

Compliments of Stacey Shanner

AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

THE MAGAZINE CELEBRATING LIFE IN AMERICA

ISSUE 115



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Front of Tear Out Card 1



roasted banana and sour cream WAFFLES



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Back of Tear Out Card 1

**MAKES FOUR
6-INCH WAFFLES**

roasted banana and sour cream WAFFLES

ingredients:

3 bananas, peeled (2 broken into large pieces for the batter, 1 sliced for serving)
3 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
2 large eggs
1 c. sour cream, plus more for serving
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground cloves
1 c. whole wheat flour
Cooking spray (my preference is olive oil spray, but use whatever you have)
Maple syrup, for serving

instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
2. Place the 2 bananas broken into large pieces and the butter in a small baking dish and roast until the bananas and butter are a little bit browned and the bananas are very soft when you press them with a fork, about 15 minutes.
3. Turn the oven down to 250°F and heat your waffle iron to its highest setting.
4. Using a fork or a potato masher, crush the bananas directly in their baking dish with the butter.
5. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and whisk in the eggs and the sour cream. Whisk in the baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and cloves. Stir in the whole wheat flour. Be careful not to overmix—just stir it until everything is combined.
6. Spray your waffle iron with cooking spray. Add enough batter to your waffle iron to cover most of the surface area (the exact amount will depend on the size of your waffle iron). Close the waffle iron and cook the waffle until the iron has stopped steaming and the waffle is golden brown and crisp, about 4 minutes, but the exact timing will depend on the heat of your waffle iron and the size of your waffle. Transfer the waffle to a sheet pan and keep it warm in the 250°F oven while you repeat the process with the rest of your batter (spray in between waffles as needed).
7. Serve the waffles warm with the sliced banana, extra sour cream, and maple syrup.

Excerpted from *Simply Julia: 110 Easy Recipes for Healthy Comfort Food* by Julia Turshen. Harper Wave, 2021.
Photography and styling by Melina Hammer.



AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

Dear Bill and Judy,

Whether you get a friendly hand lick from the neighbor's dog or stop to watch a honeybee pollinate a flower, there's no question that interacting with animals often has a positive effect on your day. This issue of American Lifestyle magazine features critters of the four-legged and four-winged varieties.

If you're impressed when a dog knows how to shake your hand, wait until you read about what The Canine Stars can do! Dock diving, high jumping, agility racing, and Frisbee catching are some of the special talents of this traveling performance team made up of rescue dogs owned by Keri Caraher and Ethan Wilhelm. Their furry contingency even got a chance to perform on America's Got Talent.

Artist and educator Anita Yan Wong has looked to her cat, Pandora, as inspiration for two of her painting series. Using calligraphy brushes and ink, Wong mimics the graceful movement of her feline friend in a signature impressionistic style. Wong hopes her contemporary take on Chinese painting will inspire younger generations to practice contemporary traditional arts.

For those who prefer a bit more buzz in their art, check out Matt Willey's traveling mural project, The Good of the Hive. Willey was spurred to research honeybees after observing a sick bee that flew in through the window of his home. After learning how important these insects are and the intricacies of their communities, Willey began painting bee murals to raise awareness, both from an environmental standpoint and a societal one. He theorizes that we're all part of a greater hive.

Consider this issue an opportunity to be amazed by the influence of animals and insects. As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

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© Photo courtesy of The Good of the Hive

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Of all the states in America, New Mexico is one of the most breathtaking. Known as the Land of Enchantment, it features popular attractions such as Carlsbad Caverns National Park and White Sands National Monument, both of which keep you grounded.

A Sky-High Adventure

written by [matthew brady](#) | photography by [jeff caven](#), [caven photography](#)



But if you want a truly uplifting experience that provides a bird's-eye view of New Mexico's natural beauty, then you need to travel just east of the state's largest city, Albuquerque, and take a ride on the Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway.

THE HISTORY

The tram opened in May 1966, but the uphill climb to build it rivals the Sandia Mountains themselves. Inspired by a European trip, Robert Nordhaus, the cofounder of the Sandia Peak Ski Company, joined forces with partner Ben Abruzzo to make the idea come to life. After many government hearings, engineering studies, and helicopter lifts

(more than 5,000) to build the tram and its towers, it was completed after two years.

THE HEIGHTS

Today, the Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway is still the longest aerial tram ride in North America.

It takes around fifteen breathtaking minutes to travel the 2.7-mile incline and reach the 10,378-foot-high peak. And be prepared: at that height, the temperatures can be 15 to 30 degrees cooler than at the base. Once you get to the top, you can do some hiking or skiing, visit the tram's gift shop, and enjoy dinner with a view at TEN 3 restaurant.

THE HORIZONS

Of course, the true appeal of this adventure is the tram's jaw-dropping 11,000-square-foot panoramic view of the state. You'll be amazed by all you can see and photograph from the cabin, from endless mountains, some more than one hundred miles away, to the Rio Grande to the capital city, Santa Fe.

With this much to offer, it's no wonder that over twelve million visitors have ridden the Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway since it opened over half a century ago. It's one adventure that literally sweeps you off your feet and takes you to heights you could never imagine.

For more info, visit sandiapeak.com

An estimated 3.3 million dogs live in shelters across America. Keri Caraher decided to do something about it with the help of her partner, Ethan Wilhelm. They created The Canine Stars, a traveling performance show that not only entertains but also demonstrates what's possible with rescue dogs.

pup performances with a purpose

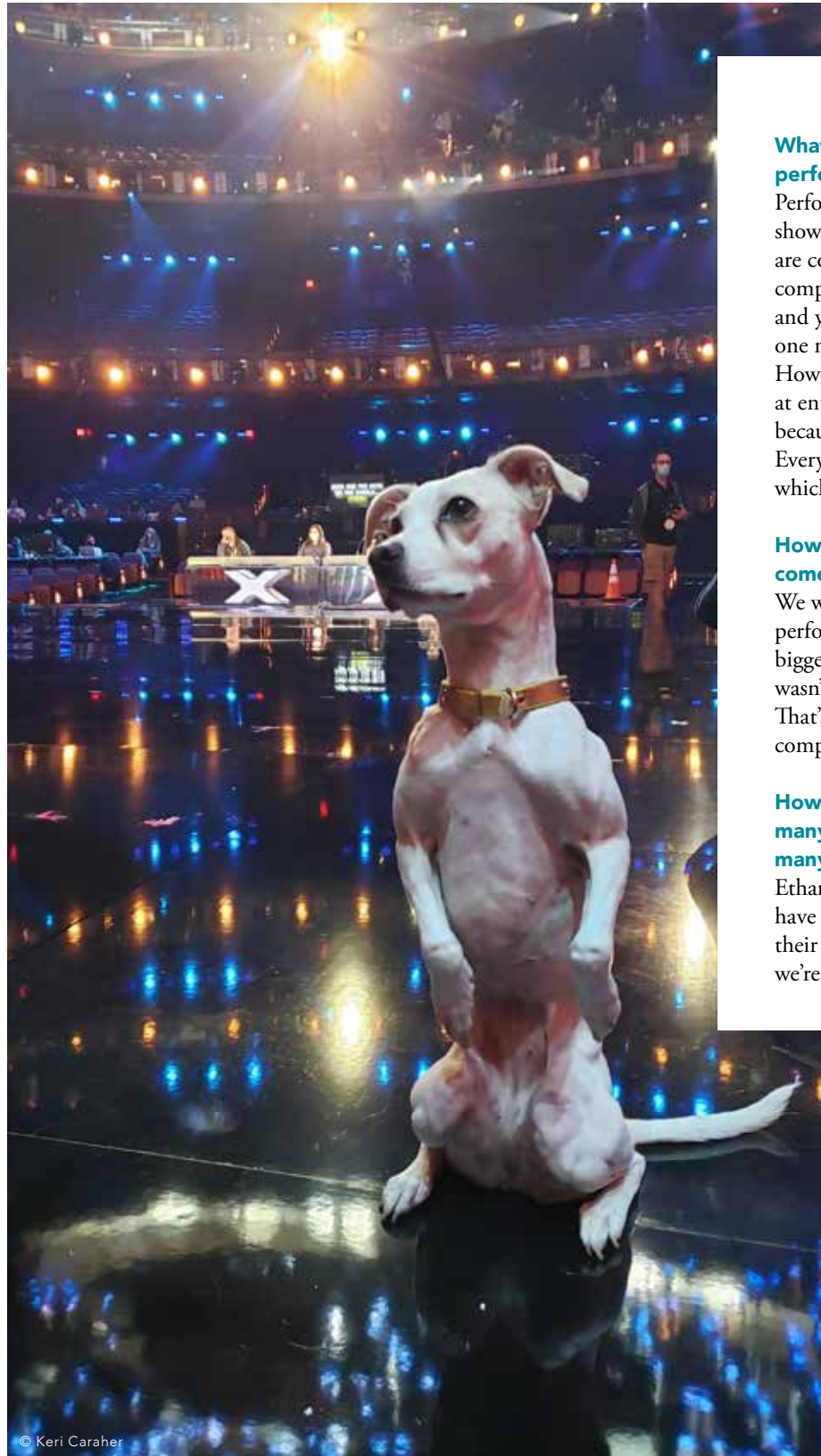
interview with **keri caraher**
written by **matthew brady**
photography **as noted**

Have you always had dogs? How did you get into dog shows?

