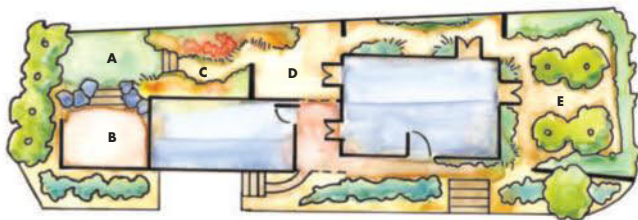
A

As Liz and Peter Keenan can attest, downsizing can have its upside. Four years ago, with their teenage daughter, the couple moved from their large home—which had a pool and sprawling lawn—to a smaller house in their Pacific Palisades, California, neighborhood. With the move came a chance to create a yard that fit their new way of life. “It became more about lounging outside with *our* friends,” says Liz. “We didn’t need lawn for the kids—and didn’t want the boring look of it. Or the maintenance.”

They hired architect Dane Twichell and landscape architect Rob Steiner to overhaul their new place, a corner lot with expanses of lawn and concrete. “With a smaller house, we needed outdoor spaces that would become extensions of it,” says Liz. To that end, Twichell dismantled some interior walls of the 1950s house and installed French doors off two rooms. Then Steiner designed a tree-shaded lounge off the living room and a dining patio off the kitchen. Throughout the yard, he planted low-water natives—“It’s the right thing to do here,” says Peter—and strategically placed trees for privacy from the street.

“It’s better than what we had,” says Liz. “We’re outside all the time now. And when the succulents bloom, it’s magic.”

DESIGN Architect: Dane Twichell; *twichellstudio.com*. Landscape Architect: Rob Steiner; *robsteinergardens.com*.



A | Meadow B | Sports court C | Garden walk
D | Dining area E | Alfresco lounge

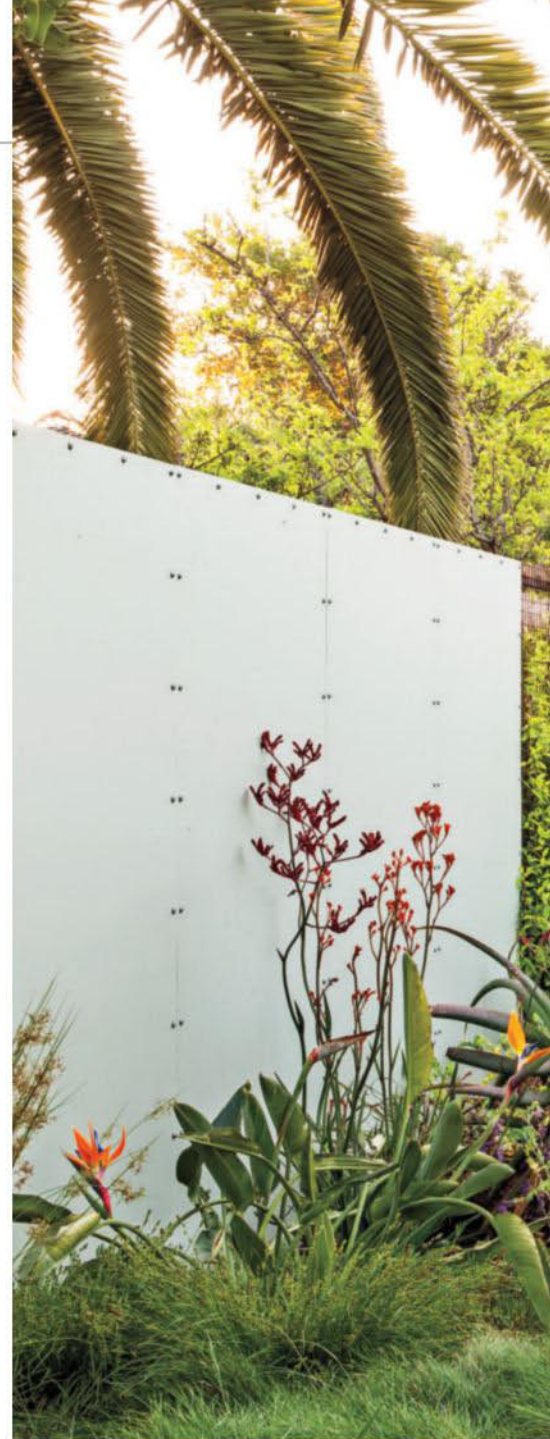
By SUSAN HEEGER



DINING AREA

BEFORE The paved patio was hot and uninviting.

AFTER French doors open onto a semiprivate patio for dining (right). The designer defined the area using HardiePanels, a rot-resistant fiber-cement board (*jameshardie.com*), attached to steel panels. The partition, painted sunny yellow (Hibiscus by Benjamin Moore), gives the space intimacy, while its window provides views of the ferns, meadow grasses, red-flowered kangaroo paws, and succulents along the path in the foreground.



GARDEN WALK

BEFORE A patio of cracked aggregate ended in an upward-sloping lawn, a tired fence, and a carob tree.

AFTER A gravel path edged with succulents (opposite) leads from the kitchen door and up steps to a meadow of red fescue (additional soil was used to shape the new terrace).



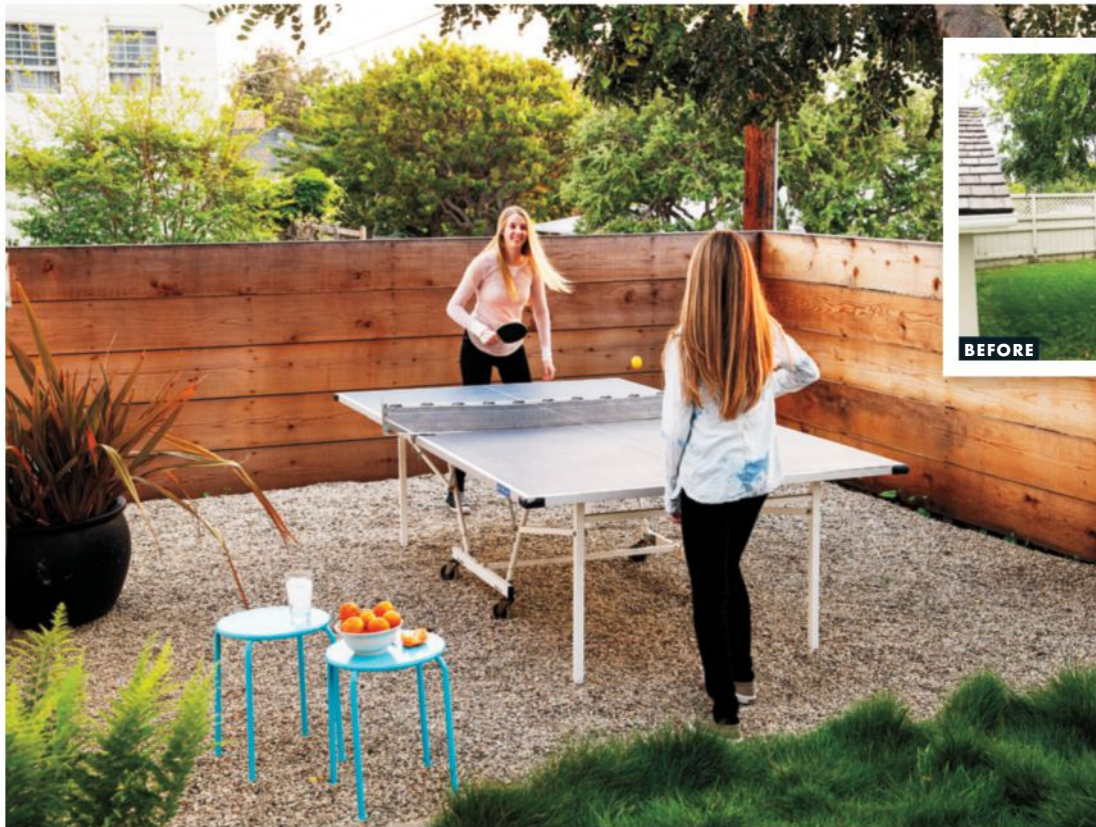


**BEFORE &
AFTER**



***“With a smaller house,
we needed outdoor
spaces that would become
extensions of it.”***

—LIZ KEENAN



SPORTS COURT

BEFORE This patch of grass behind the garage was wasted space—the lawn required too much water and was walked on only for mowing.

AFTER A ping-pong court paved with Del Rio gravel replaces the thirsty lawn; it is now a big draw for daughter Grace and her friends.

“We didn’t need lawn for the kids—and didn’t want the boring look of it. Or the maintenance.”

—LIZ KEENAN



FRONT YARD

A low wall of painted HardiePanel provides a cool backdrop for shrublike white-flowering tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), while low-water blue fescue, blue oat grass, and blue and pink muhly grass replace the lawn. Groundcovering gazanias add silver leaves and creamy blooms.



ALFRESCO LOUNGE

An outdoor seating area opens off the living room along the side of the house. The wicker sofa is from Restoration Hardware (La Jolla sofa, from \$1,655; cushions from \$635; restoration hardware.com). Although it’s close to the sidewalk, the space feels private, thanks to a low hedge of ‘Smokey’ coast rosemary (*Westringia*), dwarf tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum* ‘Reevesii’), and a tall *Metrosideros* hedge.

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TIPS
FROM OUR
TEAM

In the SUNSET GARDEN



“Add bloomers like sunflowers or coreopsis to draw bees and bring color to beds.”

JOHANNA SILVER,
ASSOCIATE GARDEN EDITOR



GENIUS

Plant by number

A new collection of plant kits from New Mexico-based High Country Gardens takes the guesswork out of garden design. Each of the 10 kits includes a selection of potted plants (anywhere from 4 to 27 of them), care directions, and a plan for beds and borders. All are water-wise; our favorite is August Afternoons, a mix of ornamental grasses and perennials. It's also favored by butterflies and hummingbirds. From \$31; highcountrygardens.com.

KNOW-HOW

Veggies in dry times

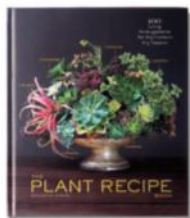
Can you still grow summer edibles, even during a drought? Yes—just plan carefully. Here's how we do it in our Test Garden.

KEEP BEDS SMALL Plant only as many crops as you'll eat. Our curved raised bed, measuring 16 feet long and barely 4 feet wide, contains eggplant, peppers, pole beans, basil, sage, one zucchini, and an artichoke.

AMEND THE SOIL To improve its water retention, we mixed a 6-inch layer of compost into the soil before planting.

MULCH Organic mulch (leaves, straw, or bark) can cut water use in half by reducing evaporation. We covered the soil with a 3-inch layer of bark chips.

TARGET WATERING Drip irrigation is far more efficient than sprinklers at getting moisture to plant roots. We used 1/4-inch tubing with emitters pre-drilled every 6 inches, and watered our plants deeply twice a week for 45 minutes. Soaker hoses work well too.



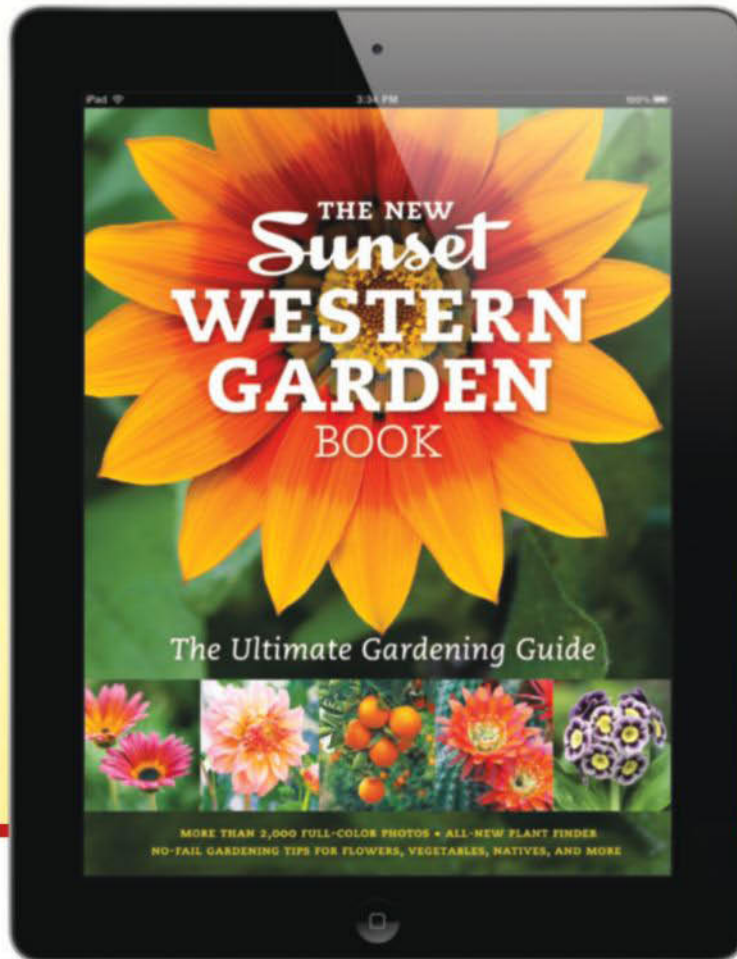
WE'RE LOVING | THE PLANT RECIPE BOOK

Roses are nice ... but euphorbia lasts (almost) forever. That's the big takeaway from *The Plant Recipe Book* (Artisan, 2014; \$25) by San Francisco garden designer Baylor Chapman. In it, she provides 100 easy-to-follow recipes for arrangements of living plants. First on our to-make list: a mini Zen garden of baby cactus and euphorbia resting in a wooden box, topped with black sand. 🌵



Blipp this page to shop online.

GREEN THUMBS GO DIGITAL!

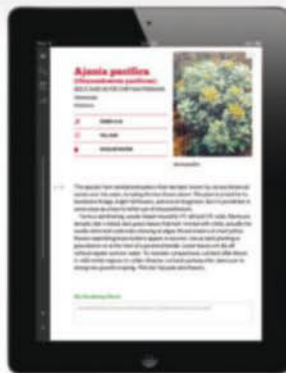


For the first time ever, *The New Sunset Western Garden Book* springs to life as an interactive book for **iPhone**[®], **iPad**[®], and the **web**. Now, the ultimate gardening guide—filled with more than 9,000 plant descriptions, over 2,000 gorgeous color photos, and no-fail gardening tips—is even more useful with these **exclusive extras** found only in the digital version:

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NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA

Your CHECKLIST



"Stone orbs and colorful furnishings add pop to this low-water garden."

KATHLEEN BRENZEL,
GARDEN EDITOR



GARDEN WE LOVE

Light touch

This verdant San Francisco yard doesn't need much water. Its secret: hardy Mediterranean plants and permeable paving. Screens of English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) provide privacy, while a 50-year-old olive tree shades one corner. The key to making all-green plantings interesting, says landscape designer Katharine Webster, is to mix in chartreuse and variegated foliage. Here, green *Choisya ternata* 'Sundance' and *Dietes grandiflora* 'Variegata' brighten the border. DESIGN: Katharine Webster, San Francisco; webstermla.com.



PLANT

Sow seeds of cucumber and melon; plant seedlings of eggplant, pepper, and tomato.

Plant colorful subtropicals such as bougainvillea, hibiscus, and princess flower. In areas with winter frost, plant them by a protected south-facing wall.

Position herbs such as basil, lemon verbena, or rosemary along garden paths where you can enjoy the scent as you brush by.

Set out tuberous begonias for spectacular color in pots on patios and your doorstep. Hybrids are sold as either

hanging or upright plants with flowers ranging from small to saucer-size. Most grow best with filtered light and moist but not soggy soil.

Sow seeds of green beans directly in the soil. For bush beans, like flat Italian 'Roma', plant seeds 2 to 4 inches apart in rows spaced 2 to 3 feet apart. For pole bean varieties, such as favorite 'Blue Lake', space seeds 4 to 6 inches apart.

To add interest to perennial borders, tuck in long-blooming flowers such as cosmos, echinacea, marigolds, yarrow, and

zinnias. Water weekly once established, and expect blooms all summer and into autumn.

In summer-dry areas, plant low-water groundcovers such as manzanita and prostrate rosemary in unamended native soil.



MAINTAIN

Fertilize tomato plants weekly with a diluted solution of organic fish emulsion.

Thin out clusters of marble-size fruit on apple, apricot, nectarine, and peach trees. Gently twist them off, leaving 4 to 6 inches between remaining fruit.

Mulch planting beds with several inches of bark chips to help retain moisture as temperatures rise and water needs increase.

Aerate lawns to allow air, fertilizer, and water to reach the turf roots. For small lawns, a manual aerator can be sufficient. For large areas, rent a power core aerator from a landscape equipment supply company.



