

Compliments of Joseph C. Collins

start HEALTHY

ISSUE 53

*IMPACTFUL,
CREATIVE
GIFT-GIVING
IDEAS*

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Joseph C. Collins
Insurance Associate

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COVERAGE.



Front of Tear Out Card 1

CAULIFLOWER AND BACON *pasta*





Joseph C. Collins
Insurance Associate

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57 percent of readers save these tear out cards to reference recipes and other helpful tips and pass along your contact info to referrals.

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Back of Tear Out Card 1

make

- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- ½ lb. thick-cut bacon, diced
- 1 small head cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 c. chicken stock
- Kosher salt
- 1 lb. dried cavatelli
- 1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ c. grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 tsp. chili flakes

measure

1. Heat the canola oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until crisp. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate, leaving the rendered fat in the pan. Add the cauliflower and sauté until it begins to color and soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Use a spoon to hold back the contents of the pan and pour out and discard most of the fat. Return the pan to the heat and add the shallots and garlic. Cook until the shallots are softened, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken stock, raise the heat to medium-high, and simmer for 5 minutes.
2. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta according to package instructions. Drain, then add the pasta to the pan with the cauliflower. Add the cooked bacon and sherry vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is hot and fully combined. Transfer to a serving bowl and top with the Parmesan, parsley, and chili flakes.

Recipe from *Everyday Chef: Simple Dishes for Family and Friends* by Jeremy Sewall and Erin Byers Murray, Rizzoli New York 2025.
Photography by Michael Harlan Turkell.

SERVES 4



Dear Bill and Judy,

As the air turns crisp and the light softens, it's natural to slow down and return to what truly restores you. In this issue of Start Healthy, you'll find inspiration for stepping back from constant noise and leaning into balance, from unplugging with intention to proactively caring for your body.

Wellness often begins with a positive mindset. If you've been feeling tethered to your devices, you'll discover a refreshing perspective on creating tech-free habits. Tips for a Sunday recalibration and a five-minute mood refresh also encourage you to build small rituals that help you reset and refocus.

Focusing on prevention can also sustain your health. From expertise on low-impact movement to insights on inflammation-fighting foods and the essential role of magnesium, you'll see how everyday choices can strengthen your body. And be sure to explore the seasonal recipes, including comforting soup and roasted sweet potatoes, which offer nourishing options for your table.

The holidays often remind us that well-being extends outward. Features on thoughtful gift-giving, community involvement, and restorative wellness escapes reveal opportunities to choose connection and renewal, both close to home and beyond.

Here's hoping these ideas help you move through autumn feeling energized and ready to kick off the holiday season! As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

Joseph C. Collins



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Add a personal letter to the front inside cover that speaks to your connections. This personalization leads 77 percent of recipients to better appreciate the sender.

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Satisfying Solutions to **SCREEN FATIGUE**

written by: ANTHONY COFFMAN

TECHNOLOGY HAS WOVEN ITS WAY INTO ALMOST EVERY ASPECT OF our lives, from our leisure activities to our work and even to many of our self-care routines. But as we drift from one screen to another, we may start to feel tethered to smartphones, computer monitors, and TVs—or maybe even dependent on them.

While these gadgets certainly have value, overrelying on them can carry significant drawbacks to your well-being. Chief among these include heightened stress and anxiety, diminished quality time with loved ones, and a more sedentary lifestyle (a major risk factor for obesity, heart disease, and diabetes).

Before you turn on another device as a reflex, set aside some screenless time instead. After all, unplugging for at least part of each day can open you up to a world of benefits. Try these enriching activities, each of which can empower you to live a more well-rounded life.

Each issue is filled with feel-good content that engages your audience and makes 80 percent of recipients more likely to do business with you.





TAKE A **WALK**

Nature offers a perfect antidote to the digital world. Taking in thriving greenery and fresh air can reduce stress, boost your mood, and enhance your memory. Either alone or with a loved one, consider taking a leisurely stroll around the neighborhood or a park. For a more challenging activity, lace up your hiking boots and hit a rugged trail. You could even try your hand at bird-watching or identifying local plant life, either of which can make your time outdoors feel more engaging and provide a sense of connection to your environment. And while you may be tempted to add a soundtrack to your activities, truly unplugging means leaving your headphones at home so you can take in the enriching natural soundscapes or conversation with a cherished companion.



CHALLENGE YOUR **BODY**

One of the most worthwhile ways to invest your free time is in your own physical fitness. Staying active not only benefits your heart health, among other perks, but also remedies the sedentary lifestyle largely associated with heavy device usage. Devote some of your sessions away from screens each week to getting more steps in or practicing a new exercise regimen (kickboxing or dancing, for example). Alternatively, set a specific physical goal like surpassing thirty-pound bicep curls or touching your toes. Once you start to see results of your training or achieve certain milestones, you'll experience a sense of satisfaction that hours lost to screen time is unlikely to match.



PICK UP A **BOOK**

Escape into a fictional world with a good, old-fashioned novel or learn fascinating real-life stories in a nonfiction work. Reading stimulates your brain, expands your vocabulary, and can open the door for fulfilling social occasions such as book club meetings. While you can experience these same benefits via e-books, opting for a physical product boosts your immersion in stories without the distractions of ads or notifications—or the negative effects of blue light.



CONTINUE YOUR **EDUCATION**

You might love reading for its own sake, but you could also turn to books to educate yourself on specific topics or improve your real-life skills. For instance, crack open an instructional book on playing the guitar or piano or check out textbooks from your local library to learn a new language. Even if you'd like to improve your tech skills, such as photo editing, reading a physical book disengages you from a hobby that would otherwise keep you glued to a screen. Mastering a new ability provides a creative outlet and feelings of accomplishment.



LEARN TO **COOK**

This skill deserves its own dedicated focus; after all, one of the healthiest activities you could pursue is enhancing your cooking chops. Crafting homemade meals with fresh ingredients is generally cheaper and more nutritious than dining out, especially when feeding your whole family. To become a true artisan in the kitchen, utilize cookbooks to take up other culinary skills like baking and intricate coffee-brewing methods.



GIVE **BACK**

For an ultra-satisfying means of spending your time offline, engage in community service or simply help someone in need. Volunteer at a local shelter, participate in a street cleanup session, or mentor an individual in your neighborhood. (Maybe you have a skill you could impart on someone else!) Performing acts of kindness not only makes an immediate difference in others' lives but also benefits you in return, providing a sense of purpose, enhancing your personal satisfaction, and potentially improving your mental health.

Ultimately, moderating screen time is not about rejecting technological advancements altogether but, rather, integrating them into a more balanced lifestyle. If you need a little help kick-starting your unplugging journey, try setting tech-free zones (the bedroom is a great place to start) or screenless sessions, such as the final two hours before going to bed. You could even implement time limits on your smart devices and schedule more in-person catch-ups than virtual ones. However you approach it, making a concerted effort to unplug once in a while can recharge your mind and body, strengthen your relationships, and help you rediscover the joys of the offline world.

