

THE
REAL ESTATE & LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

Compliments of Stacey Shanner

ISSUE 05

THE MANY LAYERS OF
MELORA HARDIN



Stacey Shanner
REALTOR®

**WHAT'S YOUR HOME
REALLY WORTH?**

**SCAN TO SEE
YOUR ESTIMATED
HOME VALUE!**

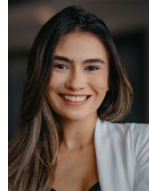


HS HOMESERVICES
OF AMERICA

Front of Tear Out Card 1



HS HOMESERVICES
OF AMERICA



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Back of Tear Out Card 1



Stay in your price range

It can be fun to peruse different vacation properties and their various luxuries, dreaming about savoring their priceless views. However, doing so can often lead to unrealistic expectations. Instead, establish a budget and stick to it throughout the search process, only looking at homes you can afford.

Know the area

Buying a home—particularly a vacation home—in a town you've never been can be a risky endeavor. Make sure you're familiar with the area rather than buying a house under the assumption you'll love it. Try renting a local home a few times so you can have a chance to explore and see if the location's right.

Do your research

If you plan on renting out your property, research the rules on the venture so you can be sure to comply with any state and county regulations (homeowners association, city boards, etc.). Connect with an agent who knows the market well and can guide you in the right direction.



THE REAL ESTATE & LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

Dear Bill and Judy

In the spring, fresh chances meet fresh starts, as front yards and back gardens are painted with the bright colors of flowers in bloom. For real estate, springtime is our annual selling season, when a flurry of listings typically appears on the local market, and eager buyers are given fresh choices to find exactly what fits their needs.

Opportunity is everywhere, from homeownership to transformative home decor, and the articles in this spring edition of The Real Estate and Lifestyle Magazine were inspired by the wonder of discovering something new. Whether it's an unexpected food pairing or a helpful hack for spring cleaning success, there's a lot to explore among these pages and I'm thrilled to share them with you.

Happy reading from your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network Forever Agent.

Please get in touch if you'd like to connect and learn more about the benefits of the spring selling season for buyers and sellers alike!

Stacey Shanner



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MELORA HARDIN PHOTO BY JOHAN JANSSON. PIZZA PHOTO BY EMILY WEAVING

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Freshen Up Your Patio or Deck for Spring

Written by **LAUREN KIM**

As the days grow longer and warmer, you may be eager to get out and enjoy your deck or patio. Consider decorating the area with these items to transform it into a peaceful outside haven.

Comfortable seating

Your space's dimensions might determine whether a small outdoor sofa or large sectional for lounging will work best for seating. Bring in a stylish coffee or bistro table, and you'll have a beautiful spot to enjoy warm, sunny mornings or entertain family and friends.

Cozy decor

Colorful pillows, an outdoor rug, and perhaps a warm blanket for those lingering cool nights can boost the personality and comfort of your outdoor area. Fill a large planter with water, plus some shells or stones, and insert a solar fountain to give your new hangout spot a soothing ambience. Flowering plants can also provide extra interest and beauty.

Cool shade

Provide yourself some protection from the elements by installing a pergola, retractable awning, or outdoor curtains so you can enjoy your newly outfitted space even on hotter or rainy days. A statement piece—like a large, cantilevered umbrella in a primary color or a sophisticated linen-colored shade sail—will allow you to match your coverage with your personality.

Mood lighting

Make your deck or patio magical after the sun sets by illuminating it with traditional string lights, lanterns, or a battery-operated chandelier. Another possibility: stick whimsical stakes of solar lights that can sway in the breeze around the edges of your new oasis.

Whether you wish to spend blissful afternoons or cool evenings outside, you can make those dreams a reality by creatively furnishing your deck or patio.



COLORFUL PILLOWS, AN OUTDOOR RUG, AND PERHAPS A WARM BLANKET FOR THOSE LINGERING COOL NIGHTS CAN BOOST THE PERSONALITY AND COMFORT OF YOUR OUTDOOR AREA.



ORGANIC
**LAWN
CARE**
MADE SIMPLE

Written by ALLISON GOMES



When the first weeds appear in your yard this season, you may be tempted to reach for the synthetic weed killer you bought from your local gardening store. But while it's sure to quickly zap those pesky intruders, it may not be the best option for you, your lawn, or the environment. Luckily, there is a healthier alternative—organic lawn care. By embracing natural methods, you can not only create a safer outdoor space for your family but also contribute to the overall well-being of the planet.

What is organic lawn care?

Organic lawn care is a holistic approach to maintaining your lawn without relying on harsh synthetic chemicals. It includes prioritizing all-natural products like organic fertilizers and compost to enrich the soil with essential nutrients, help improve its overall structure, and promote

plant health. Additionally, it encourages the use of natural weed-control methods like pulling or spreading corn gluten meal. Together, these practices create a sustainable and balanced ecosystem in your yard, resulting in a greener, healthier lawn that is ultimately safer for the people and pets who come in contact with it.

Making the transition

When swapping to all-natural lawn care, first test your soil to better understand its current pH and nutrient levels. Knowing where it's lacking will help you determine what amendments you can add to improve its overall health. You can purchase a soil-testing kit online or through a local nursery or store.

Once you have your game plan, prep your lawn by pulling any visible weeds, mowing your grass to about two inches, and aerating the soil to allow air, water, and nutrients to better penetrate it. You can then add whatever compost or organic fertilizer will serve it best. Such a conditioner will slowly release nutrients into the soil and provide your grass with what it needs to stay healthy and grow deep roots.

