AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

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American Lifestyle

Dear Bill and Judy,

Ice cream cones, loud, booming fireworks displays, and dinosaurs--these are among the pillars of childhood interests--and this issue of American Lifestyle magazine honors them all. It opens deliciously with a feature on Lick Honest Ice Creams, a chain of ice cream shops based in Texas. Founders Chad Palmatier and Anthony Sobotik have rooted their business on the principles of locally sourced ingredients and nuanced flavor combinations, including sweet cream and strawberry, persimmon and sage, and cilantro lime. Not wanting to leave anyone out, they also offer three or four vegan flavors, made with a coconut milk base.

Fireworks by Grucci began in the small town of Bari, Italy. Angelo Lanzetta moved to New York with his son Anthony in 1870 and set up shop there until the business was bought by Anthony's nephew, Felix Grucci Sr., the company's namesake, in 1923. Felix grew the company in many ways, including developing the stringless shell, which was a major advancement in safer fireworks technology.

Dinosaurs have fascinated us for generations--and the Wyoming Dinosaur Center has fostered this fascination for kids, and kids at heart, for decades. For example, its Dig for a Day Program allows guests to put themselves in the shoes of paleontologists, uncovering and preparing fossils. The process is more complicated than most people think, involving location mapping, photographing, and documenting each bone.

What reminds you of childhood? Perhaps something to ponder over a delicious ice cream cone. As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

Stacey Shanner



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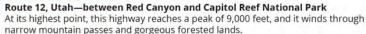
Back of Tear Out Card 1



MOST COLORFUL DRIVE

Green Mountain Byway, Vermont—between Waterbury and Stowe

The drive from Waterbury to Stowe, Vermont, has some of the most incredible foliage displays in the entire world. Don't forget to stop at the original Ben & Jerry's, right next





Extraterrestrial Highway, Nevada—between Crystal Springs and Warm Springs Most people are familiar with the legendary Area 51, but the highway to get there— Highway 375—has been home to a number of UFO sightings over the years.

MOST HISTORIC DRIVE

Mohawk Trail, Massachusetts-between the MA/NY border and Connecticut River This stretch of road in western Massachusetts is known as one of the most beautiful in the entire Northeast, but it was traveled first by Native Americans and early colonists for



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THE CATH OF I CE CREAM

written by shelley goldstein | photography by shelley rose photography

"Cilantro-lime ice cream. People absolutely love that flavor, and it makes my heart smile because it's my favorite." Anthony Sobotik, cofounder of Lick Honest Ice Creams, speaks affectionately of the first flavor made specifically for the Austin, Texas-based ice cream shop that holds at its core the value of locally sourced ingredients.

Each time Anthony and his partner, Chad Palmatier, visited Austin, they would wonder aloud why there weren't more ice cream makers taking advantage of the multiple growing seasons in Texas. Their careers in journalism and interior design, respectively, took them to New York City and then Ohio until they decided to take the huge leap, move to Austin, and open an ice cream shop. "We thought, 'Let's go there. Let's do this.' We put our house on the market, moved in September, and had a shop open by the following October," Chad divulges.

Both Chad and Anthony were raised in small, rural, agricultural towns—Chad grew up in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Anthony in Hallettsville, an hour and a half outside of Austin. Anthony's grandparents had a fully operating farm, and many of his friends lived on a ranch or farm in the country as well. His German grandmother baked homemade poppy seed rolls and kolaches. "I thought everyone's grandparents had a farm. To me,

that was just normal. It formed my views on how I eat, and knowing where my food comes from, and knowing how you should treat the land and your animals." Chad explains, "We're all hardworking families. Nothing was ever handed to me, and everybody I knew worked."

Though Anthony loved cooking and baking from a young age, going to culinary school was not something his guidance counselor really recommended, so he focused on another passion—journalism—figuring he could write about food. And, in his spare time, he experimented with ice cream flavors in the ice cream maker his mom gifted him. After college, he chose to move to New York City, intent on being a food writer, but his lack of food clips led him to the catering business. While working in the industry, he realized his heart had been in the culinary field all along. He created recipes, collaborated with chefs, catered on his own, and worked for a bakery.

Meanwhile, Chad was pursuing interior design, specifically focusing on retail branding to help clients like Kenneth Cole and Victoria's Secret build their spaces to enhance their identities. He dreamed of being a shopkeeper and of having the freedom to express his ideas. When he and Anthony decided to start their own business, they soon realized they had the perfect recipe for success.

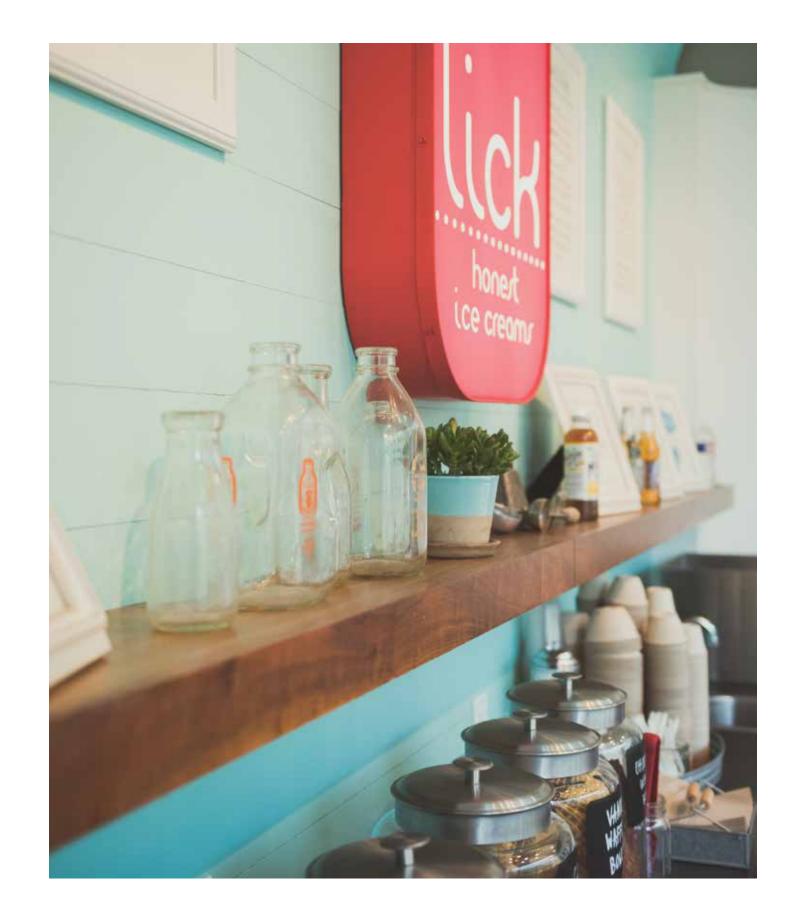
Lick was the first name they brainstormed for the shop. It was fun and playful, but they wanted to be clear about their mission—making ice cream from local ingredients and forming relationships with those growers. Lick morphed into Lick Honest Ice Creams.

Everything is made from scratch in their kitchen, and they can vouch for every single thing that goes into the ice cream. "You really have to dig deep to find the root of an ingredient, dissect it, and find every source. A lot of companies will hide things that you don't want in your product," reveals Anthony of their meticulous research and production.