I had a dog as a child, but it wasn't until 1999 that I got my own, a Great Dane. One day, I saw a dog agility competition on TV and thought, "I wonder if she could do that?" Since there were no classes available, I built my own agility equipment. I started learning about agility trials and got completely hooked.

We started competing all over the country, including the national championships in the US and Canada, and then expanded to other sports like Frisbee and flyball racing. She became well known, and a few dog-performance shows heard about us and hired us.

© Ethan Wilhelm



© Keri Caraher

What's the difference between performing and competing?

Performing at an entertainment show and competing at a dog show are completely different. When you compete, you pay for everything and your dog is judged. If you make one mistake, you fail—not so fun. However, no matter what the dogs do at entertainment shows, they're winners because everybody cheers for them. Every single show is fun. It was obvious which path I should take.

How did The Canine Stars come about?

We were touring with Canada's biggest performing show and two of the biggest shows in the US, but there wasn't enough work to do it full time. That's when I decided to start my own company with Ethan in 2012.

How many dogs do you own? How many are in your show, and how many trainers are part of it?

Ethan and I have fourteen dogs. We have our main performers that are in their prime, some up-and-coming ones we're training, and several retired ones.



© Sara Carson

At least twenty different trainers do shows with us. Some tour with us all summer, and others will only come to one show because we're in their city every year.

How busy are you with The Canine Stars? How much do you travel?

2019 was our biggest year; I was only home for one month total. We do a lot of shows, and traveling between the shows also takes up a lot of time. For example, we did a show at the Alaska State Fair and our next show was in Mexico City, so we drove straight from one to the other. The van we bought at the end of 2016 just hit 220,000 miles, and that's only one of three vehicles we tour with.

How did COVID-19 impact your show?

When COVID hit, all but one of our 2020 shows were canceled. In 2021, we were back to half capacity, but we still had a lot of cancellations, especially in Canada. It was difficult because we couldn't continue our mission: to encourage adoption and having strong relationships with dogs.

To keep communication open with our big fan base of kids, we decided to do an Instagram contest. We'd pick five kids from anywhere in the world between the ages of twelve and eighteen to be in our Youth Performer Mentorship Program and help them train their dogs via Zoom. We got over one hundred incredible entries from sixteen different

NO MATTER WHAT THE DOGS DO AT ENTERTAINMENT SHOWS, THEY'RE WINNERS BECAUSE EVERYBODY CHEERS FOR THEM. EVERY SINGLE SHOW IS FUN.

countries. To meet this demand, we also started an online dog school.

And then *America's Got Talent* came calling. How did that come about?

One of our trainers, Sara Carson, and her dog, Hero, had been on *America's Got Talent* about five years ago. Since then, *AGT* has emailed us every year asking us to send in a video, but we were always too busy. In 2020, our team came up with and virtually filmed a cool idea. *AGT* loved it and invited us to audition.

But there was a big problem—our Canadian trainers couldn't cross the border. Two weeks before our audition in LA, we had to replace those spots. We tried to figure out who was available and would be a good match for our audition, which had the dogs portraying the show's judges.

So we went to our school and asked if any students were interested in this opportunity. One flew in from North Carolina and one from Alaska—and they were both sixteen years old. We'd never met the teen from North Carolina before; she just practiced at home



© Sara Carson



Two weeks before our audition in LA, we had to replace those spots [on *AGT*]. We tried to figure out who was available and would be a good match for our audition, which had the dogs portraying the show's judges.



© Trae Patten/NBC



© Shannon Smadu

using our audition video. The Alaskan dog was only a year old and had never performed in public before. They all pulled it off, though, and were great!

Tell us about the serious message behind the fun:

First and foremost, it's about having fun with your dog, no matter their breed or age. If a dog doesn't like swimming, we're not going to have them dock diving. Just discover what a dog likes and turn that into a fun game or sport.

We also encourage people to adopt from rescue groups. They already know the dogs' personalities and can match them to yours and what you're looking for. So a huge part of *The Canine Stars* is sharing a dog's story on stage to show how far they've come and what they can do.

Do any of your dogs stand out as being particularly inspirational?

They all do, but Whoopie Pie does especially. I was driving from Michigan to Florida and saw a dog running down an interstate median in Georgia. When we finally got to her, we found that she had a huge gash in her neck, a lot of bite wounds from fighting, and tons of ticks and fleas. Plus, she had clearly had a litter of puppies recently. She was a complete mess. We fed and leashed her and tried to find a place for her down there but couldn't.

She's been with us for nine years now. She's great with people and an amazing dock diver and Frisbee dog. We promote her story as an example of any rescue dog's potential. She's now a star of the show and has raving fans.

What events do the crowds enjoy most?

Dock diving is the most popular because the dogs run at full speed for forty feet and then launch thirty feet in the air before splashing down into the pool. High jumping is also popular, as are agility racing and head-to-head pull racing. We like to include dogs of all different sizes and breeds in the events.

The Canine Stars is now celebrating its tenth year. What are your dreams for the next ten years?

I think we've done everything there is to do for a thirty-minute North American performance show. I hope our *AGT* experience opens the door for us to be in their new show in Las Vegas and for more TV opportunities. I'd also love to do a world tour.

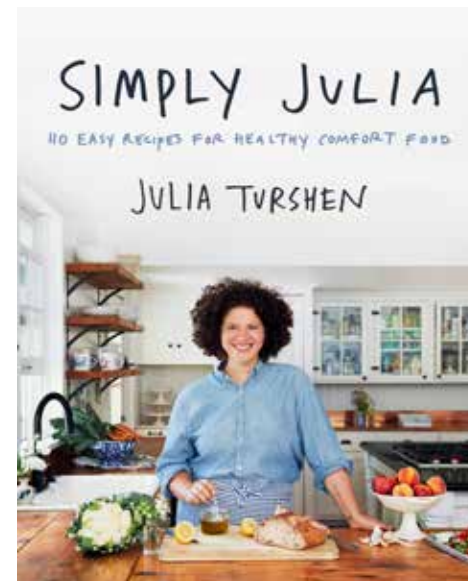
What do your dogs mean to you?

These dogs are our pets, but they are also family. They sleep in our beds at night. We encourage them to do what they love doing, and that's it. If I died today, I would die happy. We've done so much to help our dogs and others out there, but there's much more we can do.

For more info, visit thecaninestars.com

JULIA'S FEEL- GOOD EATS

recipes by **julia turshen** | photography by **melina hammer**



There's almost always a bunch of kale in our refrigerator. Most nights I finely chop it, cook a little minced garlic in oil, add the kale and a splash of water and a sprinkle of salt, give it all a good stir, and call it a night. But sometimes after I do that, I dot the top with milky ricotta and grated mozzarella and pop the whole skillet under the broiler so that the cheese melts. Giving kale the white pizza treatment is one of the best ways I know to take the boring out of eating your greens.