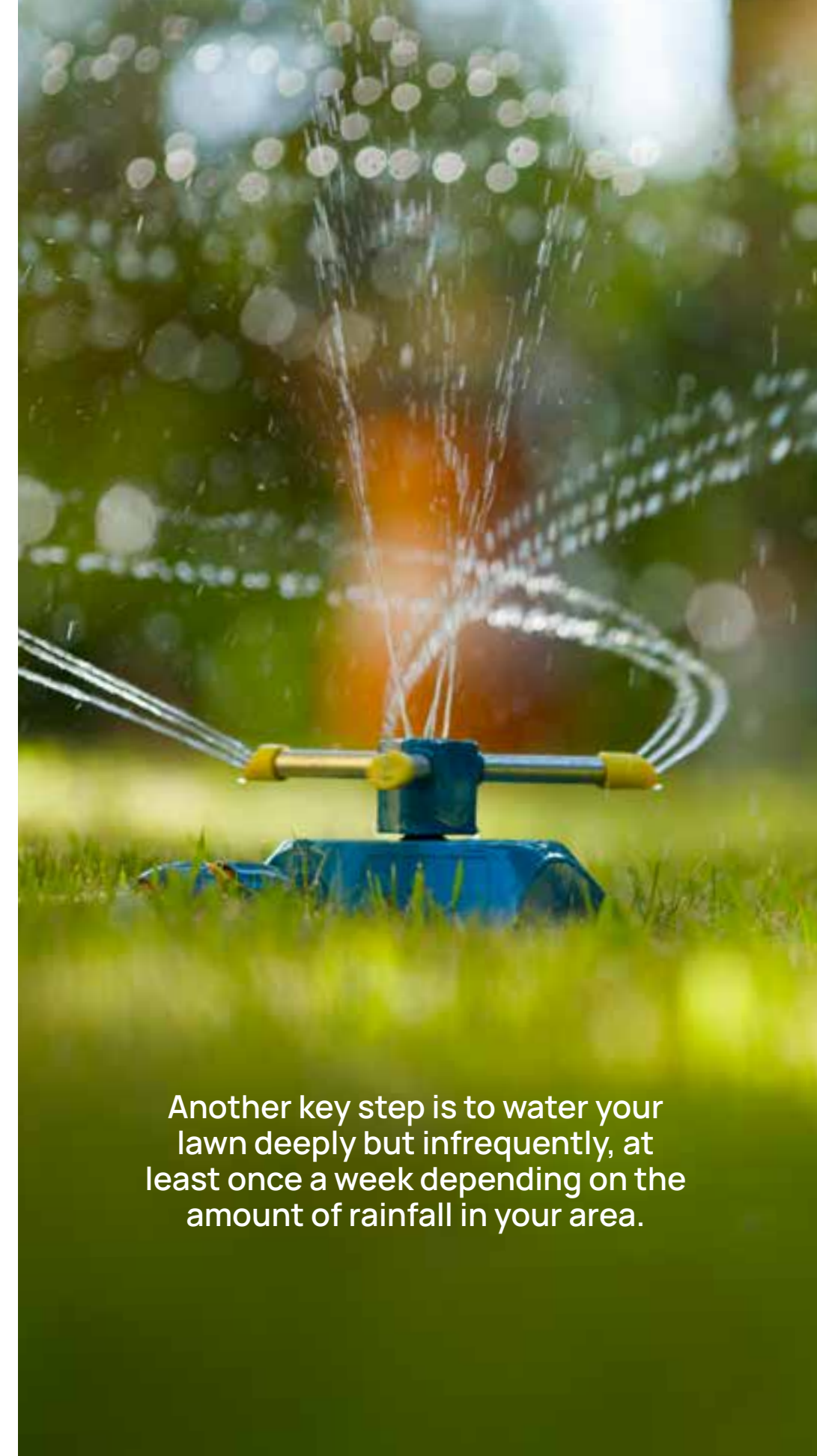
Maintaining your yard

It's best to mow your grass with sharp blades and leave it between three to four inches tall in spring and summer; the taller it is, the more it shades the soil, thereby keeping it moist and reducing weed growth. As a general rule, don't cut more than one-third of the grass each time you mow to avoid putting additional stress on it. You can also leave the

clippings on your lawn to let them decompose and release nutrients back into the soil.

Another key step is to water your lawn deeply but infrequently, at least once a week depending on the amount of rainfall in your area. (Just make sure to follow any local water-conservation ordinances.) Early morning is generally the best time since the sun won't be as intense, causing less evaporation. As for weed control, hand-pull or use tools to remove any as soon as you notice them, cutting them off before they have a chance to take root. You can also apply a layer of corn gluten meal in spring to better prevent their germination.

Organic lawn care is a sustainable practice that benefits both your home and the planet. By focusing on soil health and implementing natural practices, you can achieve a beautiful, healthy yard and create a safe and eco-friendly outdoor space.



Another key step is to water your lawn deeply but infrequently, at least once a week depending on the amount of rainfall in your area.



HOW TO FUTUREPROOF YOUR HOME

Written by CHRISTY MURDOCK

Both the world and your lifestyle are ever evolving, and that means it's essential to ensure that your home is equipped to meet your future needs as well as your current ones. Enter futureproofing, an approach that involves incorporating design and technology that adapt to shifting requirements for comfort and safety. Here are three key areas to focus on when upgrading your home to better guarantee its suitability for years to come.

EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

When planning for the future, two factors to keep in mind are your home's longevity and your finances, both of which you can bolster by making changes based on efficiency and sustainability. For one, improving your home's energy efficiency may put less strain on your systems and lower your cost of living. Consider solutions that can positively impact your heating and cooling, such as upgrading your home's insulation, installing new windows and doors, and choosing Energy Star appliances when your current ones need replacing. Though certainly more of an investment, solar panels are another great option due to the renewable energy they produce, reducing your dependence on gas or oil and, in turn, shrinking your energy bills.

Similarly, implementing water-saving features can make your home more

sustainable and lower your expenses. For example, you can switch out your bathroom's fixtures for low-flow versions to lower water consumption without sacrificing performance. If you're a gardener, you could also collect rainwater to use for irrigation or install a smart irrigation system that adjusts watering schedules based on weather conditions and soil moisture. (Just make sure you comply with local ordinances for water retention and usage.)