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exercise WITH EASE

written by: ANDRE RIOS
photography courtesy of: GYMGUYZ



INTENSE EXERCISE CARRIES THE RISK OF INJURING YOUR MUSCLES AND JOINTS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE A SENIOR. HOWEVER, PERSONAL TRAINER **HENRY POLLOCK** OF GYMGUYZ IN AUSTIN, TEXAS, EXPLAINS HOW YOU CAN WORK OUT MORE SAFELY WITH LOW-IMPACT ALTERNATIVES.





“
**Exercising safely is really
just about not stressing the
body past a certain point.**

***Tell us about your
fitness background:***

I've been in fitness and parks-and-recreation management for about thirteen years. I started by receiving a personal training certification, then started working for a municipal recreation center, where I fell in love with the parks system. I worked my way up the chain and have had multiple certifications, including becoming an ISSA Certified Master Trainer, which is my current role at GYMGUIZ.

I've held over 2,500 sessions in my time, guiding a variety of different classes and clients. I absolutely love fitness, and my motto is always to make people healthier and happier than when we first met.

***How would you define
low-impact exercise?***

These are exercises that aren't too hard on any of the muscles or joints. They're easily accessible for seniors and won't cause any further injury or extreme pain.

High-impact activities include anything that involves jumping or heavy weightlifting. Obviously, we don't want to put seniors through intense sprinting, downhill running, or heavy squats, for example. But "high-impact" is a relative term depending on the person, and it's not necessarily a bad thing—just as low-impact doesn't necessarily mean "good workouts." Exercising safely is really just about not stressing the body past a certain point.

***Should even young and
able-bodied people be
concerned about impact?***

In a sense, yes. You can always overload your body, and high-impact exercise always carries more risk than low-impact fitness. The former has a place

in any routine, though. Weight training is a great exercise for many seniors. You'll need to build lean muscle mass as you get older, which can keep you safe against falls and other risks. These people should tailor their approach to high-impact exercises, not omit them.

***What are some examples of
low-impact exercises?***

They include squatting-to-standing moves or sitting-to-standing ones, using the wall to do push-ups, doing calisthenics on a floor or bench, and other body-weight exercises like hip hinges or thrusts. These are exercises you can do without incorporating extra weights. Some other low-impact exercises that I strongly recommend, especially for seniors, are yoga and water or aerobic exercises. Getting in the water is extremely good for your body because it naturally diffuses impact, but you can still stress the right muscle groups and get a good cardio workout.

Recumbent bikes, ellipticals, and upper-body bikes also offer great cardio exercise. These are generally low-impact in nature and carry a low risk of injury. Some other good trainings include balance exercises, such as tai chi and slow-marching with heel-toe movements.

How important is form for impact?

Form is critical for any type of exercise, whether you're working with strength equipment or just walking. It's really what trainers look at to make sure that our clients are doing exercises correctly, even simple ones, since using the correct modality reduces their risk of injury. What's key is working gradually according to your needs and seeking a trainer's help to check your form and help you make progress.

What are the top advantages of working out with a trainer?

It's extremely important to seek advice because each person is different: their injuries, ailments, goals, etc. Ultimately, when you hire a trainer, you're going to get better results because they will help you stick to the "big three" in fitness: accountability, a plan, and nutrition, tailoring them to your needs.

When I work with clientele, I always start with an assessment to understand where they are and what their needs are. Everyone has different goals. Many of my clients live a more sedentary life, but others have experienced balance issues due to vertigo or even a serious injury and are learning how to walk again.

How do you recommend someone begin a new regimen?

One of the best ways to get started, especially if you're looking to prioritize low-impact exercise, is to seek out local group exercise classes. I think it's particularly great for seniors to work out in a group setting because of the socialization aspect. There are lots of different classes offered in elderly settings, like SilverSneakers, with low-impact routines geared toward that demographic. But instead of just jumping into any random class, make sure you're getting into one that targets your demographic and goals.

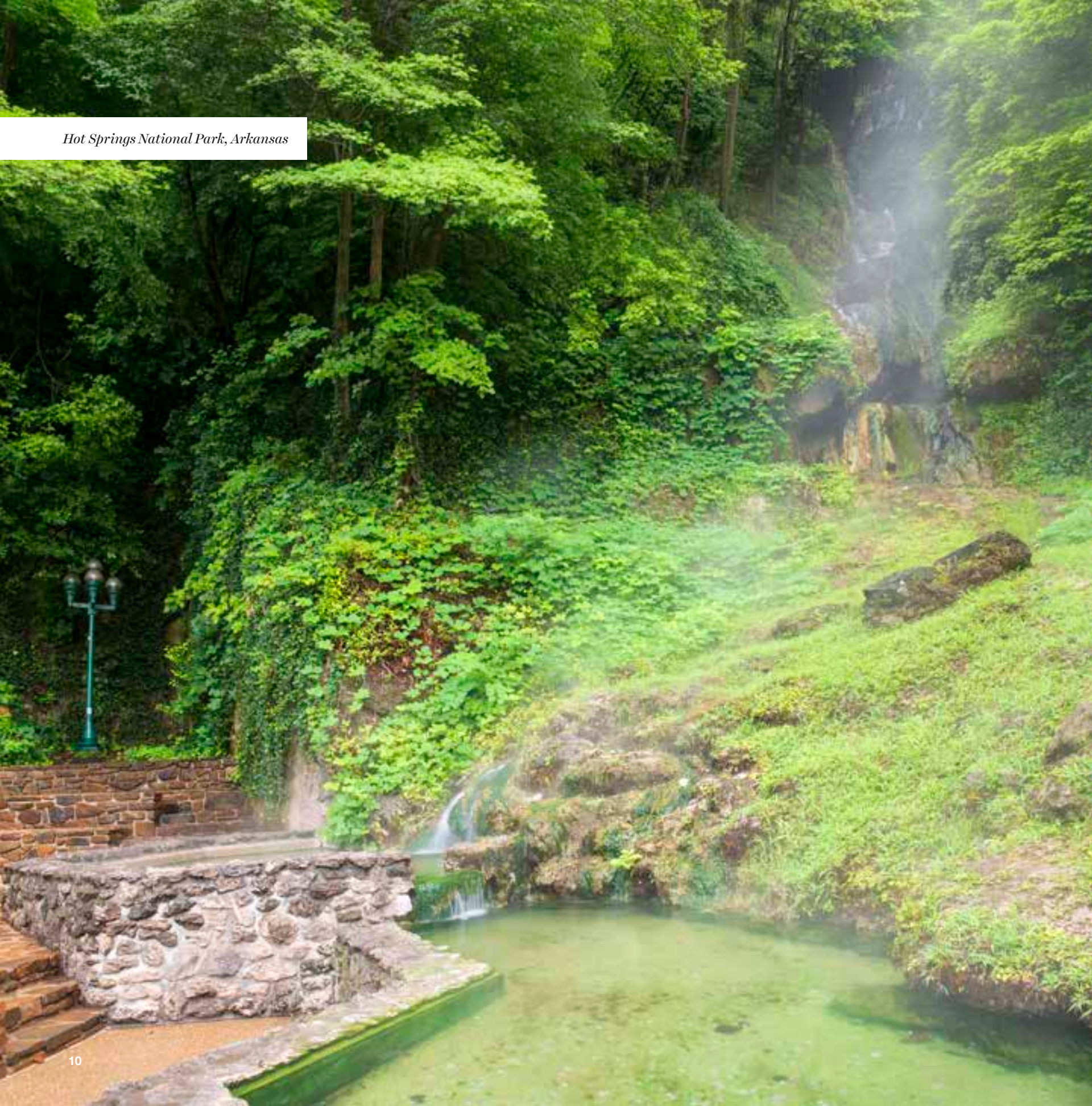
However, one-on-one training offers the best customized experience, so *you* get what *you* need. For example, GYMGUYZ can bring fitness to your home since we carry equipment in our van and can provide personal training and accountability. That's a huge advantage for those with transportation challenges, including seniors, teenagers, and people recovering from an injury, as well as folks who live in towns without gyms. There's also a comfort factor because gyms can feel intimidating for some people, but the comfort of working with a trainer at home can lead to greater success.