Serves 4

white pizza-style kale

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1 pound kale (preferably lacinato or dinosaur kale), rinsed, tough stems discarded, coarsely chopped (2 standard bunches)**
- 3 tablespoons water**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ½ cup whole milk ricotta cheese**
- ½ cup coarsely grated mozzarella cheese**
- 2 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan cheese**
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ½ teaspoon dried red pepper flakes (optional)**

- 1.** Position your oven rack 6 inches from the broiling element and turn the broiler to high.
- 2.** Place the olive oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until it begins to sizzle, about 1 minute. Add the kale and water and then sprinkle with the salt. Cook the kale, stirring now and then, until it's softened and the water has evaporated, about 5 minutes.
- 3.** Turn off the heat. Dollop the ricotta cheese evenly on top of the kale and sprinkle evenly with the mozzarella cheese.
- 4.** Broil until the cheese is melted and bubbling, about 2 minutes. Keep an eye on the skillet as broilers vary and yours might take a little less, or a little more, time.
- 5.** Sprinkle the kale with the Parmesan cheese, oregano, garlic powder, and red pepper flakes (if using). Serve immediately, straight from the skillet.

Excerpted from *Simply Julia: 110 Easy Recipes for Healthy Comfort Food* by Julia Turshen. Harper Wave, 2021. Photography and styling by Melina Hammer.



During the first few days of being together, Grace and I ended up on a spontaneous road trip that included dinner at a friend-of-a-friend's-mom's house (got that?). She served what she called Sticky Chicken, small pieces of chicken coated with a very glossy glaze. Based on Chinese stir-frying traditions, it's such a flavorful dish that comes together quickly thanks to a host of pantry ingredients. Each time I make it, I'm taken back to those very early, exciting days of our relationship when it felt like a light switch I didn't know about got flipped on, like everything finally made so much sense.

Serves 4

sticky chicken

- 2 tablespoons water**
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch**
- ¼ cup ketchup**
- 3 tablespoons honey**
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce**
- 1 tablespoon chili garlic sauce (such as sambal), or your favorite hot sauce (optional)**
- 4 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 tablespoons canola oil (or other neutral oil such as vegetable), plus more as needed**
- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces**
- Kosher salt**
- Freshly ground black pepper**

- 1.** Place the water and cornstarch in a small bowl and stir well to combine. Stir in the ketchup, honey, soy sauce, chili garlic sauce (if using), and garlic. Reserve the sauce.
- 2.** Place the canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add half of the chicken to the pan and season generously with salt and pepper (about ½ teaspoon of each) and cook, stirring now and then, until browned all over, about 5 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate and repeat the process, adding another tablespoon or so of oil to the pan if necessary, with the rest of the chicken.
- 3.** Return the first batch of chicken to the skillet along with the reserved sauce. Bring the mixture to a boil, then turn the heat to low and simmer, stirring now and then, until the sauce is thick and coats the chicken, about 5 minutes. Serve immediately.



In my early twenties, I ended up living in a studio apartment in the same building that I grew up in. It was a surreal experience, almost a time loop, and living there allowed me to reconnect to some of the places I went to as a little kid. One of those places was La Taza del Oro, a very special lunch counter that opened in 1947 and sadly closed in 2015. La Taza del Oro was one of New York's iconic Puerto Rican restaurants, and it served dishes from other cultures too, including traditional Cuban ropa vieja (which translates to "old clothes," an evocative description of the texture of the shredded beef). Making this version at home helps me keep my memories of it alive.

eighth avenue ropa vieja

Serves 6 to 8

- 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced into half moons**
- 6 garlic cloves, crushed**
- 2 medium green bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and thinly sliced**
- One 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes with their juice**
- ¼ cup yellow mustard**
- ⅓ cup raisins**
- ½ cup pimento-stuffed green olives, plus 3 tablespoons olive brine for finishing the dish**
- One 2- to 3-pound boneless chuck roast, trimmed of any large pieces of fat or gristle, cut into 3 even pieces**
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt**
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- Fresh cilantro, for serving (optional)**

1. Preheat your oven to 300°F.
2. Place the onion, garlic, bell peppers, diced tomatoes with their juice, mustard, raisins, and olives (hang onto that brine for later) in a large, heavy ovenproof pot (such as a Dutch oven). Mix well to combine.
3. Sprinkle the chuck roast pieces all over with the salt, black pepper, and cumin. Nestle the pieces into the mixture in the pot. Cover the pot tightly with a lid or aluminum foil.
4. Roast the beef until it's incredibly tender and shreds easily when you poke at it with tongs or a couple of forks, about 3 hours. Add the olive brine to the pot and use those tongs or forks to shred the beef directly in the pot (discard any large pieces of fat as you work) and mix it together with the juices. Season to taste with salt. Serve warm with cilantro sprinkled on top (if you'd like).



Makes four 6-inch waffles

3 bananas, peeled (2 broken into large pieces for the batter, 1 sliced for serving)

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
2 large eggs

1 cup sour cream, plus more for serving
2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

⅛ teaspoon ground cloves

1 cup whole wheat flour

Cooking spray (my preference is olive oil spray, but use whatever you have)

Maple syrup, for serving

Quickly roasting the bananas makes them extra soft and intensifies their flavor and sweetness, which also allows you to skip any additional sugar in the batter for these waffles. Moreover, roasting the bananas in butter means you get melted, ever-so-slightly browned butter in your batter. Flavor, flavor, flavor! Note that the amount of waffles this batter makes depends entirely on the size of your waffle maker and the amount of batter you put in it.

roasted banana and sour cream waffles

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
2. Place the 2 bananas broken into large pieces and the butter in a small baking dish and roast until the bananas and butter are a little bit browned and the bananas are very soft when you press them with a fork, about 15 minutes.
3. Turn the oven down to 250°F and heat your waffle iron to its highest setting.
4. Using a fork or a potato masher, crush the bananas directly in their baking dish with the butter.
5. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and whisk in the eggs and the sour cream. Whisk in the baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and cloves. Stir in the whole wheat flour. Be careful not to overmix—just stir it until everything is combined.
6. Spray your waffle iron with cooking spray. Add enough batter to your waffle iron to cover most of the surface area (the exact amount will depend on the size of your waffle iron). Close the waffle iron and cook the waffle until the iron has stopped steaming and the waffle is golden brown and crisp, about 4 minutes, but the exact timing will depend on the heat of your waffle iron and the size of your waffle. Transfer the waffle to a sheet pan and keep it warm in the 250°F oven while you repeat the process with the rest of your batter (spray in between waffles as needed).
7. Serve the waffles warm with the sliced banana, extra sour cream, and maple syrup.



BRUSHSTROKES AND PROGRESS

interview with **anita yan wong** | written by **shelley goldstein**



© Canessa Gallery, San Francisco

Artist and educator Anita Yan Wong uses her background and expertise to push traditional art into a modern paradigm, shifting outdated norms and inspiring students to find their own stories.

Where did you grow up? What is your background in art?

I was born in Beijing and moved to Hong Kong when I was four. I was always quietly drawing while other children were running around the playground. I started learning Lingnan-style Chinese painting, a fusion and mastering of Japanese, Chinese, and Western art, when I was six from a third-generation master who was one of the first pupils of master artist Chao Shao-An. I was accepted by Chao as a young pupil, but my single mom could not afford the tuition fees from such a famous artist at the time.

We decided to go down a different path instead and headed west so I could continue my art studies and embrace the true essence of Lingnan

art. My mom believed in my art and my ability to achieve success. With her encouragement, I applied to and was accepted into The Hong Kong Polytechnic University's art and design program. I continued my studies at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. I eventually moved to Maryland to complete my master's degrees in digital arts and photography at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Is there an art era you wish you'd been alive for? Who or what has inspired you?

I am happy to be living now in this era—I enjoy both freedom of speech and travel as a woman. I do not have a pair of bound feet, and I'm not limited in my creativity. I am quite inspired by



“

I started learning Lingnan-style Chinese painting, a fusion and mastering of Japanese, Chinese, and Western art, when I was six from a third-generation master who was one of the first pupils of master artist Chao Shao-An.

nature and the impressionist painters. As Claude Monet said, “I am following Nature without being able to grasp her, I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers.”

The new Lingnan Guo Hua style I am developing is inspired by impressionism for its characteristics in expressive, defined brushstrokes; shimmering effects of light; and movement and passage of time. I’m fascinated not only by the style but also by the movement that brought painters outdoors to experience nature. Unlike realist painters, impressionist painters and Guo Hua painters are using the medium

as an expression of their feelings and viewpoints toward the subject matter rather than as an imitation of reality.