The milk is all sourced from one small dairy that's eighty miles north of Austin. Explains Anthony, "It's a family-owned business, and the dairy has been in the same family for seventy-six years now. The milk comes from 150 cows, and the family knows them all by number. They take amazing care of their cows. They have tons of open space and they're grass-fed. They are happy cows. And I believe in that; I really do."

The milk base they've created is purposely lighter than some ice creams because Texas is so hot, so people gravitate toward a less fat-dense ice cream. And they cater to vegans as well, with at least three or four dairy-free coconut ice cream flavors in the case at all times. Austin is known for being vegan-friendly, and both Anthony and Chad believe in everyone being able to enjoy ice cream. Says Anthony, "I associate ice cream with family, joy, and happiness. My favorite childhood memories were of eating ice cream with my grandparents." Adds Chad, "Everyone should be able to eat ice cream. It's heartbreaking to think about people, especially little kids, who are lactose intolerant, and we are happy to provide a dairy-free option so all can enjoy."

After so many years of ice cream experiments and baking projects, Anthony amassed some interesting flavor profiles he was dying to put into production in the shop. The cilantro-lime, as previously mentioned, was the first. The most successful flavors





overall are the dark chocolate, olive oil, and sea salt flavor, and the Hill Country honey vanilla bean. They have ten flavors that remain consistent all year round, an additional six to eight flavors that rotate seasonally, and another three or four dairy-free flavors. Every season there is a standout. One season it was sweet cream and strawberry. Says Anthony, "It's based off of churning ice cream when I was a kid. My aunt made this sweet cream ice cream, and usually there were peaches in it, but we made it with strawberries."

Of course, not all flavor experiments are so successful, which makes for good stories, even if they didn't sell as well as they had hoped. Anthony defends one of his experiments: "Smoky melon was a flavor that didn't work so well. It was roasted cantaloupe with a little bit of mesquite-infused olive oil. I loved it and could eat a whole pint, but it didn't sell that well." Another flavor started what would become affectionately known as "Trail-mix-gate." Says Anthony: "We did a trail mix flavor that we thought would be a huge hit. We named it trail mix. Customers were so invested.



they started e-mailing to let us know it should be named fruit and nut mix because it lacked chocolate." Then there was the one time they made tomato ice cream . . . "It had tomato sauce. It was real tomatoey. People were like, 'Uh, it's pasta sauce,'" laughs Chad. On the flip side, some flavors that don't

initially sell well end up becoming popular due to food trends. Anthony talks about that phenomenon: "Persimmon and sage ice cream didn't sell well for three years, but in our fourth fall season, it sold three times as much. That year, persimmons started cropping up in food publications. The food trend thing is very real."

The shop has been both personally rewarding and financially successful for the duo, with four shops now open in Texas—three in Austin and one in San Antonio—and other cities begging for them to open other locations. Anthony explains that, when it comes to opening new shops, "We have grown very organically. It's an ongoing conversation and collaboration with the dairy and our other local farmers and artisans. We are all growing together and we have to consider everyone's capabilities as we expand." Chad revels in the variety of challenges from day to day and a lack of monotony. "Every day is different," he shares. "There's not a lot of routine. There's something great about that. We're still a small company. There are new ideas all the time and new ways of doing things."

They've treated the company like a big family, with employees who are excited to be there and help grow the business and growers who want to collaborate to make a quality product. It's clear that relationships are at the top of their hierarchy of values. "It's collaborative growth—synergy. The fact that we've succeeded is very gratifying because we put all our money into this and said to each other, 'OK, here it goes,'" says Chad.

It seems the people of Texas are in full agreement with the co-owners of Lick Honest Ice Creams—they are crazy about Lick's delicious ice cream, locally sourced ingredients, and that cilantro-lime!

For more info, visit www.ilikelick.com



Frank's Asparagus and Seafood Quiche

THIS QUICHE CAME FROM ONE OF MY OLDEST, DEAREST FRIENDS IN THE WORLD, SUE BOORE FOSTER. Sue's father, Frank Boore, was the longtime owner of two beloved St. Petersburg restaurants, Aunt Hattie's and Uncle Ed's. When Sue offered her dad's seafood quiche recipe, all I could say was "yes, please!" I did substitute crabmeat for the ½ cup of scallops Frank specified, because crab is more readily available where we live, but if you have access to scallops, go for it!

1 refrigerated pie crust
(or frozen deep-dish pie crust)

1½ cups chopped cooked peeled shrimp
1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 cup (2- to 3-inch pieces) asparagus
½ cup crabmeat (backfin is fine), picked over
1½ cups half-and-half
3 extra-large or jumbo eggs, lightly beaten
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
½ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon dried dill weed

- 1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Unroll the pie crust and fit it into a deep-dish pie plate. Fold and crimp the edges. (Skip this step if using a frozen crust.) Line the crust with parchment paper and fill with uncooked beans or rice. Bake for 10 minutes, then remove from the oven, remove the beans or rice and paper, and set aside.
- 2. Sprinkle the crust with the shrimp, cheese, asparagus, and crabmeat.
- 3. In a bowl, whisk the half-and-half, eggs, salt, pepper, garlic powder, and dill together; pour over the filling. Bake for 40 minutes, or until the quiche is set. Serve warm or at room temperature.

SERVES 4-6

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Ham and Havarti Sandwiches with Peach-Mustard Spread

ITHINK A BEACH PICNIC, EVEN A PICNIC WITH "JUST" SANDWICHES, should be more memorable—and delicious—than everyday picnic fare, especially since boneless ready-to-serve hams are so readily available. Purchase deli-sliced Havarti and brioche or batards for the sandwich bread. The Peach-Mustard Spread makes 2 cups. You can refrigerate leftovers for up to two weeks.

FOR THE SANDWICHES:

1 boneless sliced heat-and-serve ham quarter
2 large navel oranges
1 (12-ounce) can cola
½ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cloves
6 French or crusty bread rolls, halved horizontally
1 pound sliced Havarti cheese
1 (5-ounce) package baby arugula

FOR THE PEACH-MUSTARD SPREAD: 1 cup peach preserves 1 cup grainy mustard

- 1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Place the ham in a baking dish.
- 2. Slice 1 orange and place the slices between the ham slices and over the ham.
- 3. Grate the zest and squeeze the juice from the remaining orange into a bowl and add the cola, brown sugar, and cloves. Pour over the ham. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the ham is browned. Let cool.
- 4. To make the spread, stir the preserves and mustard together in a small bowl. Spoon a little onto the cut sides of each roll. Top evenly with ham slices, cheese slices, and arugula. Serve.

SERVES 6

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Fried Okra Cakes

WHEN I JOINED THE FEATURES STAFF AT THE *ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION* IN 1983, Thelma's Kitchen on Techwood Avenue was a favored lunchtime destination for AJC reporters. Thelma's was a soul-food flavored meat-and-three-vegetable luncheonette, and her okra cakes were legendary—especially for me, since I'd never particularly liked the slimy texture of cooked okra before. Thelma's recipe was a closely guarded secret, but I think this version comes pretty close to hitting the key nutty-salty component. Choose small-to-medium tender okra pods and chop them finely by hand, discarding the tough tops and tips. And do use the bacon grease added to the frying oil. About six slices of bacon yields the amount needed for this recipe. I can't prove that using a cast-iron skillet makes a better-tasting okra cake. But it does.