CHANGING NEEDS

While it's tempting to design your home for the life stage you're in right now, you should instead create flexible spaces for greater adaptability as your needs shift over time. One way to do so is by modifying certain rooms to serve multiple functions, such as by making your home office double as a guest room. Also, invest in furniture that can be reconfigured



While it's tempting to design your home for the life stage you're in right now, you should instead create flexible spaces for greater adaptability as your needs shift over time.



to suit different purposes and maximize space: think ottomans that provide both seating and storage and foldable tables that can be put away when needed.

In addition to these general upgrades, identify specific changes you can make based on your current life trajectory. For instance, if you're a parent with young children, focus on creating spaces that will grow with them. Forgo overly specific themes in favor of more neutral designs, and invest in multifunctional pieces that can be converted for other uses down the line, such as a crib that could transform into a child's bed when the time comes. With such versatility, it will be easier to make better use of your spaces as your kids get older.

Conversely, if you're on the verge of retirement or have a multigenerational home, look into age-in-place design ideas that can make your house accessible for everyone in the long term. Some good options include modifying doorways for wheelchairs and walkers,

creating no-step entryways to minimize injury risk, and installing grab bars and handrails to enhance safety.

TECHNOLOGY

The world is becoming increasingly digital, so it's important to make sure



your home is equipped with a robust connectivity infrastructure and high-speed internet to support numerous smart devices for multiple family members. Structured wiring, Wi-Fi boosters, and integrated ethernet ports can help ensure that everyone is and will continue to be up and running as technology grows even more essential for school, work, and connecting with loved ones.

It may also be worth integrating smart upgrades for climate control, lighting, and security, all of which can be run with a voice assistant like Amazon Alexa

or Google Nest. These enhancements can greatly improve the convenience, safety, and efficiency in your place and potentially reduce your energy costs.

Futureproofing your home is all about creating a living space that is sustainable and adaptable, equipping it to withstand the test of time and handle any changes that may arise regarding technology, your lifestyle, and your physical mobility. By making these kinds of improvements, you can better guarantee that it will remain comfortable, valuable, and ready for whatever your future holds.



MAXIMIZE YOUR BEDROOM CLOSET

Written by **LAUREN KIM**

If you find yourself having to dig through a heap of items just to find a single pair of pants, your shoes, or other clothing, your bedroom closet may need some reorganizing.

However, embarking on a full overhaul may take hours, time that could be better spent curling up with your favorite book or enjoying a coffee date with a loved one. Instead, try these easy tactics to help you quickly tame the chaos.

► **DECLUTTER**

One of the simplest ways to create extra room is by clearing out anything you either no longer want or won't need in the coming weeks. Grab a bag for tossing items with holes, stains, or other damage and a box for ones suitable to donate. Then pull out off-season garments to temporarily stow them elsewhere—perhaps under the bed in

a zipped fabric storage bag. Consider decluttering in small, focused sessions to help keep the task manageable.

► **HANG MORE ITEMS**

If your closet has a rod, you have several options to enhance your hanging space. For example, you could buy a package of slim hangers to fit in more of your wardrobe; just be aware that these tend to be flimsier than others, making them best for lighter items. They are, however, often covered in a nonslip material to better secure clothing and prevent a mess on your floor. You could also hang a closet organizer with tiers to provide convenient spots for folded items.



Additionally, aim to capitalize on the empty spaces on your closet walls and back of the door. Installing a few hooks in the former will allow you to hang hats and purses out of the way along with canvas bags to hold various items like sunglasses or socks; adhesive hooks are an easy alternative if you don't wish to drill holes. Add an over-the-door organizer as well, and you'll have handy pockets you could use to stash all sorts of items, from slippers and sneakers to belts and ties.

► **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TOP SHELVES**

It can be challenging to keep high shelves tidy, especially if they're hard for you to reach. A solution for utilizing this space more efficiently is to place containers that have see-through fronts or can be clearly labeled, allowing you to corral your belongings by type and quickly find them later. Also consider getting a step stool to give you easy access to the upper shelf; look for one that folds up compactly so you can put it in the back of your closet or underneath your bed.

► **INTRODUCE FLOOR UNITS**

Don't forget about the square footage at the bottom of your closet! To make the most of it, move all your hanging shirts, blouses, and other shorter items to one side to make room underneath for a wheeled multidrawer unit, stackable bins, or cubbies. Such pieces will offer extra storage for clothing like sweatshirts or T-shirts.

► **BRIGHTEN IT UP**

As a final touch, consider adding an LED wireless ceiling light so you can see your clothing more easily as you sort through it all for an outfit. Another option is to stick a few rechargeable motion-sensor lights on the walls to make sure every section is visible. With optimal lighting and a perfectly organized space, you can enjoy a truly stress-free closet experience.



SAY GOODBYE TO *OUTDATED* DECOR

Written by
ANDRE RIOS

Your home is a reflection of your sense of style, a collection of furniture, artwork, and more that is carefully curated to create your ideal ambience. But trends evolve, and what once felt like a must-have fad may now appear outdated, resulting in interiors that feel stale and uninspired. If you're ready for a fresher, more modern design, check out this guide to some of the most common decorative elements that could be aging your home along with more stylish alternatives for breathing new life into your spaces.



MATCHING BEDROOM SETS

For those who prefer a clean and perfectly matched appearance for their primary bedrooms, a comprehensive furniture bundle—featuring an identical bed frame, side tables, vanities, and/or dressers—may certainly have seemed like the ideal solution in the past. But while such a set is convenient and cohesive, it can also make arguably the most personal space in your home feel like it's right out of a furniture showroom: pretty and neat on the surface, yet ultimately dull and generic.

Instead, opt for distinct yet compatible pieces that lend a stylish look representative of your unique personality. A simple trick for achieving this is to vary the materials as you shop for new bedroom furniture. For example, you could select an upholstered bed frame, stone end tables, a wooden dresser, and a metallic vanity mirror, depending on your specific tastes. As for color, diversifying shades from very light to completely dark will create eye-catching variety. Curate your bedroom with variable selections, and you'll imbue the space with a visually stunning range of hues and textures you won't soon grow tired of.