ENTICE BIRDS

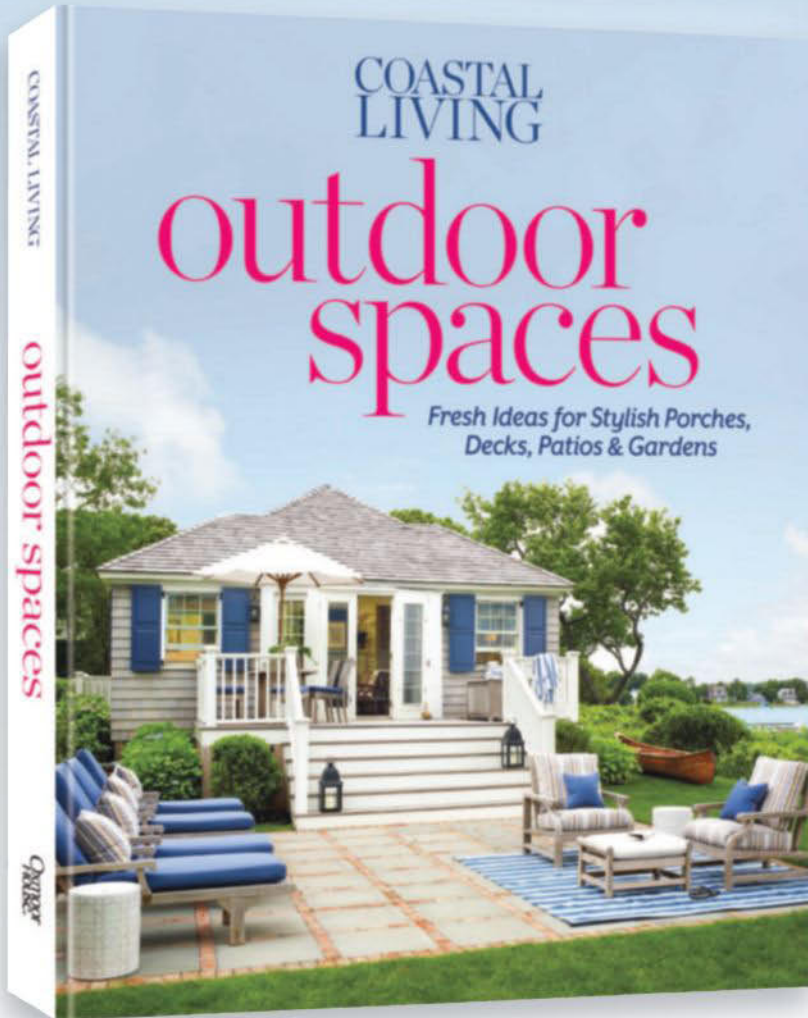
Fill a glazed pot saucer at least 12 inches wide and 2 inches deep with water. Place it under a shrub or tree to protect birds from predators. 🐾



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Bright now

Previously dark and cluttered, this 40-year-old California rambler is finally cast in its best light. *By Sarah Engler*

WHEN JOAN AND FRANK MAXWELL decided to update their 1970s rambler in Orinda, they weren't thinking beyond the kitchen. Known for her elaborate dinner parties, Joan was tired of cooking in such a dark, cramped space. "I spent so much time in there alone," she remembers. "No one else could fit."

Architect Lara Dutto had a solution beyond new cabinets and appliances. The second floor—where all the main living areas are located—"was broken up into a bunch of small rooms under this fantastic vaulted wood ceiling," Dutto explains. "The spaces needed to flow under that big, beautiful lid." To stretch the light from the living room all the way into the kitchen, Dutto removed the dining room walls, expanded the kitchen entry, and created what Joan calls the "wow wall": frosted resin panels hanging between the two spaces. "Light filters through, but the wall's opaque enough to hide my dirty dishes," Joan says.

Now the couple have the roomy kitchen and endless sunlight they longed for. "We hated so many things about this house for 33 years!" says Joan. "If we'd known how transformative it would be, we'd definitely have done it sooner." →

DESIGN Lara Dutto; laraarchitecture.com.

Update with color

Above: Most of the living room furniture was picked with architect Lara Dutto's help. "We had been using my aunt's old pieces, which were elegant in my mind only because I'd loved her so much," says homeowner Joan Maxwell. "Lara helped me see that they were actually quite dowdy." The new sofa was upholstered in a neutral charcoal gray. Complementary color accents in yellow and blue unite the leopard-print ottoman and pair of polka-dot chairs.



LONG LIVE WE TIME



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“I was afraid that having walls come tumbling down would make the house too modern and cold, but it was the opposite. It created a more friendly, livable space.”

—JOAN MAXWELL



Reveal the view

Top: Removing the upper cabinets made room for more windows. “Now, when I stand at the sink, I have a view of Mt. Diablo,” Joan says. Dutto designed the storage-packed island and peninsula with a few open cubbies to display Joan’s colorful cookware.

BACKSPLASH TILE: heathceramics.com. **STOOLS:** 20-06 Barstool Upholstered, \$680 each; dwr.com.

Create airiness

Left: The frosted resin panels weren’t Dutto’s only brightening move. She also replaced visually heavy features with lighter ones—swapping the dark wooden balusters with steel and cables, painting the walls and trim white, and hanging a see-through pendant.

PENDANT LIGHT: Coral, \$500; dwr.com. **CUSTOM RESIN PANELS:** 3-form.com.

XI XII I
LONG LIVE US TIME



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BIGGER IDEAS

Though Dutto didn't touch the original footprint of the house, she employed a few tricks to make it feel substantially more expansive.

ELIMINATE THE OVERHEAD

Without the upper cabinets, the kitchen seems taller and much less oppressive.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

A corner window in the kitchen gives the illusion of a boundary-free space.

TAKE BREATHERS

Empty spaces—like the bare hallway wall leading to the kitchen (page 52)—balance areas with more architectural details.

RAISE 'EM HIGH

The renovated portion of the house has no interior doors or standard door-frame heights. Some extend all the way up to the ceiling.

Get outside

In the new breakfast nook, Dutto replaced an old sliding door with custom French doors that lead to a deck. "We leave them open all the time when we're cooking or entertaining," Joan says. The bottom half of an antique English hutch stores 24 place settings for the couple's dinner parties.

DINING FURNITURE: Saarinen table, from \$2,005, and Tulip chairs with Parakeet vinyl cushions, from \$1,621 each; knoll.com.

Define the entry

"When I first came to see Joan, I had a hard time finding the front door," remembers Dutto. Landscape designer Katherine Vincent called more attention to the house's entrance by installing a floating stone walkway flanked by boxwood globes. Dutto also reconfigured the deck so that it would sit underneath the cantilevered dining room and have a view of the valley. 🏡



"For almost 33 years, we'd complained that our house was too dark. Now Frank jokes, 'It's too bright in here!'"

—JOAN MAXWELL

DIGITAL BONUS Watch a video tour of these rooms. Blip this page or go to sunset.com/brighthouse.

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Counting inches

“This room was all about maximizing the tiny space we had. We had no room to spread out.”

—AYA BRACKETT

MOST PEOPLE begin a renovation with a stack of inspiration photos. When photographer Aya Brackett and her husband added a second bedroom to their home, they started with just a bed. “We bought it for the style, but also for its storage capacity,” she says of the piece with built-in drawers. “We designed everything else around it.” The result—a 330-square-foot master suite—makes up the third



floor of their 1895 Oakland home. Because of city setback rules, “everything was negotiated on inches,” Brackett says. Custom furniture makes the most of the space; the cherrywood and white palette keeps it serene. “We like the minimal.”—*Joanna Linberg*
DESIGN Architect: Jennifer Cooper, Oakland; *pumpkinhousestudio.com*. Furniture: Kelly Roth Best, Oakland.



FIVE WAYS TO MAKE IT BIG

1. Build in for perfect fit. “It didn’t feel like we had a lot of space for furniture,” Brackett says, “so we wanted to streamline as much as possible.” Brackett worked with a friend to design the built-ins, custom-fitting them to the available space—and adding features like drawers in the window seat for storage.

2. Take advantage of dead space. Shelving covers walls that might otherwise be empty, and the landing at the top of the staircase was the perfect place for a Japanese *tokonoma* (page 58). “It’s an alcove in teahouses that holds a seasonal flower arrangement or object,” Brackett explains. “I wanted one in our room, but we didn’t have the space, so our compromise was to put the walnut shelf there.”

3. Use all available height. Brackett cast aside her original desire for a flat roof and a rooftop garden in favor of a peaked roof that stretches as high as city code allows and gives the room a 12-foot-high ceiling. “A low ceiling would have felt claustrophobic,” Brackett says.

DIGITAL BONUS
 Watch a 360° video of this master suite. Blipp this page or go to sunset.com/masteraddition.

Photographs by THOMAS J. STORY



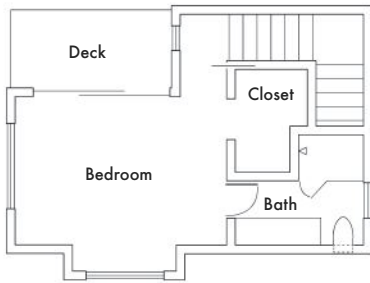
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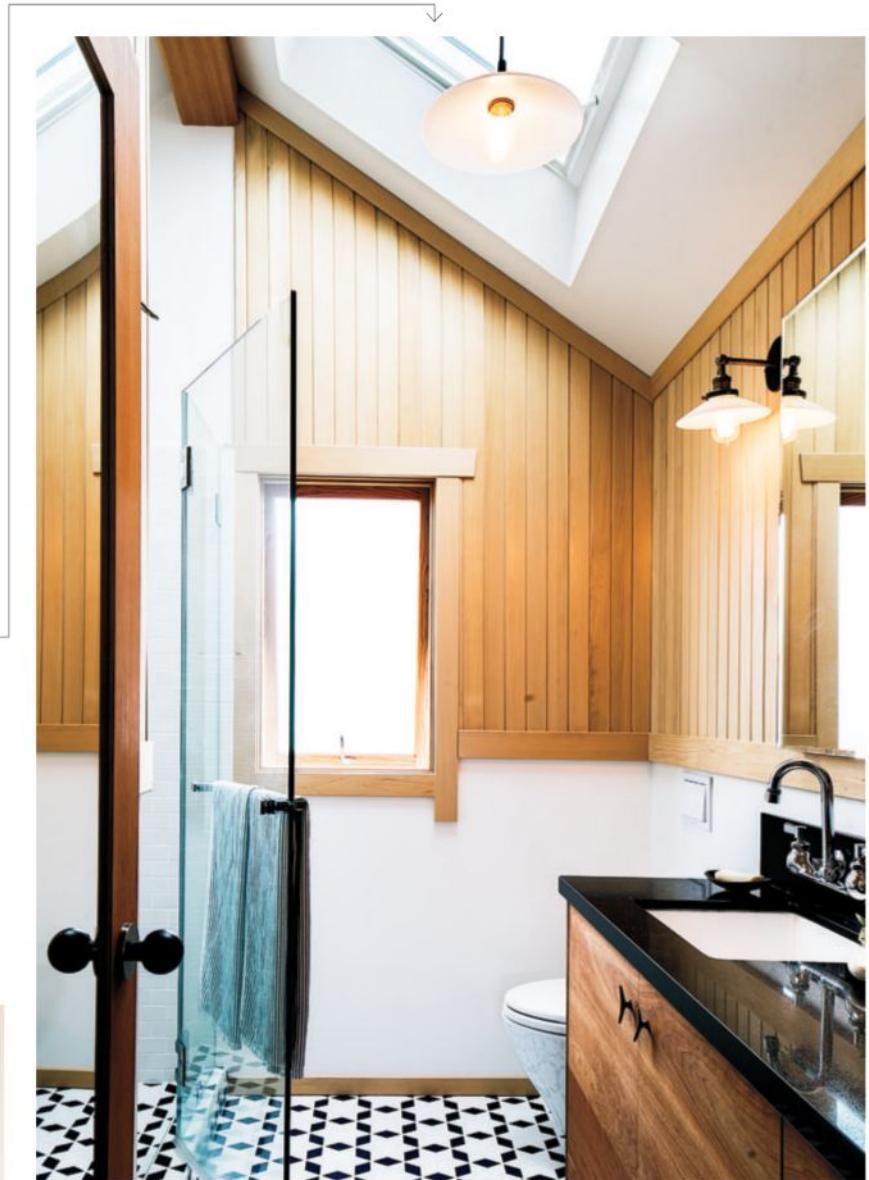
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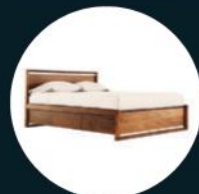
“I wanted the addition to feel really personal. Everyone says, ‘You improved the home’s value,’ but I couldn’t care less. It’s more about liking living here.”

4. Fill in walls. In her hunt for every spare inch, Brackett turned to the space between the studs. In the bedroom, a pocket door and drapes take the place of doors that swing open. In the bathroom, the medicine cabinet is recessed and the toilet tank sits in the wall.

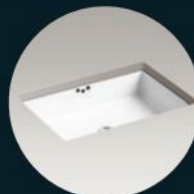
5. Be transparent. Glass shower doors make the bathroom feel more spacious than a shower curtain would because you can still see the whole room. Another see-through secret? The skylight. “Because of it, the bathroom doesn’t feel that small,” Brackett says. 🏡



THE GOODS



MATERA BED WITH STORAGE
\$4,725; dwr.com.



KATHRYN UNDER-MOUNT BATHROOM SINK
\$422; us.kohler.com.



ZURN WALL-MOUNTED FAUCET #Z842A1-XL
\$212; faucetdirect.com.



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Howard Creek Campground at Westport-Union Landing State Beach north of Fort Bragg, CA.

A person with long hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a wooden picnic table in a grassy field. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise. In the background, there are rolling hills and a body of water under a clear sky. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

2014
GUIDE
TO

The Joy of Camping

Are you an absolute beginner? Ready to camp with the kids? Whatever your skill set, this guide will make you a better camper than you've ever dreamed of. And we'll show you 30 ideal places in the West to follow your personal call of the wild.

Photographs by Thomas J. Story

HEAVEN IS A CAMPSITE. Don't believe us? Look at the photo here: a brilliant afternoon, sunlight polishing the Pacific. That's the joy of camping—spending time someplace so beautiful it takes your breath, and your worries, away. We know not everybody agrees. We know some people look at camping the way they look at kale: a thing they're supposed to like but suspect they won't. Say "camping trip" to these people and they don't think John Muir. They think of *The Simpsons* camping episode where Homer is mistaken for Bigfoot and Maggie is taken in by bears. We are here to say that cartoons are not real life. And that a good camping trip is the most fun you can possibly have. In these pages, you'll meet people who can help you plan that made-to-order trip. You'll discover the West's best campgrounds. And easy, delicious food to cook in them. We can almost guarantee it—start here, and you'll have the most memorable summer vacation of your life.

Camping with kids

Becoming a parent doesn't have to end your camping career. It can even make it better—if you're prepared. *By Peter Fish*

PARENTHOOD MAY NOT be *All Joy and No Fun*, as Jennifer Senior's current best-seller has it. But you have to admit it comes with trade-offs. You trade Arcade Fire for Recess Monkey, and late-night takeout tacos *al carbón* for 5 p.m. mac 'n' cheese.

But what about camping? Maybe you were the kind of person who at noon on Friday decided it was the perfect weekend to pitch your tent on a nearby mountaintop. And maybe you think those days are gone for good.

Sunset photographer Tom Story and his wife, Sara Paloma, will help convince you otherwise. Longtime campers, they took their two kids, Clara, 7, and Miles, 5, on a first camping trip to Lake Alpine in California's Sierra Nevada.

Camping with kids, Paloma advises, requires more planning than what you'd do for yourself. In this case, she purposely chose a campground she knew from past trips to be kid-friendly. That meant campsites close to the lake, with bathrooms nearby. "And for fun, there were great rock formations to climb on," she adds. "Also, good swimming and boats to rent. And a lodge with a little store."

Which meant that everybody was perfectly happy from the moment they arrived at Lake Alpine. Um, no. "Camping with kids is work," Paloma says. "The stress of packing, the chaos of setting up—our first day was rocky, and Tom and I were thinking, Is this worth it?"

But it got better—partly because the lake was so beautiful and partly because Paloma had thought ahead about what her kids might like to do. Banning movies and games on the iPad was hard, but bringing along art supplies

proved to be a big hit. "The kids actually had more of an attention span for drawing and painting in nature than they do at home," Paloma says.

An even bigger hit was the treasure hunt for which Paloma hid items brought from home—"random sparkly stuff like Mardi Gras beads and an old rhinestone brooch." The kids then found the items using a hand-drawn treasure map. "We let them pretty much go on their own," Paloma says. "Since Tom and I don't live in the kind of neighborhood that allows for free-range child-rearing, that was a real treat for them."

Quieter moments proved equally enthralling. Clara was afraid to explore without a flashlight at night, then decided it was fun: "When you turn the light off," Paloma says, "other senses seem to kick in a little more; smells and sounds are more vivid."

By their third and last day on the lake, Paloma says her family's sole regret was that the trip wasn't longer. "I could be imagining it, but I felt as if our kids were getting smarter out there," she recalls. "The things they talked about, the connections they were making. We didn't want to leave."

SARA AND TOM'S TIPS FOR CAMPING WITH KIDS

GO CLOSE.

There are good campgrounds within easy drives from almost all Western cities. Says Sara Paloma, "You don't want to wear out the kids with a six-hour drive just getting to your campsite."

PLAN FOR FUN.

Glorious mountain views may be enough to keep parents happily occupied. Not kids. Design games and activities that will let them have fun outdoors on their own terms.

GRAB TIME FOR YOURSELF.

You need to remember why you're out in nature too. Paloma says, "I got up two hours before everybody else and got prime time alone on the lake with my coffee and the first light hitting the water. Magic."



Family night out: Sara Paloma and her kids, Clara and Miles, stargaze at Lake Alpine in California's Sierra Nevada.

Best gear for families



YAYLABS ICE CREAM BALL

An ice cream maker and a toy all at once? When you add rock salt and ice in one end of this bright plastic ball and a few ingredients (half-and-half, vanilla, sugar, and whatever sweets your kids come up with) in the other, it only takes 20 minutes to toss and roll until you've made enough for a couple of cones. \$35; industrialrev.com.



NEMO COSMO INSULATED 30XL SLEEPING PAD

A well-rested parent is a happy parent. And even though your kids will sleep fine on a Walmart air mattress, you won't. Splurge on the Cosmo, a 30-inch-wide, 4-inch-thick pad—which inflates in under a minute with a built-in foot pump—with a raised baffle at one end to bolster your pillow. \$180; nemoequipment.com.



BIG AGNES WYOMING TRAIL 4

This is the tent version of an apartment complex—two individual “rooms” separated by a covered vestibule the size of a garage, with options to zip everything up in bad weather or stake out an awning for an improvised front porch.

If you and kids and dogs in one tent are too much, this Wyoming Trail 4 is a clever solution. \$550; bigagnes.com.

Tom Story takes Clara and Miles on a boat ride; at right, Lake Alpine's serene shore; Paloma helps with an outdoor art project.