1 pound okra, finely chopped
½ cup finely chopped onion
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ cup plain cornmeal
1 teaspoon baking powder
Canola or peanut oil for frying
¼ cup bacon drippings

- 1. Place the okra, onion, ½ cup water, egg, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a large bowl and mix well.
- 2. Stir the flour, cornmeal, and baking powder together in a separate bowl. Add the flour mixture to the okra mixture and stir until well combined.
- 3. Heat about 2 inches of oil plus the bacon drippings in a cast-iron or heavy skillet with high sides until the temperature reaches 350°F.
- 4. Drop the okra batter into the hot oil by heaping tablespoonfuls and cook, in batches, until golden brown, turning once. Drain on paper towels and serve warm.

SERVES 10-12

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Butterscotch Brownies

THESE MAY BE THE ULTIMATE SALTY-SWEET LUNCHBOX-TYPE TREAT and, as a bonus, they are a one-bowl, one-pan trick pony.

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
½ cup (1 stick) salted butter, melted
1 large egg, beaten
1½ teaspoons bourbon or vanilla extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¾ teaspoon baking powder
1 cup chopped pecans, toasted
1 cup butterscotch baking chips

- 1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with aluminum foil, allowing 2 to 3 inches to extend over the sides of the pan.
- 2. Combine the brown sugar, melted butter, egg, and bourbon in a large bowl. Stir in the flour, salt, and baking powder. Stir in the pecans and butterscotch chips.
- 3. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes, or until the center is set. Let cool in the pan for 30 minutes. Using the foil sides as handles, remove the brownies from the pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Cut into squares and serve.

SERVES 6

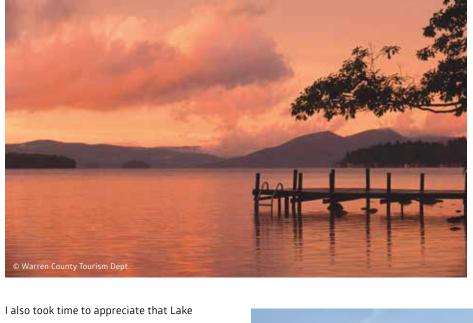


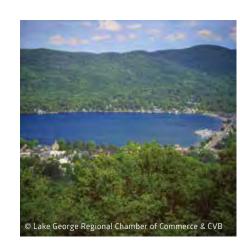
When it comes to getting away from it all, some people prefer the beach and some the lake. I've been fortunate enough to live in equal proximity to both lakes and the ocean—and, although I have enjoyed both, I've always preferred the ocean.

That is, until I visited Lake George, New York.

These were the thoughts that danced in my head while my wife, Sandra, and our kids, Jeff and Laura, were buckling up for our return trip to this haven in northeastern New York State.

During the four-hour drive, much of which takes place on scenic I-87, I had plenty of time for more reflection on the adventure that awaited. Only three hours from Montreal and situated in the Adirondack Park, the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous US, the lake itself is unique in many ways. It's a huge body of water, about thirty-two miles long and, at its max, about 200 feet deep (with shipwrecks at the bottom of the lake to boot). It boasts over 175 miles of shoreline and over 180 islands, all of which add to the grandeur of this place dubbed the Queen of American Lakes.





George holds a vital place in US history. Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson visited there (with the latter calling it "without comparison, the most beautiful water I ever saw"). In addition, it was a key battleground during the French and Indian War, and it's the inspiration for the setting in The Last of the Mohicans.

Before I knew it, I was making the familiar turn onto Route 9, which welcomes you into the village of Lake George. Famished, we headed straight to Giuseppe's Pizzeria & Restaurant, which is located toward the north end of the village. After eating a light lunch and settling in at our hotel, we ventured down to Beach Road to play miniature golf at Around the World Golf, which is on several top ten lists as the best in the country.

It's easy to see why. There are two courses: Around the US and Around the World. We did the American course during our prior visit, and it was a blast. The coup de grâce is the final hole, New York, which features a subway station—complete with turnstiles and graffiti-splashed walls-that





Only three hours from Montreal and situated in the Adirondack Park, the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous US, the lake itself is unique in many ways.

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you have to walk down into. This time around, we did the international course, which features icons such as the Pyramids of Giza, a torii gate and temple bell, and a hole shaped like a Spanish guitar.

After golfing, we crossed Beach Road and walked along the lake. We considered going southeast, which would have landed us at Million Dollar Beach. Located at the southernmost part of the lake, it's where the kids and I had swum the previous August—and where I was first captivated by the clear, calming water of Lake George. With a chill in the air, we instead headed northwest toward town. At sunset, the lake seemed even more intoxicating than I remembered. The sun blazed over the mountainous horizon, making the vast, translucent lake sparkle.

At any time of day, though, the lake is peaceful and mesmerizing—with good reason. Formed over 10,000 years ago when a glacier blocked two rivers, Lake George holds about 550 billion gallons of water. It's also constantly refreshing itself, with over 50 percent of the water coming from streams and almost 20 percent from groundwater. As a result, you experience a lake with crystal clear water—so clear, in fact, that it's been classified as drinking water.

As we continued on our stroll, we watched one of Lake George's famous cruise ships, the Minne-Ha-Ha, meander away from its dock with happy tourists. One of five authentic paddle wheeler steamboats still in existence, the Minne-Ha-Ha is run by the Lake George Steamboat Company, which celebrated its 200-year anniversary in 2017.



As I made a mental note to schedule a steamboat cruise, we continued making our way toward the village's main road, Canada Street. It was now nearly dark, and the breeze seemed to follow us everywhere. We spent some time at Shepard Park, a central hub that hosts nightly concerts and weekly fireworks displays during the summer, and walked out onto its pier, which brought back memories of the previous year's amazing fireworks show. It's a sensational sight to see the glimmering pyrotechnics flying high and reflecting off the lake—and a wonderful way to end a night.

The next day, we drove to Prospect Mountain, one of the most popular destinations in Lake George. We turned onto Veterans Memorial Highway, paid the entrance fee (only ten dollars), and then

started our incline upward. With our ears popping, we soon came to the first overlook, the Narrows, and parked. At this tree-lined area, we gazed at the mountains across from us on the other side of the lake.

The next two overlooks, Lake George Panorama and Eagle's View, earn their names with spectacular, seemingly neverending views of the entire area. We then reached the summit, parked, and boarded a shuttle, which takes you to the very peak of the mountain. Now over 2,000 feet in the air, we peered out at distances over 100 miles away. From this vantage point, we could see not only the entire Lake George village (looking like a diorama below us) but also New Hampshire's White Mountains and Vermont's Green Mountains. Awe-inspiring, to say the least.

After coming back down to Earth, we traveled south on Route 9 toward the Factory Outlets of Lake George, which boast over fifty stores, including L.L.Bean, adidas, Banana Republic, and Harry & David. We weren't there to shop, though (as we did during our first trip); we were there to eat at the Log Jam Restaurant.