WORD ART

“Live, Laugh, Love” was once the battle cry of American suburbia, but this and other word-based decor may have drawn their final breath. “No one needs to be told to ‘EAT’ while they’re in a kitchen,” designer Taylor Johnson tells Apartment Therapy. It’s time to swap these canned sayings for some more unique and striking wall decor.

Take a risk by embracing creative features such as framed original pieces from local artists (or prints if you’d like to save money) or antique paintings from secondhand shops. If you aren’t sure where to start, search for art that communicates the feeling those cliché statements are meant to illustrate; for example, replace the words “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” with an uplifting and bright-colored sketch for greater impact.

GLOSSY ACCENT DECOR

It’s hard to miss highly reflective and light-catching decorations, whether they’re made of glass, glazed ceramic, or shiny plastic. Such goods were once sought-after for their supposed elegance—before they became representative of mass-produced pieces that appear cheap and bland. So while they may have had their place in the sun, it’s now the era of matte pieces, which lend a much more tasteful touch to their surroundings.

To give any room a style update, upgrade items like lamps, vases, and candleholders to ones made from materials that are naturally nonreflective, such as stone, porcelain, and terra-cotta, in muted colors to guarantee that you get that sophisticated matte finish. Of course, if you still want to retain some glossy elements in a space, this is by no means forbidden; just opt for metal pieces instead. Such decor is timeless and appears naturally shiny, making it a stylish exception.





SHAGGY RUGS

Once synonymous with comfort due to their relaxed feel and long pile, shaggy rugs were common elements for crafting a welcoming living room or bedroom. However, they aren't without their drawbacks. Their dangling fibers can create a tripping hazard and tend to cling to messes and never let go, potentially spawning some unfortunate odors over time.

For these reasons, you'll want to replace any longer rugs in your home with more chic alternatives: short-pile ones that display a subtle pattern in various neutral colors and are made with low-maintenance wool or cotton fibers. Their simplified style and reduced care needs will make a tremendous difference in any room.



CORPORATE DINING ROOMS

Nothing says "good eating" like a glass table and black leather chairs, right? The businesslike look of minimalist dining rooms may seem clean and forward-thinking, but it ultimately lacks the warm, welcoming vibe that such a valuable hosting space needs. (You may end up requiring that "EAT" sign after all to indicate this room is for holding meals and not meetings.)

If your dining area feels too coldly contemporary, try warming up the color scheme by swapping stark-white wall paint or furniture for more comforting neutrals with hints of green or peach. Then incorporate a few elements like a vintage sideboard, classical oil painting, or antique table centerpiece. However, avoid going *too* traditional. Good design is all about balance, after all, and a space that marries contemporary with classic features will welcome guests and residents alike to enjoy a shared meal and forge stronger bonds.

If your dining area feels too coldly contemporary, try warming up the color scheme by swapping stark-white wall paint or furniture for more comforting neutrals with hints of green or peach.

A full-page photograph of Melora Hardin. She is standing in a lush, colorful floral environment, leaning against a dark green armchair. She is wearing a long-sleeved, high-necked top with a vibrant, multi-colored floral pattern and bright yellow trousers. Her hair is blonde and styled in a short, layered cut. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a dense wall of various flowers, including red anthuriums, purple hydrangeas, and pink roses, creating a rich, textured backdrop.

THE MANY LAYERS OF *MELORA HARDIN*

Interview with **MELORA HARDIN** / Written by **LAUREN KIM** / Photography **AS NOTED**

Photography by **JOHAN JANSSON**
Stylist **RANDY SMITH**
Hair & makeup **STEEVE DAVIAULT**

Actress and director Melora Hardin, best known for her roles on *The Office*, *Monk*, and *The Bold Type* and her Emmy-nominated turn on *Transparent*, is also a passionate collage artist and wallpaper designer. She discusses her creative process and how it informs her work on, off, and behind the screen.

How did you get started in collage art?

As a little girl, I was always creating and drawing, and I kept getting pulled into collage. I enjoyed being messy, adding layers, and making something. I also loved that I could cover a collage up with something else if I didn't like it. It was a fun way to express myself—it was kind of like doodling.

How did you get back into collaging?

When I started making my documentary, *Hunter's Thunder*, collaging was something I could use to inform me as an editor. It's a little like directing because they are both about putting pieces together to tell a story. It's this ability to tell stories that attracts me most to collaging.

I also did a lot of collaging in Montreal while shooting *The Bold Type* since I hadn't been to that city before and was about 3,000 miles away from my family and friends. I felt compelled to collage since I knew there would be downtime. It gave me something relaxing to do to balance the intensity of the work I had done in Los Angeles with Hunter Austin, the subject of my documentary.

What is your documentary about?

It's both an inside look at my friendship with Hunter and a story about a meaningful chance connection, real-life serendipity and healing, and women holding women up. It's 85 percent self-shot and is quite intimate. With a documentary, you follow real life, not a script, so I didn't know where the story was taking me. When I started editing my footage, I did a series of collages to help me figure out what I wanted to say. My collages resonated with Hunter; it was incredible to see my art



Photography by JOHAN JANSSON
Stylist RANDY SMITH
Hair & makeup STEVE DAVIAULT



PHOTO COURTESY OF MELORA HARDIN



Photography by JOHAN JANSSON
Stylist RANDY SMITH
Hair & makeup STEEVE DAVIAULT

have such an effect on somebody. They gave her an imaginative escape that helped her heal and create a new vision for her life.

Does being a collage artist and an actor share any similarities?

Yes. In acting and directing, as with collaging, you sometimes need to release control and allow intuition and instinct to lead. The process requires a lot of skill because you have to know how to relax your brain to get the best results.

What is your creative process when collaging?