For more info, visit gymguyz.com



America's Most Rejuvenating **WELLNESS ESCAPES**

written by: MATTHEW BRADY



Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

From ancient geothermal pools to sleek, modern sauna sanctuaries, wellness-focused travel is booming across the United States. And people are noticing. The global wellness tourism market is forecast to nearly double, from an already robust \$525.38 billion in 2025 to around \$910 billion by 2030, per researchandmarkets.com.

As more people prioritize restoration over nonstop sightseeing, hot springs, spa towns, and immersive sauna experiences have become destinations in their own right. These places can offer not only physical relief, soothing sore muscles and improving circulation, but also mental clarity and rare opportunities to slow down.

Whether you're craving solitude, recovery from your itinerary, or a luxurious reset, you'll find ample restorative escapes that blend natural beauty with intentional relaxation. Here's a guide to some of the most revitalizing wellness destinations nationwide.

The healing power of natural hot springs

Long before wellness tourism became trendy, Indigenous cultures recognized the restorative properties of mineral-rich hot springs. Today, many of these sites are thoughtfully preserved and enhanced to create deeply relaxing experiences.

Hot Springs, Arkansas

Often referred to as “the Spa City” or “America’s First Resort,” Hot Springs has a long history of therapeutic bathing. Bathhouse Row, a collection of historic baths within Hot Springs National Park,

blends old-world charm with modern spa treatments. Visitors can enjoy traditional thermal baths while surrounded by preserved architecture and forested hills.

Ojo Caliente, New Mexico

One of the oldest natural health resorts in the country, Ojo Caliente offers multiple mineral pools, from iron-rich waters to lithium-infused soaking spaces, each with its own unique benefits. The experiences here encourage mindful relaxation in a desert landscape that feels both grounding and expansive.

Pagosa Springs, Colorado

Home to the world’s deepest geothermal hot spring, Pagosa Springs is a haven for those seeking a range of relaxation offerings, with its titular resort offering over fifty options (both hot and cold). Its mineral waters include sodium, magnesium, and potassium, which reportedly offer a host of health benefits for muscles, bones, skin, and more. Relaxing beneath the open sky in this southwestern Colorado town feels especially restorative.

Spa towns designed for deep relaxation

Some destinations go beyond a single soak, offering entire metropolitan areas shaped around wellness, leisure, and intentional living.

Berkeley Springs, West Virginia

A quieter gem located a mere two hours from Philadelphia and Washington, Berkeley Springs has drawn visitors since 1776, including the first president himself. The warm mineral waters remain central to the town’s identity, complemented by a peaceful arts scene and small-town charm that encourages unhurried exploration.





Grand Teton National Park

Sedona, Arizona

Known for its striking red rock formations and wellness, Sedona attracts travelers seeking physical and emotional renewal. Many visitors flock here for a reset, thanks to options like luxury spas and outdoor meditation experiences that pair perfectly with hiking and yoga.

Calistoga, California

Napa Valley-based Calistoga boasts both striking mineral hot springs and volcanic ash mud baths. A blend of wine-country indulgence with holistic spa culture, it's ideal for travelers who want equal parts relaxation and refinement. It even houses the Golden State's own version of Old Faithful!

Postadventure wellness

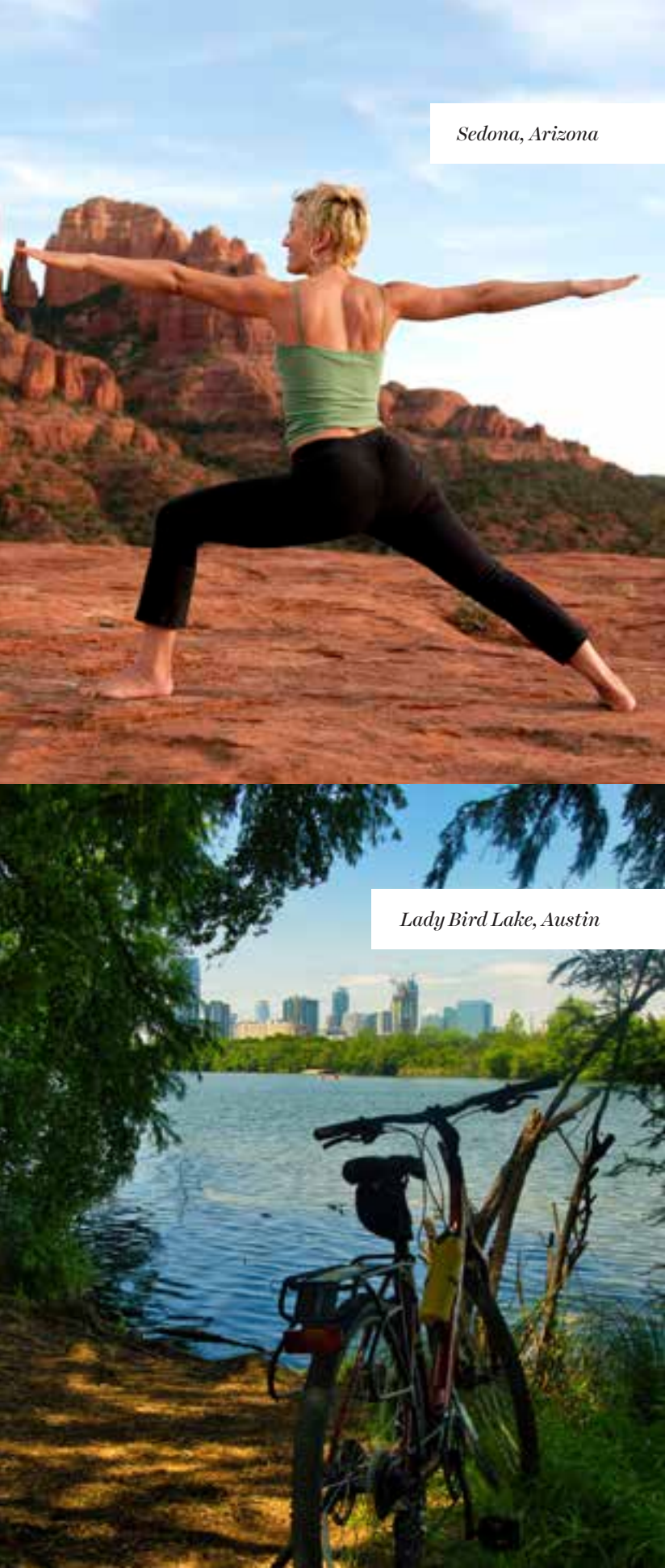
For many travelers, wellness experiences serve as the perfect complement to their physical activity.