When did teaching come into play? What does the relationship between creating art and teaching look like?

My mom is a linguistics and history teacher, and I have always admired and respected the field of teaching. I became a professor in electronic media and culture in my early twenties and continued my career as an art and design professor for over fourteen years. I taught at the School of Visual Arts, the Maryland Institute College of Art, the Art Institute, and Temple University.

Students are my main inspiration; they bring fresh topics and ideas into the classroom, and they are the future of traditional art.

I believe I have unconsciously blended my goal as an artist and my mission as an art educator in many ways. My art is traditional, but it tends to get the most attention in contemporary blogs and magazines that speak to the current audience. In 2014, I gave up my career as a professor to become a full-time artist. I hope to continue to develop more contemporary traditional art that inspires Generation Z to practice contemporary traditional arts in the

digital age. I still enjoy lecturing part time, most recently teaching a course at UC Berkeley Extension in San Francisco in 2020.

What do you strive to instill in your students to help them on their path to success?

A teacher needs to see every student in their classroom, discover the beauty of their stories, and inspire them to see the value of their own uniqueness in their personal and cultural backgrounds, regardless of their learning speed. Art comes naturally to some students, and others might feel that they are still seeking their path.



AS AN ASIAN AMERICAN LINGNAN (CANTONESE) WOMAN AND ARTIST, I ALSO WANT TO BRING AWARENESS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN ARTISTS' CONTRIBUTION TO LINGNAN ART. THEY ARE OFTEN IN THE SHADOW OF MEN IN LINGNAN ART SHOWS AND MUSEUMS IN BOTH ASIAN COUNTRIES AND THE UNITED STATES.

How do your background and culture factor into how you teach and paint?

My art is who I am, and it is a collection of all my memories on canvas. As an Asian American Lingnan (Cantonese) woman and artist, I also want to bring awareness to the importance of women artists' contribution to Lingnan art. They are often in the shadow of men in Lingnan art shows and museums in both Asian countries and the United States.

What inspired your cat paintings? What kind of brush and medium are used? And how does that relate to the style in which you paint them?

Ink kitten (2018) and the recent *Pandora* (2021) painting series are minimalist feline paintings inspired by my cat, Pandora. I used calligraphy brushes, sumi-e ink, and a very focused mind for both series. Each painting is written out like calligraphy without the use of tracing or an eraser. The art is inspired by my beloved cat, her dynamic movement, and her intentions of seeking perfection in everything she does. It makes me think that perhaps a perfect painting of a cat should be like the cat herself—simple yet elegant, free but in control at all times.

What drew you to painting with coffee? Did a coffee spill lead to an artistic epiphany?

I love drinking coffee in the morning and using the leftover coffee to spill out a painting. Every painting is a process I like as much as the painting itself. I taught film and special effects



in the past, and I am always interested in both motion and stillness and how to connect the two. Yes, I have spilled coffee many times, and the shape of the spill reminds me of finding images in the clouds.

Do you consider yourself a homebody or a wanderer?

I am definitely a wanderer. I love traveling and living in different cities. There is so much to see and explore in the world. I love learning about different cultures, trying different cuisines, and meeting amazing people in different locations.

What keeps you grounded?

I think studying overseas made me a very independent person. I was a shy kid, but I'm a pretty happy and confident adult because I found my passion in art, which I will never give up. I love what I do.

For more info, visit anitayanwong.com

ARCHITECTS OF THE WILD WEST

interview with **jessica hutchison-rough**
written by **shelley goldstein**
photography by **thompson photographic inc.**

Principal architect Jessica Hutchison-Rough explains how her award-winning architecture firm, Urban Design Associates, incorporated its signature “organic adobe” and steel accents into a contemporary build in Scottsdale, Arizona.

How did Urban Design Associates originate?

Urban Design Associates was started by my father, Lee Hutchison, in 1979. Over the past forty years, we’ve provided services from urban planning and community home design to luxury custom residential architecture. My mother, Laurel, joined the firm early on to manage the staff and the financials. I worked at the firm throughout architecture school and joined as an associate



architect in 2010. I was honored with the opportunity to purchase the company and am now the principal architect, continuing the family legacy of designing dream homes for our clients throughout the desert Southwest.

What about Arizona resonates with you?

Arizona is home. From the low deserts to the saguaro forests to the pine-covered mountaintops, Arizona has a unique environment that lends itself to those looking for an adventure. The extreme sunlight is both an asset and a challenge that inspires interesting design solutions. We also work in New Mexico, Texas, Nevada, and Colorado. Essentially, the Wild West is our territory.

Are there certain features that define Arizona architecture and design?

Traditional desert architecture focuses on sun protection and thermal massing, so thick walls, stone features, small windows, and shade structures were common. With new energy-efficient materials and window technology advances, current design trends are focused on indoor/outdoor living spaces with open great rooms, patios, and courtyards. Bringing the desert landscape into the home is always the goal, and we appreciate the challenge!

Do you remember your first design project or the realization that you wanted to make this a career?

There was never a question that I wanted to be an architect—it is in my blood. I remember going through a home tour with my dad when I was in second grade. We'd just had a lesson at school where we were able to design our own dream home and build a model. After seeing the homes my dad had designed, I revised my school project



with so much more inspiration! I still visit classes to do introduction “design your dream home” lessons in the hopes of inspiring future designers.

What do you find most rewarding about design?

I have the privilege of being invited into my clients’ daily lives, rituals, and routines. I learn about their families and what they hold most dear. I’m driven by the collaboration between their input, the land, and whatever is new in my worldview.

What architects have you been influenced by?

With Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West in my backyard, his philosophy and aesthetic have probably had the most direct influence. More



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WE MAKE SURE THE FLOOR PLAN WORKS FOR THE LIFESTYLE, THE FURNITURE FITS, AND THE FLOW OF THE SPACES MOVES EFFORTLESSLY.

current influences have affected how I approach the business of architecture, like Zaha Hadid. Her work is beautiful, and her groundbreaking, courageous presence in the profession has truly changed how women are perceived in the field. A current fascination is Neri Oxman, who is working on the boundaries of architecture and biology; she will bend the future.

Will you talk about the beginnings of the Privada project? What vision did the clients have?

This was a difficult lot with a steep slope on a corner with a wash running through it. The views toward Pinnacle Peak were not visible from the street level over the homes directly behind it, and the owners wanted more livable space than would fit on one side of the wash. The solution was to use retaining walls to raise the finished floor and create a bridge across the wash with the guest suite on the other side. The owners wanted a mix of UDA signature “organic adobe” with a nod to more contemporary finishes with a lighter palette.

Adobe block masses are used to anchor the building to the land while more contemporary steel windows and doors open the indoors to the outside with large openings and covered patios. A light-white interior wall color complements the natural warm tones and bronze windows while keeping the spaces open and fresh.

How did you take into account the landscape? What are some thoughts you had when trying to maximize the surroundings?

We maintained and enhanced the natural wash that runs through the property with native landscaping. We typically design with the site’s native plant materials and supplement them with additional native plants

when necessary. We work with many talented landscape architects for the final planting plans while we try to structurally nestle the buildings into the natural landscape.

What were some of the main materials used in the build?

The most expressive materials of the home are the adobe block and the steel accents. The mason that worked on the home, Jim Nelson of Old Mission Masonry, is extremely talented. He hand-placed each block and used authentic materials and detailing. We won the Excellence in Masonry Architectural Award for this home. The steelwork and front window and door system were done by Randy Arnett, the general contractor with R-Net Custom Homes, and Janus Custom Building Products.

In what ways is this house sustainable?

The roofs are covered by solar panels, but they are completely hidden by the parapet walls. The home functions without outside electrical draw while the sun is shining, which is a good portion of the day and year here in Scottsdale. The first sustainable act, however, always takes place when locating a building on the lot. The solar and wind orientation should always drive the placement of a building at the onset. We place windows in the correct locations to protect the home from direct sun and add operable openings to capture breezes. This home also has a large thermal mass in the adobe that keeps it cool during the day and releases heat at night.

What was the overall vision for the interior design of the home?