I begin by looking through magazines. I have piles of them—new ones, vintage *National*

Geographic and *Life* magazines, and some from France. Anytime I see an interesting image on paper or cardboard, I save it. When I go to an airport, I find a newsstand and flip through each publication; if I find something intriguing, I buy it. Later, I'll cut out what I like—I have piles of clippings to pull from when collaging. I sometimes accent the images with gold, silver, or copper leaf and usually glue everything together with Mod Podge.

Where do you create your collages?

I work on them wherever I go, but I really love to spend time on them in Montreal—that's where I have the most space to spread out and

make a mess. Rather than glue them together right away, I leave my collages out for a while. Then, when I'm happy with a collage, I take photos of it so I can take it apart, reassemble it, and glue it down. Putting my collages back together exactly as they were before is the tricky part.

I've filled a bedroom wall in my place in Los Angeles with my collages. When I wake up in the morning, I gaze at them and let them speak to me. On another wall in my bedroom, I've hung more collages using adhesive strips that allow me to easily move them around. My husband loves them; when I told him I was going to put them all over the wall, he was fine with it.

Tell us about your wallpaper collection:

It's called Storyboards by Melora Hardin because everything in the collection tells a story—you can even infuse them with your own imaginings. My first experiment for the series was a collage I made for the bathroom wall in my Montreal condo. The collage makes the space, which has a big bathtub, feel incredibly restful. I can soak, relax, and gaze at its



Much of my collection is inspired by *Hunter's Thunder* and the idea of metamorphosis and healing.

giant blooms, butterflies, and ancient-looking sculpture—it has an owl perched on it that appears to be looking at me. The scene in the collage can be almost anything, whether a lake or a garden—the possibilities are endless.

Do the wall coverings you designed have a unifying theme?

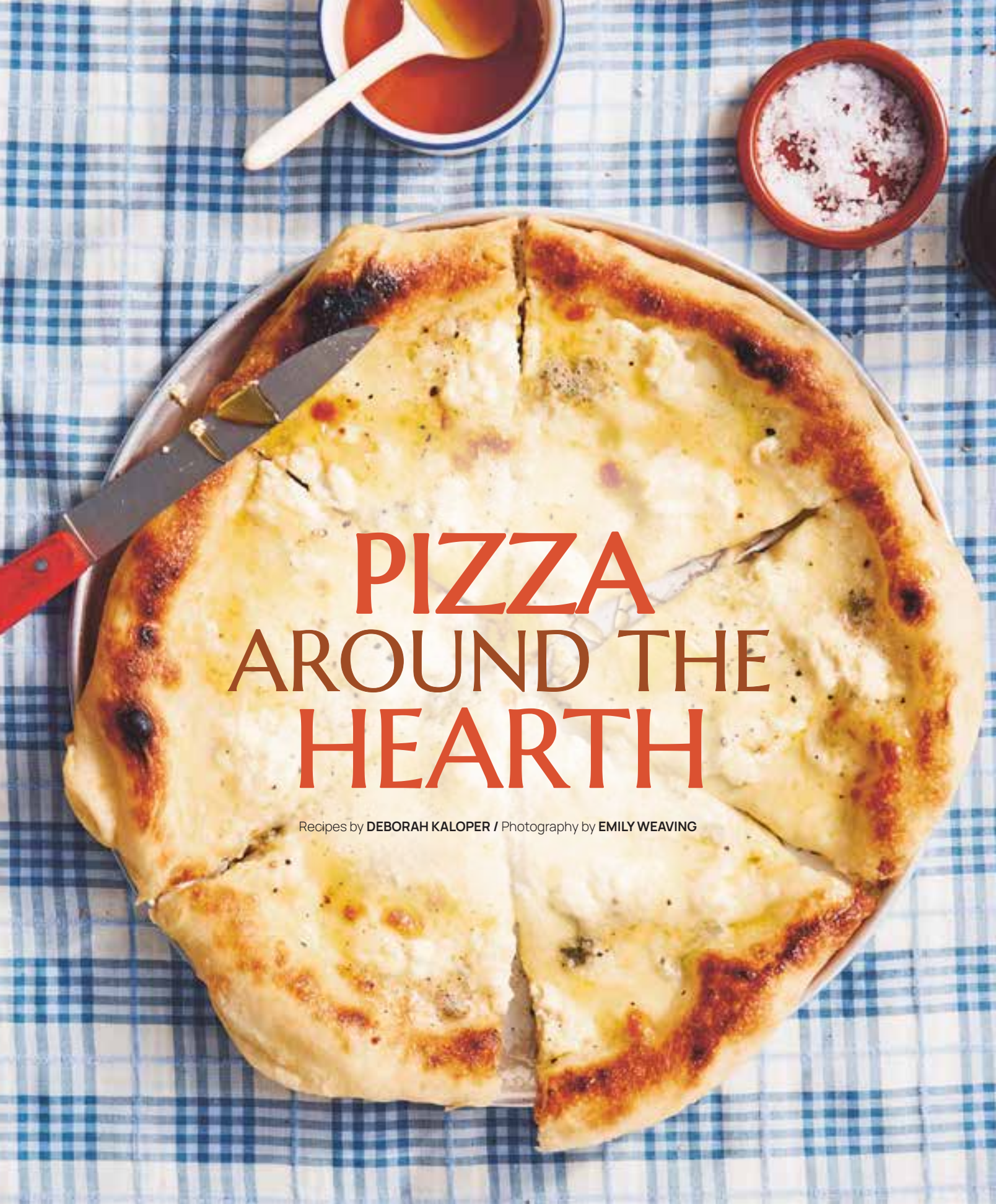
Much of my collection is inspired by *Hunter's Thunder* and the idea of metamorphosis and healing. Some elements it features, such as butterflies and flowers, are about letting the light in since shame can only exist in the shadows. For example, my "Birds of a Feather" pattern has a bleak black-and-white background, but it also has a vibrant gold and pink foreground.

Is your decorating style as colorful as your collages and wallpaper?

Yes—I want my spaces to be warm and welcoming. I'm what you'd call eclectic and "house proud." In my homes, I have lots of magic and whimsy and have collected many things. I love that my wallpaper can turn a room into a work of art.