This eatery has a charm unique to the Adirondacks, with wood throughout, dimly lit lanterns, and even cozy stone fireplaces. Besides its filling food, it also has an impressive salad bar as the focal point of the restaurant; in fact, Sandra and I filled up on the delicious salads and fixings before our meals even arrived. One thing that's certain no matter where you eat in Lake George: you aren't left hungry.

In fact, later that day, we experienced more filling fare when we ventured a few miles south to Martha's Dandee Creme, named one of the top ten ice cream parlors in the country. Martha's offers a dozen flavors each day, and the menu changes every few days, so you have dozens of options. Laura chose banana, while Jeff went for raspberry chocolate twist.

With surprisingly large serving sizes—their kiddie size is about the same size as most places' large—it took a while to consume these cones. Jeff couldn't finish his, so I gave it a taste; amazingly, it was like eating a fine piece of raspberry-filled chocolate, only in rich, creamy ice cream form.

The next day, we decided to have history repeat itself, so to speak. The year before, we had visited the nearby Fort William Henry Museum and were taken in by the living history of the place. We toured the complex for hours, watched demonstrations, witnessed cannons and muskets being fired. and learned a great deal about the fort's vital role in American history.

This time, we decided to take a scenic, tree-lined drive north to Fort Ticonderoga. Driving along the western edge of the lake, we saw cottages dotting the landscape and witnessed breathtaking views of the lake and its islands (many of which are available to rent). We passed through the quaint hamlet of Bolton Landing, which features a historic opera museum and a Victorian-era hotel, and traveled for about twenty more miles until we reached our destination.

The star-shaped Fort Ticonderoga maintains an impressive array of cannons big and small pointed in various directions—reminding you of the many ways the enemy could attack. Inside, we witnessed living history demonstrations, toured barracks, and viewed many displays, most notably a large collection of eighteenth-century artifacts, including weapons, ceramics, and tableware. You can even try your hand at loading cannons and other artillerymen's weapons.

With rain pelting us after we ate at the fort's café, we decided to skip the hiking trails through the battlefield and instead walked through the raindrops to the King's Garden, a walled colonial revival garden on the premises. The landscaping there features brick pathways, a reflecting pool, and a multitude of magnificent flowers; the flowers' colors defiantly burst through this gray day. We also observed the Pavilion, a centuries-old historic structure that was once a summer home and a hotel; sat in a gazebo in its backyard overlooking Lake Champlain; and walked down to its dock at the edge of the lake. Before returning south to Lake George Village, we took a ten-minute drive to Mount Defiance, which provides a bird's-eye view of Fort Ticonderoga.

On the day of our departure, we frankly didn't want to leave—so we didn't. (The same thing had happened the year before, when we shopped at the outlets and ate



before heading home.) Even though our vehicle was packed to the brim, we spent more time at the lake, enjoyed the village again, and chowed down on more local cuisine, including another trip to Martha's.

That, ultimately, is what Lake George does: it draws you in, compels you to kick back and enjoy the endlessly soothing, majestic lake, and makes you want to learn more every time you visit.

Even about yourself. I, for one, learned how much an oceangoer could be hooked by the lure of the lake.

For more info, visit www.lakegeorgechamber.com or visitlakegeorge.com



The star-shaped Fort Ticonderoga maintains an impressive array of cannons big and small pointed in various directions—reminding you of the many ways the enemy could attack.

22 | AMERICAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE americanlifestylemag.com | 23 After a career in the entertainment industry as an art director and an animator, artist Jeffery Roth turned his attention to watercolor painting full time, answering the call of a new passion and beginning his next chapter of creativity.

What is your earliest memory of making art?

My first memory of creating art goes back to my earliest memories of my life. I can still hear a distant muffle of grown-ups towering above me and calling my name—their voices muted by the depth of my singular concentration and my face inches away from the page.

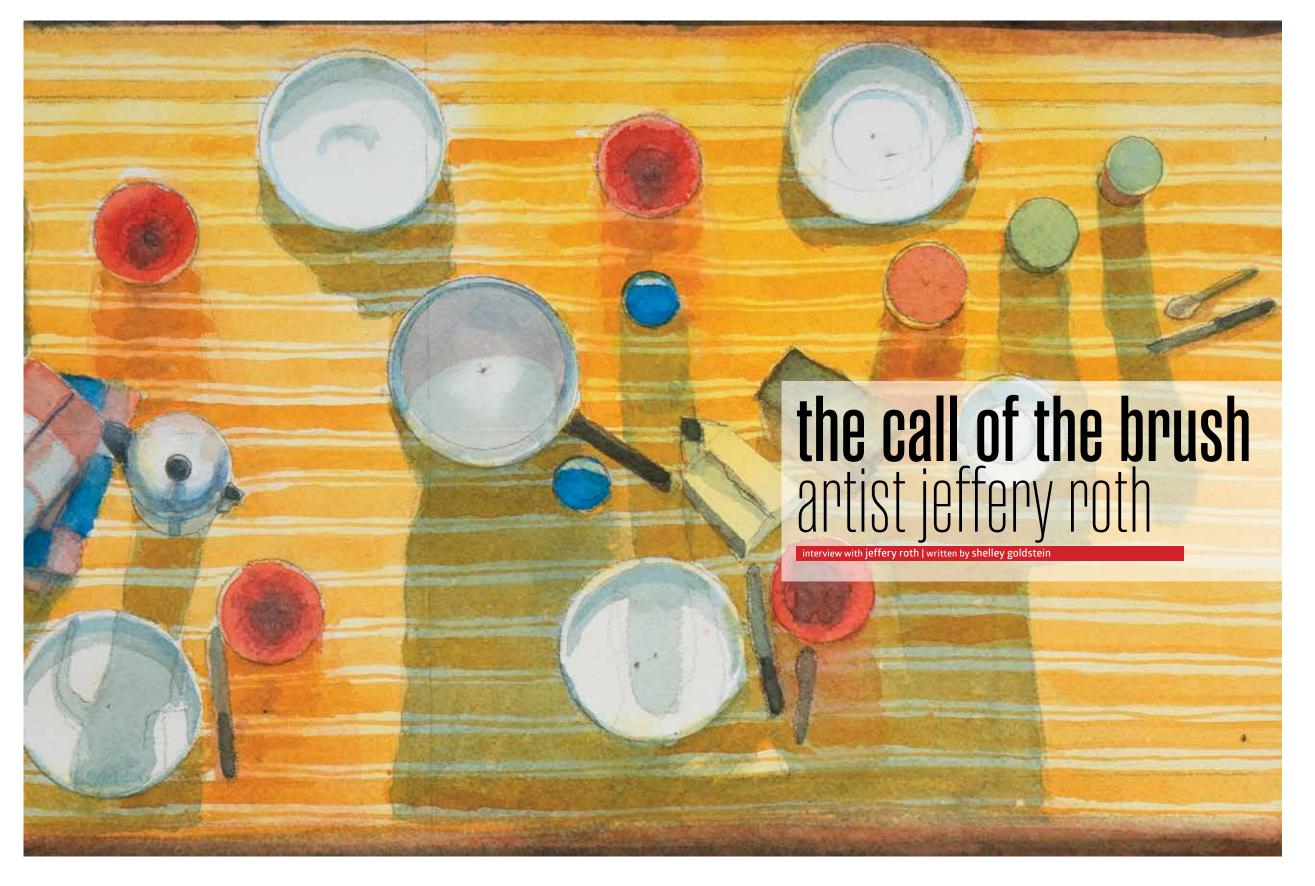
What did the path to becoming an artist look like for you?