Unfortunately, the home’s talented interior designer, Billi Springer, passed away. She had a signature style of mixing warm, natural materials to



keep Southwest design current. The darker, elaborately designed floors pair calmly with the lighter white walls, and we added warmth to the ceilings with wood details and lighting. There is also a classic Billi “cowboy closet”—a decorative furniture storage piece she often designed into homes—in the hall from the bridge to the main living space.

The ceilings are so visually dynamic. Were these solely design choices, or do they also serve a utilitarian purpose?

My dad would always say, “The floor plan is the function; the ceiling is the emotion.” I still design with this in mind. We make sure the floor plan works for the lifestyle, the furniture fits, and the flow of the spaces moves



“

A large armoire was converted into a pantry, the refrigerator and freezer were built into the wall and paneled in wood, and the curved kitchen hood was handcrafted on-site.

effortlessly. Then we take it to the third dimension. The ceiling can dramatically change the feeling of a room, whether it is open and airy or warm and cozy. The height, texture, and color are carefully considered to create the mood of the room. I would say mood is a purpose!

The kitchen is quite original. Will you elaborate on some of its distinctive elements, such as the island, the ceiling, and the two kitchen sinks?

The kitchen island was made by a very talented craftsman, John Taber. The owner did not want traditional kitchen cabinetry and instead opted for more furniture-like pieces and built-in elements. A large armoire was converted into a pantry, the refrigerator and freezer were built into the wall and paneled in wood, and the curved kitchen hood was handcrafted on-site. The ceiling was a group effort between architect, builder, interior designer, and electrical contractor. There are two layers of beams with tape light above and then a layer of Saltillo tile that was whitewashed to create the glowing effect. There is the main farmhouse sink at the window and then there is a smaller prep sink next to the cooktop for prepping food and making drinks.

How did your clients feel about the home?

They were so gracious and excited. They had been following my dad's work for many years and were so happy with the design and the results. They still let us back in to show it off!

For more info, visit urbandesignassociatesltd.com

interview with **matt willey**
written by **matthew brady**
photographs courtesy of **the good of the hive**

FOR THE BETTERMENT OF BEES (AND PEOPLE)



Inspired by a chance encounter, artist Matt Willey decided to raise awareness of bees and improve human interaction. He now travels the globe painting bee murals, a project he's dubbed The Good of the Hive.

Did you always want to be an artist?

Yes. My mom was a painter and an interior decorator, and she recognized early on that I had an aptitude for art. I did two years of college at Alfred University in western New York, an amazing art school, and then transferred to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and Tufts University.

What did you do after school?

I moved to Washington, DC, and waited tables. One night, I experienced a panic attack about my art dreams slipping away, so I quit and put up flyers for painting work. Within a week, somebody called me about a decorative painting job. That was my first project, and it turned into twenty-five years of a mural business that is continuing today.



What inspired The Good of the Hive?

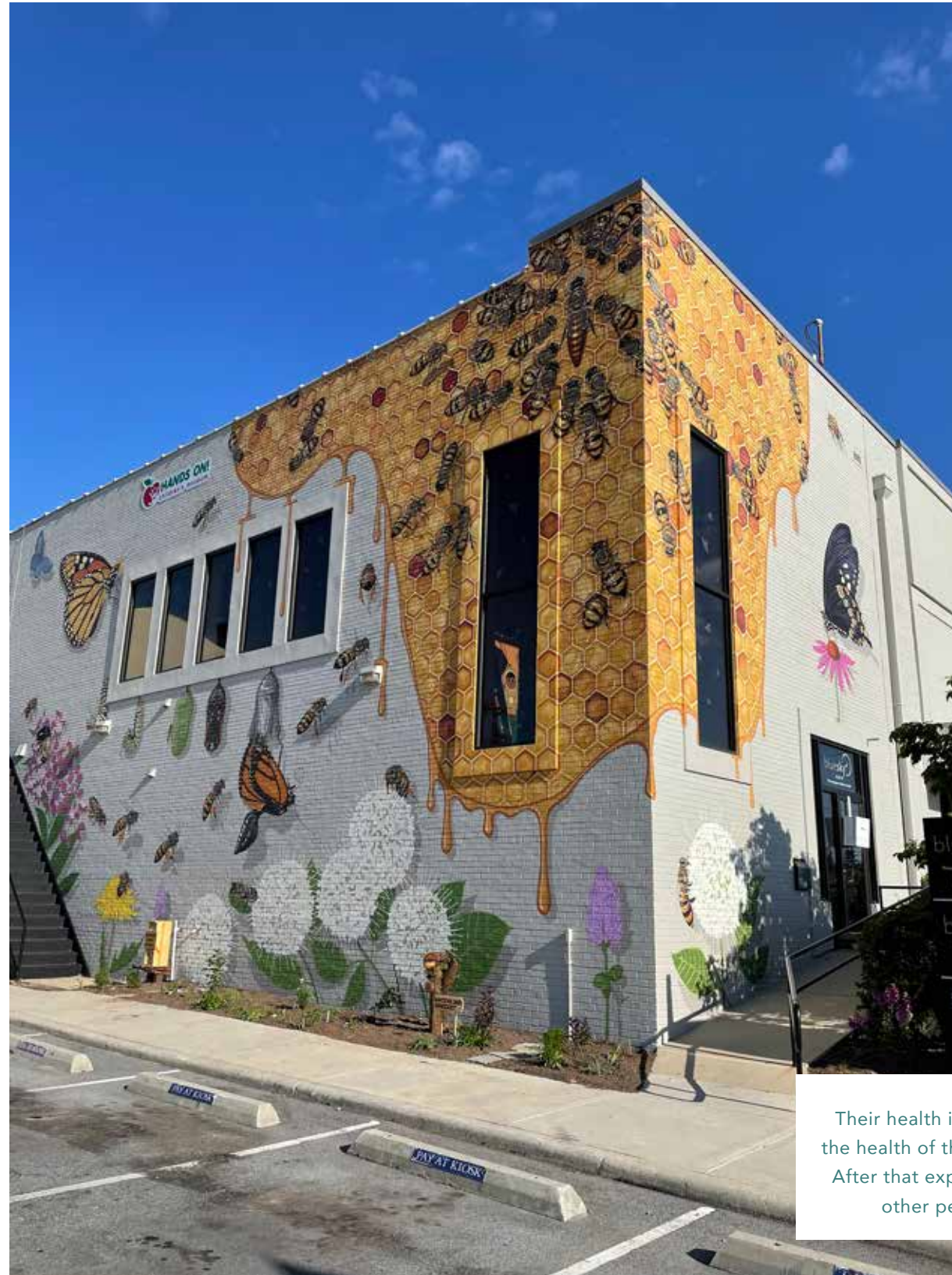
I'm naturally observant and curious. One day, this dying bee flew in my window and landed on my rug. I was surprised by how beautiful this little creature was. After she died, I started researching honeybees and came across a behavior called "altruistic suicide," where a sick bee will voluntarily leave for the good of the hive.

It fascinated me that bees take this drastic action because they're hardwired to understand that their immune system is collective. Their health is not based on each individual bee but on the health of the hive. It made me realize that ours is, too. After that experience, I felt so much more connected to other people. It was a paradigm shift for me.

How did the bee murals begin?

I'd moved to Asheville, North Carolina, and was still doing regular mural projects until 2014, but I had been telling people I wanted to do just one mural to raise awareness of bees. A friend of mine showed me an exterior wall of a honey company in Florida, and so I called the family and pitched my idea. They said they would love for me to do it, but they didn't have any money to pay me, the town had no money to pay me, and murals were illegal in their town. I told them that if they could get the law changed, they wouldn't need to worry about paying me. I hung up the phone thinking I would never hear from them again.

Two months later, they called and said they got the law changed. I called that project The Good of the Hive, created a website for it, and raised around five hundred dollars for gas money. When I started the job, though, I noticed that



people were sharing stories about it; one even hit Facebook. Donations started coming in, and I ended up getting the mural fully funded. It was amazing to see everyone come together for the bees.

Is the hive mentality a metaphor you've continued with?

The definition of The Good of the Hive and what a hive means to me began to form at that time, based mostly on human interactions. For example, so much debate happens in the world today. However, when I was painting that project, I'd see two very different people, like an eighteen-year-old girl and an eighty-year-old farmer, talking while looking in the same direction at the bees. Their body language was the opposite of defensive.