FAMILY CAMPING FARE

COWBOY HOT DOGS

SERVES 4 / 30 MINUTES IN CAMP

With several toppings, including caramelized onions, bacon, and barbecue sauce, these can be customized for a range of diners, from those who like their dogs plain to those who want them fully loaded.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 tbsp. olive oil | About 2 tbsp. spicy brown mustard, such as Gulden's |
| 1 large yellow onion, cut into half-moons | About 4 tbsp. barbecue sauce |
| 4 bison* or other hot dogs | ½ cup shredded white cheddar cheese |
| 4 potato hot dog buns | 6 slices cooked bacon, crumbled |
| About 6 tbsp. mayonnaise | |

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium heat on a camp stove, or over a charcoal or wood-fired grill heated to medium (350°; you can hold your hand 5 in. above cooking grate only 7 seconds). Add onion and cook until deep golden and very tender, stirring frequently, about 20 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, if you don't already have it going, heat a charcoal or wood-fired grill to medium (see step 1). Grill hot dogs until slightly charred all over, about 6 minutes, turning occasionally. Add buns and grill, turning frequently, until warmed and lightly charred, about 3 minutes.
3. Spread buns with mayonnaise and drizzle with mustard and barbecue sauce. Set hot dogs in buns.
4. Sprinkle cheese on top, followed by caramelized onions and bacon.

* Find bison hot dogs at highplainsbison.com or Whole Foods Market.

PER SERVING 633 Cal., 63% (399 Cal.) from fat; 17 g protein; 44 g fat (13 g sat.); 9.5 g carbo (1.7 g fiber); 1,111 mg sodium; 69 mg chol.



Top 10 family campgrounds

Splash in the ocean, wade in a lake, ride a bike, or paddle a kayak—these campgrounds will keep kids and parents happy for days.

ARIZONA

Bog Springs Campground Madera Canyon, Coronado National Forest

This canyon south of Tucson is hummingbird central in springtime, when swarms of them pause here during their annual migration. And it offers year-round opportunities for kids to marvel at other wildlife: Turkey, deer, and waterfowl congregate around Bog Springs's 13 mostly oak-shaded sites, which sit near a lush riparian zone. Summer rain showers trigger bursts of butterflies, and a short nature trail winds through critter-spotting zones. \$10; \$5 park entry; vault toilets; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/Oud9Qq.

CALIFORNIA

Lake Alpine

Stanislaus National Forest
Its water is a clear blue-green and its shore is edged by tall pines, with the peaks of the Sierra Nevada rising close behind. No wonder families and everybody else like Lake Alpine (pictured on pages 63–67), off State 4 northeast of Arnold. Additional draws include swimming, trout fishing, and paddling the lake in kayaks and canoes you can rent from Lake Alpine Resort. Downside? This is a popular place in summer and campsites fill on a first-come, first-served basis—so go for a weekday visit. \$25; open late May–late Sep; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/1iEknwp. 🏠 🛒 🐟

Leo Carrillo State Park Malibu

Malibu is all about the ocean, and Leo Carrillo has two sandy beaches to roam, sea caves to explore, tidepools to inspect. The camp lies across the highway in a sycamore grove; a tunnel leads to the beach. Parents appreciate ranger-led nature walks, campfire programs, hot showers, and camp store for last-minute necessities. Bring your toys: stand-up paddleboards, surfboards, bodyboards, plus water sandals for the

rock-strewn beach. And bring your dog; he or she is allowed in camp on the beach's north end. \$45; \$12/day park fee; parks.ca.gov/?page_id=616. 🏠 🛒 🐟

Limekiln State Park Big Sur

Tucked into a canyon, this 700-acre park on the south Big Sur coast preserves some of the oldest and largest redwoods in Monterey County. Kids love to splash around in Limekiln Creek, which runs through camp; campsites are creekside, beachfront, or in the redwoods. The park is named for its 1880s wood-fired kilns, which smelted limestone into powdered lime to make bricks and cement. Easy hikes lead to the kilns and a 100-foot-high waterfall. A small rocky cove is great for sunset and star watching. Hot showers are welcome luxuries. \$35; \$10/day park fee; campone.com. 🏠 🛒 🐟

COLORADO

Piñon Flats Campground Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

The dunes alone would make this park a must-do for families, but mid-May through June, the sands morph into a delightful swimming hole: Medano Creek's ephemeral flow creates a shallow channel through the sands that's perfect for water play. Reservations are essential—the 88-site campground often fills up during “beach” season—but the experience is worth the extra planning. \$20; \$3/person park entry; nps.gov/grsa. 🏠 🛒 🐟

NEVADA

Nevada Beach Campground Lake Tahoe

Wake to the sight of Lake Tahoe shimmering in the morning sun at this quiet 46-site campground occupying the sandy eastern shore, south of Zephyr Cove. Sites 22, 23, and 24 sit closest to the water and offer pine-filtered mountain views. A short walk to the swimming beach (Tahoe's widest) lets families splash in relative solitude: This lakeside paradise

almost never feels crowded, since the huge, nearly mile-long beachfront disperses visitors. \$32; open May 16–Oct 12; 1.usa.gov/1def8nn. 🏠

OREGON

Fort Stevens State Park Hammond

The military structures at Fort Stevens State Park protected the mouth of the Columbia River from the Civil War through the 1940s—and now they're just one attraction at this 4,200-acre, 530-campsite tract along the Pacific 93 miles northwest of Portland. Nine miles of flat, paved biking trails? Check. Nine miles of easy hiking? Check. Beachcombing, a historic shipwreck, three swim- and canoe-friendly freshwater lakes, underground tours, and even a ride in a period military transport truck? But of course. And if hot showers are an attraction, well, the fort has those too. From \$21; \$5 park entry; bit.ly/1gE28Gy. 🏠 🛒 🐟 🏠 🛒

Tumalo State Park Bend

Parents will love the piping-hot solar shower and the proximity to Bend (early-morning latte run, anyone?). Kids will love floating down the lazy, crystal-clear Deschutes River, leaping into swimming holes, and taking part in the Junior Ranger program—collecting passport stamps by identifying plants and animals and learning about the local environment. And no one's going to complain about the surplus of sunny days at Central Oregon's Tumalo State Park. Tip: The sites in Loop A are closest to the water. Snag one if you can. \$21; \$5 park entry; bit.ly/OzAqQ. 🏠 🛒 🐟 🏠 🛒

WASHINGTON

Ohanapecosh Campground Mt. Rainier National Park

Groves of insanely tall old-growth forest. A wild river that runs right through camp. A nature trail that winds past a bubbling hot spring. And, if you're more adventurous,



a 3-mile hike to a nearby waterfall. Ohanapecosh isn't intimate—it has about 170 sites. But traditionally it's where families visiting Mt. Rainier gather, marshmallows and all. From \$12; \$15 park entry; 1.usa.gov/1ov2cuJ. 🏠

Salt Creek Recreation Area Port Angeles

Once you pull into Salt Creek Recreation Area, you can stay put—no matter if your brood likes basketball, creek swimming, hiking, World War II bunkers, or



beaches. Even better: Tongue Point Marine Sanctuary, on-site, has what could be the best tide-pooling in the Northwest. And many of the 92 campsites have views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca; on a clear summer night, you might even be able to see all the way to the lights of Victoria, B.C. \$22; bit.ly/1nEejbO.

Unless noted, these 10 campgrounds have potable water and flush toilets.

HOW TO TAKE CAMPING PHOTOS LIKE A PRO

Sunset staff photographer Tom Story knows how to get terrific photos outdoors—whether he's on assignment or on a family trip. His tips:

1. Bring extra batteries and memory cards for your camera. Especially if you're out camping someplace where you have no power.
2. Don't bring too much—one camera, one standard lens, and one zoom lens.
3. Do bring a small tripod if you want to try night shots.
4. Put the camera down sometimes and relax. You're on vacation—not every moment needs to be recorded.



Secrets of success: Story and Paloma packed lots of gear and art supplies to keep the kids busy. And they allowed time for unplanned fun.

Camping for first-timers

Even if you've never camped, even if you've never wanted to camp, Rue Mapp is going to make you love it. *By Peter Fish*

"THIS IS OUT OF my comfort zone," Delane Sims says. "I don't like bugs. And I'm afraid of the bogeyman."

Okay, all you noncampers out there. Do you identify with Ms. Sims? Or maybe you're the camper, and you desperately want your spouse, significant other, or offspring to share your love of the great outdoors.

Rue Mapp—who happens to be Delane Sims's sister—is here to help you.

Mapp is founder and CEO of Outdoor Afro. That's an Oakland-based group that connects African Americans with the natural world through hikes, bike rides, camping trips, and other activities.

Mapp herself grew up in Oakland. But her city upbringing was leavened by weekend visits to her family's ranch in rural Lake County. In high school, she admits, she was mortified by her family's rustic roots: "I felt like I was living with the Beverly Hillbillies." But she came to value the exposure to the outdoors the ranch gave her.

Then, at age 20, Mapp tested herself by taking Outward Bound mountaineer training in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park. The course culminated in a night climb up a Sierra peak. Halfway up, she became frozen with fear. "I was starfished on the side of a mountain, and I started breaking down," she says. "I was in tears. The instructor said, 'Rue, trust your feet,' and when I heard that, something clicked. I made it to the top."

So when, after college and a stint at Morgan Stanley, a mentor advised her to do what she truly longed to do, Mapp decided to trust her feet again—and knew that they were leading her back into the outdoors. She founded Outdoor Afro (*outdoorafro.com*) in 2009. She started small, with hiking and biking trips in the San Francisco Bay Area, then

expanded to more ambitious camping and river rafting excursions.

While Mapp works hard to make sure each Outdoor Afro trip goes smoothly—"There's something about being the person responsible for everything"—she's the first to admit that not all her own camping trips have been perfect. "I've made all the mistakes," Mapp says. "I've been stuck in a rain with a leaky tent. I've forgotten can openers." Her misadventures have helped her understand how to make camping appealing to newbies.

Above all, Mapp says, you have to convince them they're not about to flunk some horrible wilderness exam. "People are afraid they're going to do things wrong," she says. "And nobody wants to be embarrassed." She

also believes in camping comfortably. "People—and I'm going to say women especially—don't want to give up things," she says. "I explain you don't have to give up comforts to be out in nature." On Mapp's trips, that means spreading your sleeping bag on a state-of-the-art self-inflating sleeping pad (see page 64). And she sets campsite picnic tables with bud vases and cloth napkins, the latter of which, she notes, are elegant as well as environmentally friendly.

She's having an impact. Today Outdoor Afro has more than 5,000 members from California to New York. This April, Mapp was honored with a Conservation Achievement Award from the National Wildlife Federation. Her own three children—Seth, 17; Arwen, 12; and Billy, 10—are avid campers. And so, with a few trips under her belt, is her sister. "I was so doubtful," Sims says. "I thought, Why go into the woods and get dirty? But now I see how it helps me recalibrate. Now it's something I do for myself. Now I ask, Why wasn't I doing this before?"

RUE'S BEGINNER TIPS

CAR CAMPING IS NOT A SIN.

Hike-in camping has its pluses (see page 74).

But car camping lets you bring the gear that will make first-timers comfortable.

RENTING IS YOUR FRIEND.

Don't buy expensive camping equipment before you've determined if you even like camping. REI and other outdoor outfitters have a wide selection of tents, sleeping bags, and stoves for rent.

GLAMP IT UP.

A really comfy pillow, a cup of fresh-brewed coffee (see gear list, page 70), and a superb grilled steak (recipe, page 73) can turn camping carpers into camping converts.



Rue Mapp and Outdoor Afro leader Clay Anderson make dinner on a trip to Samuel P. Taylor State Park in Marin County, CA.

CAMPING FOR FIRST-TIMERS

Best gear for beginners



THERM-A-REST NEOAIR PILLOW

Sure, you can use extra clothes as a cushion—or you can inflate the 2-ounce NeoAir, the lightest, most compact pillow around. \$40; thermarest.com.



POLER X STUMPTOWN CAMP COFFEE KIT

All you need for that perfect cup of morning joe—in one bag. It's like a greatest hits of coffee brewing: an AeroPress, a mini Porlex burr grinder, two cute camp mugs, funnel, filters, instructions, and even a small bag to keep everything organized. Just add beans. \$125; polerstuff.com.



TICLA BESITO SLEEPING BAG

A brand-new company, Ticla makes elegant and uncomplicated camping gear. Its Besito sleeping bag might be the first sack we can truly call "stylish"—thanks to a soft patterned liner that wouldn't be out of place on a Taos sofa. But it's the insulation (cozy to 45° on one side, 30° on the other) that'll beat your comforter any day. \$100; ticla.com.

Rue Mapp and group bird-watch; at right, Samara Cole Mercado, age 5; Clay Anderson and Seth Mapp put up a tent.





Have RV, will camp

Not a tent person? Rent some outdoors-ready wheels.



MOTORHOMES

They have beds, kitchens, bathrooms—plus generators and water and waste tanks. But narrow roads are challenging; mileage can be less than 10 mpg. Class C models sleep five to eight; Class As, four to six. Where to rent: Cruise America; nationwide. From \$100/night, plus generator fee and mileage;

cruiseamerica.com. El Monte RV; nationwide. From \$100/night, plus mileage; elmonterv.com.



CAMPER VANS

These modified full-size vans have kitchens and sleep up to four, but typically lack a toilet, shower, or generator. They're comfortable and easy to drive. Grab attention by renting a rig with a graffiti paint job, or splurge on a luxe Mercedes Sprinter. Where to rent: Escape Campervans; Las Vegas, L.A., San Francisco.

Min. \$300 for up to 7 days; escapecampervans.com. RVEyellowstone.com and RVSanFrancisco.com; Salt Lake City, S.F. From \$394/night.



VOLKSWAGEN CAMPERS

Vintage VW vans like the Westfalia retain an aura of retro cool. Most offer a kitchen, dining table, and storage (but no toilet). They get 18+ mpg—but you won't drive faster than 65 mph. Where to rent: California Campers; Redwood City, CA. From \$129/day; *californiacampers.com*. Happy Campers Hawaii; Hilo, HI. From \$120/day; *happycampershawaii.com*. Vintage Surfari Wagons; Costa Mesa, CA. From \$130/day; *vwsurfari.com*.

Min. \$120/day; happycampershawaii.com. Vintage Surfari Wagons; Costa Mesa, CA. From \$130/day; vwsurfari.com.



FULL-SIZE TRAILERS

Up to 35 feet long, they have kitchens, bathrooms, and sleeping space. To tow one, your vehicle needs a hitch, electrical wiring, and a controller for the trailer's brakes. Towing takes practice. No tow car? Rent an Airstream coupled to a GMC Yukon Denali SUV. Where to rent: El Monte RV; L.A. From \$95/night;

elmonterv.com. Adventure Camper; Denver; Jackson Hole, WY. From \$158/night; adventurecamper.com. Airstream 2 Go; Bozeman, MT; Las Vegas; L.A. From \$770/day; airstream2go.com.



LIGHTWEIGHT TRAILERS

Most passenger cars can tow these trailers. Teardrop models have a snug sleeping space for two and an open-air kitchen in back. Stand-up trailers sleep up to four and have indoor kitchens. Tent trailers collapse for driving but fold out when parked. Few have toilets or showers. Where to rent: Adventure Camper; Denver; Jackson Hole, WY. From \$92/night;

adventurecamper.com. Happier Camper (pictured here and on page 60); L.A. From \$125/night; happiercamper.com. Vacations in a Can; Penngrove, CA. From \$88/night; vacations-in-a-can.com. —Fred Sandmark



Top 10 beginner campgrounds

They're gorgeous, they're fun, and they're comfortable—these campgrounds will turn even the most doubtful campers into true believers.