I've always thought I would be an artist. Having grown up in Carmel, California, I was always surrounded by artists—some world-famous, others locals who really understood the value and impact of art on a community. My biggest obstacle has always been the definition of art itself and how that defines one's life.

Tell us about your career in the entertainment industry. How did that come about? How did that suit your personality?

Art, cinema, and actors helped define the little oasis that is Carmel, and I was not immune to the allure. I had wanted to become a cinematographer. I wasn't seduced by the idea of the director's role; I'd wanted to be the person who designs the illusion, the seduction of cinema, and its ability to create an environment that allows complete suspension of disbelief.

When I was in art school, I had a chance to work at a Macworld/iWorld show in San Francisco. At the time, this was an extremely exciting moment in the convergence of art and technology. Digital tablets were just a



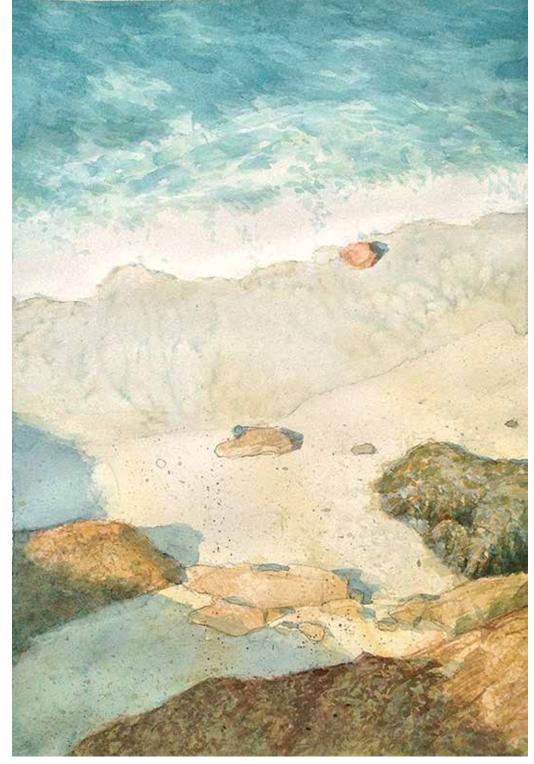
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burgeoning idea that would allow an artist to work on a pressure-sensitive tablet with the use of a special pencil input device. This could mimic the result of the analog world, allowing the simulation of brushes and pens on paper. Such a fantastic and novel idea was too great to pass up. I was told to simply "draw" and do my thing. So I would sit in a chair with the tablet on my lap and my eyes staring up at a monitor, sketching away whatever images I would conjure in the moment. A group of men stood for over thirty minutes watching me work, saying nothing. After a short time, they returned, and one of them handed me a business card and said, "Come here on Monday and you'll have a job."

It was that simple, that fortunate, and that magical. My job was at a company that was in its own creative nexus. They had access to all kinds of mediums. This was a creative powerhouse, and I was allowed to "play" and create ideas and key frame art, which is the visual reference made during the initial creative phases of production. I went on to work as an art director and animator for such production houses as DreamWorks Animation, until I decided to become a freelance artist and cherry-pick the right projects.

I never stopped making art by hand, though, whether it was sculpture or the constant presence of my sketchbook. I have had the great privilege of working with some of the best directors of our time but came to realize that I wanted to contribute something more intimate and personal, and I could no longer deny my growing passion





for watercolors and the challenges that each work presents—as much drama as a film production, but complete control from the first brushstroke to the last.

Have you always lived in California? What is the energy of the place?

I've spent most of my life in California and always lived near water—a year on the big island of Hawaii and a year in Boston for school. The power of water has always seduced me and has always been a part of where I live. From the complete sensory experience of sight, sound, and smell, it's really an undeniable force that deserves reverence and endless observation and demands humility and respect.

Do you consider yourself an artist first?

I couldn't define myself as anything but an artist. It is simply who I am, and it informs all of my other manifestations.

What is a word of praise or criticism that stands out to you?

One of my teachers in art school, named



Brook Temple, had a profound effect on me. He wasn't impressed with my skills, and he made that very clear. This made him unique; he knew that he had a much deeper understanding of the questions I should be asking.

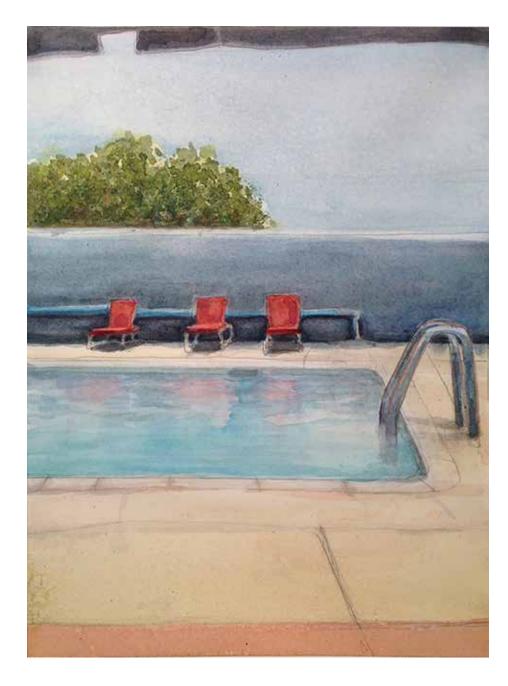
When I was finally beginning to understand some of this message, he said to me, observing my new confidence, "When you feel like your work is getting good, take it and set it next to a Picasso, a Degas, or any of the great ones, and ask yourself, 'Is this work worthy to be called masterful?"

That really hit home, because the accolades and awards I had just received for my work suddenly lost their luster and my sights were quickly adjusted. That's a litmus test I still use to this day, and I've yet to match that standard—but I refuse to stop trying.

What do you hope an audience will perceive or feel when looking at your work?

For me, creating art is still a sacred act, a pure thing with the same focus and curiosity of a child. I seek the beauty and poetry of a

26 | AMERICAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE americanlifestylemag.com | 27 I strive to create an experience or escape for the viewer, whether that's an internal voyage or an external one. To coin a phrase, I would call it "cinematic realism," since cinema is an opportunity to create an illusion that the viewer wants to journey through.



single moment. Triggering those memories in others' minds, some so great they can remember exquisite details such as smells and tastes and feelings—that's what I'm striving for.

Do you have a mission statement or words you live by?

I know that "Be here now" is a California cliché, but the idea is a noble one that requires concentration and observation in the moment. This is a rather elusive skill in these times of quick-paced access to an overabundance of information inundating all our senses.

How would you describe the style of your work?

I strive to create an experience or escape for the viewer, whether that's an internal voyage or an external one. To coin a phrase, I would call it "cinematic realism," since cinema is an opportunity to create an illusion that the viewer wants to journey through.