At that first mural, a man asked me how many bees were in a healthy hive. I had just learned from the company's beekeepers that there are 30,000 to 60,000. He asked if I could paint 50,000 of them, so I decided to make that my goal. There were sixteen in that first mural, and that was almost 8,000 bees and thirty-four projects ago.

What started out as raising awareness of the importance of bees has evolved to include pollination and food systems. Bees are also the symbol I use for defining the hive as us. Every living creature on earth is part of one hive. I want to help integrate that into our consciousness, and bees are a tenacious symbol of perseverance and a higher



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sense of purpose—of always working for the greater hive.

How far has your work taken you?

I just follow where the project goes. I've gone from New York to San Diego. I did a mural at the Smithsonian's National Zoo. I've painted international murals, spoken at MIT and the United Nations, and given a TED Talk. Recently, people have reached out from Peru, Belgium, South Africa, and India, and I discovered that around seventy-five schools in India had put *The Good of the Hive* on their curriculum. It's been wild.

Do you interact with people at your job sites?

Yes, possibly to my detriment. From day one, I knew my job was to paint bees and talk to people about bees. But there are times when it gets overwhelming. The collaboration is great, though. I

did a project at Burt's Bees where every employee painted a petal of a flower, so they got to feel connected to the project and each other. Those are magical moments for me.

How do your projects come about? How long do they take?

Every single mural I've made has happened because somebody reached out to me. I call them my champions because it's not always easy to spearhead such a project. On average, each project takes a minimum of four to six weeks for me to paint it, and murals can take years to come to fruition from our first discussions.

Who decides what is going to be painted?

There are different processes and stories for each one, whether it's on the side of the Burt's Bees global headquarters, a building in a historic district where

murals normally aren't allowed, or an elementary school building. It's always my goal to remain open to ideas.

I also like to keep it interesting because this project is a marathon, and I don't want to be painting the same thing all the time. Burt's Bees was about the swarm. The zoo was about the swarm as well but from a very different perspective. I painted giant bees on a barn roof in a tiny organic farm in Nebraska, so the nearby crop dusters would be reminded of the harm they were doing to the bees and his crops whenever they flew by.

What lessons have you learned on this journey?

I've learned a lot, but primarily that balance is invaluable. How do we create balance with the ecosystems that sustain us? Another is how we speak to each other, especially the way the world is

today. People need to listen more and adapt how they say something to their audience. Cognitive dissonance is a real problem. It doesn't mean we change the facts. It means that people have different ways of hearing. Facts are fine for some, but they scare others into not listening. So maybe they need it to be told as a story.

I also realized we're hardwired to go and get whatever we want. That's not balance. Balance is when you say, "What do I need, what is enough, and what happens when I exceed enough?" I hope that's something we can learn from the pandemic. Painting for weeks at a time has allowed me to slow down, take stock of things, and talk to people.

What challenges did you face during your Good of the Hive project?

I love that word because I do see things as challenges instead of struggles. But

I've had my share over the years. The first was "Is anybody going to pay me to do this?" [Laughs.] Plus, my work doesn't allow for mistakes. I've worked at schools where the screaming was deafening, kickballs were hitting me in the head, and kids were climbing the scaffolding. I sometimes paint in 100-degree weather and windy conditions.

But more often than not, I'm standing there up on scaffolding, listening to music, painting bees for a living, and wondering how I ever got this lucky.

For more info, visit thegoodofthehive.com

EVERY SINGLE MURAL I'VE MADE HAS HAPPENED BECAUSE SOMEBODY REACHED OUT TO ME. I CALL THEM MY CHAMPIONS BECAUSE IT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY TO SPEARHEAD SUCH A PROJECT.

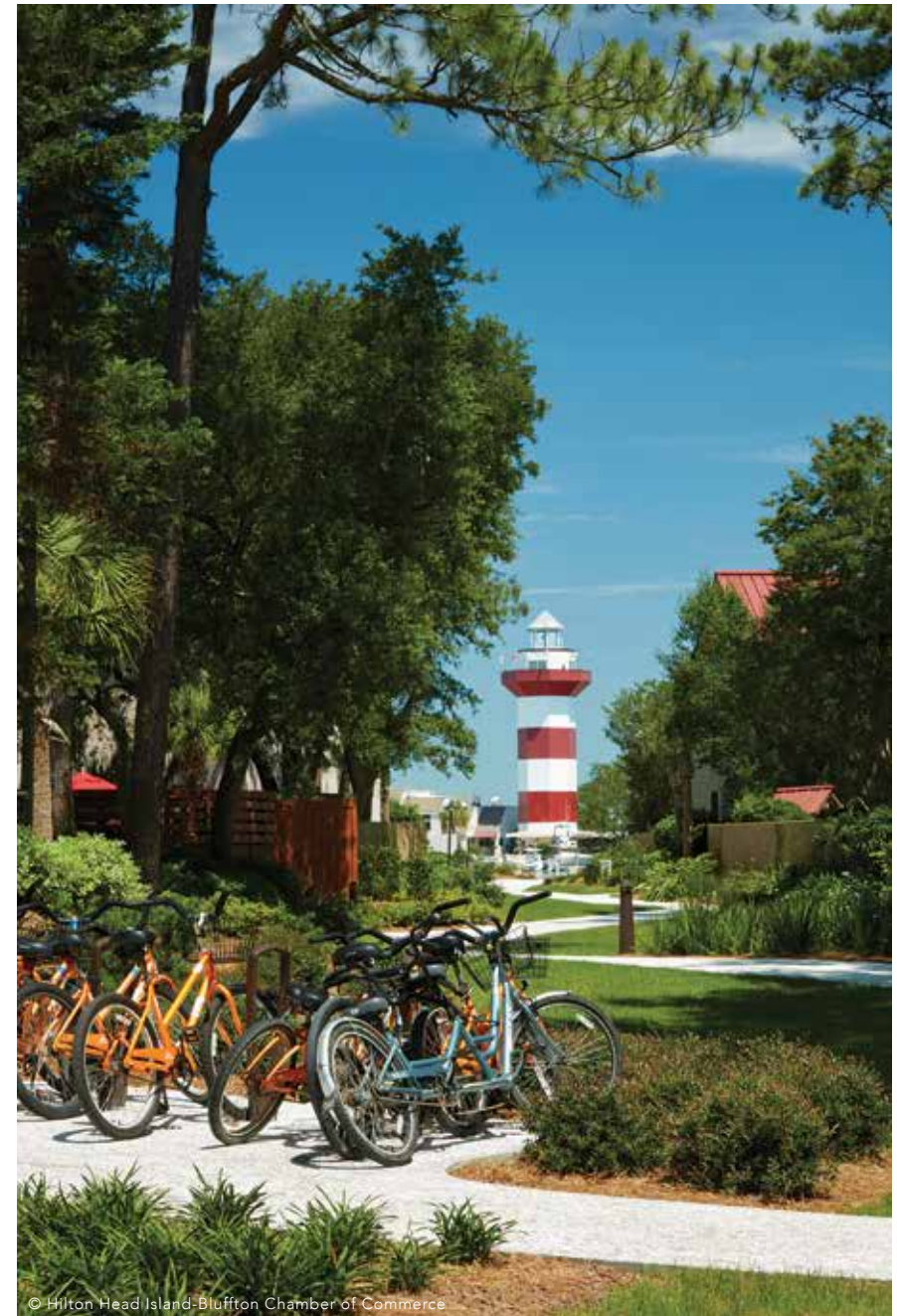




LOWCOUNTRY LIFE

written by **alexa bricker**
photography **as noted**

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In recent times, it has become the ultimate resort destination, beloved for its impeccably preserved natural spaces, beautiful beaches, and plethora of outdoor activities. It truly is a nature lover's paradise.

Many places claim to have one foot in the past and one foot in the future. But there aren't many places that can make this claim earnestly.

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, is a sixty-nine-mile barrier island located just twenty miles north of Savannah, Georgia, and roughly ninety-five miles south of Charleston. Due to its location in the Atlantic, it has been a hub of activity for centuries and a home base for a whole host of cultures and influences.

In recent times, it has become the ultimate resort destination, beloved for its impeccably preserved natural spaces, beautiful beaches, and plethora of outdoor activities. It truly is a nature lover's paradise. But it's also so much more than that.