Austin, Texas

A long-time haven for live music in the Lone Star State, Austin also features a wide range of outdoor offerings. For instance, you can bike along Lady Bird Lake during daytime hours before unwinding at Miraval Resort & Spa, named North America's best wellness retreat by the World Spa Awards two years running.

Jackson Hole, Wyoming

After skiing, snowshoeing, or hiking in Grand Teton National Park, nearby spas and hot springs such as Granite and Astoria provide essential recovery. Soaking tired muscles while overlooking rugged peaks can add a sense of reward and balance to adventure-heavy trips.



Sedona, Arizona

Lady Bird Lake, Austin



Bend, Oregon

Known for its outdoor recreation, the Bend area also offers access to natural hot springs and wellness lodges within driving distance. Visitors can mountain bike or paddle during the day, then unwind with a soak or sauna session in the evening at Summer Lake Hot Springs, a mere two hours away.

The rise of sauna culture

While sauna traditions have long been associated with Nordic countries, the United States has embraced them in new and creative ways. Modern sauna destinations emphasize contrast therapy (i.e., alternating heat and cold) to boost circulation, reduce inflammation, and promote mental clarity. The following are just some of the trendy types to try.

Mobile and outdoor saunas

Mobile saunas, often built into trailers or small cabins, are popping up near places like beaches and mountains. These flexible setups allow travelers to enjoy the benefits of steam bath therapy in scenic, unconventional locations.

Scandinavian-style sauna retreats

Sauna culture is deeply rooted in northern Midwest states such as Michigan and Minnesota. Lakeside saunas paired with cold plunges or snow immersion offer a bracing yet invigorating experience with a focus on community and reconnecting with nature.

Mobile saunas, often built into trailers or small cabins, are popping up near places like beaches and mountains.

Urban sauna studios

Cities such as New York and Los Angeles are seeing a surge in boutique sauna studios. These spaces often combine infrared saunas, steam rooms, cold plunges, and breathwork sessions in sleek, minimalist environments. They cater to busy professionals looking for efficient, high-impact relaxation without leaving the city.

Choosing the right escape for you

The beauty of wellness travel lies in its flexibility. While destinations emphasize quiet reflection and solitude in nature, others offer social soaking and guided treatments in resort-style amenities. When planning your escape, consider what you need most: deep rest, physical recovery, mental clarity, a connection to nature, or a little of everything. There are hundreds of such places to choose from, so do your research and consider contacting a travel agent to narrow down your options to perfectly suit what you're looking for.

SASHA-VUKOVIC/PEXELS



THE ART OF THE **SUNDAY REBOOT**

written by: MATTHEW BRADY



FROM “SELF-CARE SUNDAY” TO THE “Sunday reset,” many terms describe using this day to rest and recharge. But it’s not a one-size-fits-all situation: what it specifically entails is entirely personal. True self-care includes whatever brings you peace, whether that’s truly relaxing or tackling tasks you’ve been putting off. Here are four tips to help you start your week strong.

WAKE UP SLOWLY

It’s a dream come true: taking your time instead of rushing. So go ahead and linger under the sheets, breathe deeply, and gently stretch to ease your body into the day. Then move through your morning routine mindfully, appreciating how a simple action like washing your face can help you feel refreshed and grounded.

ALLOW YOURSELF A TREAT

An indulgence doesn’t have to be extravagant; it’s simply about saying yes to what makes you happy. Perhaps that’s enjoying one of your favorite foods, window shopping at a new store, or spending the afternoon watching a football game or a beloved show while munching on popcorn.

GET STUFF DONE

On the other hand, the most effective self-care for some people is productivity. Completing lingering chores, organizing a space, or planning meals for the week can bring future relief, a sense of completeness, and an uncluttered mind going into Monday. If this is what you need for your Sunday reboot, go for it!

REFLECT

Sometimes, looking back creates a brighter future, even if it’s just the coming week. So consider spending ten to fifteen minutes reviewing the previous one, which can help you process its highs and lows, gain perspective, and mentally close the door on one chapter before starting the next.

In the end, there’s no single right way to do a Sunday reboot. Your ideal one can change week to week, and such flexibility is part of this restorative package. Whether you focus on relaxation, enjoyment, productivity, or all of them, the goal is simple: ending your day feeling refreshed, balanced, and ready to embrace the week ahead.

FOODS THAT FIGHT *inflammation*

written by: ANDRE RIOS

REDDENING SKIN, STIFF JOINTS, AND PERSISTENT PAIN—these symptoms of inflammation can make it feel like your body is sabotaging itself. Ironically, this process is actually a key component of your immune response and a tool for restoring damaged tissue. But if it becomes more severe or chronic, it may potentially do more harm than good. Luckily, there are certain nutritious foods that can help you better regulate it for optimal health.

AVOCADOS

It's time to start springing for that side of guacamole: the unsaturated fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals in this savory fruit may rein in inflammatory cells.

Meal tips: Smash a fresh avocado, and then add a pinch of seasoning and fresh lemon or lime juice. Smear onto a sandwich as a substitute for mayonnaise, or serve it on toast as a low-effort side.

FATTY FISH

The omega-3 fatty acids in fish like salmon and tuna offer a treasure trove of health perks, including decreasing your body's production of inflammatory chemicals.

Meal tips: Replace at least two meals a week with fish-based dishes, baking them with olive oil, fresh lemon slices, and a flavor-packed spice mix like Cajun blackening seasoning.

NUTS

Eating these crunchy, bite-sized treats regularly could help keep inflammatory markers of C-reactive protein and more under control, potentially reducing your risk of heart disease and arthritis.

Meal tips: For an instant snack or salad topper, toast your favorite nuts in an ungreased frying pan until fragrant and golden brown, then remove and sprinkle with a pinch of salt.

OLIVE OIL

A Mediterranean superfood, olive oil offers tremendous anti-inflammatory properties, including oleocanthal, a chemical so advantageous that it's similar to taking ibuprofen.

Meal tips: Swap butter, coconut oil, and other less beneficial options for olive oil when preparing virtually any savory dish.



**Talk to your doctor before making any dietary changes.*

SMART *STORAGE SOLUTIONS*

written by: MATTHEW BRADY

IF YOU’VE EVER LOOKED AROUND

your home and wondered where all the stuff in it came from, you’re certainly not alone. According to a survey from Talker Research, half of the respondents deemed at least one room in their place unsalvageable due to clutter. In fact, our houses are so overflowing that, per StorageCafe, an estimated one-third of us utilize self-storage.