What is your preferred medium?

I love to create, so I try not to box myself into a corner, but I paint watercolors now more than anything else. I also love the colors and viscosity of oil paints, and I enjoy creating some sculptures, but I find the immediacy of watercolors to be an extraordinary challenge.





How do you choose a subject? What does your process look like for creating a piece?

For me, the image must touch me, if not take my breath away. I often begin with a sketch or a photograph. I have simple rules: I must have experienced it myself, I will only use photos as reference, they must have come from my own creation, and, with any luck at all, they must elicit that moment of wonder. Once I begin, I must complete as much of it as possible in a single sitting. I find that the flow and energy of the dance is gone if left too long.

Do you get frustrated with paintings? How do you handle that tension?

One of my teachers at art school would ask if he could sit down for a moment at my drawing bench. This was often followed by him taking a large piece of charcoal or whatever drawing medium I was using to completely obliterate my image. He would stand up, smile, hand me the charcoal back (while saying "There!"), and walk away. He

later revealed the lesson that I should never get too attached to my work.

What advice would you give to a beginning painter?

I have often given this advice in the past to those who want to go down this path: just create. Don't try to make art—just enjoy the experience that it brings to the heart and mind. Later, if you take stock of what that journey really entails, seek out someone with years more experience. Get the tricks and techniques you will need, but enjoy the raw, pure joy of creation, and find a mentor to fill in your gaps.

Who are you influenced by?

There are the giants, like the Renaissance masters, who still thrill me. There are the masters of light, like Caravaggio, Sorolla, Monet, and Matisse; the draftsmen like Michelangelo, Sargent, Diebenkorn, and Picasso; Rodin for form and poetry; and my personal mentors—Donald Teague, for one, who spoke with me little of technique and mostly of the power of art.

Will you share a lesser-known fact about yourself?

Since high school, I have been studying a rare and exotic form of Chinese martial arts called bagua qigong, which I have recently started to teach. It is much like tai chi chuan, but more active and fluid, like water. Again, there's that water thing.

In the alternate reality movie of your life, where would you be living and what job would you have?

I have often used a one-line joke when things become complicated: "I should have stayed in Hawaii and grown orchids." Still a fine plan if this one doesn't work out.

For more info, visit www.jefferyrothpaintings.com



An unlikely talent sprouted from the small town of Bari on Italy's Adriatic coast in the 1800s. In a country known for its cuisine, fashion, and architecture, one man found his calling as a pyrotechnician—helping to bring the art of firework making into the public eye. What started out as a hobby quickly became the family business, and now, having crossed continents and spanned over more than five generations, the Gruccis—America's first family of fireworks—continue to astound as true pioneers of the craft.

Who was Angelo Lanzetta, and how did he develop an interest in pyrotechnics?

Angelo was my great-great-grandfather, who started our business in Bari, Italy, in 1850. He had a hobby of making fireworks, but back then they didn't have the large shows that we have today. Firework making was more of a trade where people would produce individual fireworks and compete with other local artisans on the elaboration of that product.

When did he decide to turn this hobby of firework making into a business?

Angelo decided to leave Italy in 1870 with his son, Anthony. They came to New York through Ellis Island and set up shop in what was practically nothing more than a cardboard box, right outside the island. They produced and sold fireworks in the same location until Anthony's nephew, Felix Grucci Sr., bought the business in 1923.





How did Felix Sr. help catapult the business to the level that it has grown to today? What were some of his important innovations?

As the company has progressed, each generation has left its own mark and attributions. One of the most important elements that Felix Sr. left the company is our contract with the military, which came about during the Korean War in the 1950s. This contract helped us establish a larger factory to work with and therefore transition into the production of larger pyrotechnics.

During these years, Felix Sr. also developed one of the most important improvements in the history of the industry—the stringless shell—which helped to make fireworks displays much safer. One of the biggest

safety hazards with these displays was the fallout from the explosions, which could land on cars and homes from miles away. Now, when fireworks burst in the sky, there is much less fallout.

Was there a particular performance that helped make Fireworks by Grucci the number one player in the industry?

Our first big show outside of the New Jersey-New York area was over the Charles River in Boston, during America's bicentennial. Then, in 1979, we entered into the Monte Carlo International Fireworks Festival, where we became the first American family to win the gold medal—breaking the world record for the largest firework in the process. This was a huge achievement for us, because this is really the

most prestigious fireworks competition in the entire world.

Can you explain some of the techniques that your family has pioneered in terms of fireworks technology?

Our medium is very exciting because it's constantly changing. We provide fireworks products to some of the biggest events and companies in the world, such as presidential inaugurations and Disney, for example.

One of the specialty products you will see at these shows is the golden center split comet, which we developed the shell for in the 1970s. We typically use it as a prelude right before the grand finale because it has a tapering, streaky effect that, just when you think is over, splits apart elegantly.

We also created the pixel burst, which is a small microchip embedded in the shell that allows us to control the height and timing of the burst. We make these exclusively at our factories in Virginia and New York.

What is the process for putting on a fireworks show, from start to finish?

All parts of our performances are very design driven. Fireworks are our artistic medium, just like paint, pencil, or chalk. First, we look at the structure of the stage, bridge, field, or whatever area we are working with, and then we figure out how to marry the location with the theme of the performance, including music.

After that, the engineering takes place over a few months. We never want to repeat





The most important part of our business is the people.
Because we are working with hazardous materials, training is critical for us to sustain the business.



a design in a show, so it's a challenge to make it all happen and keep the audience from guessing what they'll see next. We also have to consider the shipping, storage, and logistics; for example, at one of our performances we served 1,500 meals just to feed the crew who would be setting off the fireworks.

You also hold training seminars for the education and safety of the people lighting the fireworks. What do these courses entail?

The most important part of our business is the people. Because we are working with hazardous materials, training is critical for us to sustain the business. We generally hold training seminars in the spring, and they are made up of a mixture of pyrotechnicians and those interested in joining our team through this program.

The course is four days long, and it goes through every aspect of our business, including federal regulations and state-by-state regulations. When students come out of the course, they typically go out to their

first show with the assistance of a chief pyrotechnician and practice their skills in the field. The 2017 class graduated sixty pyrotechnicians, who were scheduled to practice work in the field before the Fourth of July.

What has been most rewarding for you in taking over the business that has been in your family for so many years?

The training and sense of pride in this business through each generation have allowed us to keep the business together. I am proud to say that, even though we lost my father—who was really the life of the business—in 1993, we pushed through and were able to build it back up.

I am very fortunate to see how the industry has changed—with electronics in the early 1980s and computers in the 1990s, all the way to the elaborate technological achievements we see today.

For more info, visit www.grucci.com



After spending her childhood in Hyderabad, a busy metropolis in the south-central portion of India, designer Vani Sayeed did not expect to expand her career in the quaint suburb of Newton, Massachusetts. But now that Sayeed has spent more than a decade living in New England, her work reflects the cultural influences of her beloved home blended with the relaxed, seaside style of the East Coast.

How did your upbringing specifically your mother's penchant for art—influence your creative development?

