Compliments of Stacey Shanner

start HEALTHY

ISSUE 55

MAKING WELLNESS MORE CONVENIENT

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Stacey Shanner
REALTOR®

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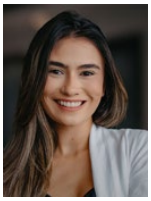
SCAN TO SEE YOUR ESTIMATED HOME VALUE!

Front of Tear Out Card 1

hibachi *STEAK*



SHANNER REALTY



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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.

Back of Tear Out Card 1

hibachi *STEAK*

make

- 2 pounds sirloin steak
- ¼ c. low-sodium soy sauce
- ¼ c. hoisin sauce
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- Neutral oil, to cook

SERVES 4

Recipe from ***Let's Get Into It: 130+ Comfort Food Recipes for Novice Cooks*** by Davon Moseley. DK Publishing, 2025. Photography by Stephen Buchanan.

measure

1. Pat dry the steak. Cut the steak into 1 in. pieces. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, hoisin sauce, sesame oil, minced garlic, and ginger until combined.
3. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add 1 tbsp. neutral oil. Once the oil is hot, it will easily move around the skillet and shimmer. Add the steak pieces in small batches to cook. You do not want to overcrowd the skillet as too many pieces in the skillet can cause them to steam and reduce the chances of getting a good sear on each piece. Add just enough so each has room to cook. (You'll need to sear in 3 or 4 batches.) Cooking time will depend on your preference of steak doneness. I like medium and cook the steak for 1 to 2 minutes, flip, then cook 1 to 2 minutes on the other side. For well done, I recommend cooking for 2 to 3 minutes each side. For a medium-rare cook, increase the heat to high and cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute on each side. Once the steak is cooked to your preference, remove from the skillet and set aside on a plate. Repeat with all the steak cubes.
4. Once all the steak is cooked to your preference, reduce the heat to medium and add all the steak back into the skillet. Toss in the sauce and cook for about 2 minutes, until the steak is coated in the sauce. Serve and enjoy.



Dear Bill and Judy,

Winter has a way of drawing us inward toward cozy interiors, relaxed routines, and the slower pace of the season. This issue of Start Healthy can help you feel your best wherever you are, from encouraging fitness to addressing a downside of being indoors to suggesting a throwback retreat. You'll discover that even now, there's plenty you can do to keep you thriving.

Exercise is a great way to reduce the monotony of winter. Inside, you'll find a flowchart for choosing a workout routine that best suits your needs and an interview with a fitness expert who stresses the mental aspect of health.

Have you ever felt weary, especially in winter? You could be experiencing indoor air fatigue, which results from spending long periods indoors with stagnant air. Read more about the phenomenon, including how to lessen it in your home.

To get out and about, consider giving yourself a spring break. The enclosed tips for a grown-up escape can help you narrow down your options, create a sensible itinerary, and make wise spending decisions so you can plan the perfect getaway.

Let the resources in this issue inspire you to remain healthy throughout the season. As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

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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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Crank Up Your CALCIUM

CALCIUM TENDS TO BE ONE OF THOSE overlooked "healthy nutrients." We might overlook it because we assume that it's easy to get. And though the consequences of unhealthy levels may not be obvious, over time the effects can be serious. Take a closer look at what makes this mineral so vital and what a healthy intake looks like.

written by: ANTHONY COFFMAN

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.

CALCIUM'S ROLE IN THE BODY

The element functions as both a structural component and a signal. About 99 percent of it resides in your bones and teeth, where a continuous process called remodeling breaks bone tissue down and rebuilds it. The remaining fraction circulates in the blood and tissues to perform a more immediate role.

Every day, the body shifts calcium between bones and the bloodstream, flowing from there to support basic functions. Your muscles depend on it to contract and release, while the heart uses it to keep a steady rhythm. Nerves also rely on it to transmit signals, shaping your coordination and reflexes.

Even modest deficiencies can disrupt these systems before bone loss becomes measurable. In the short term, that may lead to fatigue or muscle cramps. Over time, your risks increase for more serious issues like osteoporosis and fractures.

DAILY NEEDS ACROSS LIFE STAGES

Your calcium requirements depend on your age, sex, and any hormonal changes. Here is what current NIH guidance suggests:

- Children and teens (9–18): 1,300 mg daily
- Women between 19-50 and men between 19-70: 1,000 mg
- Women over 50 and men over 70: 1,200 mg

CALCIUM AT THE TABLE

For many people, calcium readily brings to mind dairy products—single servings can provide over 25 percent of your daily needs. Options like calcium-rich tofu and collard greens can offer comparable or greater amounts per serving. Fortified cereals and juices are also useful sources, though their broader nutritional value varies widely.

What matters is consistency, not any single food. Spreading calcium intake across your day (yogurt at breakfast, greens at dinner, and fortified milk in coffee, for instance) can help you meet your needs without much effort.

CONSUME WITH CARE

While you might assume that more calcium is always better, eating too much can actually lead to issues like digestive maladies, muscle weakness, and even abnormal heart rhythms. Moreover, high-dose consumption of calcium supplements without medical guidance has been linked to additional cardiovascular risks in some studies. But for those with diagnosed deficiencies, restricted diets, or other medical conditions, adjusting diet alone may not be enough and certain supplements like calcium carbonate or calcium citrate may be needed.