CALIFORNIA

Fallen Leaf Campground

Lake Tahoe

Set between Lake Tahoe and smaller, mellower Fallen Leaf Lake, the campground makes it easy to enjoy swimming in and boating on both bodies of water. Beginners who feel iffy about sleeping on the ground can rent yurts with platforms and electric lights. You'll find hot showers and a general store. *From \$32; open May 16–Oct 12; 1.usa.gov/OwvyQl.* 🏕️ 🚰 🏠 🚻

Howard Creek Campground

Westport–Union Landing State Beach

Shown on our cover and on pages 60–61, this blufftop campground on the Mendocino coast may be better suited for trailers than for tent camping: There's a steady wind off the ocean and not much privacy. But the view of the King Range meeting the Pacific will wow any first-time camper: It's as spectacular as any in California. *\$25; no reservations; vault toilets; parks.ca.gov/?page_id=440.* ➤

Main Campground

Samuel P. Taylor State Park

Sun-washed meadows, regal stands of coast redwoods shading quiet Lagunitas Creek—this West Marin park (pictured on pages 69–73) showcases Northern California at its loveliest. And it's a great place for beginning campers. The mostly paved Cross Marin Trail makes for easy hiking and biking, and civilization is close enough that when you realize you've forgotten eggs, a store is only a 15-minute drive away. Two cautions: Sites can be hard to book on weekends, and the drought may limit water use—check to see if you need to bring water. *\$35; \$8 park entry; parks.ca.gov/?page_id=469.* ➤

North Beach Campground

Pismo Beach State Park

Set behind Pismo Beach's white sand dunes, this grassy camp

supplies wind protection plus hot showers. From most sites, a two-minute walk leads to the waves. The wide beach is ideal for beachcombers, while surfers, kayakers, and anglers ply their pursuits in the water. The restaurants of downtown Pismo Beach, 1 mile away, provide dinner options. In winter, thousands of monarch butterflies roost in the eucalyptus trees. *\$35; bit.ly/1merNJA.* 🏕️ ➤

IDAHO

Huckleberry Tent and Breakfast

Clark Fork

Yes, this one-of-a-kind resort near Sandpoint qualifies as camping: Canvas and screen are the only materials separating you from the great outdoors, there's no electricity, and a privy serves as your necessary room. But these three tent cabins come with quilt-covered bedsteads and wood-burned stoves. You'll cook your own camp-style dinner over propane burners in the screened outdoor kitchen, but in the morning, campers are served a hot breakfast featuring the property's garden-grown produce. *\$135; open early May–Oct 31; primitive toilets; huckleberrytentandbreakfast.com.* 🏕️ ➤ 🏠

NEW MEXICO

Sundial Springs

Gila National Forest

Steaming hot springs make this privately run campground northwest of Silver City feel as sumptuous as any spa. Ten RV and two tent sites overlook the San Francisco River, and campers enjoy access to two rock-lined mineral pools. Reserve one (from \$20) for a private soak and views across hills where bighorn sheep are known to roam. *From \$15; no children under 12; sundial springs.com.* 🏕️ ➤ 🏠 🚻

OREGON

Silver Falls Campground

Silver Falls State Park

Some of the waterfalls at this Cascade Range park, including

177-foot South Falls, drop from overhangs so large that hiking trails actually pass behind the splashing water. That's just one of the cool things about Oregon's largest state park, 25 miles east of Salem. Whether you come for mountain biking, strolling by huge western hemlock and lush sword ferns, cooling off in a Silver Creek swimming hole, or warming up by the fireplace in the 1930s stone lodge, you always have a hot shower to come home to. And even Fido can run (a bit) free: There's an off-leash area for dogs. *From \$19; \$5/day park fee; bit.ly/1htgM1g.* 🏕️ ➤ 🏠 🚻

UTAH

Goblin Valley Campground

Goblin Valley State Park

Roughing it is de rigueur in Utah's rugged canyon lands (where even outhouses can seem like luxuries), but Goblin Valley, west of Moab, is the Ritz-Carlton of the desert. These 24 sites pamper campers with showers and with shade. Two yurts have wooden floors and bunk beds—even swamp coolers offering relief from summer heat. All sites enjoy views of eroded pinnacles and mushroom-shaped rocks; tenters should nab sites 10 through 12, which are tops for seclusion and scenery. *From \$20; \$8 park entry; 1.usa.gov/1qMYCOD.* 🏕️ 🏠

WASHINGTON

South End Campground

Moran State Park

All five campgrounds in Moran State Park—on Orcas Island in the San Juans—are set among skyscraping evergreens and sit steps away from swimming, paddleboating, fishing, and 38 miles of hiking trails. But it's the 17 sites of the park's South End Campground that have all the creature comforts (showers, real toilets) without the crowds—and you can pitch your tent on the edge of a private beach along sapphire Cascade Lake. *From \$23; \$10/day park fee; parks.wa.gov/547/moran.* 🏕️ ➤



WYOMING

Lizard Creek Campground

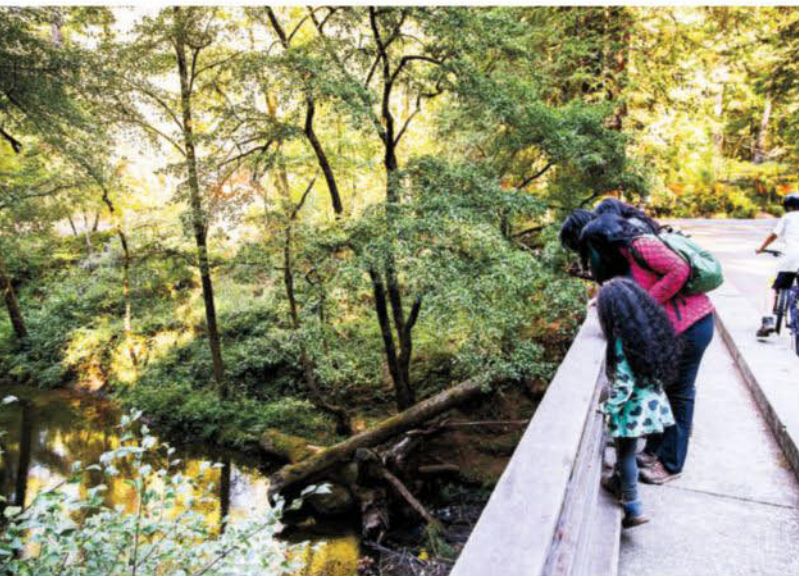
Grand Teton National Park

Delightfully off the radar for most park visitors, this privately run lakeside campground gives campers the chance to enjoy stunning mountain views without the crowds that clog other parts of the park. Some of its 60 sites sit near the edge of Jackson Lake, with views of the jagged Tetons. Pines separate tents and trailers (the prettiest spots are designated a generator-free zone). And the nearby marina and restaurants increase your dining options. *\$22; \$25 park entry; no reservations; open Jun 13–Sep 1; signalmountain lodge.com.* ➤

Unless noted, these 10 campgrounds have potable water and flush toilets.



A full day in the redwoods: forest bike rides, steak and fish for dinner, and a quiet moment along Lagunitas Creek.



FIRST-TIME CAMPER FARE

RIB-EYE STEAKS WITH PISTACHIO BUTTER AND ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4 / 10 MINUTES AT HOME, 30 IN CAMP

Flavorful and generously marbled, rib-eye makes a restaurant-worthy splurge in camp, particularly when topped with a distinctively flavored butter. The amount of pistachio butter is generous; if you like, turn the asparagus in some of it right after the spears come off the grill and top the steaks with the rest.

¼ cup shelled, roasted unsalted pistachios*	(each about 12 oz.)
1 cup arugula	1 lb. asparagus, trimmed
¼ cup butter, softened	2 tbsp. olive oil
2 boneless rib-eye steaks	1½ tsp. each kosher salt and pepper

AT HOME

- Whirl pistachios and arugula in a food processor until minced. Add butter and whirl until smooth, scraping down inside of bowl as needed. Transfer to a small container and chill.

IN CAMP

- Heat a charcoal or wood-fired grill to high (450° to 550°; you can hold your hand 5 in. above cooking grate only 2 to 4 seconds). Coat steaks and asparagus with oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill steaks, turning once, until done the way you like, 6 to 15 minutes for medium-rare. Grill asparagus in last few minutes, turning once, until tender-crisp.
- Transfer everything to a cutting board, dollop steaks with butter, and tent with foil. Let rest 5 minutes. Slice steaks and serve with asparagus.

*If you can't find unsalted pistachios, use unsalted butter to balance the salty nuts.

MAKE AHEAD Pistachio butter, up to 1 week, chilled.

PER SERVING 506 Cal., 66% (334 Cal.) from fat; 38 g protein; 37 g fat (16 g sat.); 5.2 g carbo (2.3 g fiber); 727 mg sodium; 172 mg chol. **GF**

Camping like experts

These Seattle power campers prove you can find love, and a new life, in the outdoors. *By Evelyn Spence*

PROJECT MANAGERS Tammy Nerwin and Luke Panezich knew after their second date that they were a perfect match. On a calm Saturday, they kayaked from Seattle to a small island on the Puget Sound, cooked fingerling potatoes with fresh dill and olive oil, slept in a tent near the beach—and, on the return crossing the next morning, had to brave big blustery waves through a major shipping lane. “It was incredibly hair ball, and we really had to dig deep,” says Nerwin. “But it reinforced something I’ve believed for a long time: You just don’t get to know someone the same way at a cocktail party as you do in the outdoors.”

Panezich agrees that their Blake Island epic brought them together like nothing else could. “People who are dainty don’t do this kind of stuff,” he laughs. “You see pretty quickly how they deal with challenges.”

Both of them grew up in upstate New York with some exposure to nature—Nerwin’s parents were ski patrollers who forced her out into the fresh air every day, and Panezich, an athlete, tried Scouting and occasionally camped in his backyard with his buddies. Still, their love of adventure was slow in coming. In fact, Nerwin didn’t put on a backpack until she traveled from Seattle to Nepal for a trek at age 29. “I remember taking a photo of myself so I could announce, ‘Finally, Mom!’” she says. “I just fell in love with it. As soon as I returned home, I joined a climbing club.” And though Panezich, as a 20-something, spent up to 180 days a year camping while he was in the Army, it wasn’t until he finished his military commitment

and moved to Seattle in the late 1990s that he sought out the backcountry for its own sake. “At that point, I knew all the practical skills, like how to read maps,” he says. “I had to remember how to have fun.”

Since then, they’ve both racked up a list of outdoor experiences: climbing Mt. Rainier, hiking in Peru, skiing from the rim of Mount St. Helens, running half-marathons. For Panezich, the physical effort of backpacking is the main reason he now loves it—that, and the satisfaction that comes from reaching a goal. “You get to a pinnacle, literally,” he says. “To a lake. To a pass. It’s a very concrete accomplishment.” Nerwin sees it another way: “When you’re out there, you don’t have to stress about all the things that come at you in daily life,” she says. “You simply worry about where to go, when to eat, and how beautiful it is around you. You can work hard, then go to bed early. You get back to the basics.”

Their relationship was forged, and solidified, in the outdoors—and they wouldn’t have it any other way. She plans the menus; he navigates. She brings two down coats; he’s warm enough with one. They both hike faster than most people jog. These days, more weekends than not, the couple is skiing, backpacking, or, yes, paddling. They’ve even bought a green double kayak—dubbed Kermit—though it has yet to make its maiden voyage to Blake. And while they appreciate cozy mountain lodges and farm-to-table meals, those aren’t the things that make them truly feel alive. As Panezich says, “It comes down to this: We’d almost always rather be outside than inside.”

TAMMY AND LUKE'S EXPERT TIPS

TAKE A HIKE.

Campgrounds even a short walk from the road will take you closer to the outdoors and farther from crowds.

PACK RIGHT.

Use multiple waterproof stuff sacks to keep gear dry. Put the sleeping bag at the bottom, and stash heavy items like a stove and food near the center of your back, close to the tent and clothing along the sides and top; sun-screen, headlamp, and snacks in the lid pocket. Put bottles of white gas in a lower exterior pocket, in case they leak.

TEND TO YOUR TOOTSIES.

No need to wear heavy, stiff high-top hiking boots—lighter low-tops (maybe with Gore-Tex or some waterproofing) are fine for a short overnight and are easier to break in, weigh less, and cause fewer blisters. And bring a pair of sandals or Crocs to give your feet a break.



Luke Panezich and Tammy Nerwin backpack in Washington's North Cascade Range.

CAMPING LIKE EXPERTS

Expert gear you'll love too



JETBOIL JOULE

With a canister that's positioned upside-down to eke out every last drop of fuel, the super-efficient Joule can boil a liter of water in under 3 minutes, simmer at low levels, and has a design that allows its flame to stay solid even when the mercury drops below 0°. Just as nice, it packs down tidily within its own 2.5-liter pot. \$200; jetboil.com.



OSPREY TALON 44

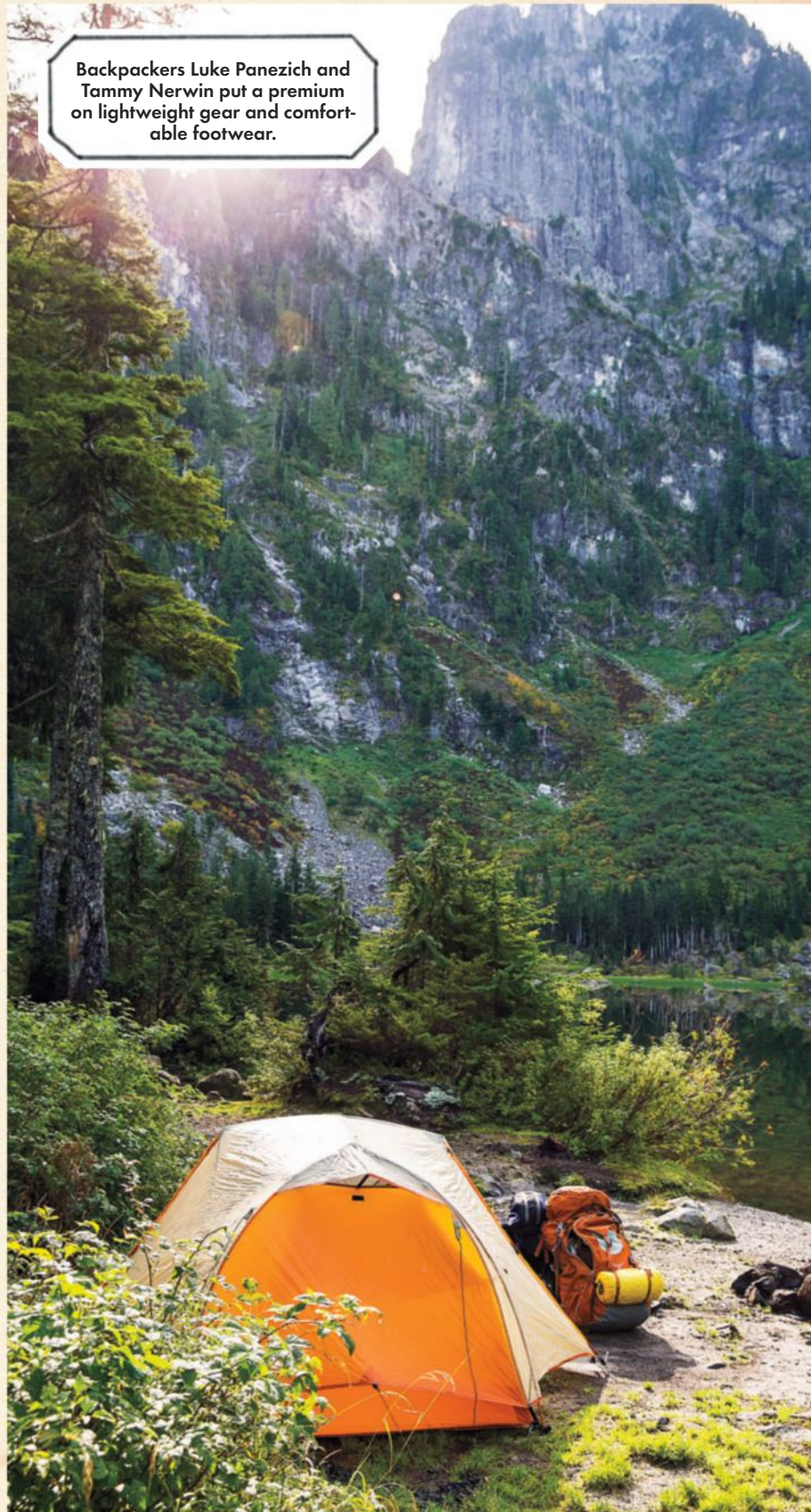
Ready to take your first backpacking trip? The Talon 44 (Tempest 40 for women) has plenty of bells and whistles—a ventilated back panel, an adjustable foam harness, and scads of mesh pockets. \$150; ospreypacks.com.



HELINOX CHAIR ONE

Think you're too much of a purist to haul a camp chair into the backcountry? Think again: The new Helinox, with ultralight poles and a mesh seat, packs down small, weighs 30 ounces, and sets up in a flash. You may never sit on a log again. \$100; helinox.com.

Backpackers Luke Panezich and Tammy Nerwin put a premium on lightweight gear and comfortable footwear.





EXPERT CAMP FARE

PRESSED ITALIAN SANDWICHES

SERVES 8 / 20 MINUTES, PLUS 30 MINUTES TO PRESS, IN CAMP

These hearty sandwiches are weighted to compress the layers. We've found that stuffing the filled ciabatta loaf into a pack to tote on the trail also does the trick nicely. Before you leave the car or camp, fill and cut the loaf, wrap it in foil, then in a large resealable plastic bag.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 ciabatta loaf (about 8 by 14 by 2 in.) | ¼ lb. thinly sliced spicy Italian cold cuts (coppa or capocollo) |
| ½ cup store-bought black or green olive tapenade | 8 oz. fresh mozzarella, sliced |
| 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar | 1 roasted red bell pepper, chopped |
| 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil | 6 leaves fresh basil, torn into bite-size pieces |
| ¼ lb. thinly sliced Genoa salami | Pepper |
| 3 oz. thinly sliced prosciutto | |

1. Cut ciabatta in half horizontally. Spread bottom half with tapenade. Drizzle cut side of top half with vinegar and oil.
2. Arrange salami on top of tapenade, followed by the prosciutto, cold cuts, mozzarella, red pepper, and basil. Sprinkle with pepper to taste and place top half of loaf on filling.
3. Wrap sandwich thoroughly with plastic wrap or foil. Place a heavy cutting board or other flat object on top of sandwich and weight it down with a 2- to 4-lb. weight (such as a large pot or six-pack of soda). Let sit 30 minutes to 2 hours. Unwrap, cut into eighths, and serve.

PER SANDWICH 398 Cal., 66% (261 Cal.) from fat; 20 g protein; 29 g fat (8.5 g sat.); 22 g carbo (1.2 g fiber); 1,449 mg sodium; 64 mg chol. LC

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: JEFFERY CROSS; WING CHAN PHOTOGRAPHY; FAR RIGHT: ERIN KUNKEL



S Recipes are from *Sunset's Great Outdoors Cookbook*, on sale April 22. Preview the book's grilling chapter on page 96.

Top 10 expert campgrounds

Okay, we're exaggerating. These beautiful spots are for everybody—you just need to hike a little to reach them.

CALIFORNIA Coast Camp

Point Reyes National Seashore
Ninety minutes north of San Francisco, spend the night 200 yards from Santa Maria Beach, one of Point Reyes' most inviting stretches of sand. An up-and-down 1.8-mile hike on the Laguna and Firelane Trails leads to 14-site Coast Camp, where breaking waves croon a soothing lullaby. Sites 1 through 7 have optimal privacy and views. From Santa Maria Beach, walk north toward Limantour Beach or south toward Sculptured Beach, with miles of uninterrupted shoreline between. The camp has vault toilets. \$20; nps.gov/pore. ➤

Ridge and Sunrise Campsites

Angel Island State Park
After day-trippers leave, campers reign over Angel Island and its San Francisco Bay vistas. Ridge sites, on the island's west side, offer city and Golden Gate Bridge views. Sunrise sites, on the east, overlook Treasure Island and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. Fog and wind can be fierce: Layer your clothing and stake your tent. During daylight, explore the island, hike Mt. Livermore, or beachcomb Perle's Beach. Campsites are minimalist with vault toilets. The trek in is up to 2.5 miles. \$30 plus ferry from Tiburon, Oakland, or San Francisco; angelisland.org. ➤

Water Canyon Campground

Santa Rosa Island, Channel Islands National Park
California's second-largest island (nearby Santa Cruz is first), Santa Rosa provides 84 square miles to explore and a noticeable lack of crowds. A three-hour boat ride from Ventura and a 1.5-mile hike take you to camp. Enjoy long expanses of white sand beaches and a rare stand of Torrey pines—this island and San Diego are the only spots where these wind-sculpted conifers grow. A hike to Lobo Canyon is a must.