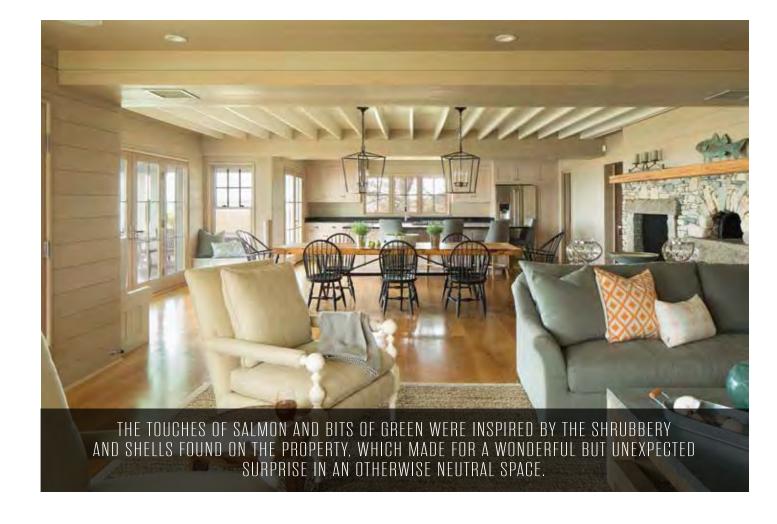
Growing up in Hyderabad—a city rich in culture and history—I learned to value aesthetics from a very young age. My mother is a very artistic and creative person who shaped a lovely environment for us to grow up in. Between my external and personal milieus, my education and career in art and design was a natural progression.

In what ways did attending the prestigious Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai influence your proclivity toward interior design?

The Sir J.J. School of Art places an emphasis on the fundamentals of art and design—especially in a student's first two years of study. Courses are a rigorous foundation in basic drawing, proportion, color theory, life drawing, still-life, perspective, 3-D design, and art history and language, among a range of other subjects.

All of the basics are covered, and these are the tools that have stayed with me my whole life. After the first two years, students have to decide what field to concentrate on, and I





chose interior design because I could utilize all of my ideas and showcase my creative expression in a variety of ways.

When you moved to the US in 1998, you began your career living and working in San Francisco. What motivated you to move to the East Coast?

Working in the Bay Area was phenomenal. I was four years into owning my own design studio and slowly growing my business each year when my husband was offered a fantastic opportunity in Boston. It was a hard move, but it was the right decision for us as a family, and the opportunity has opened so many different doors for me to reinvent myself.

Now that you work primarily in New England, how has your style evolved?

There are no clear-cut solutions in my studio. My work is influenced by all of the places I've lived in and traveled to, as well as my life experiences. I try to bring a "global chic" vibe to the spaces I design. With that being said, I love the natural beauty of New England—the region's distinct seasons, rolling hills, big, blue skies, seaside towns, and beautiful architecture. All of that can't help but seep into the way I design for local projects. In my mind, it's very important that spaces sync with their overall environment.

One of your recent projects in Martha's Vineyard is a great example of this quaint seaside style. What was the goal for the clients and their expectations for the space?

The clients in this project were a young family with little children and dogs, and they wanted a space that was easy to use and family-friendly. We took cues from the neutral colors and materials found in the environment around the home and worked to achieve the relaxed vibe they were seeking.

What was your first step in developing a strategy for this space, and what elements were most important to consider?

Like most homes in the area, this house was originally built in the 1920s and needed to be lifted onto a newly built foundation. The previous layout consisted of small rooms, with the kitchen sequestered behind the public spaces—cut off from view. We began by reconfiguring the space with the help of William C. Sullivan (of the architecture firm Sullivan + Associates Architects) to be more functional for a modern family, with lots of wide-open space. We took down walls to create this more expansive great room situated toward the water, with three sets of French doors that open out to the porch.

This helped create a nice flow between indoor and outdoor living.

Did you maintain any of the home's original framework or features? Or did you have to essentially begin from scratch?

We kept the original beams and beadboard on the dining room ceiling. I thought they set a modern, pared-down tone for the space while echoing the neutral color scheme. We worked to find just the right gray-tinged wood stain, to which we matched the kitchen cabinetry and built-ins in the living room. All of these elements work together to keep the space cohesive.

Speaking of cohesiveness, the space is very simplistic, but there are pops of color every now and again. How did you preserve this unified look without the design looking too monotonous?

The touches of salmon and bits of green were inspired by the shrubbery and shells found on the property, which made for a wonderful but unexpected surprise in an otherwise neutral space. These colors are the perfect backdrop for the modern-meetshand-hewn furnishings. The clients wanted a low-maintenance space, and this sentiment is honored in every room.





What are some of the finer details in this space that contribute to its understated yet comfortably luxurious appearance?

The family invested in solid pieces that will stand the test of time, including Windsor dining chairs with a matte-milk finish, a sturdy, tin-covered, reclaimed-wood coffee table, and a large sectional sofa. The soapstone counter in the kitchen is traditionally oiled to keep its dark color, but the clients left it patina to add character and for easier maintenance. The accessories with a global feel enhance the design with a little more color and texture without disrupting the quiet.

The bedrooms, in particular, are very minimalistic in terms of furniture and color. Was this a strategic move based off of the pieces that the family already owned?

The clients requested unique, customdesigned, and hand-block-printed cotton textiles for the bedding and upholstered furniture. The art on the walls is sourced









In my view, there is never a definite end to designing a room or space. I will often leave a few walls empty so that clients can add art to their collections.

from local artists in the Boston area. The simple, light tones also make the most of the slope and pitch of the ceiling lines in the bedrooms, which give these spaces dimension and interest as the light hits the angles differently throughout the day.

How do you know when a particular design is finished? Is there an "aha" moment when you can sense that a room is complete?

In my view, there is never a definite end to designing a room or space. I will often leave a few walls empty so that clients can add art to their collections. During space planning, I make sure to float some pieces of furniture, too, so they can be moved around for a specific occasion or just to refresh a space. Sometimes less is more, and sometimes more is more—it all depends.

You emphasize collaboration in your design philosophy. Is this the most important goal you set when taking on a new project? Clients invite me to a project because they

trust my design judgment and expertise. That being said, the trust has to extend beyond the technical aspect to the artistic end, and part of my job is to understand my clients' vision for the space. I must advise and steer them in the right direction, and this process is based on mutual respect and understanding. You have to give some, and vice versa.

For more info, visit **www.vanisayeedstudios.com**

Before Wyoming was made up of sprawling plains and mountainous terrain, it was a vast series of sandy dunes, and, before that, it was a subtropical inland sea. Like most parts of the planet, the geography of this state has changed significantly over the course of millions of years—shifting as much in ecology as it has in topography.

We know so much about the past lives of this small piece of North America thanks, in part, to a discovery made more than twenty years ago. On a hike through the small town of Thermopolis, in the north-central portion of the state, paleontologists uncovered one of the most important fossil discoveries ever made. Millions of years of erosion had exposed a series of dinosaur bones jutting out of the mountainside—and this group of paleontologists was lucky enough to spot the fossils—prompting the formation of the Wyoming Dinosaur Center in 1995.