One way to take control? Get creative. Here are some simple ways to maximize your spaces and prevent your belongings from becoming burdensome.

BOX THEM IN

For most people, sectioned-off areas—including drawers, shelves, and large receptacles—are big sources of mess stress, and basic boxes or bins are great for increasing their cleanliness. For instance, a crate would work well as a sturdy container for small tools on your workbench, while adding shallow bins to your freezer can make grouping, and thus finding, items easy. And if your drawers are too small for boxes, opt instead for organizers like dividers for a similar decluttering effect.

GO UNDER

Do you have an alcove that’s not currently being used? Mull over what you could potentially store there. Consider the space under your basement stairs: it can be used to neatly stack paint cans if the room is unfurnished, or you can add shelving if it is. In addition, the gaps beneath beds are a perfect place to keep items like seasonal clothes in covered bins. You can do the same below a sofa that has tall legs.



GO VERTICAL

Sometimes, the answer to your problems is staring right at you—in this case, it’s your doors and walls. Over-the-door hangers, for example, are convenient out-of-sight options for draping everything from robes to purses to ties in various rooms and closets; shoe organizers can also do the trick. Cabinet doors are similarly ideal for storing hair dryers, utensils, and the like using hooks or magnetic strips.

In addition, you can find inspiration in the classic pegboard. Normally hung in the garage, it can be added to a wall in virtually any room. Utilize one for impressive craft storage or even for organizing your kitchen’s pots and pans.

The ongoing battle to keep your home clutter-free can be won with the right tools and a little ingenuity. You’ll be amazed at the possibilities that exist when you make the most of your square footage to stow away your possessions.



HOLIDAY HOME *RECOVERY*

written by: SHELLEY GOLDSTEIN

For many, the holidays are a hectic (but joyful) time for connecting with friends and family, hosting guests, and cooking heaps of food. Between the decorations, the clutter, and the stress of entertaining, it's no wonder people often feel overwhelmed and disorganized after it's all over. But with a little patience and a good plan, you can wrangle your home—and yourself—back into a more normal routine.

Take a moment to decompress

After you've driven the last relative to the airport or hugged your friends goodnight after a long day of togetherness, make sure to sit down, relax, and recharge your batteries. Maybe that means having some hot tea and putting your feet up or watching an episode of the TV show you've been binge-watching. Give yourself permission to do nothing for a few hours, or even a full day, before you start working on your to-do list.

Tackle the gifts

Go around and remove any miscellaneous clutter like stray wrapping paper pieces, gift boxes, bags, or bows. Once you're left with clear floors, assess the new items that have entered your home via gift exchanges. This is a great time to implement the "one in, one out" rule of organization. For instance, if you received a couple of new sweaters, see if there are any items of clothing in your closet that you could swap out for them.

For any exchanges or returns that need to be made, print the labels and package items for drop-off. Taking care of this immediately will make you less likely to miss your return window.



Put away holiday decor

To get your house back in order, begin taking down your decorations and stowing them in labeled storage containers and dismantle your artificial tree if you have one. For real-tree disposal, check your county website for information on curbside pickup or tree-recycling drop-off locations.

Clean, clean, clean

If you've had guests staying with you, load their used linens and towels into the washing machine. Shake out and wash tablecloths, and put away any serving dishes and kitchen items you won't need until your next large gathering. Then go room by room, vacuuming and dusting until your house starts to resemble its preholiday self.

Assess your food situation

The holidays usually include massive quantities of food and, therefore, leftovers. However, there's no rule that says you must eat all of them until they are gone. Take any pies and cookies to the office, or make up a meal for a neighbor who doesn't have family nearby. You can also consider ways to repurpose leftovers into meals for the week, like making a turkey potpie or meatball sandwiches for your family or turkey sandwiches for kids' lunches. Organize your fridge so you can see what's in there and what needs to be eaten first, take stock of your pantry, and make a list of any staples you need to replenish at the grocery store.

Reflect

While the memories are still fresh, write down some of your favorite moments or traditions from the holidays. Record the recipes and menus that worked well and would be good to repeat, noting which ones weren't quite hits. Also, send any videos or digital photos to family and friends so they can have those visual reminders of a wonderful holiday. And if you partake in thank-you-note writing, now is a great time to pen your appreciation and send off your handwritten messages.

making sense of **MAGNESIUM**

written by: ANDRE RIOS

WHEN YOUR BODY IS FUELED OPTIMALLY, you feel your best. And when you get all the beneficial chemicals your body depends on, the difference is transformative. To function optimally from day to day, accomplishing everything from your workday to your workout, you need magnesium.

This powerful yet underutilized nutrient can help your muscles operate properly, keep your heart beating strong, sustain your long-term bone health, and so much more. In fact, more than three hundred chemical reactions inside you depend largely on it. Thankfully, it's easier than you may think to get the right amount you need.

LIVING WITH LOW MAGNESIUM

When you consume magnesium, it settles inside the cells throughout your body, powering them up to generate many essential processes. However, a deficiency (called hypomagnesemia) can lead to numerous adverse effects. Some possible signs include muscle twitches, high blood pressure, migraines, and, surprisingly, some mental-health conditions like anxiety and insomnia. Should you fail to get a sufficient supply of magnesium, you can even increase your risk of developing osteoporosis.

But how much magnesium should you aim for? Look to meet the recommended daily amount of 310–320 milligrams for women and 400–420 for men. As Robert H. Shmerling, MD, writes in Harvard Health Publishing, this figure is not difficult at all to reach if you maintain a healthy diet. However, many Americans may not get enough of it, and those living with a condition such as diabetes can actually burn through more magnesium than other individuals, making regular consumption a necessity. Further, experiencing high levels of stress can actually cause your body to deplete it.

TACKLING YOUR NEEDS

If you want to measure your magnesium against the aforementioned guidelines, a smart first step is to see your doctor. You can discuss your concerns with them, request a blood test, and develop a health-care plan based on your results.

If you must boost your levels, you have a few primary options to consider. You can increase your magnesium by taking over-the-counter supplements, but the best way to obtain it is through your diet. Ingesting more magnesium through natural sources improves absorption while reducing your risk of reaching excessive quantities by self-medicating.

EATING YOUR WAY TO WELLNESS

Now that you know more about magnesium, take a look at some of the best sources to fuel you with it.

Chocolate

You may be thrilled to learn that such a delicious treat can satisfy your health as well as your palate. But surprisingly, chocolate is packed with magnesium. Try to avoid overindulging to limit sugar, saturated fat, and other less-ideal ingredients, or eat cocoa nibs, an unprocessed and unsweetened version that tastes wonderful in smoothies and on toast.

Green vegetables

These paragons of nutrition are go-to sources of many vitamins and minerals, and magnesium is no exception. Spinach and Swiss chard are especially beneficial, so dress your sandwiches with some raw greens or quickly sauté the veggies to make a wholesome side for your weeknight dinners.

Nuts

Nuts are packed with magnesium, with roasted almonds being a particularly high source at 80 milligrams per ounce. Snack on a handful of nuts during your workday, or incorporate them into salads, your morning bowl of oatmeal, and more.