The camp is surprisingly plush—showers, flush toilets, and wind shelters for food storage. \$15 plus boat (\$114 round-trip; islandpackers.com); nps.gov/chis. 🏕️ ➤

COLORADO Molas Lake Campground

Silverton
The state's most photogenic summits tower over 10,515-foot Molas Lake, so it's no surprise that campers routinely fill this 58-site campground south of Telluride. But its five walk-in options let tenters escape the hubbub, and the choicest sites even offer views of snowcapped peaks. It's ample reward for hauling your gear 50 to 200 feet. New vault toilets feel nicer than many gas station rest stops, and a shower house delivers the kind of refreshment that only hot water can achieve. From \$12; open Jun 1–Sep 30; molaslake.com. 🏕️ ➤

MONTANA Handkerchief Lake Campground

Flathead National Forest
Camping at one of these three walk-in sites due east of Bigfork is like entering a decompression chamber. Silence and solitude make campers feel as if they've arrived at the back of beyond, but an easy 100-yard walk is all that's required to reach these scenic lakeside spots. Picnic tables, fire rings, and a vault toilet are the sole facilities—there's no potable water—but rusticity keeps the crowds away: No motorboats disturb the water, which reflects the waterfalls and steep, forested peaks along its edge. Anglers should bring their tackle since Handkerchief is brimming with grayling. Free; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/PK0Bp2. ➤

OREGON Mirror Lake

Mt. Hood National Forest
Just an hour from Portland, the mile hike up to rhododendron-rimmed Mirror Lake is more

popular than a noontime food truck, but thankfully most folks retreat to their cars at the end of the day—giving you front-row views of Mt. Hood and (naturally) its reflections. Come morning, leave your things and continue 1.8 miles to the ridgetop of Tom Dick and Harry Mountain for even more stunning views of the volcano (and great rocks for sunbathing). No toilets or potable water. Free; \$5/day rec pass; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/1kYLaL9.

Strawberry Campground

Malheur National Forest
Rising above Eastern Oregon, the quiet and craggy Strawberry Mountain Wilderness—named for the wild berries that ripen here in July—seems more like the Canadian Rockies than the high desert. Depending on the strength of your quads, call it good at Strawberry Lake (1.2 miles in), a gentle pool below an amphitheater of cliffs. Or continue another 1.8 miles to Little Strawberry Lake for even more solitude and expansive vistas. Feeling invincible? Day-hike 4 miles more to 360° panoramas on 9,038-foot Strawberry Mountain. \$8; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/1meyRG5. ➤

UTAH Rock Cliff Campground

Jordanelle State Park
Compared with the park's lively hub at Hailstone, which buzzes with motorboats and RVs, Rock Cliff is a low-key corner dedicated to nature and wildlife. Its six-site hike-in campground sits on a quiet tributary of Jordanelle Reservoir. Nab sites 1, 2, or 3 for riverside views, and look out for marmots and eagles. Even moose occasionally wander along the bank, browsing on shrubs. The 50-yard walk to the campsites feels like a small price to pay for scenery and seclusion just 40 minutes from Salt Lake City, and the rustic vibe comes with civilized comforts like plumbing. \$16; \$7 park entry; stateparks.utah.gov. 🏕️ ➤

WASHINGTON Heather Lake

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
Tucked below dramatic 1,500-foot-high cliffs, as if poured into a giant bowl, tranquil Heather Lake (pictured on pages 75–79) is reached by a moderate 2.5-mile climb up from the Mountain Loop Highway. (On the way, watch out for colossal cedar stumps left from logging days.) A half-mile trail encircles the lake, allowing easy access to huckleberry bushes and close-up looks at the waterfalls cascading off the lower flanks of Mt. Pilchuck. You'll find flat places for your tent but no toilets or potable water. Free; \$5/day rec pass; no reservations; 1.usa.gov/1dIH7k. ➤





Reached by a moderate 2.5-mile hike, mirror-smooth Heather Lake makes the perfect backdrop for a wilderness selfie.



Shi Shi Beach

Olympic National Park

Once you navigate a forested 2- to 4-mile approach and a 200-foot descent down a bluff, you can set up camp anywhere on 2.5-mile-long Shi Shi Beach (say shy-shy)—one of the most spectacular stretches on the Olympic coastline. The primo real estate is between Petroleum Creek (potable if boiled or filtered) and the sea stacks and seastar-filled tidepools at Point of the Arches. Go for a bracing dip, build a campfire, and settle back for a wide-open sunset. \$5; \$15 park entry and fees for parking and permits; nps.gov/olym. ➔



Unless noted, these 10 campgrounds have potable water but do NOT have flush toilets. 🏕️



DIGITAL BONUS Watch our video tips: See how to ... pack a cooler, buy the right hiking boot, build a campfire, make the perfect s'more. Blipp this page or go to sunset.com/camping.



BEYOND

CURRY

Explosively flavorful and addictively snackable, Indian street food is the West's newest edible phenomenon.

BY
MARGO TRUE

A spread of street food at Vik's Chaat Corner, Berkeley.

THE

throng of customers around the little cart drew me in. One night years ago in Delhi, near the Red Fort, I inched my way to the front of the crowd and ordered a snack from a street vendor. He handed me a steel plate—a landing pad for a series of small golden puffs. I popped one in my mouth, and it shattered in a burst of cilantro-mint water. It was called *pani puri*, and it was the most thrilling snack I'd ever eaten.

Back in the States, I kept an eye out for the street foods I'd come to love while traveling over the years in India, especially the subcategory called *chaat*, explosively flavorful snacks based on fried dough. But our Indian restaurants then—invariably named Bombay Palace or Taj Mahal—offered only standards like chicken tikka masala and naan. Instead, I found street food in Indian neighborhoods, lining up with homesick expats at counters in grocery stores or strip-mall restaurants to order what seemed, then, like a secret.

That secret is out. Especially in the West, where Asian culture runs deep and the food truck boom has primed our palates with flavors from all over the planet, Indian street snacks are moving into the mainstream. “We don’t have homogeneous tastes here,” says Amod Chopra, owner of Vik’s Chaat Corner, in Berkeley. “So I don’t have to conform to steak and potatoes.” He was the first of several Bay Area chefs to take street food as their muse, using its bright flavors and hustle-bustle to create new kinds of Indian restaurants that are pure, delicious fun.

On a typical Saturday at Vik’s, some 1,400 people, at least half of them non-Indians, pour in. You can watch your food being made, as if you were on the street in India: One guy vigorously tosses *bhel puri*—a mix of puffed rice, cilantro, potatoes, and onions—with chutneys. Another fries up lamb *samosas*. Huge balloons of dough called *bhature* swell and crisp in hot oil. The crowd seems to flow in six directions at once, collecting food here, flatware over there, tea at yet



Top: Amod Chopra at Vik's Chaat Corner in Berkeley. "There's something very zippy, zesty, and vibrant about street food," he says. Above: Customers at Vik's.

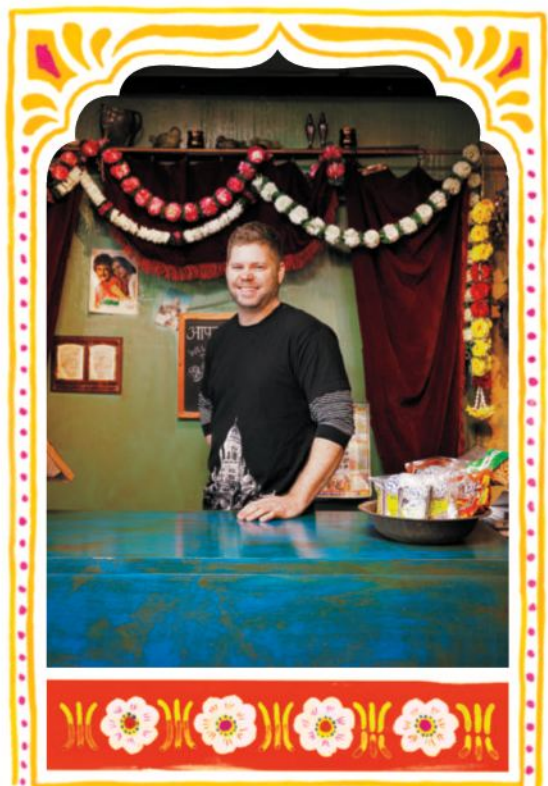
another counter. That's intentional, says Chopra delightedly: "Mayhem should be part of the experience!" The place feels, tastes, and smells like India—there's even a heady undercurrent of incense from the market at the far end.

But it also feels like Berkeley, with its sleek signage, skylights, and compostable plates. Chopra moved Vik's—legendary in Berkeley for two decades—into this location four years ago, and his new menu, written for a crossover crowd, turns unfamiliar dishes into adventures. "Chaat literally means 'to lick,'" it explains, going on to say that these snacks were traditionally served on leaves and were "so tongue-tickling that one could not resist licking the last morsels from the leaf before discarding it." Each snack is described through a memory of seeking it out, or seeing it prepared, or gobbling it up: "At 3 p.m. sharp every day, the *bhel puri wala* would pass our neighborhood ringing the bell on his pushcart..." By the time you order, you're practically drooling.

When I heard that Vik's had inspired a new restaurant in Portland called Bollywood Theater, I had to hop on a plane. Snow had shut down the restaurant (and pretty much all of Portland) when I arrived, but its owner and chef, Troy MacLarty, kindly unlocked the door and fired up the stove for me. During the couple of hours we were there, people kept showing up—in defiance of citywide warnings to stay inside—and hungrily peering in.

I hoped the food wasn't visible from the door, because it was glorious. He started with one of my favorite snacks, called *papri chaat*, a complex assembly of wheat crackers, puffed rice, vegetables, chutneys, and yogurt, all showered with spices, thread-thin fried noodle bits, and cilantro. He followed it up with a *kathi* roll (a flatbread with an egg scrambled on top of it, then rolled up with other ingredients) and *vada pav* (a deep-fried potato-patty slider known as the "poor man's burger" in Mumbai). "My proudest moment was when some Indian customers picked out the stall that I based my vada pav on," he says.

MacLarty learned about Indian food while working at Chez Panisse, in Berkeley. A few times a month, he'd head over to Vik's,





Like India itself, Portland's Bollywood Theater floods the senses. Clockwise from above, at the S.E. Division St. location: Crisp chile-lime okra and cucumber *raita* (spiced yogurt); customers order at the counter under antique chandeliers and lamps; Troy MaClarty brings a top chef's talent to Indian snacks. Right and left: Around the room, visual vignettes—including a toy auto-rickshaw, Bollywood movie posters, and vintage photos from Kerala—layer on the charm.





Above: Tasty fun at Juhu Beach Club, here in the form of the *vada pav* (mashed potato-patty slider), with pickled onions and cilantro chutney. Top right: Chef Preeti Mistry in Juhu's open kitchen. Opposite, top: Juhu, with jarred spices and tiffins (Indian lunch boxes). Center: Juhu's Bombay sandwich, served grilled cheese-style, with spicy tomato soup. Right: Sleek and colorful Badmaash. "We wanted to do cool, casual, funky, fresh Indian," says co-owner Nakul Mahendro. Left: *Chai* (spiced tea) at Badmaash.





“I’m making something that’s very California... beautiful foods from the market with an Indian street-food template.”

—PREETI MISTRY, JUHU BEACH CLUB, OAKLAND

loving the spicy, comforting flavors there. “It replaced Mexican food for me,” he says. After moving to Portland, he taught himself to cook Indian food from books and took a three-week trip to India. Then, in 2012, he opened Bollywood. “We got crushed immediately.” With just 56 seats, he was serving 450 people a day. Barely two years later, he’s opened a second, larger location.

As you might expect, Bollywood Theater does show Hindi movies, but that’s just part of its evocation of India, so personal and complete that the place seems more like an art installation than a restaurant. Surfaces look weathered, as though worn down by heat and time. Old movie posters and nostalgic photos of Indian families plaster the walls. Walk in the bathroom, and you’ll be watching a raucous video of Indian street life (“I wanted to put it in the most claustrophobic part of the restaurant,” MacLarty says). Every detail is meant to transport whoever comes in.

FOR OTHER CHEFS who are taking their lead from Indian street food, authenticity isn’t exactly the point. “My idea was never to replicate what I’ve had in India, but to take inspiration from what I’ve experienced,” says Preeti Mistry, a former Google chef who opened

tikka masala. “We wanted to make it more approachable to order Indian food,” owner Akash Kapoor says. “No 20-page menu where you’re wondering what’s the difference between the tomato-onion sauce and the onion-tomato sauce.”

And then there’s the new wave’s resident badass—almost literally. Badmaash (“rascal” in Hindi)—opened last summer in Los Angeles by Nakul Mahendro; his father, Pawan (who is also the chef); and his brother, Arjun—blends the family’s great sense of humor with their sheer love of street food. “We’re all a little chubby, and whenever we go to Bombay, as soon as we land, we’ll run out and get papri chaat,” says Nakul. He describes chaat, with its lively dance of flavors and textures, as “an Indian 5-Hour Energy shot.” Badmaash’s menu plays around with the standards—with dishes like Badass Chicken Tikka—and serves it up with style, a terrific list of local beers, and a dash of kitsch (one wall doubles as a movie screen for old Bollywood films).

I could never have imagined, all those years ago in Delhi, that someday I’d be eating “chickpeas & chips” (papri chaat), with a craft beer in my hand and the Beastie Boys playing in the background. Indian street food as a bona fide cool scene: That’s a thrill.

Juhu Beach Club in Oakland last year (it’s named after a Mumbai beach famous for chaat sellers). Mistry’s parents are from India, but she was raised in the States. “I’m making something that’s very California, very Oakland, that is what I want to eat—the beautiful foods from the market with a street-food template.” This means, for instance, replacing the usual potatoes and chickpeas in a snack known as *sev puri* with yams and green apples in winter, green chickpeas and nectarines in summer. She’s best known for her pav, slider-size sandwiches. At the restaurant—an irrepressibly happy place done in salmon pink and orange—I watch a nose-ringed cook plate up a Holy Cow pav (short ribs braised with cardamom) for me at the counter, then sink my teeth in. Like many other things on the menu, it’s not much like what I’ve eaten in India, but it’s done so well that it doesn’t matter.

Across the bay, Curry Up Now interprets Indian street food even more loosely, with a Mexican fusion spin. The chain’s storefronts have a frat-house feel, with a game often playing on a big screen and people lining up for *paratha* flat-bread quesadillas, or hangover food like the UnBurger, a smashed samosa on a bun slathered with curry. I’m a sucker, though, for the Sexy Fries—sweet-potato fries covered with cheese and chicken

YOUR GUIDE TO

CHHAAT

These snacks typically rely on several standard ingredients but in varying combinations and amounts, making each dish a different experience.

ALOO TIKKI

Fried spiced potato patties; often served with *chole* (chickpea curry).



Cooked chickpeas

Papri Fried wheat crackers

Murmura Puffed rice

Chaat masala Tangy, earthy blend of ground dried green mangoes, black salt, cumin, coriander, red chile, ginger, and other spices

Hot cilantro-mint chutney

BHEL PURI

A puffed-rice concoction featuring diced potatoes, tomatoes, crisp raw onions, and chickpeas; dressed with cilantro-mint chutney.



SAMOSA CHOLE

Fried pastries usually filled with either spicy peas and potatoes, or ground lamb; served with cilantro-mint chutney and/or chickpea curry.

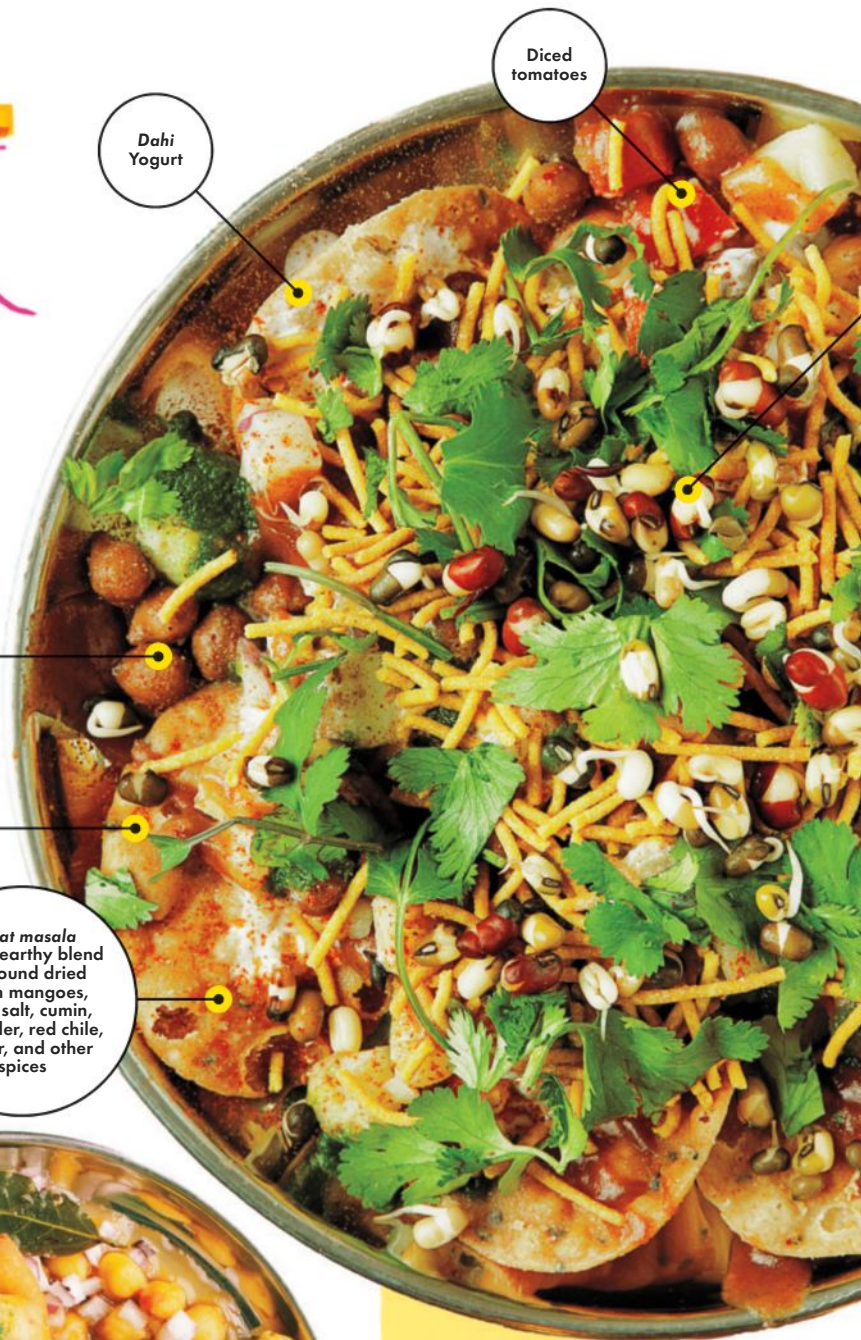


Diced tomatoes

Dahi Yogurt

DAHI PAPRI CHHAAT

Arguably the most complex chaat, it's a layering of wheat crackers with the same vegetables as *bhel puri* (and/or sprouted lentils and beans), copiously drizzled with cilantro-mint chutney, tamarind chutney, yogurt, and (phew!) a snappy sour *chaat masala* and sev on top. Plus cilantro!