For more info, visit melora.com





PIZZA AROUND THE HEARTH

Recipes by **DEBORAH KALOPER** / Photography by **EMILY WEAVING**



Recipes excerpted from *Pizza Night* by Deborah Kaloper.
© Smith Street Books 2023.
Photography by Emily Weaving.



SCAN THE QR CODE
for the full cookbook.

QUATTRO FORMAGGI

MAKES ONE 9½ INCH PIZZA

INGREDIENTS:



SEE PG. 39

8 oz. Neapolitan pizza dough ball
1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
2¼ oz. fior di latte, torn
2¼ oz. ricotta, drained
1¾ oz. gorgonzola, crumbled
1¾ oz. provolone, sliced or grated
Salt flakes
Pepper
Honey, for drizzling

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1/** Place a pizza stone on the bottom rack of the cold oven. Set the oven to its highest temperature (ideally 500°F fan-forced) and preheat for 1 hour.
- 2/** Following the Neapolitan pizza dough instructions, use your hands to press, pat and stretch the dough ball out to form a 9½ in. circle. Lightly brush the dough with the olive oil and scatter the cheeses evenly over the top.
- 3/** Carefully transfer the pizza to the hot pizza stone and bake for 8–10 minutes, until the crust is golden and cooked through, and the cheese is melted and bubbling.
- 4/** Season the pizza with salt and pepper, and drizzle with a little honey for a delicious, sweet hit.



FIG, GORGONZOLA & PROSCIUTTO

MAKES ONE 9½ INCH PIZZA

INGREDIENTS:



SEE PG. 39

8 oz. Neapolitan pizza dough ball
1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
6 basil leaves
2¾ oz. fior di latte, torn
1¾ oz. gorgonzola, crumbled
2 small figs, quartered
3–4 thin slices prosciutto
Honey, for drizzling
1 tablespoon chopped and
toasted hazelnuts
Black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1/** Place a pizza stone on the bottom rack of the cold oven. Set the oven to its highest temperature (ideally 500°F fan-forced) and preheat for 1 hour.
- 2/** Following the Neapolitan pizza dough instructions, use your hands to press, pat and stretch the dough ball out to form a 9½ in. circle. Drizzle with the oil and top with the basil leaves, fior di latte, gorgonzola and quartered figs.
- 3/** Carefully transfer the pizza to the hot pizza stone and bake for 8–10 minutes, until the crust is golden and cooked through, and the cheese is melted.
- 4/** Top the pizza with the prosciutto and drizzle with a little honey. Finish with the hazelnuts and a little black pepper, and serve.



BBQ CHICKEN

MAKES ONE 9½ INCH PIZZA

INGREDIENTS:



SEE PG. 39

- 8 oz. Neapolitan pizza dough ball
- ⅓ cup shredded roast chicken
- ½ cup barbecue sauce of your choice
- 1½ oz. smoked mozzarella, shredded
- 1½ oz. gouda, shredded
- ½ oz. small red onion, sliced
- 8 slices pickled jalapeños
- 1–2 tablespoons ranch dressing

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1/** Place a pizza stone on the bottom rack of the cold oven. Set the oven to its highest temperature (ideally 500°F fan-forced) and preheat for 1 hour.
- 2/** Following the Neapolitan pizza dough instructions, use your hands to press, pat and stretch the dough ball out to form a 9½ in. circle.
- 3/** Mix the chicken and ¼ cup of the barbecue sauce together. Spread the remaining barbecue sauce over the dough and top with half the mozzarella, half the gouda, and all of the chicken. Scatter over the red onion, jalapeno and remaining cheese.
- 4/** Carefully transfer the pizza to the hot pizza stone and bake for 8–10 minutes, until the crust is golden and cooked through, and the cheese is melted and bubbling.
- 5/** Remove from the oven, drizzle with the ranch dressing and serve.



NEAPOLITAN PIZZA DOUGH

MAKES 1 POUND 15 OUNCE DOUGH OR FOUR 9½ INCH PIZZAS

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb. 2 oz. 00 pizza flour or bread flour, plus extra if needed and for dusting

2 teaspoons caster (superfine) sugar

1¾ teaspoons fine sea salt

1 teaspoon instant dried yeast

11 fl. oz. lukewarm water

3 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing

Notes:

This is a high hydration dough, so it is wet and sticky compared to a drier bread dough.

Depending on room temperature, proving can take up to 4 hours.

Do not use a rolling pin to shape your pizza dough, as this will deflate it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1/ To use a stand mixer, attach the dough hook and combine the flour, sugar, salt and yeast in the bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the water and olive oil. Turn the mixer to low speed, slowly add the water and oil and mix for 2–3 minutes, until the dough forms a rough ball. Rest the dough for 1 minute, then mix for another 1–2 minutes, until a smooth ball forms. If the dough seems too wet and sticky (see Notes), add another tablespoon of flour and mix for a further 1 minute to combine.

2/ To mix the dough using your hands, combine the dry ingredients in a bowl. Combine the wet ingredients in a separate bowl, then use your hands to incorporate the wet and dry ingredients together. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and knead for about 8 minutes, until a soft, smooth dough forms, and shape into a ball.

3/ Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover tightly and allow it to rest in a warm place for about 2 hours, or until doubled in size (see Notes).