The island's roughly 40,000 year-round residents and many repeat visitors know that, just under the surface, Hilton Head is a place with one of the most interesting histories in all of America and even the world.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Hilton Head has been inhabited by a variety of different people, beginning with the native Yemassee and Escamacus tribes. Evidence of these tribes' lifestyle is still apparent on the island, and visitors can experience it firsthand by visiting Sea Pines Forest Preserve and Green Shell Park, preserved sites that are home to famous shell rings that span over two hundred feet wide and nine feet high.

More than two hundred years after European settlers colonized Hilton Head, it became the site of some of the most important historical moments of the Civil War. After securing the island, Union troops, led by General Ormsby

DESCENDANTS OF THIS TOWN MAKE UP THE CURRENT GULLAH POPULATION WHO STILL LIVE ON HILTON HEAD ISLAND, AND THEY HAVE WORKED TO PRESERVE THE MEMORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MITCHELVILLE BY TRANSFORMING IT INTO MITCHELVILLE FREEDOM PARK.

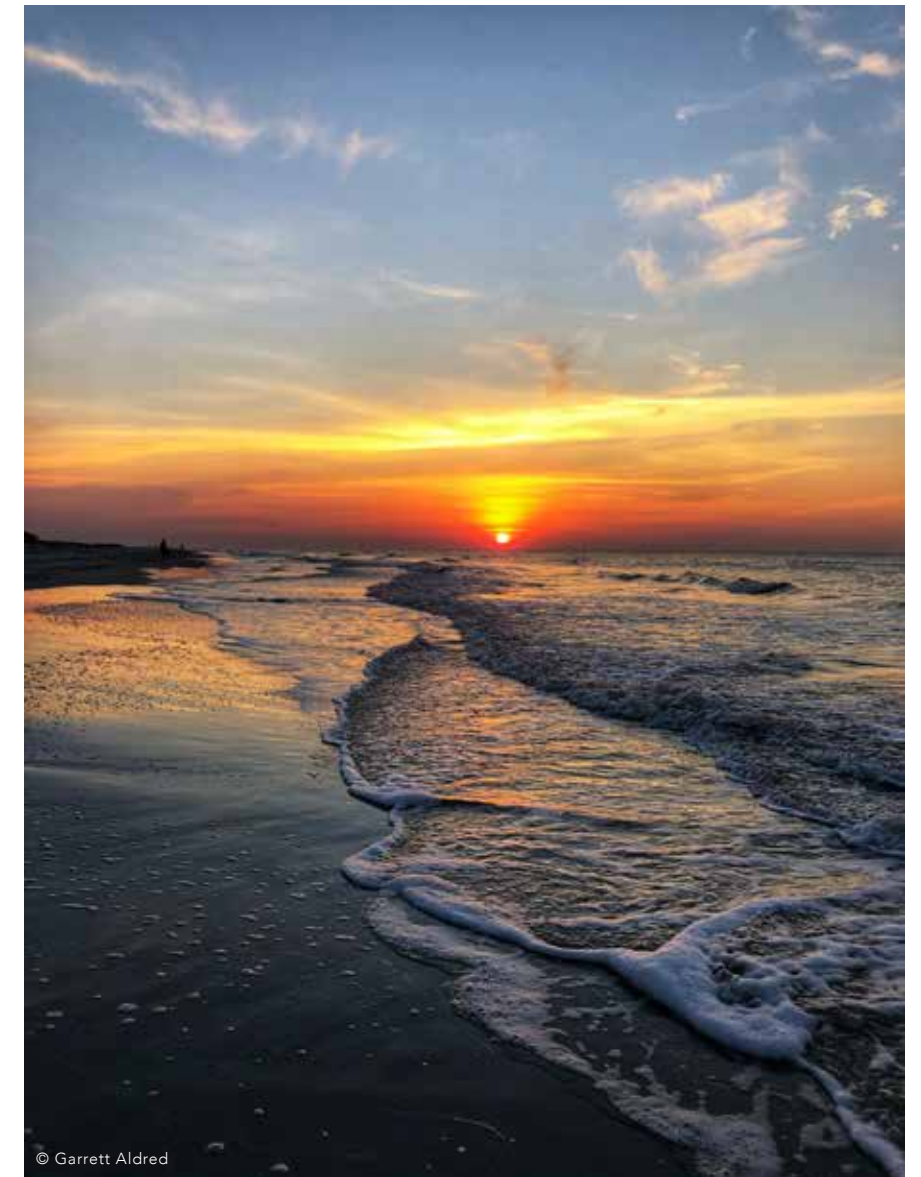
Mitchel, confiscated a portion of land from one of the twenty-four plantations and reserved the land for the newly freed slaves to build homes and establish the first self-governing freedmen's town in America, eventually naming the town Mitchelville. "It's a great piece of American history, not just Southern history or Hilton Head Island history," says Charlie Clark, vice president of communications for the Hilton Head Island Visitor and Convention Bureau. "The Gullah islanders, because of their isolation from the mainland, were able to retain their culture and their language, which you can still hear in the dialect today."

Descendants of this town make up the current Gullah population who still live on Hilton Head Island, and they have worked to preserve the memory and significance of Mitchelville by transforming it into Mitchelville Freedom Park. Visitors can now explore the park grounds and seven exhibits, including a homestead house, a bateau boat, a tool shed, and a praise house. Guided tours, such as the 'Roots of Reconstruction' tour, are also available, which can give visitors a better look at the day-to-day lives of Mitchelville's former residents and the role they played in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement.

TWO IF BY SEA

In addition to the preservation of historical places, preserving natural spaces has always been at the forefront of Hilton Head, which is why it has remained one of the most immaculate areas of land anywhere on the East Coast. Planning for the island as a resort began in the 1980s, and, from the start, it was designed to be an eco-tourism destination—America's first. "There's a lushness here you won't find with many other East Coast destinations," says Clark. "[The planners] were kind of green before green was cool." Nature rules here, and it's evident in everything from the natural color of the buildings to the height restrictions on structures to the lack of streetlights, the latter of which is intentional to preserve the visibility of the night sky. You won't even find a single neon light anywhere on the island.

Of the island's sixty-nine miles, twelve miles are beachfront, so water is at the center of life here. In spring and early summer, the average temperature on Hilton Head is in the mid-70s to low 80s, making for some truly beautiful days on the water. For those who prefer sightseeing activities, over four hundred dolphins call the island home year-round, and hopping aboard a dolphin tour is one of the best ways to catch a





© PETERLAKOMY

GOLF IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY THIS TIME OF YEAR, AND THE AREA IS HOME TO THIRTY-THREE CHAMPIONSHIP COURSES ACROSS HILTON HEAD, BLUFFTON, AND NEARBY DAUFUSKIE ISLAND.

glimpse of these animals playing and diving through the water. You can charter your own boat for the day for fishing and crabbing and dock at one of the many nearby islands for some beach exploration.

When you're ready for something more active, watersports are king, with plenty of opportunities for Jet Skiing, parasailing, and surfing, although kayaking is one of the most popular ways to get around. "The kayak is like a nature walk on water," says Clark. The island's high tides make it possible to kayak not only in the ocean but also in the many miles of marshes and estuaries that run through its center, which is a great way to see wildlife, such as oyster beds, rays, manatees, and even rare birds like bald eagles.

Of course, no Hilton Head vacation is complete without a relaxing day on the beach, and, according to Clark, one of the most unique aspects of the coastline on the island is just how undeveloped it is. There are no high-rises on the beach;



© Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce

in fact, buildings over five stories tall are not permitted on the island. Resorts are also set far back from the dunes, and they are spaced far apart from one another to preserve the natural view of the coastline. For all these reasons and more, Hilton Head has consistently been voted one of the top ten family beaches in the country and is among the most highly rated island destinations in the world.

BEYOND THE BEACH

There's a reason why 70 percent of Hilton Head visitors make a second trip—it's a truly exceptional destination,

and not just by East Coast standards. There are so many gorgeous sites to see and activities to enjoy, and spring and early summer are arguably the best times to make the most of them.

Golf is one of the most popular activities, particularly this time of year, and the area is home to thirty-three championship courses across Hilton Head, Bluffton, and nearby Daufuskie Island. Spring also brings the return of the RBC Heritage golf tournament, which is scheduled for April 11–17 in 2022. The event is one of the most prestigious in the golf world, and it

brings approximately 135,000 visitors to the island. Keeping true to Hilton Head's vision, it is also one of the most sustainability-focused events on the PGA Tour.