Sprouted dal
Legumes like
lentils, peas,
and beans

Diced
boiled
potatoes

Cilantro

Spicy-
sweet
tamarind
chutney

Sev
Threadlike
chickpea-
flour noodles,
fried and
broken into
bits



VADA PAV

As popular in Mumbai as hot dogs in New York, this is a fried patty of mashed potato spiced with green chile, ginger, and cumin, served with chutneys on a buttered bun.



KATHI ROLL

Similar to a burrito: flaky wheat-flour paratha (flatbread) with an egg cooked into a creamy scramble right on top, then rolled up with any of several fillings. A specialty of Kolkata.

SEV PURI

Little stacks of mashed potato on papri crackers, showered with chutneys and lots of crisp sev.



DAHI BATATA PURI

Like dahi papri chaat, except the crackers are puffed into crunchy balloons that hold the vegetables and chutneys. Eat immediately, before they wilt.



PANI PURI

The same fried puffs as for dahi batata puri, filled with bits of potato and chickpeas, a dab of tamarind chutney, and lots of spiced water; very refreshing when they burst in your mouth.



WHERE TO GO

Our favorite Indian street-food restaurants in the West:

LOS ANGELES

BADMAASH
\$\$; 108 W. Second St.; badmaashla.com.

PORTLAND

BOLLYWOOD THEATER
\$\$; 2039 N.E. Alberta St. and 3010 S.E. Division St.; bollywoodtheaterpdx.com.

S.F. BAY AREA

CURRY UP NOW
\$; curryupnow.com for locations.

JUHU BEACH CLUB
\$\$; 5179 Telegraph Ave., Oakland; jububeachclub.com.

VIK'S CHAAT CORNER
\$; 2390 Fourth St., Berkeley; vikschaatcorner.com.

DIGITAL BONUS
Get street-snack recipes from this story, plus an expanded list of restaurants, at sunset.com/indianfood.

HOW TO EAT PANI PURI

Beloved in North India, this snack is called *gol gappa* in and around Delhi and *puchka* in Kolkata. A good puri (puff) will be shatter-crisp, with spicy pani (water).



STEP 1 Make a small hole in the top of the pani puri with your thumb.



STEP 2 Drop in a few bits of potato and chickpeas.



STEP 3 Drizzle in some sweet-sour tamarind chutney.



STEP 4 Dunk into water spiked with spices (or pour it in). Pop into your mouth. 🍴



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*The new
steak salad*
WITH GRILLED NOPALES

p. 90

PEAK
SEASON

NOPALES FOR NEWBIES

*Get past the prickly parts, and
you'll be hooked on cactus's
lemony flavor.*

GRILLED STEAK and NOPALES SALAD

SERVES 4 / 1¼ HOURS

Nopales pads are ideal for this citrusy salad because they can be grilled, but you can also use pieces and sauté them (see step 1 of quesadillas recipe, page 92).

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3 medium <i>nopales</i> pads (12 oz. total), prepped (see “Nopales Basics,” page 92) | 2½ qts. (5 oz.) baby romaine lettuce leaves |
| ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil | ¾ cup loosely packed cilantro sprigs |
| 2 tbsp. lime juice | 10 radishes, quartered |
| 1 tsp. dried Mexican oregano, crumbled | 1 large poblano chile |
| About ¾ tsp. kosher salt | ½ cup coarsely crumbled <i>cotija</i> cheese* |
| ⅛ tsp. cayenne | ⅓ cup roasted, salted hulled pumpkin seeds (<i>pepitas</i>)* |
| 1¼ lbs. skirt steak, cut in half crosswise | |

1. Heat a grill to high (450° to 550°). Cut parallel slashes on nopales about 1 in. apart from tips to 1½ in. from bases (keep bases intact). In a small bowl, whisk oil, lime juice, oregano, ¾ tsp. salt, and the cayenne. Spoon 2 tbsp. dressing into a medium bowl, add steak, and toss to coat; set aside. Brush nopales with a little dressing. Set remaining dressing aside.
2. Put lettuce, cilantro, and most of radishes in a large bowl; cover and chill.
3. Grill chile, turning often, until blackened all over, about 10 minutes. Grill nopales, turning once, until juices cook off and bright color fades, 6 to 8 minutes.
4. Let vegetables cool briefly, then cut nopales into ½-by-2-in. strips. Peel, stem, seed, and chop chile. Toss vegetables in a medium bowl with ¼ cup dressing.
5. Grill steak, turning once, until grill marks appear, 4 to 5 minutes. Set on a board; let rest briefly. Slice across grain on a diagonal; toss with nopales and chile.
6. Add remaining dressing to lettuce and toss to coat. Arrange on a platter. Put steak mixture in the center. Sprinkle with *cotija*, pumpkin seeds, and remaining radishes. Season with more salt to taste.

* Find *cotija* and hulled pumpkin seeds at well-stocked grocery stores and Latino markets. If seeds are raw, sauté over medium heat with 1 tsp. oil, stirring often, until golden, 3 to 5 minutes. Salt to taste.

PER SERVING 654 Cal., 73% (477 Cal.) from fat; 36 g protein; 54 g fat (16 g sat.); 8 g carbo (3.6 g fiber); 1,001 mg sodium; 88 mg chol. GF

PEAK SEASON

Sunset

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STACKED NOPALES QUESADILLAS

SERVES 4 / 45 MINUTES

With the brightness of cactus and smoky heat of chipotles, this is our favorite new way to make quesadillas. Blended corn-wheat tortillas get nice and crisp in the oven.

- 3 medium *nopales* pads (12 oz. total), prepped (see “Nopales Basics” at right); or buy strips
- 2 tsp. plus 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 3 to 4 tsp. minced canned chipotle chile, divided
- 1 medium firm-ripe avocado, diced
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced, divided
- $\frac{3}{2}$ cups (10 oz.) shredded jack cheese
- 12 tortillas, about 5 in. wide, either a corn-wheat blend* or all corn
- 2 cups shredded iceberg lettuce

1. Preheat oven to 500° with rack set in upper third. Meanwhile, cut nopales into $\frac{1}{2}$ - by 2-in. strips. In a frying pan, sauté nopales over high heat with 2 tsp. oil until pan is mostly dry, 5 minutes. Reduce heat; cook until barely tender, 3 minutes more. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, whisk lemon juice, 1 tbsp. oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and half of chipotle. Gently stir in avocado; set aside.
3. In another bowl, toss remaining chipotle with half of onions and the cheese; set aside $\frac{3}{4}$ cup. Toss nopales with remaining cheese mixture in bowl. Lightly brush tortillas on both sides with remaining 1 tbsp. oil; sprinkle on one side with remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt.
4. Set out 4 tortillas on a rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with half of nopales mixture. Repeat layers. Set remaining tortillas on top and sprinkle with reserved $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cheese mixture.
5. Bake stacks until golden and crisp at edges, 8 to 10 minutes. Set on plates. Toss avocado mixture with lettuce and remaining onions, then mound on stacks.

*Find corn-wheat tortillas such as La Tortilla Factory Hand Made Style at many regular grocery stores and at latortillafactory.com.

PER SERVING 717 Cal., 50% (360 Cal.) from fat; 35 g protein; 40 g fat (16 g sat.); 51 g carbo (8.8 g fiber); 1,332 mg sodium; 63 mg chol. V

Nopales basics

BUY Some supermarkets and Latino markets sell cactus with the spines, and others sell it de-stickered and ready to use—whole or cut up. When buying whole pads, look for ones that are smooth, crisp, and small to medium size.



PREP To remove spines from pads, put on dish gloves. Scrape a knife almost flat down the length of both sides of pads to shave off spines and barbed, fuzzy dots. Pare rims with a vegetable peeler. Trim bases; rinse pads.

COOK Once *nopales* hit the heat, they release a sticky juice (like okra), but it cooks off.

DIGITAL BONUS Watch a video on how to prep nopales. Blip this page or go to sunset.com/nopales.





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NOPALES SCRAMBLE

SERVES 4 / 35 MINUTES

This easy breakfast or supper dish takes a cue from Mexico, where *nopales* are popular with eggs, and from America, where we like to add roasted potatoes.

1 large thin-skinned potato, peeled, quartered, and thickly sliced crosswise
1/3 cup very coarsely chopped red onion
About 3 tbsp. olive oil, divided
3/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
1 large poblano chile
1 large Roma tomato
1 cup diced *nopales* (see "Nopales Basics," page 92)
6 large eggs
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
Hot sauce

1. Preheat oven to 475°. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. On parchment, toss potato, onion, 1/2 tbsp. oil, and 1/4 tsp. salt. Set chile and tomato in corner of sheet pan. Bake, turning vegetables

once, until browned, about 20 minutes.

- 2.** In a frying pan, sauté *nopales* over high heat with 1/2 tbsp. oil and 1/4 tsp. salt until pan is mostly dry, 3 to 6 minutes, then reduce heat and cook until barely tender, 3 to 4 minutes more. Set aside.
- 3.** Peel, stem, and seed chile; peel tomato. Chop both. In a bowl, whisk eggs with remaining 1/4 tsp. salt and the pepper.
- 4.** Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add remaining 2 tbsp. oil and the cumin; cook until fragrant, 1 minute. Stir in potato mixture, chile, tomato, and *nopales*. Cook until hot. Pour in eggs and cook, stirring often, until set, 3 minutes. Sprinkle cheese on top; stir a few times until it melts. Serve with hot sauce. ▲

PER SERVING 357 Cal., 55% (198 Cal.) from fat; 16 g protein; 22 g fat (6.7 g sat.); 21 g carbo (3.4 g fiber); 500 mg sodium; 332 mg chol. LC/LS/V

A quick turn
from



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TAKE IT OUTSIDE

From our new *Great Outdoors Cookbook*, these recipes are grilling game changers.



AT SUNSET, you'll find us cooking outside just about as often as inside. That's how our food editors have worked for more than a century, firing up

campfire dinners, backyard barbecues, and cookouts at the beach—all in the name of story development. Our new book, *The Great Outdoors Cookbook* (Oxmoor House, April 22; \$25), draws on those decades of outdoor cooking know-how, featuring recipes that are full of flavor and unusual—they make even backyard cooking feel like an adventure. Here, we've chosen four party-ready recipes from our grilling chapter.



ON THE GRILL

TIP

Keep a close eye on the tomatoes; you want to char them so the sugars caramelize, but not let them burn.

CARAMELIZED TOMATO BRUSCHETTA

SERVES 6 / 40 MINUTES

One of our favorite grilling techniques is to use a cast-iron skillet. It's ideal for charring cherry tomatoes, since it keeps them from falling through the grate. If you have the real estate on your grill, you can do steps 2 and 3 at the same time.

- 1 slender baguette (8 oz.)
- 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 pt. large cherry tomatoes, halved
- About ¼ tsp. each kosher salt and pepper
- ¾ cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- 1 cup small fresh basil leaves

1. Heat a grill to medium (350° to 450°). Cut 18 thin diagonal slices from baguette, angling knife so each slice is 3 to 4 in. long. Save remaining bread for another use.

Set baguette slices on a tray and brush all over with about 1 tbsp. oil.

2. Arrange bread on cooking grate and grill with lid down, turning once with tongs, until browned, 1 to 3 minutes total. Transfer to a platter.

3. Heat a large cast-iron skillet or other oven-proof frying pan on cooking grate, with lid down, until water dances when sprinkled on skillet, 8 to 10 minutes. Add 1½ tbsp. oil and spread with a heatproof

brush. Pour tomato halves into pan, then quickly turn with tongs so all are cut side down. Sprinkle with ¼ tsp. each salt and pepper. Cook with grill lid down, without stirring, until juices evaporate and tomatoes are blackened on cut side, 10 to 15 minutes. Gently loosen tomatoes from pan with a wide metal spatula as they're done and transfer to a bowl.

4. Spoon ricotta into a bowl and drizzle remaining ½ tbsp. oil on top. Put basil in another bowl. Set out toasts with tomatoes, ricotta, basil, salt, and pepper so people can build and season their own bruschettas.

PER 3-TOAST SERVING 216 Cal., 45% (98 Cal.) from fat; 8.2 g protein; 11 g fat (3.6 g sat.); 22 g carbo (1.7 g fiber); 321 mg sodium; 16 mg chol. LS/V



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WEST CLIFF DRIVE,
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GRILLED CAESAR SALAD

SERVES 4 / 20 MINUTES

Romaine brushed with olive oil–anchovy paste and grilled, then topped with curls of cheese, takes Caesar salad to a whole new level. Little Gem, a type of miniature romaine lettuce, is perfect for this recipe, but hearts of regular romaine work too.

- 3 canned anchovy fillets, drained and finely chopped
- 2 to 2½ tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- Salt and pepper
- 2 whole small Little Gem lettuce heads or 4 hearts of romaine
- 2 oz. manchego cheese, shaved into thin curls with a vegetable peeler
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges

1. Heat a grill to medium-high (450°). With the flat side of a knife, mash the anchovies to a paste. In a small bowl, whisk together oil, lemon juice, anchovy paste, and salt and pepper to taste.
2. Keeping leaves attached to cores, cut lettuce heads in half lengthwise. Brush all over with 1½ to 2 tbsp. anchovy dressing.
3. Grill lettuces, covered, turning once, until they are softened and streaked brown, about 8 minutes.
4. Place lettuces cut side up on a platter. Drizzle remaining dressing over lettuces and top with manchego. Serve with lemon wedges.

PER SERVING 149 Cal., 79% (117 Cal.) from fat; 6.2 g protein; 13 g fat (4.8 g sat.); 5.2 g carbo (2.7 g fiber); 206 mg sodium; 17 mg chol. GF/LC/LS



TIP
This technique works for a wedge salad too—drizzle the seared lettuces with blue cheese dressing.

GRILLED SEAFOOD and CHORIZO PAELLA

SERVES 12 / 2 HOURS

Few dishes are as dramatic as an enormous paella, rich with saffron-scented rice and a variety of shellfish. Building it layer by layer at the grill is pure theater. Serve it with generous spoonfuls of *allioli*, a garlicky Spanish mayonnaise (similar to French aioli). You'll need a 17- to 18-in. paella pan* (or use two 12-in. cast-iron frying pans).

- 2 lbs. ripe tomatoes, cut in half
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 each red and green bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed and peppers chopped
- 2 tbsp. minced garlic
- 5 tsp. sweet smoked Spanish paprika (*pimentón dulce*)*
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 4 cups Spanish Valenciano or Arborio rice*
- 24 mussels, scrubbed and "beards" pulled off
- 24 small littleneck clams, scrubbed
- ¾ lb. peeled, deveined medium shrimp (32 per lb.), with tails left on
- 1¼ lbs. Spanish chorizo*, cut into thin diagonal slices
- 1 tsp. saffron threads
- 9 cups chicken broth, divided
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 7 tbsp. olive oil, divided
- Coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Allioli* (recipe follows)

1. Coarsely grate tomatoes into a bowl and discard skins. Put onion and bell peppers in another bowl. Measure garlic, paprika, and salt into a small bowl. Put rice in a bowl, seafood in another, and chorizo in a third.
2. Heat a grill to medium (350° to 450°). Meanwhile, toast saffron in a large saucepan over medium heat on a stove, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add 6 cups broth and the wine, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. In a small covered saucepan, bring remaining 3 cups broth to a boil. Carry all ingredients, a 17- to 18-in. paella pan, a long-handled wooden spoon, a slotted spoon, and oven mitts to the grill.
3. For charcoal, add 15 briquets to fire just before cooking and cook with lid off until step 7. For gas, keep lid closed as you cook. Heat paella pan on grill. Add 3 tbsp. oil, then chorizo, and brown the sausage, stirring, about 5 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer chorizo back to bowl.
4. Sauté onion and peppers in pan until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and cook, stirring often, until liquid evaporates and paste turns a shade darker, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in remaining ¼ cup oil and the garlic mixture; cook, stirring, 30 seconds. Stir in rice until evenly coated, then pat out level.
5. Carefully pour hot saffron liquid over rice and scatter chorizo on top. Check to be sure grill and liquid in pan are level. If needed, reduce gas or airflow in vents on lid and at base of grill (for charcoal grill) to maintain a steady simmer. Cook 12 minutes.
6. Pour enough hot plain broth over paella so rice is just covered in liquid (you may not use it all). Arrange mussels around rim of pan, almost touching, pushing them into liquid. Arrange any remaining mussels, the clams, and then the shrimp over paella in liquid.
7. Cover grill and cook paella until clams and mussels open (discard any that are unopened) and rice is *al punto* (al dente), another 6 to 10 minutes. Carefully

remove paella from grill and set on a heatproof spot. Drape with paper towels and let stand about 5 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with Allioli.