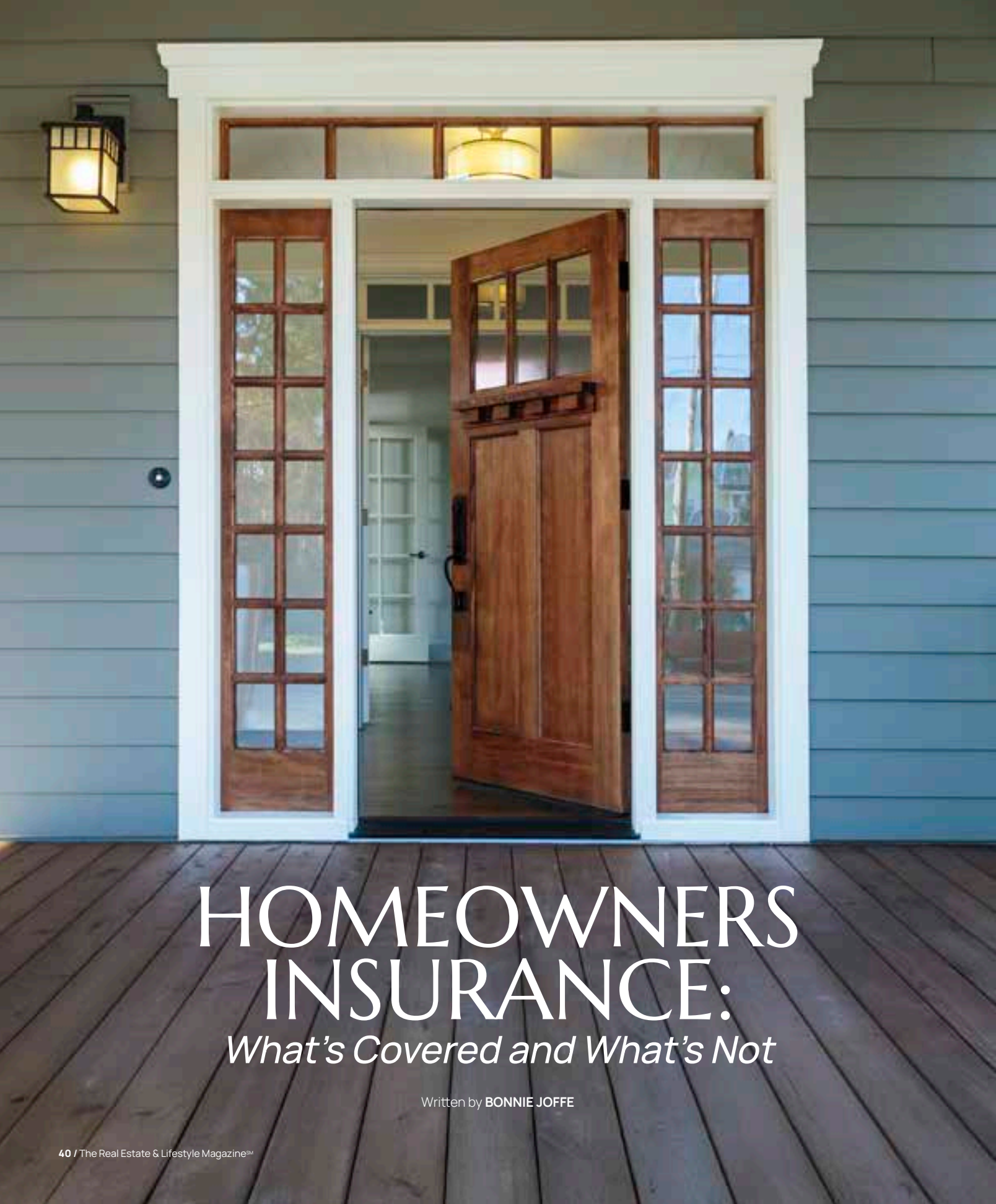
4/ Divide the dough into four equal portions. Using your hands, shape each portion into a ball and place on a lightly oiled tray, then cover and allow to rise for at least 3–4 hours, until doubled in size.

5/ Alternatively, for a slow rise that will increase the flavour of the dough, follow the instructions above, but place the portions of dough in individual lightly oiled airtight containers, with room to rise. Seal and refrigerate overnight, or up to 3 days. Allow the dough to rise for 4–6 hours, until doubled in size.

SHAPING THE DOUGH

Sprinkle a work surface with flour, place a dough ball on top and lightly dust with a little more flour. Place your hands (see Notes) in the centre of the ball and push and stretch the dough out to a 9½ in. circle. Take care to not deflate the air bubbles in the outer ½–¾ in. edge, as these will create a beautifully aerated crust.

Your dough is now ready for topping and cooking.



HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE:

What's Covered and What's Not

Written by BONNIE JOFFE



If you own a home, regardless of its type, you need homeowners insurance. It may cover your dwelling's structure and your personal belongings from various risks, such as fire, theft, and vandalism, and can potentially help pay for legal fees and damages if someone is injured on your property. However, not all policies are created equal; coverage will vary depending on your policy and insurance company along with your home's age, location, and value. Check out this handy guide to better understand what may or may not be included in your homeowners insurance.

WHAT'S COVERED

A standard homeowners insurance policy usually provides basic protection, but verify with your insurer what exactly falls under your policy so you know what you can expect if you need to submit a claim.

A home's structures

If your home suffers damage due to fire, smoke, theft, or vandalism, a standard homeowners policy normally covers the repair or replacement of the dwelling's main components—the foundation, walls, and roof—and may pay for alternate lodging if your home needs to be rebuilt. Other common structures, such as a garage, deck, or fence, may also fall under the standard coverage umbrella.

Personal belongings

Homeowners insurance often includes coverage for personal property inside your home that has been damaged by fire, stolen, or vandalized. Your policy may help pay for repairs or replace your belongings. If you have any high-value items, such as jewelry or artwork, you may need to purchase extended coverage to protect against their potential loss or damage.

Water damage

Water damage is typically covered, as long as it's from sudden and accidental events such as a burst pipe, failed water heater, or broken washing machine hose.

In addition, if your roof leaks due to a covered event like hail or a severe storm, your policy will often cover the cost of repairing it.

HVAC system

If your HVAC unit gets damaged from an unforeseen event such as a severe storm or fire, your policy will likely replace or repair it. However, this would not be the case if a unit breaks due to age or negligence.

Liability

A standard policy will typically help pay for legal fees and medical expenses if someone is injured on your property. You may even be covered if you have a dog that bites someone, though some companies won't insure specific breeds.