If you're more of an arts and culture aficionado than a sports fan, April and May are still fantastic times to visit. The Art Market at Historic Honey Horn, scheduled for April 23–24 in 2022, is an opportunity for artisans to showcase their fine art and other wares, and the annual Hilton Head Art Festival during Memorial Day weekend offers live music, a wide selection of arts and crafts



© Jake Johnson

for purchase, and delicious food from local vendors.

Without seeing it firsthand, Hilton Head can easily be mistaken for just another island in the South. It has beautiful stretches of beaches and fantastic natural wonders, but its rich history paired with an eye toward the future has made it a standout destination unlike any other you might find in America.

For more info, visit hiltonheadisland.org



PAPA'S PARADISE HOME

written by **matthew brady**
photography by **hemingway home and museum**



Key West, Florida, is world-renowned for many things, including its vast coral reefs, its plentiful opportunities for fishing and snorkeling, its food (key lime pie, anyone?), its location as the southernmost point of the contiguous United States, and its history.

One well-known part of this history is that Ernest Hemingway called this island home. From 1931 to 1940, one of America's greatest writers resided at 907 Whitehead Street, where he penned such classics as "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, *To Have and Have Not*, and *Islands in the Stream*.

Today, this house, now known as the Hemingway Home and Museum, keeps Papa Hemingway's legacy alive for literature and history lovers alike. But, as you can tell from the meowing and purring that echo in the rooms of this iconic residence, its four-legged inhabitants also add to the mystique.



A HISTORY OF HEMINGWAY'S HOME

Although Hemingway first came to Key West in 1928, he and his wife Pauline didn't immediately move into this home. Instead, they rented housing elsewhere until 1931, when Pauline convinced a relative to gift the then-dilapidated house to them as a belated wedding present.

Over the next several years, the Hemingways restored the 1851 Spanish Colonial abode while adding their own personal touches. The most notable of these are a pool—the first ever in Key West—that Pauline paid \$20,000 (the equivalent of over \$372,000 today) to

have built and Ernest's writing studio on the second floor of the guest house.

Though the couple eventually divorced in 1940, Pauline lived in the home until she passed away in 1951. When Ernest died a decade later, his sons auctioned it off to a private resident. The home became a museum in 1964 and was named a National Historic Landmark four years later.

And then there are the cats. Legend has it that Hemingway was given a polydactyl, or six-toed, cat here by a visiting sea captain. The white feline, named Snow White, is thought to be

the originator of the line of cats that have lived on the grounds ever since. Today, upward of sixty of them—around half of which have six-toed paws—call this place home, and many are named for celebrities, a tradition Hemingway himself began.

TAKING IN THIS TREASURE

The Hemingway Home and Museum is open 365 days a year to visitors, and it remains Key West's most popular attraction. When you go, be sure to tour both the estate and its grounds. You can explore the house and revel in its history on your own or do a guided tour, which lasts approximately thirty minutes.

Whichever you choose, your unofficial hosts, the dozens of cats you'll encounter, will be sure to welcome you. And why wouldn't they? As a big part of the home's family, they're fed and well cared for, getting vet checkups and treatments. They're so beloved, several employees of the Hemingway Home and Museum even chose to stay and ride out Hurricane Irma with their four-legged friends in 2017.

Outside, you'll experience the lavish, colorful greenery of the gardens and can take in the opulent 80,000-gallon pool that was built over eighty years ago. (You can also see where the home's previous cats are buried and memorialized.) The entire experience is so enchanting, the Hemingway Home and Museum is a popular locale for weddings.

Your walk through history doesn't need to end once you've visited the house, though. You'll find the Key West Lighthouse, three years older than Hemingway's home, right across the street. You can also trace Hemingway's footsteps to Sloppy Joe's, a bar he frequented (and helped name) during his time in Key West, which is a mere fifteen-minute walk away on iconic Duval Street.

Ernest Hemingway was renowned for his life of adventure, which is reflected in his vast body of work—and the places he called home. Have your own adventure by visiting this gem of a museum where Hemingway's history comes alive.

For more info, visit hemingwayhome.com



Legend has it that Hemingway was given a polydactyl, or six-toed, cat here by a visiting sea captain. The white feline, named Snow White, is thought to be the originator of the line of cats that have lived on the grounds ever since.



© ozgurdonmaz



© Valeriy_G

PANTRY OVERHAUL

written by **shelley goldstein** | photography as noted

One of my favorite forms of procrastination is reorganizing the cabinets in my apartment. I call it procrasti-cleaning.

There's nothing quite as satisfying as pulling everything from the cabinets, starting fresh, and restocking them like it's a curated art show of foodstuffs. Then I sit and admire it for a while before I finally get on with whatever work I should have been doing. I tried to do this at my parents' house once, but my mom is sentimentally attached to her expired spices, so I recommend you stick to your own cabinets unless you have permission.

CLEAN SWEEP:

Take everything out of your cabinets so you can see what you're working with. Ditch any expired food or seasonings. (Dried herbs last one to three years and ground spices last two to three years.) Donate goods you know you won't use. Now is also the perfect time to clean your shelves using a little elbow grease.

ASSESS THE SITUATION:

Group similar items together, such as all the snacks or all the baking ingredients. If you tend to cook the same meals on repeat, consider putting those ingredients in the same group. Figure out the system that will work best for your needs. To streamline your pantry, get rid of extra packaging, such as boxes that hold instant oatmeals and soups.

The inclusion of useful tips is one of the top reasons 58 percent of recipients have referred the professional who sent them the magazine in the past 12 months.

MISSION CONTAINMENT:

Now that you can see what food is to be stored and where you can choose containers that will work best for each grouping. Baskets are great for holding snacks, chip bags, and fresh produce like onions, potatoes, and garlic. Stackable can racks are ideal for bulk shoppers who want to store backups of their most-used staples. Decanting grains and pasta into glass jars or sealable plastic containers is an easy and elegant way to save space. And lazy Susans are a must in any pantry.

LABEL LOVE:

If you really want to go all in, buy yourself a label maker. Labeling may seem like an unnecessary step, but it's crucial, especially if you live with others. If people can see where things go, they are more likely to put them back. If you're less enthusiastic about making labels, masking tape and a Sharpie will do the trick.

Make sure everything is as visible as possible, and consider the heights of the people you live with when deciding which containers go on what shelf. And remember—it's your pantry, your rules. I won't tell if you want to hide some chocolate in a basket labeled "vitamins." ■



For all that you put into your home, YOU DESERVE TO GET THE *most* OUT.



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sticky CHICKEN

Back of Tear Out Card 2

SERVES 4

sticky CHICKEN

ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. water
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- ¼ c. ketchup
- 3 tbsp. honey
- 3 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. chili garlic sauce (such as sambal), or your favorite hot sauce (optional)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp. canola oil (or other neutral oil such as vegetable), plus more as needed
- 1½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

instructions:

1. Place the water and cornstarch in a small bowl and stir well to combine. Stir in the ketchup, honey, soy sauce, chili garlic sauce (if using), and garlic. Reserve the sauce.
2. Place the canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add half of the chicken to the pan and season generously with salt and pepper (about ½ teaspoon of each) and cook, stirring now and then, until browned all over, about 5 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate and repeat the process, adding another tablespoon or so of oil to the pan if necessary, with the rest of the chicken.
3. Return the first batch of chicken to the skillet along with the reserved sauce. Bring the mixture to a boil, then turn the heat to low and simmer, stirring now and then, until the sauce is thick and coats the chicken, about 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

Excerpted from *Simply Julia: 110 Easy Recipes for Healthy Comfort Food* by Julia Turshen. Harper Wave, 2021.
Photography and styling by Melina Hammer.

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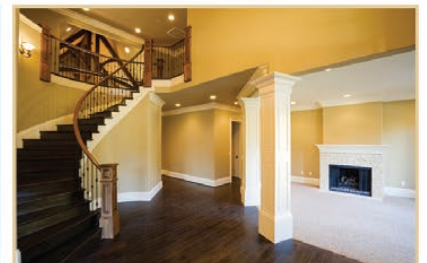
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