**Find paella pans at kitchenware stores or online. Look for Spanish paprika, rice, and chorizo (not soft Mexican-style chorizo) in well-stocked grocery stores or online.*

PER SERVING 692 Cal., 38% (262 Cal.) from fat; 35 g protein; 29 g fat (8.7 g sat.); 63 g carbo (3.6 g fiber); 1,162 mg sodium; 123 mg chol. GF

ALLIOLI

MAKES 1½ CUPS / 5 MINUTES

In a food processor, whirl 4 **garlic cloves** to mince. Whirl in 1 large **egg plus 1 egg yolk**, 2 tbsp. **lemon juice**, and 1 tsp. **kosher salt** into a smooth paste. Drizzle in 1 cup **extra-virgin olive oil** and ⅓ cup **canola oil**.

MAKE AHEAD Up to 1 week, chilled.

PER 2 TBSP. 209 Cal., 98% (204 Cal.) from fat; 0.8 g protein; 23 g fat (3 g sat.); 0.7 g carbo (0 g fiber); 154 mg sodium; 32 mg chol. GF

TIP

The trick to pulling off this stunning paella is having all the prep done before you grill.





TIP

Before grilling these sweet satays, be sure to scrub the cooking grate well so they don't taste meaty.

PINEAPPLE SATAY with COCONUT CARAMEL

SERVES 4 / ABOUT 1 HOUR

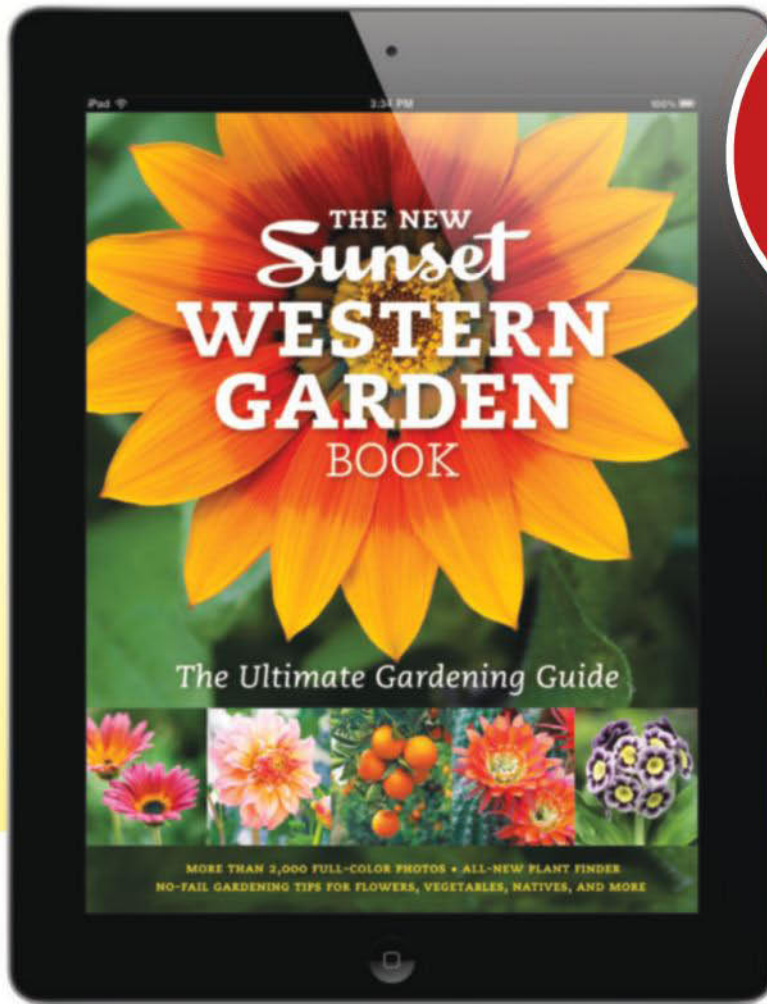
Pineapple holds up to skewering, doesn't fall apart on the grill, and makes an elegant, surprising dessert—especially when drizzled with a simple-to-make caramel sauce. You'll need 16 wooden skewers for this recipe.

- 1 ripe pineapple
- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted

1. Soak skewers in water 30 minutes. Meanwhile, trim ends from pineapple, then stand it upright and cut off peel. Quarter pineapple lengthwise and cut out core. Reserve half the pineapple for another use. Cut each remaining quarter into 4 lengthwise slices, then cut each slice in half crosswise to make 16 thin wedges. Skewer each lengthwise.
2. In a small saucepan, combine sugar with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water. Bring to a boil, swirling to dissolve sugar; boil, swirling occasionally (do not stir), just until golden and honey-like. Remove from heat and slowly whisk in coconut milk (mixture will bubble furiously).
3. Heat a grill to high (450° to 550°). Using a pastry brush, coat pineapple pieces with caramel sauce. Grill just until marks appear, then turn to mark other side, 4 to 5 minutes total. Put skewers on a platter, sprinkle with toasted coconut, and serve with remaining caramel sauce for dunking. 🍷

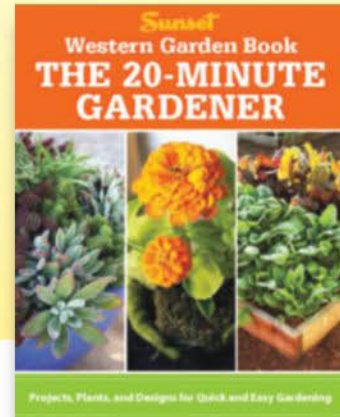
PER SERVING 299 Cal., 30% (89 Cal.) from fat; 1.4 g protein; 9.9 g fat (8.3 g sat.); 56 g carbo (1.9 g fiber); 7.3 mg sodium; 0 mg chol. GF/LC/LS/VG

S TAKE LIVE-FIRE VIDEO LESSONS Watch our food editors bring recipes from this cookbook to life: curious.com/collections/sunset.



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FAST & FRESH

WEEKNIGHT COOKING

Recipes in 30 minutes or less



PICK YOUR PASTA
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or angel hair
works too.

RICOTTA and PEA PASTA

SERVES 4 / 25 MINUTES

We are big fans of frozen peas because they're often better than fresh—and they take no time to cook. Thaw them right before you need them so they don't get wrinkly.

- 1 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 lb. tube pasta, such as ziti
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/3 cup loosely packed flat-leaf parsley
- 2 1/2 cups thawed frozen peas, divided
- 15 oz. (1 1/2 cups) ricotta cheese
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 5 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3/4 tsp. pepper
- 2 tbsp. toasted pine nuts
- 1/2 cup finely shredded parmigiano-reggiano cheese

1. Bring a large pot of water with 1 tbsp. salt to a boil. Add pasta and boil until tender, 7 to 9 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, whirl garlic and parsley in a food processor until finely chopped. Add 1 1/2 cups peas, the ricotta, lemon juice and zest, 4 tbsp. oil, remaining 2 tsp. salt, and the pepper. Pulse to a coarse purée.
3. Reserve 1 cup pasta cooking water. Drain pasta and return to pot. Immediately add ricotta-pea purée and remaining 1 cup peas and stir until well mixed. Add a little pasta cooking water, if necessary, to loosen sauce.
4. Divide among 4 bowls. Sprinkle each with pine nuts and parmigiano, and drizzle with remaining 1 tbsp. oil.

PER SERVING 868 Cal., 36% (310 Cal.) from fat; 39 g protein; 35 g fat (11 g sat.); 103 g carbo (8 g fiber); 1,574 mg sodium; 48 mg chol. V

COOK LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE TO CLEAN



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PORK MEDALLIONS with BELGIAN ENDIVE

SERVES 4 / 30 MINUTES

Belgian endive, available year-round, turns supple and tender when braised. The tapered shapes and the barely sweet orange-maple sauce give this dish elegance.

- 1 lb. whole pork tenderloin
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 thyme sprig
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 6 heads Belgian endive, halved
- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 tbsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley

1. Remove filmlike silverskin from surface of tenderloin. Cut tenderloin crosswise into 12 medallions, each about 1 in. thick. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Set a large plate next to the stove. Heat oil in a very large pan (not nonstick) over medium-high heat. Add garlic and thyme;

cook, stirring constantly, until garlic is browned all over, about 1 minute. Transfer to plate. Add pork and cook until well browned underneath, about 3 minutes. Turn over and cook until barely pink in the center, 1½ to 2 minutes. Transfer to plate of garlic and thyme.

3. Put butter in pan and let melt. Add endive, cut sides down, and cook until browned underneath, 1½ to 2 minutes. Turn over and cook 1 minute more. Transfer to plate of pork.
4. Add orange juice and maple syrup to pan and cook, scraping up browned bits, until liquid is reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Add heavy cream and boil, stirring, until thickened and reduced by half, 2 to 3 minutes.
5. Return garlic, thyme, pork, endive, and any accumulated juices to pan and heat, gently stirring, until everything is warmed through, about 1 minute. Sauce should be reduced enough to thickly coat the back of a spoon and yield about ½ cup.
6. Divide pork and endive among 4 plates. Spoon on sauce; garnish with parsley.

PER SERVING 380 Cal., 62% (234 Cal.) from fat; 25 g protein; 26 g fat (12 g sat.); 11 g carbo (2.6 g fiber); 116 mg sodium; 130 mg chol. GF/LC/LS

HOT and SOUR SHRIMP SOUP

SERVES 4 / 30 MINUTES

With its lively dance of flavors, this soup is a spring tonic.

- 2 lemongrass stalks
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 or 2 serrano chiles, halved lengthwise
- 1 shallot, sliced
- 2 slices (¼ in. thick) fresh ginger, crushed
- 1 small zucchini, cut into ½-in. dice
- 4 button mushrooms, quartered
- 1 red jalapeño chile, thinly sliced
- ¾ lb. small (about 50 per lb.) raw shrimp, peeled and deveined

- 1 tbsp. Vietnamese or Thai fish sauce
- About 1 tbsp. white vinegar
- ¼ cup cilantro leaves
- 2 tbsp. fresh dill, coarsely chopped

1. Trim green tips from lemongrass and peel off tough outer layer from each. Mash stalks with a meat mallet or rolling pin, then tie each stalk in a knot. Put in a small pot, add chicken broth, serrano chile, shallot, and ginger, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer 10 minutes.
2. Remove lemongrass, serrano chile, and ginger from pot and discard. Add zucchini, mushrooms, jalapeño chile, and shrimp. Turn off heat and let steep until shrimp is just cooked through, 2 minutes.
3. Stir in fish sauce, 1 tbsp. vinegar, the cilantro, and dill. Add more vinegar to taste, if you like.
4. Divide among 4 bowls and serve hot. ▲

PER SERVING 160 Cal., 21% (33 Cal.) from fat; 25 g protein; 3.7 g fat (0.9 g sat.); 8.4 g carbo (0.7 g fiber); 601 mg sodium; 121 mg chol. LC

DIGITAL BONUS Watch a video on the best way to devein shrimp. Blip this page or go to sunset.com/deveinshrimp.



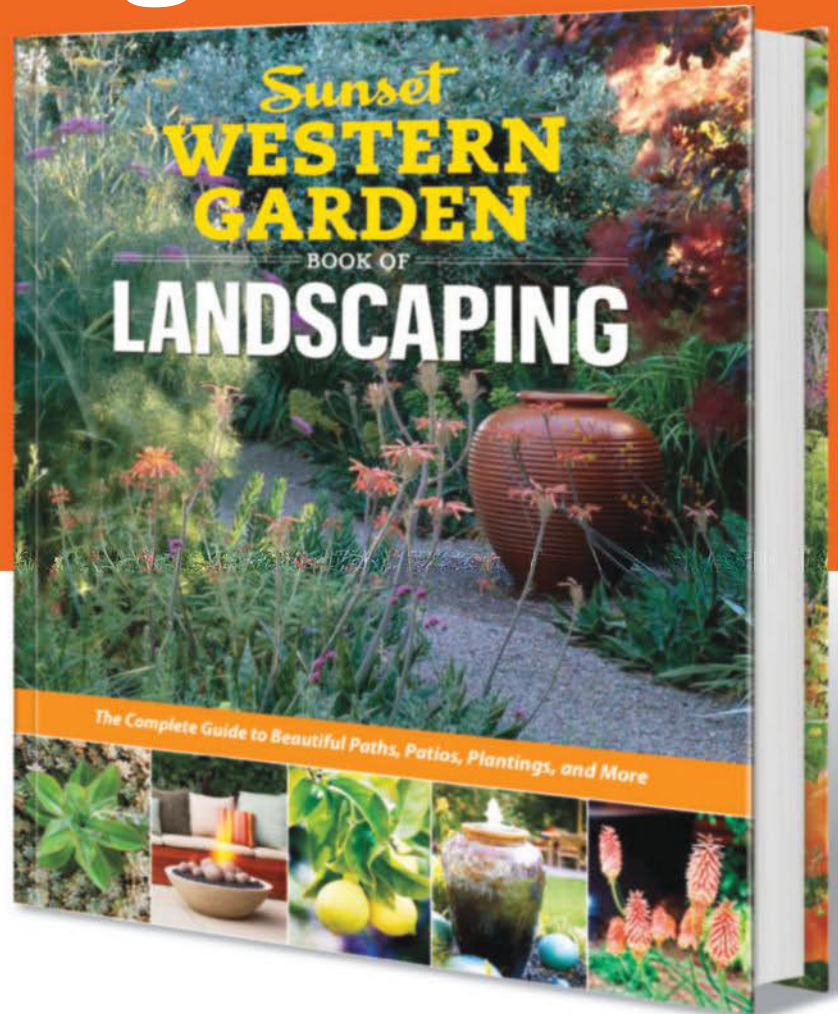
FOOD STYLING, FROM LEFT: RANDY MON, KEVIN CRAFTS

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In the SUNSET KITCHEN

TIPS FROM
OUR TEAM

EASY IMPROV

Breakfast revelation

The first time we tried Marge Granola—a small-batch variety made in Seattle—we knew we were in it for more than a handful. Now its creator, Megan Gordon, shares her granola-making wisdom in the new cookbook *Whole-Grain Mornings* (Ten Speed Press, 2013; \$22). We played around with her method to create a Sesame, Almond, and Cherry Granola (go to sunset.com for the exact recipe), but encourage you to invent your own.

Gordon's master method for granola

CHOOSE REGULAR ROLLED OATS. They have the perfect chewy texture. The following proportions are based on 3 cups oats.

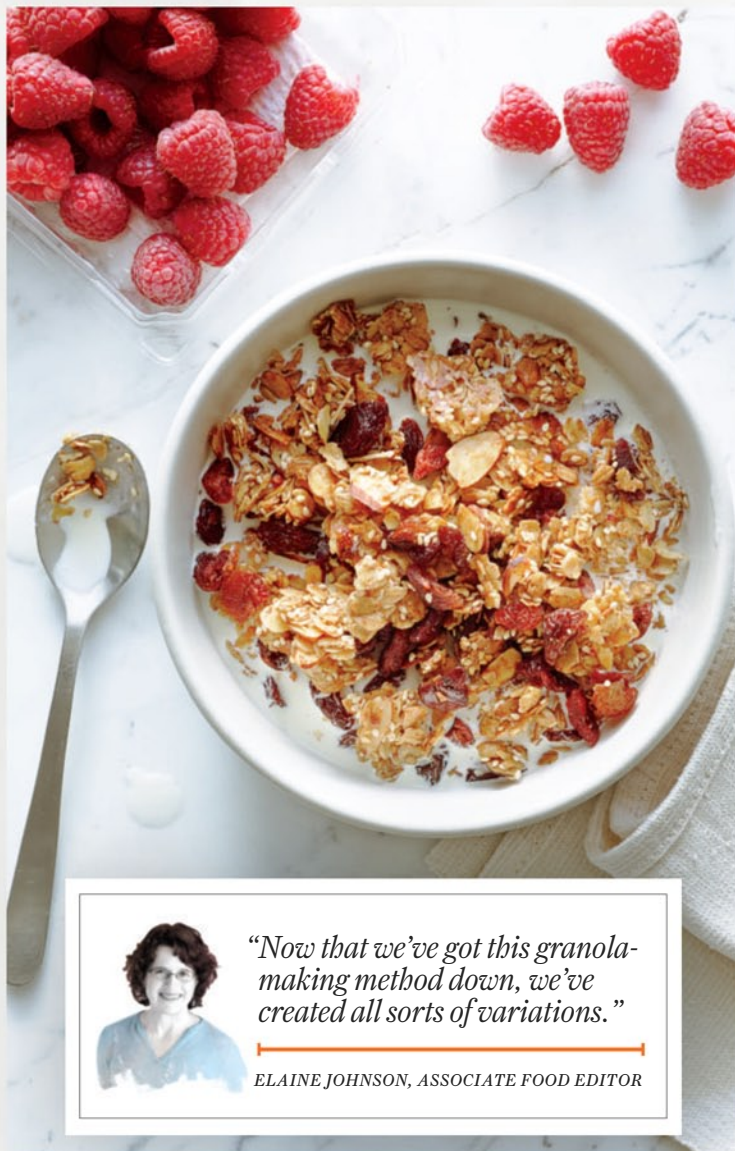
BE GENEROUS WITH NUTS AND SEEDS. You'll need about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of each, raw.

USE OIL (LIKE GOOD OLIVE OIL) AND A LIQUID SWEETENER LIKE MAPLE SYRUP. To achieve a nice crunch, you need about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of each.

DON'T FORGET THE SEASONINGS. Vanilla, sweet spices like cinnamon or cardamom, and a good dash of kosher salt (about a teaspoon of each) all enhance granola's flavor.

TOAST WELL. Spread the mix on a parchment paper-lined sheet pan and bake in a 350° oven until light brown and fragrant, 30 to 35 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. Let cool.

ADD CHOPPED DRIED FRUIT AFTER BAKING. This way, it won't get hard and stick to your teeth.



"Now that we've got this granola-making method down, we've created all sorts of variations."