Angie Guyon, executive director for the Wyoming Dinosaur Center, has been with the museum since 2001. In the twenty-three years that it's been open, fossil discoveries have numbered well into the thousands. "We have found over 12,000 bones in the area since 1993—hundreds of which are on display in the museum," Guyon says. "All of our bones stay at the center for science and research, so if they are not on display, they are within our collections or on loan to other educational institutions."

A WORLD-CLASS DISCOVERY

Included in the 12,000 artifacts in the museum are the longest horseshoe crab trackway, a Supersaurus—lovingly named Jimbo—that measures in at 106 feet long, the largest Stegosaurus skin impression ever found, and the only Medusaceratops ever able to be displayed. But perhaps the most significant finding was that of an Archaeopteryx, "The Thermopolis Specimen"—the only one currently on exhibition outside of Europe.



The Archaeopteryx is widely considered to be the missing link between birds and dinosaurs. None of the twelve Archaeopteryx fossils found possesses a "reversed toe"—a common feature in birds that allows them to perch on tree branches. However, the fossils do have feather impressions, which make them a particularly exciting find. For decades, researchers have been trying to make a clear connection between dinosaurs and birds, and this breakthrough is a step in the right direction, according to Guyon.

Because of the way the environment surrounding the center has changed over millions of years, tracks from prehistoric marine life, such as trilobites, ammonites, and crinoids (which resemble some of the odd-looking creatures we see in oceans today) have also been unexpectedly uncovered on digs. Also surprising are the remains of land-dwelling animals, like the North American camel, the North American cheetah, early horses, and the North American lion, that have been excavated.

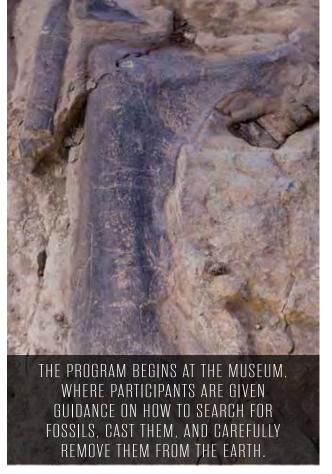
UNEARTHING THE LAYERS OF TIME THE WYOMING DINOSAUR CENTER

written by alexa bricker | photography by wyoming dinosaur center



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IN A PALEONTOLOGIST'S SHOES

Professional paleontologists aren't the only ones making discoveries at the center. Since 1996, the organization has offered its Dig for a Day Program, which puts guests in the heart of the action—learning the process of uncovering and prepping the fossils.

The program begins at the museum, where participants are given guidance on how to search for fossils, cast them, and carefully remove them from the Earth. "People have the opportunity to explore actual dig sites, prep the bones, and learn the molding and casting process," explains Guyon. "Most of the fossils that have been discovered were with the help of this program, including Allosaur, Camarasaur, and Diplodocus

bones—some of which were almost completely intact. The Camarasaur was even mounted in our gallery in 2015 for the museum's twentieth anniversary."

Guyon admits that many of the program participants are surprised to find out how extensive the process for digging up fossils is. Plenty of people assume it is as simple a process as finding a bone and removing it from the ground, but because of the sensitivity of the fossils, special precautions have to be taken every step of the way. "Once the bone is discovered, we have to map the location, photograph and number the bone, as well as document the find and record the name of its discoverer," says Guyon. "When the bone is small enough, we

can take it right out of the ground, but with a larger bone, we make plaster jackets to surround the exposed portions, allow it to set, and then roll it over to remove the bone from the ground. It's then brought into the prep lab for more detailed matrix removal and cleaning."

More than 40,000 guests come through the museum per year, mostly during the summer months—though the team of paleontologists and museum employees works all year round.

For high-school students who desire a more in-depth lesson in paleontology, the center also offers Dinosaur Academy—a five-day course that delves into the ins and outs

of the geologic timetable of Thermopolis, map reading and surveying, excavation, specimen identification and classification, and collection management. The museum also offers a Kids' Dig Program, Road Scholar Program, and Paleo Prep Programs.

THROUGH THE LAYERS OF TIME

As more fossils are found and more groundbreaking discoveries are made, the Wyoming Dinosaur Center continues to be at the forefront of how we interpret and understand the past lives of our Earth.

Aside from the programs and exhibitions at the museum, the organization works to make its innovative research more accessible through educational videos, demonstrations,

events, and more. Though dinosaur fossils have been preserved in the Earth for millions of years, Guyon notes that we have only just begun to scratch the surface of their importance, and, with the work of organizations like the Wyoming Dinosaur Center, will hopefully continue to learn more about some of Earth's most captivating creatures.

For more info, visit www.wyodino.org

Front of Tear Out Card 2

UNBEATABLE BURGER SEASONINGS

For those who love them, biting into a freshly grilled, juicy burger is one of the best parts of a summer cookout, but only if it's made just right. To achieve the perfectly flavored burger, you're going to need plenty of seasonings—just like these!





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King Of Prussia, PA 19406



Back of Tear Out Card 2

UNBEATABLE BURGER SEASONINGS

Make these perfect burger spices, and try them out the next time you head to the grill. Snap a photo of your yummy burgers, too, to share on social media with the hashtag #ALMbites.

For a zesty asian spice mix, as well as more summertime tips and recipes, visit americanlifestylemag.com/travel.



SWEET HONEY MUSTARD

Just a bit of sweetness is the perfect addition to a burger.

- * 1 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 tbsp. salt
- · 1/4 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tbsp. brown sugar
- ½ tsp. mustard powder

SPICY KICK

Take your burger's flavor up a notch with some slight heat.

- 1/4 c. salt
- 1 tbsp. pepper
- 2 tbsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- . 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tbsp. onion powder



Lovely Luau PARTY

A luau is the ultimate summer party theme, and now you can throw your very own! Prepare for your Hawaiian-themed bash with these festive ideas!

For printable luau treat recipes, decorating instructions, and everything else you need to host the ultimate Hawaiian party, visit americanlifestylemag.com/travel.

Crepe Hibiscus Flowers

Hawaii is known for its beautiful hibiscus plants, and your party can have them, too (no island getaway required!).



Printable Artwork

Give guests a taste of this aloha theme with fun, printable invitations, and print out a banner and sign for your party!





Floral Pineapple Centerpieces

Golden pineapples and fresh summer flowers bring a bit of the islands to your party tables.

Stacey Shanner

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Bill and Judy Smith

123 Main Street King of Prussia, PA 19406



No ice cream maker required! With a blend of a few simple ingredients, you can add just about anything to this base—so get creative.

- 2 c. heavy cream
- · 14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

step one • Whip the heavy cream until it begins to form stiff peaks (about 3 minutes).

step two · Slowly add in the sweetened condensed milk, and incorporate into the cream. Add in the vanilla and any other additional ingredients.

step three • Pour the mixture into a metal loaf pan, and freeze for at least 6 hours.

If you're looking for something fruit based, sorbet is the way to go. It's a great way to enjoy frozen treats without the dairy!

- 1½ c. water
- 1½ c. sugar
- 1 c. any fresh fruit juice

step one · Combine the water, sugar, and fruit juice in a saucepan, and bring to a boil.

step two · Reduce the heat to a simmer, and continue to cook for another 5 minutes.

step three · Pour into a metal loaf pan, and freeze for at least 6 hours.