Seeds

Like nuts, seeds pack exceptional quantities of this helpful chemical for their size, with pumpkin and chia varieties being particularly advantageous. And because they’re so small, you can easily sprinkle them into all kinds of recipes, including soups.

Water

There are innumerable benefits to hydrating well, and another you may not know is that water from various sources (i.e., filtered, tap, or others) can actually supply you with magnesium. In fact, meeting the recommended daily water intake of 2.7 liters for women and 3.7 liters for men could fortify your intake of this nutrient. Check nutrition labels of bottled water and, if possible, choose a mineral-rich brand.

While magnesium may share the spotlight with some more well-known and readily considered ones like vitamins C and D, it is just as crucial to your overall health. Whether you are tackling lower levels of it, are at risk of reduced quantities, or simply want to improve your diet, be sure to incorporate more magnesium-rich foods and beverages into each day so you have more strength to tackle whatever your lifestyle demands of you.

**Talk to your doctor before making any dietary changes.*



RECYCLING

dos and don'ts

written by: ANDRE RIOS

SORTING YOUR TRASH RESPONSIBLY CAN NOT ONLY CLEAR YOUR HOME OF CLUTTER BUT ALSO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, HELPING PRESERVE OUR PLANET FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES TO INITIATE OR IMPROVE YOUR PERSONAL RECYCLING PROCESS.



DO *keep bins handy*

For an easy way to make it a habit, set up an additional bin beside your trash can for simple curbside recyclables—think cardboard, dry paper products, glass, and tin cans. It might also be useful to have a designated spot for goods that need a special program, such as reusable plastic containers and electronics.



DON'T *ignore the symbol*

Plastic items will generally feature the famous triangle containing a number; this indicates the type of plastic used. For example, those with the number 1 (e.g., most soft drink bottles) are made from polyethylene terephthalate, while those with the number 5 (e.g., food containers) are made from polypropylene. Processing of these items varies by municipality.



DO *remember the other two Rs*

Equally important as recycling are the two other tenets of this widely shared directive: reduce and reuse. Challenge yourself to purchase fewer single-use plastic products overall, which are often the trickiest to recycle, and repurpose items when possible.

For more info, visit epa.gov/recycle



TAKE THIS **FIVE-MINUTE** MOOD REFRESH

written by: ANTHONY COFFMAN

NEED A RECHARGE? When daily stressors like work, relationships, and finances hang a dark cloud over your mood, practice these five steps to let in some sunshine. In just a few minutes, you could face the rest of your day with a brighter temperament.

1

PAUSE

If you feel your mindset or emotions becoming overwhelmingly negative, stop what you're doing. Then find a spot where you can safely sit down, close your eyes, and ignore stimuli like phone notifications.

2

BREATHE

Try alternate-nostril breathing. Inhale and exhale slowly, then block your right nostril before taking another breath in. Exhale through the left side of your nose. Repeat this, blocking the other nostril each time you inhale. Do this cycle ten times, focusing only on your breath.

3

GROUND YOURSELF

Open your eyes, and begin "grounding." This is the process of shifting your focus away from negativity and toward basic sensory stimuli. What does the surface you're sitting on feel like? How does the air smell? What's one pleasant thing you hear?

4

BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS

Next, it's time to actively concentrate on turning your mood around. Think of a proactive way you could improve how you feel. Perhaps write down your honest feelings and three changes you could make. Even if you're dealing with factors beyond your control, you can at least try the next step.

5

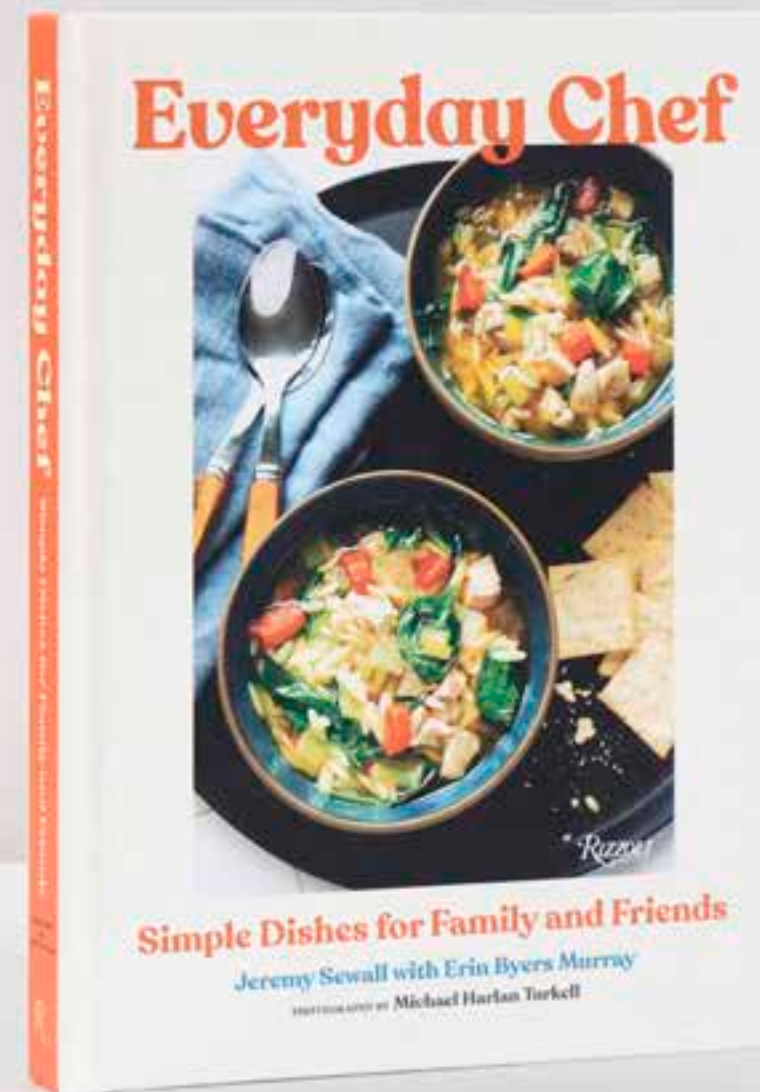
DISTRACT YOURSELF

Finally, seek a pleasant amusement. Maybe take a brisk walk outdoors or give a loved one a big hug and spark a conversation. Avoid looking up distractions on your phone, though, since it's also a source of emails, news, and other potential stressors. You could even just enjoy some coffee or a snack. Tell yourself that you deserve it, and embrace the opportunity as you welcome the start of a better day.



RON LACH/PEXELS

Simply Satisfying **EVERYDAY EATS**



Home cooking gets elevated in the *Everyday Chef* cookbook, including the following recipes for soup, bread, potatoes, and pasta. Each dish is perfect for cozy get-togethers this season.

scan here
to get the full *Everyday Chef: Simple Dishes for Family and Friends* cookbook.



Recipes from *Everyday Chef: Simple Dishes for Family and Friends* by Jeremy Sewall and Erin Byers Murray. Rizzoli New York 2025. Photography by Michael Harlan Turkell.