WHAT'S NOT COVERED

Understanding what's not included in your homeowners insurance policy can help you be better prepared in the event of a loss. Consider purchasing additional coverage for specific risks depending on your location and situation.

Flood and earthquake damage

If you live in a flood or earthquake zone, you may want to seek separate insurance as a standard



homeowners insurance policy will not cover this type of damage.

Plumbing

While the resulting water damage may be covered, homeowners insurance usually won't pay to repair or replace a burst pipe or broken water heater. The exception to this would be if they are damaged due to a fire or storm; in these cases, they should fall under your dwelling coverage.

Termite damage

Termite damage is viewed as preventable, so treatment and

repair are not covered under your homeowners policy. The only caveat is that if the termites chew through wires and cause a fire, some insurers may cover the repair of the fire damage.

Certain roof damage

Though your roof is covered under your standard policy, the insurer will not pay for a roof leak or other issues if it determines such damage is due to lack of maintenance, age, neglect, or abuse.

The cost of homeowners insurance can vary, so make sure to compare quotes from different insurers before choosing a policy. And always review your policy annually to ensure that it still meets your needs.



A CLEANING GUIDE

FOR YOUR TRICKIEST CLOTHING

Written by LAUREN KIM

If you've been doing laundry most of your life, you likely have a routine down pat. But even the most seasoned pros may stumble over certain items or even wash them incorrectly due to their unique care requirements. Follow this guide to cleaning some of the more difficult pieces of clothing to help ensure that you get them spick-and-span every time.

JEANS

Let's start with jeans, which are often washed too often according to Levi Strauss & Co. Unless they're noticeably dirty or have an odor, the iconic denim brand recommends laundering them only after every ten wears or so to preserve their original fit. Turn your jeans inside out to prevent color fading before washing them in cold water and on a gentle cycle in your machine. But don't toss them in the dryer, which can cause shrinking; instead, hang them or lay them flat. As a bonus tip, you can spot-treat any stains with a mild soap and damp cloth in between washings.

SNEAKERS

Though your sneakers may fare fine in your machines depending on their material, it's generally recommended to clean them by hand when they start to look or smell a little worse for wear. Start by removing loose dirt with a dry, soft-bristled shoe brush or toothbrush. Then take out the laces and insoles and clean them separately in a solution of mild laundry or dish detergent and water. Give them a rubdown, rinse thoroughly, and blot dry with a cloth. Use the same cleaning solution to scrub the exterior of the shoes with a brush, wiping away the soapy residue with a dry cloth.

To dry, stuff your shoes with paper towels and place them, the laces, and the insoles on a towel indoors. This process may take up to a day or two, but you can speed it up by replacing the paper towels every couple of hours and placing a small fan in front of the items.



SOCKS

Your socks may be some of the smallest items in your laundry basket, but they require more of your attention. For one, wash them in a mesh bag; tossing them into your laundry pile with everything else almost guarantees they'll be separated. Also, turn them inside out so your machine can better remove sweat and bacteria transferred from your skin. Most socks can go in the washer and dryer, but delicate materials like wool should be air-dried to maintain their shape and avoid damage.

BASEBALL CAPS

Whether worn to ball games or on errands, these hats are among America's favorite headgear. And, yes, they should be washed like everything else you wear. But don't be fooled by their simple appearance—they require delicate care. Use a soapy solution and a toothbrush or soft-bristle brush to pretreat stains, then soak your hat in the solution for at least fifteen minutes. Rinse thoroughly, and air-dry by placing it over a bowl to keep its shape.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE ACTIVEWEAR

To maintain the elasticity and moisture-wicking properties of your yoga pants and other workout gear, proper care is essential. First and foremost, wash them immediately after each exercise session to prevent odor and bacteria growth. (They can go an extra use if just worn out and about.) To better eliminate smell, presoak your gear in a solution of one part distilled vinegar to four parts water for at least fifteen minutes before washing. Always turn these garments inside out and place them in a mesh laundry bag, using a gentle wash cycle with cool water. Finally, air-dry or tumble-dry on low heat.

By following these general tips, your clothing will likely last longer and look better. Just make sure to always check for care labels so you can give all your favorite threads the proper TLC they deserve.





CRAFT A *SIMPLE* CLEANING PLAN

Written by DAKOTA DAMSCHRODER

When it comes to cleaning, it can be easy for essential tasks to slip through the cracks amid the busyness of life. However, there's a simple solution that may help—breaking down your typical chores into daily, weekly, and monthly categories. Use these timelines to create a tailored schedule that works for you, and you can better maintain your home without feeling overwhelmed.

Daily

Part of what can make a bigger cleaning session feel so intimidating is the buildup of clutter and residue that requires more time and effort to put back in order. Instead, identify tasks that could be worth doing for just a minute or two every day. For instance, you could wipe the kitchen counters and take care of any dishes each night. By tackling these chores piecemeal, you can prevent them from piling up and being a hassle to handle later.

Weekly

At least once a week, you'll want to hit the areas where dust, dirt, and grime tend to accumulate the most. Generally speaking, this category will include tasks like dusting, vacuuming, and wiping down your toilets and bathroom counters. You should also make sure to wash your bed linens weekly to ensure a continuously fresh and comfortable sleeping environment.

Monthly

This group is reserved for infrequent chores such as scrubbing the microwave, oven, refrigerator, cabinets, and ceiling fans. Do a walkthrough of your house to identify the areas you often overlook, then make a game plan of when to take care of them and how often. Not everything may need to be done every month, but having a list will help you stay on top of it all to keep your home clean and organized, contributing to a greater sense of well-being and peace of mind.



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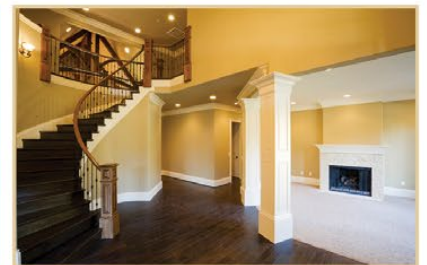
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