ELAINE JOHNSON, ASSOCIATE FOOD EDITOR

KNOW-HOW

STEAK SMARTS

Making our steak salad (page 90), we discovered there are actually two skirt steaks (ask your butcher if the label doesn't specify). For both, remove any stretchy membrane. Grill hot and fast. Let it rest, then slice across the grain (lengthwise).



OUTSIDE SKIRT From the plate cut, it's the juicier and meatier of the two—and pricier. Season simply and brush with oil before grilling, or marinate briefly.



INSIDE SKIRT From the flank, this one is shaggier and can be tough if not treated right. Before grilling, tenderize for an hour or two in an acidic marinade (like the one for our salad), and slice thinly.



BACK TO BASICS

CARING FOR CAST IRON

It's a rare day in our indoor-outdoor kitchens when our cast-iron pots and pans aren't in use. To maintain them, we clean them with hot water (no soap) and a nylon mesh pad, then heat them on the stove so they dry thoroughly. While they're warm, we rub them with a little oil and a paper towel. →

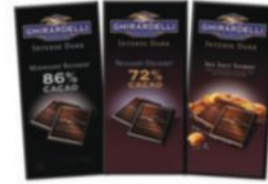


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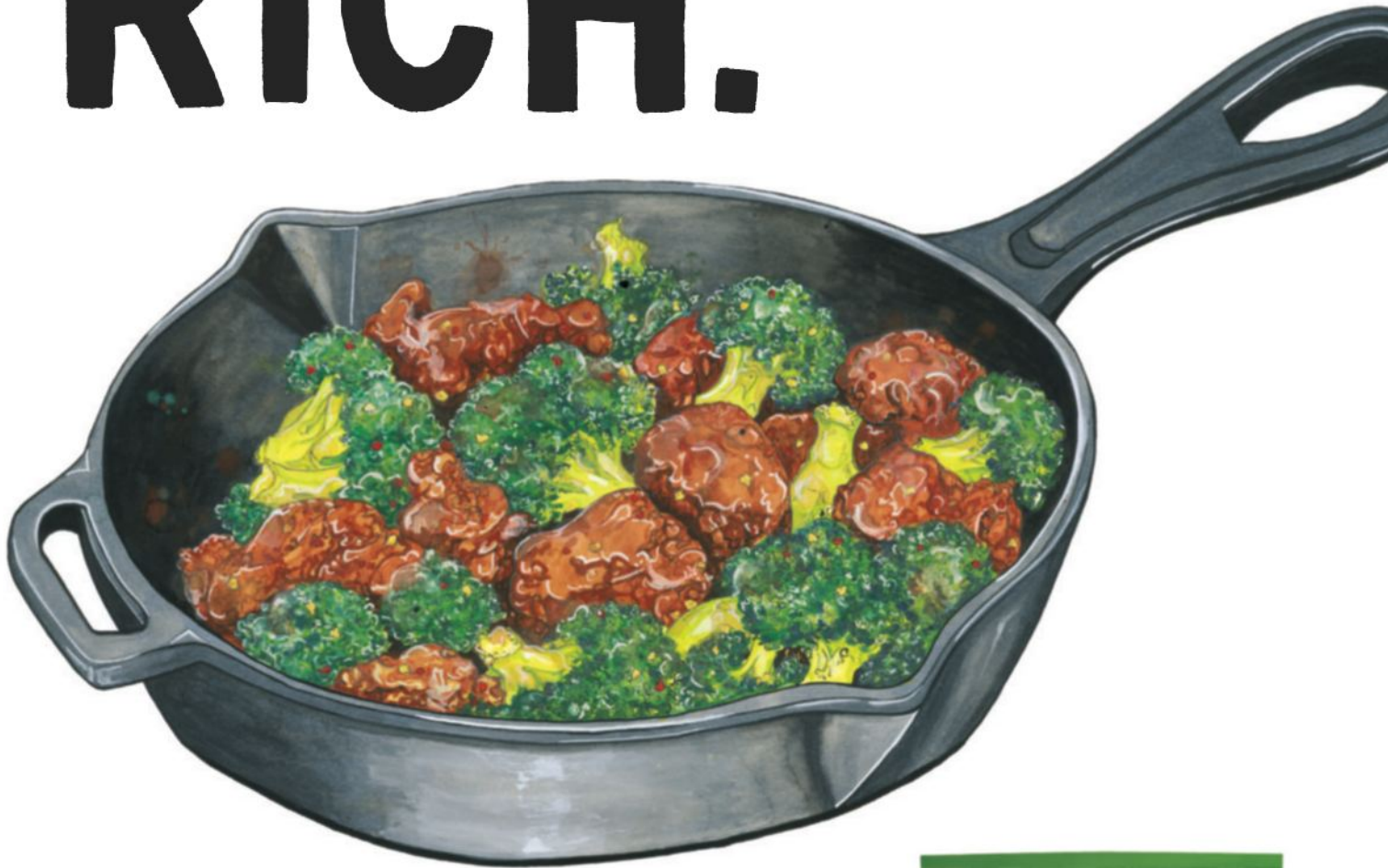
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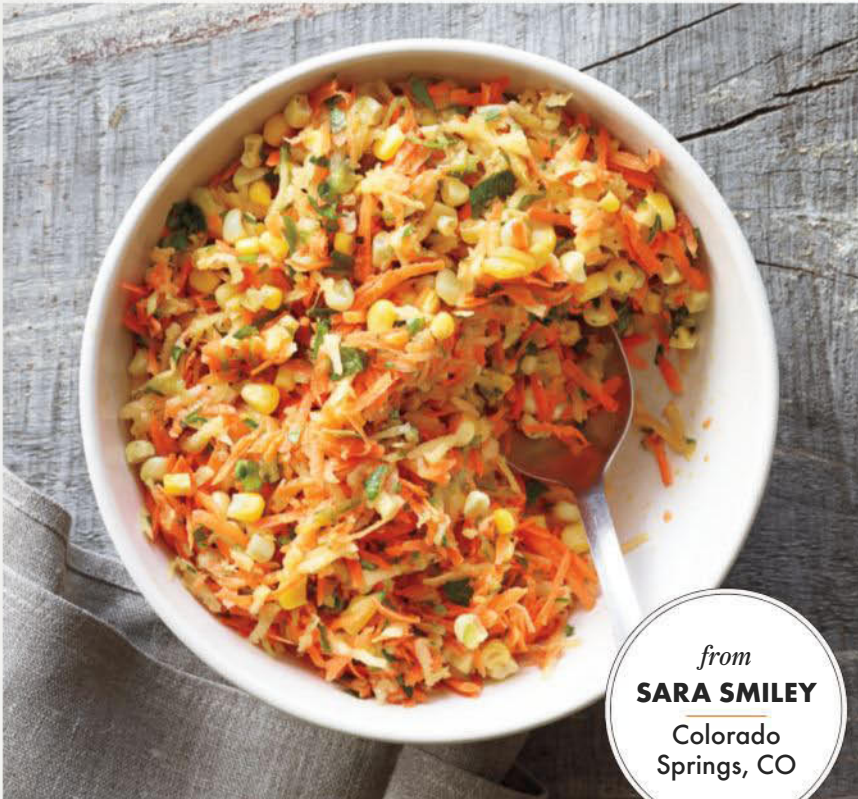
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How's that for a satisfying meal?

In the frozen aisle.



In the SUNSET KITCHEN



from
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WINNING READER RECIPE

CARROT, APPLE, AND CORN SLAW

This light salad, based on one our reader had while vacationing in Germany, is great alongside grilled meat or fish. Squeezing out excess liquid from the fruit and vegetables keeps the salad from getting watery. **SERVES 6 OR 7 (MAKES 7 CUPS) / 35 MINUTES**

- 2 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels (from about 2 ears)
- ½ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 English cucumber, coarsely shredded
- 3 large Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and coarsely shredded
- 4 large carrots, coarsely shredded
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped parsley

1. Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add corn and cook until just tender if using fresh (about 2 minutes), or until heated through if using frozen (about 1 minute). Drain.
2. Whisk together oil, vinegar, cumin, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Squeeze excess liquid from cucumber, apples, and carrots with your hands and discard. Add vegetables, apples, and parsley to the bowl with dressing. Toss until well combined. Serve at room temperature or chilled. ▲

PER 1-CUP SERVING 260 Cal., 57% (149 Cal.) from fat; 2.1 g protein; 17 g fat (1.4 g sat.); 29 g carbo (4.5 g fiber); 200 mg sodium; 0 mg chol. GF/LS/VG



10 WAYS TO ENHANCE DINNER TONIGHT

1. Brighten up the table with a vase of seasonal flowers
2. Create a special playlist for the evening
3. Light a candle for instant ambiance
4. Sprinkle fresh herbs on your entrée
5. Infuse citrus slices in your water for a refreshing twist
6. Take your meal outside and enjoy the fresh spring air
7. Mix-and-match casual dinnerware with formal place settings for a festive update
8. Make the most of your dinner with the perfect wine pairing
9. Pick up dessert from your local farmers market or bakery

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SIP

WINE-LIST CONFIDENTIAL

A new kind of sommelier takes the pressure out of navigating a restaurant's wine collection. *By Sara Schneider*

I'VE KNOWN MANY MOMENTS of wine-list dread. The tome is passed my way, with a mandate to pick a bottle that will make everyone at the table (and their wallets) happy. The sommelier bears down, sizing me up as a customer. My wine-editor cred is on the line. (He doesn't know that, but everyone at the table does!)

Does navigating a wine list have to feel like an exam that you're woefully unprepared for? Not according to Carlton McCoy, one of the new breed of wine stewards who are more interested in being your ally than in intimidating you.

McCoy could certainly lord it over us if he wanted to: A newly minted Master Sommelier, he's one of only 214 people worldwide to pass the rigorous final test for this credential in its 45-year history. (If you've watched *Somm*, the 2012 documentary following four young guys obsessing over wine in preparation for their own final exam, you have a sense of just how hard this is.)

But McCoy and, thankfully, many more wine experts of his generation are rejecting the stereotype of the pretentious sommelier. As wine director at The Little Nell, a resort whose spectacular wine list alone prompts many skiers to choose Aspen over its rivals, he happily takes responsibility for finding out what his customers really want (and can afford). Here, he explains how to make that panicky wine-list moment a satisfying adventure.

How much should the average diner know about wine when they come in?

Not much! They just need to be open. First off, we get all the questions on the table: What style do you like? What's your price point?

That's often a hard conversation, isn't it?

The toughest thing for most people is finding the language to describe what they really like. They might say they generally enjoy "sweet wines." But does that mean literally sweet? Or do they mean they like ripe, fruity wines that just seem sweet?

Do you have a question that gets to the bottom of it?

I often ask, "What do you drink at home that you like?" Some people take pictures of the wines they've liked. When they show me a label on their phone, I know exactly what style of wine they're talking about.

What should people do when everyone at the table is ordering different dishes for every course? Stick with wines by the glass?

I'm not a fan of ordering single glasses through a meal. You get tiny sound bites about the wines, and you don't remember anything. Plus, sharing a bottle with the whole table is such a great way to enjoy something together.

So what's your strategy?

I take back that single-glass advice in one instance—do start with a glass of Champagne. Then go to a half-bottle of white and a whole bottle of red.

Is that going to work even if someone ordered fish for an entrée?

There are reds that go well with a huge range of food, salmon to steak: Beaujolais, for example, or a dry Brachetto from Piedmont. West Coast Pinot Noirs can work well too—a really elegant Willamette Valley Pinot Noir, like Cristom, from Eola-Amity Hills. And from western Sonoma, Pinot from Arnot-Roberts and Hirsch. You just have to be careful with overly ripe fruit (with their alcohol levels) and oak. You need elegance.

“Some people take pictures of the wines they’ve liked. When they show me a label on their phone, I know exactly what style of wine they’re talking about.”

If someone has drunk mostly California Cabernet but would like to branch out into the Old World, where would you point them? I’d take them to great Super Tuscans [rule-breaking blends of Sangiovese with Bordeaux varieties] or Brunello di Montalcino [Sangiovese]; Châteauneuf-du-Pape [Grenache-based blends]; and Spanish reds [Tempranillo, Garnacha], which are well priced too.

What’s the most tactful way to let a sommelier know how much you can spend? Price isn’t an awkward question at all. If I’m directing a customer to a page of wines from a certain region, I just ask them to point to a bottle they’re comfortable with, and I suggest one a little lower and one a little higher, so they have choices.

What if someone wants to splurge, but doesn’t want a current cookie-cutter cult wine? In my book, splurge money is best spent on older wines from classic producers, especially from the Napa Valley: Opus One (I just opened a ’79—beautiful), Diamond Creek, Dominus Estate—from the late ’70s and ’80s.

How much are wines generally marked up on wine lists? And are some marked up more than others? The rule of thumb in the industry is 3 times wholesale. At Little Nell, we mark bottles up 2 to 2½ times—obscure wines a little less, otherwise, no one would buy them. And we generally mark up hard-to-get cult wines the most. If we get only a few bottles of something, we don’t necessarily want to sell it fast.

What justifies the hefty markups?

An insane amount of work (and cost) goes into running a good restaurant wine program. We have to have temperature-controlled storage for 20,000 bottles, multiple sommelier salaries, best-quality glassware, labor to polish every glass ... Questioning a wine price on a list is like wondering why the chef is charging me this much for a steak, when I can buy it for \$12 at the butcher.

How can you tell that a wine list is a good one? I think it has to cover every major wine-growing region in the world and feature the best producers. But it has to have a focus too. Ours happens to be France: Burgundy, Bordeaux, and the Rhône Valley. Where you really get a peek at the wine director’s passions is in the verticals—years’ worth of particular wines. That will show what he or she truly loves.

When is it okay to bring your own bottle to a place that has a great wine list? If someone has a very special bottle that means a lot to them, I understand that. But otherwise, it’s like bringing your own food to the restaurant and ordering wine.

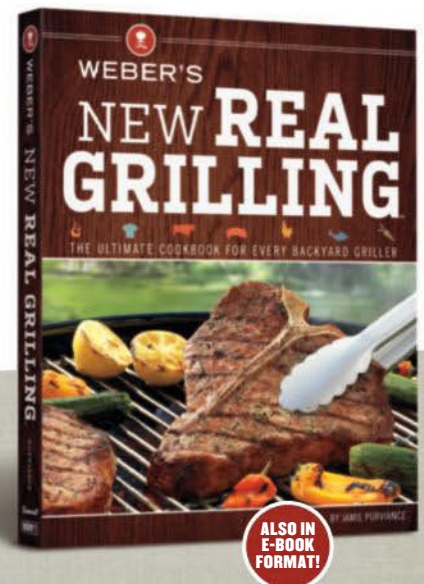
Is there an inexpensive bottle on your wine list that you’re excited about right now? Jean Maupertuis “Les Pierres Noires” 100 percent Gamay, from Auvergne. It’s vibrant, alive, fresh, clean—it will be a great \$30 bottle for this summer. 🍷



Learn more with Sara! Follow wine editor Sara Schneider on **Twitter** for tasting tips, wine picks, and news: @SaraAtSunset. And go to **Curious.com** to watch one of her video lessons about buying, pairing, and understanding wines of the world: curious.com/sunsetmagazine.



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ASK SUNSET

HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT LIFE IN THE WEST? WE HAVE THE ANSWERS.

Q: I'm planning a road trip, and I'd like to visit Southern California's best clean, swimmable beaches. Snorkeling would be heaven too!

—CAROLYN DEROO, OAKLAND

DEAR CAROLYN For the ultimate SoCal beach road trip, we suggest the roughly 100 miles from Newport Beach south to San Diego. Start with sedately pretty Corona Del Mar State Beach, then make a quick jog south on Pacific Coast Highway to more ruggedly picturesque Crystal Cove State Park. Farther south still, we're very fond of the surf at San Clemente Pier. Now drop into San Diego County, where a string of excellent beaches—Carlsbad, San Elijo, and Torrey Pines State Beaches; Del Mar City Beach; La Jolla Shores Beach—will keep you in your bathing suit for days. All these beaches earn As or A+s in cleanliness on the environmental group Heal the Bay's latest Beach Report Card (brc.healthebay.org). Snorkeling? La Jolla Cove has the best in California.



The surf and sand are hard to beat at Crystal Cove State Park.

Q: I want to replace our backyard lawn with something more practical. But my wife insists we keep the grass—just for the dog! Can you help me convince her to switch to something more water-wise? —MIKE SZUCH, OCEANSIDE, CA

DEAR MIKE We're in your camp: In the face of drought, maintaining a turf lawn just for your dog is an unnecessary luxury. In the West, lawns are responsible for as much as half of outdoor residential water use. And dogs don't need a lawn to be happy, as long as they have shade, a comfortable place to relax, and room to roam.

Instead of traditional thirsty turf-grass, you could plant a drought-tolerant type such as 'UC Verde' buffalo grass. (Water-wise groundcovers such as dymondia, sedum, or thyme probably aren't rugged enough to stand up to an active dog.)

Better yet, train your dog to use just one corner of your yard, and line that corner—and perhaps the path to it—with pea gravel or cedar chips, which will be easy on your dog's paws and easy to keep looking good.

To adapt your dog to his new spot, take him out on a leash and walk him around in circles, or allow him a long lead until he does his business. Then praise and reward him. Working with a trainer can help teach your dog this new and water-savvy trick.

Q: I have good luck with lavender plants in my garden but find mine always get woody and sparse over time. Do I just have to rip them out every few years? —JOHN MARSH, PORTLAND

DEAR JOHN Don't be too hard on yourself. The deal we make with lavender plants is that in exchange for their heavenly blooms and undemanding nature (little water and little or no fertilizer), we have to put up with a relatively short life span. In most cases, if you get five or six productive years out of a plant, you're a champ. The keys to success: Plant them in full sun in very well-draining soil (rocky, poor soil is no problem) and water sparsely after the first year. To keep lavender neat and compact, shear back by one-third to one-half (even by two-thirds) every year immediately after bloom. When the plant becomes woody and open in the center, replace it. 🌿



Lavender plants provide a big payback of blooms.



Happiness is a lawn-free yard.

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