CHICKEN, VEGETABLE, *and Orzo Soup*

SERVES 4 TO 6

Everyone should have a go-to chicken soup recipe. Some version of chicken soup is found in almost every culture, with recipes as ancient as our ability to boil water. My version is flexible: once you learn the basics, you can swap out the vegetables depending on what you have on hand. I use orzo because it holds up well in broth and it's easy to eat with a spoon. This tastes better the day after it's made, especially with a few crumbled crackers on top.

measure

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 2 tablespoons canola oil, plus more for brushing
- 1 teaspoon celery salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 cup orzo pasta
- 1 small bulb fennel, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 to 3 medium carrots, diced (about 1 cup)
- 3 to 4 ribs celery, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 leeks, white parts diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 3 cups baby spinach leaves

make

1/ Preheat the oven to 325°F.

2/ Place the chicken thighs on a baking sheet lined with foil and brush generously with the canola oil. Season with the celery salt and a little pepper. Roast for 25 minutes. Remove and let cool. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, dice it into ½-inch pieces.

3/ In a large pot, bring 4 cups water and the 2 tablespoons of salt to a boil. Add the orzo and cook for 10 minutes. Once the pasta is al dente, drain in a colander, then spread out on a baking sheet and let cool to room temperature. Add 1 teaspoon of the canola oil and stir to combine to keep the pasta from sticking.

4/ In a large saucepan, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons canola oil over medium heat and add the fennel, carrots, and celery. Sauté until the vegetables begin to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the leeks and garlic and stir to combine. Sauté until the leeks have wilted. Add the chicken stock and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add the chicken meat and orzo and return to a simmer, then simmer for 2 additional minutes. Season the soup with salt and pepper. Just before serving, add the baby spinach and cook until just wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve hot.

recipe by: JEREMY SEWALL AND ERIN BYERS MURRAY
photography by: MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL



FRIED SCALLION BREAD

with Marinated Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Brie, and Kalamata Olives

SERVES 4 AS AN APPETIZER

This quick and easy recipe starts with a no-yeast dough that is pan-fried, topped, then baked. I give the dough a bit of bite with a dose of black pepper—it's my favorite part of the recipe. I prefer store-bought marinated sun-dried tomatoes that come in a jar. Keep a jar in your pantry for an easy addition to snacks. This dish also works well with thinly sliced fresh tomatoes.

measure

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 scallions, green parts only, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- About ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained and chopped
- 8 ounces brie, cut into thin pieces
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives, halved
- 2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves

make

1/ In a large bowl, combine the flours, baking powder, salt, and pepper. Fold in the scallions. In a small bowl, combine the honey with ¾ cup warm water and stir until the honey is dissolved. Add the olive oil and stir to combine. Add the liquid to the dry ingredients and mix by hand until the dough forms a ball. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes, then remove from the bowl and cut into 4 equal portions.

2/ On a lightly floured surface, shape each portion into a ball, then use a rolling pin to roll each piece into a circle about ¼ inch thick.

3/ Preheat the oven to 400°F.

4/ Place a medium sauté pan over medium heat and add the ¼ cup canola oil; heat until shimmering. Add one of the dough circles to the pan and fry on one side until lightly browned. Flip and repeat on the other side, about 1 minute per side. Transfer to a baking sheet, then repeat with the remaining dough, adding a little more oil if needed. Evenly divide the tomatoes, brie, and olives and layer them on top of each piece of fried bread. Bake until the brie is just softened, about 3 minutes. Remove and allow to cool slightly before cutting each bread into 4 to 6 pieces. Garnish with oregano before serving.

recipe by: JEREMY SEWALL AND ERIN BYERS MURRAY
photography by: MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL



CUMIN-ROASTED SWEET POTATOES

and Basil Pesto

SERVES 4 AS A SIDE

Cumin and the other spices make this dish sing, and the smell of them toasting is amazing. You can use ground spices if you don't have whole ones, though grinding them yourself guarantees freshness. The pesto can be made ahead and goes well with many other dishes.

measure

- 2 medium sweet potatoes, unpeeled
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon dark mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon white peppercorns
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Basil Pesto (recipe follows)

make

1/ Preheat the oven to 375°F.

2/ Halve the sweet potatoes lengthwise. Cut the halves in half and then again, for 8 wedges per potato. In a small, dry sauté pan, combine the cumin, mustard seeds, and white peppercorns and toast over low heat until the spices become fragrant. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. Transfer to a spice grinder and pulse until finely ground. In a large bowl, combine the spices with the olive oil. Add the potato wedges, season with salt, and toss to combine. Transfer to a baking sheet and roast for about 25 minutes.

3/ To serve, transfer the cooked potatoes to a serving bowl and distribute the pesto on top, or serve the pesto on the side.

BASIL PESTO

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

- 2½ packed cups fresh basil leaves
- 3 small cloves garlic, smashed
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

In the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade, add the basil, pine nuts, Parmesan, and garlic and pulse to combine. Leave the machine running and slowly add the olive oil until the mixture is well blended. Season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate in a sealed container for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 1 month.

recipe by: JEREMY SEWALL AND ERIN BYERS MURRAY
photography by: MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL



measure

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- ½ pound thick-cut bacon, diced
- 1 small head cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 cup chicken stock
- Kosher salt
- 1 pound dried cavatelli
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 teaspoon chili flakes

make

1/ Heat the canola oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until crisp. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate, leaving the rendered fat in the pan. Add the cauliflower and sauté until it begins to color and soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Use a spoon to hold back the contents of the pan and pour out and discard most of the fat. Return the pan to the heat and add the shallots and garlic. Cook until the shallots are softened, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken stock, raise the heat to medium-high, and simmer for 5 minutes.

2/ Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta according to package instructions. Drain, then add the pasta to the pan with the cauliflower. Add the cooked bacon and sherry vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is hot and fully combined. Transfer to a serving bowl and top with the Parmesan, parsley, and chili flakes.

recipe by: JEREMY SEWALL AND ERIN BYERS MURRAY
photography by: MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL

CAULIFLOWER *and Bacon Pasta*

SERVES 4

Bacon and cauliflower are a stellar combination. Add cheese and pasta and it's a party. This straightforward dish can be prepped in advance, making it a breeze to put together. I call for cavatelli here but just about any dried pasta will work.



IMPACTFUL, CREATIVE GIFT-GIVING IDEAS

written by: MATTHEW BRADY

GIVING GIFTS UNDOUBTEDLY plays a major role in the holiday season. For many people, shopping starts months in advance; unfortunately, costs can quickly add up, along with excess packaging and other waste.

But you don't need to spend big—or shop at all—to show someone you care since there are many meaningful alternatives to traditional gift-giving. Consider these five inspired options that focus on experiences, shared memories, and meaningful gestures rather than material items. Taking such a thoughtful, fiscally sensible approach can strengthen your relationships and fulfill wishes without busting your budget.

GIVE *an experience*

Events often create longer-lasting memories than physical items, offering something more personal and enduring. For your family, consider planning a scavenger hunt or escape room experience, purchasing an annual national parks pass, or enrolling everyone in a painting class. If you're buying for a partner, a private dinner, tickets to a local performance or show, or a class tied to their interests will give an added gift: showing how much you know them.

GIVE *back*

Helping others can also be a gift to yourself. According to studies, volunteering can not only reduce stress, blood pressure, and depression but also build social connections and even increase life expectancy. This year, instead of (or in addition to) a gift exchange, why not spend time with your loved ones volunteering for a cause that matters to everybody involved? Check out a website like [idealists.org](https://www.idealists.org), which makes it easy to find opportunities in your area.

GIVE *for the future*

It's been said that there's no better time than the present, but when it comes to presents, looking ahead can be particularly meaningful. Gifts that



support a loved one's long-term success can have a lasting impact, providing both funding and hope. Consider setting up a savings account or buying a savings bond, particularly for children or young adults learning financial responsibility. For a student, you could help with tuition, books, or other school supplies.

GIVE *good health*

Wellness gifts can encourage positive lifestyle changes that might otherwise feel financially out of reach to some. If friends or family members have been talking about wanting to get healthier, gifting a gym membership or meal kit subscription may be duly appreciated. Another option: gifting them simple fitness equipment such as resistance bands or hand weights.

GIVE *your time*

For many, the most precious thing you can give them is your time. Surprise your loved ones this holiday season by going this often overlooked gift-giving route. For young parents in your life, create a One Free Babysitting coupon so they can enjoy a break. Another example: offer to help an older relative with a home project. Even simply prioritizing time together can mean more than any store-bought item. Such gestures cost little yet can make a meaningful difference.

Ultimately, thoughtful gifts don't have to be expensive or even physical. Taking an alternative approach to presents can reduce stress, expense, and even waste (fewer boxes and less wrapping paper!) while creating deeper connections during the season of giving. Your options are virtually endless, too, only being limited by your imagination.

**CONSIDER SETTING UP
A SAVINGS ACCOUNT OR
BUYING A SAVINGS BOND,**
*particularly for children or young
adults learning financial responsibility.*



a guide to
COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT

written by: LJ RAMOS



BUILDING STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD

bonds is a labor of love. It's often built slowly through shared experiences, mutual support, and countless small moments of connection. While developing one can sound like a huge abstract goal, it's actually rooted in simple, approachable actions like lending a hand and choosing to engage with the people around you. In fact, the mere act of showing up is a positive first step. So whether you've lived in the same place for decades or just moved in, there are meaningful ways to get involved that can create a lasting sense of belonging for everyone.

Start with simple connections

Something as small as a conversation can be a big starting point. Saying hello to your neighbors, introducing yourself to a neighborhood newbie, or exchanging a few words with a fellow pet parent can help break down barriers. Even kind gestures like holding a door open and offering a genuine compliment contribute to a more supportive environment.

You may ask: Can I do this if I live in an apartment building or planned community? The answer is yes! These shared spaces offer natural opportunities to connect. For example, take advantage of common areas by hanging out in one for a few minutes. Building events are another place where residents, and conversation opportunities, often flourish. You could even start a casual chat at the community mailbox. Regardless of where you live, such brief interactions can have a cumulative effect by both building familiarity over time and making your community feel more welcoming.



Join interest-based groups

Do you thrive more in a low-pressure environment for forming connections? If so, one of the easiest ways to build community is through shared interests. Book clubs are a popular example of this; you could even start one. Fitness classes, gardening groups, crafting circles, and recreational sports leagues are just a few other examples of activities that could bring people together in your neighborhood.

Look for these opportunities at places like local community centers or parks-and-rec departments, which, as a bonus, often host free or low-cost programs for all ages. Online

neighborhood platforms and social media groups can also be a gold mine for unearthing meetups and clubs in your area. Show up consistently, and you might just begin to form relationships that extend beyond the activity itself.

Support local businesses and initiatives

Shopping at local businesses and dining at neighborhood restaurants help sustain the local economy while fostering personal connections. As many people have experienced, when business owners recognize customers by name (re-creating a mom-and-pop feel), it fosters a sense of mutual investment and pride in the area.



Volunteer your time and skills

Giving your time is one of the most impactful ways to contribute to your community while meeting others who care about similar causes. Opportunities range from food banks to animal shelters to youth mentoring programs to environmental cleanups. And don't fret about the time commitment; many organizations offer one-time volunteer opportunities. If you're looking for long-term opportunities, consider your personality or schedule, offering your skills informally, such as by helping a neighbor with yard work or helping set up a yard sale.

Foster neighborly relationships

Strong communities are built on trust, and trust grows through kindness and reliability. Simple gestures, such as shoveling a neighbor's sidewalk, checking in with them during extreme weather, or offering to share your tools, can have a big impact. These actions show care without expecting anything in return.

If you're comfortable doing so, consider taking the next step by organizing casual gatherings yourself. They don't need to be elaborate; the goal is simply to create space for people to connect. Over time, such shared moments can turn acquaintances into friends.

Building a strong community doesn't require grand gestures or formal titles. It's the result of taking small, consistent actions that create a ripple effect of connection and trust over time. Each conversation, shared activity, and act of generosity contributes to nurturing a culture of belonging for everyone.

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

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Front of Tear Out Card 2

CHICKEN,
VEGETABLE,
AND ORZO
soup





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Back of Tear Out Card 2

make

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 2 tbsp. canola oil, plus more for brushing
- 1 tsp. celery salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 c. orzo pasta
- 1 small bulb fennel, diced (about 1 c.)
- 2 to 3 medium carrots, diced (about 1 c.)
- 3 to 4 ribs celery, diced (about 1 c.)
- 2 leeks, white parts diced (about 1 c.)
- 2 tbsp. chopped garlic
- 6 c. chicken stock
- 3 c. baby spinach leaves

measure

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
2. Place the chicken thighs on a baking sheet lined with foil and brush generously with the canola oil. Season with the celery salt and a little pepper. Roast for 25 minutes. Remove and let cool. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, dice it into ½ in. pieces.
3. In a large pot, bring 4 c. water and the 2 tbsp. of salt to a boil. Add the orzo and cook for 10 minutes. Once the pasta is al dente, drain in a colander, then spread out on a baking sheet and let cool to room temperature. Add 1 tsp. of the canola oil and stir to combine to keep the pasta from sticking.
4. In a large saucepan, heat the remaining 1 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. canola oil over medium heat and add the fennel, carrots, and celery. Sauté until the vegetables begin to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the leeks and garlic and stir to combine. Sauté until the leeks have wilted. Add the chicken stock and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add the chicken meat and orzo and return to a simmer, then simmer for 2 additional minutes. Season the soup with salt and pepper. Just before serving, add the baby spinach and cook until just wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve hot.

Recipe from *Everyday Chef: Simple Dishes for Family and Friends* by Jeremy Sewall and Erin Byers Murray. Rizzoli New York 2025. Photography by Michael Harlan Turkell.

| SERVES 4 TO 6

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