Be sure to talk to your doctor about your calcium needs and develop a balanced plan for greater overall health.

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The contents of this magazine are for editorial purposes only. Please contact a medical professional if you have any questions about your health or need advice about the content within this issue.

All photos inside are provided by Getty Images unless noted.



find the right ROUTINE FOR YOU

written by: ANDRE RIOS

ACCORDING TO THE *PHYSICAL* *Activity Guidelines for Americans*, all adults should engage in at least two-and-a-half hours of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week and perform muscle-strengthening exercises on at least two days a week. It can be tough to picture what that means in practice.

If you're seeking a routine as engaging as it is wholesome or want to find a more appropriate program for your health needs and personal goals, this simple flow chart can help you find your "fit."

Talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise program.



KEY

Aerobic exercise
Cardio workouts that increase your breathing and heart rate over an extended period
Examples: *Jogging, bicycling, swimming*

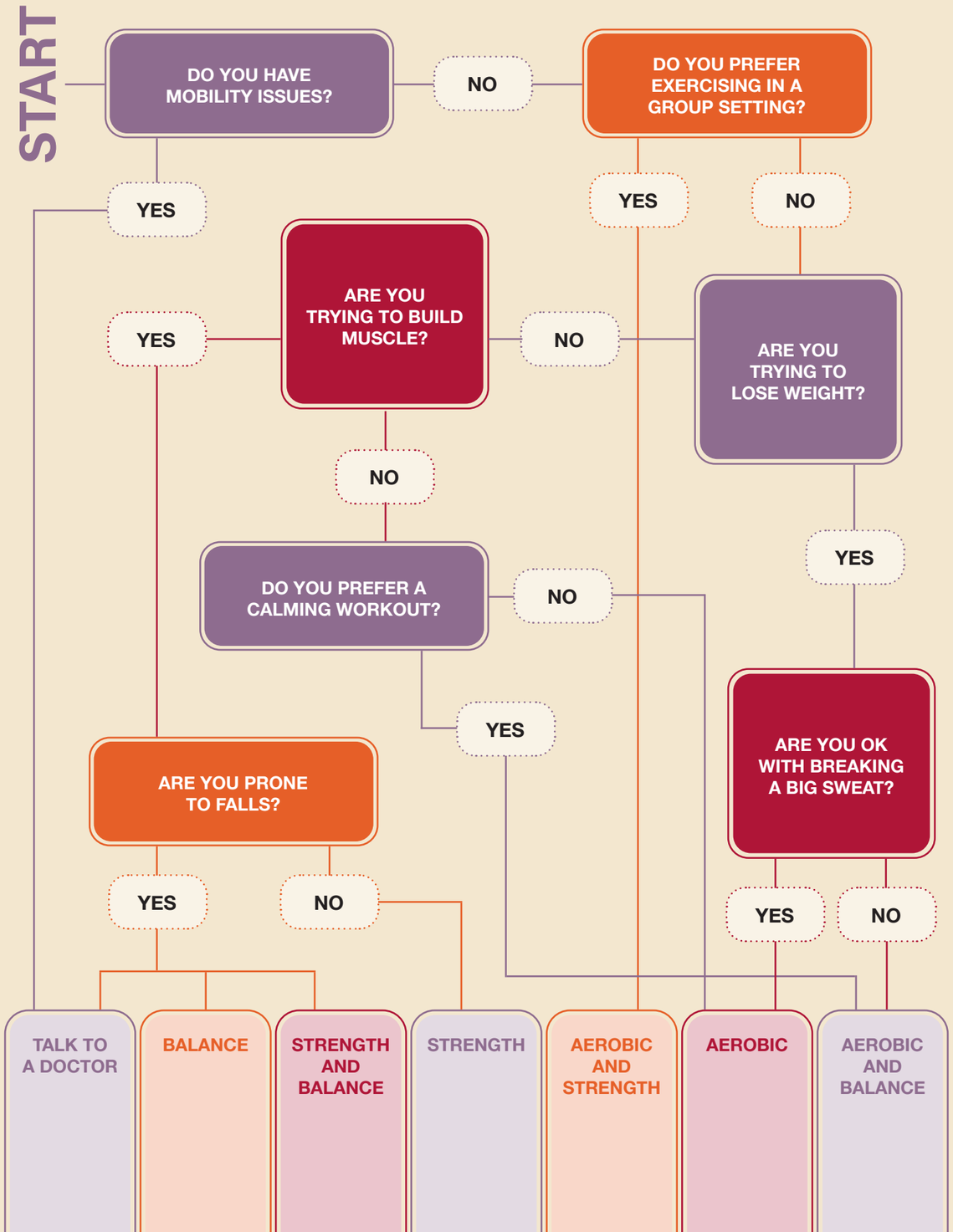
Balance exercise
Movements that focus on maintaining the body's stability
Examples: *Tai chi, single-leg exercises, walking*

Strengthening exercise
Activities that work muscles against resistance, such as weights or bodyweight
Examples: *Weight lifting, calisthenics like pushups or lunges*

Balance and strengthening
Examples: *Yoga, surfing*

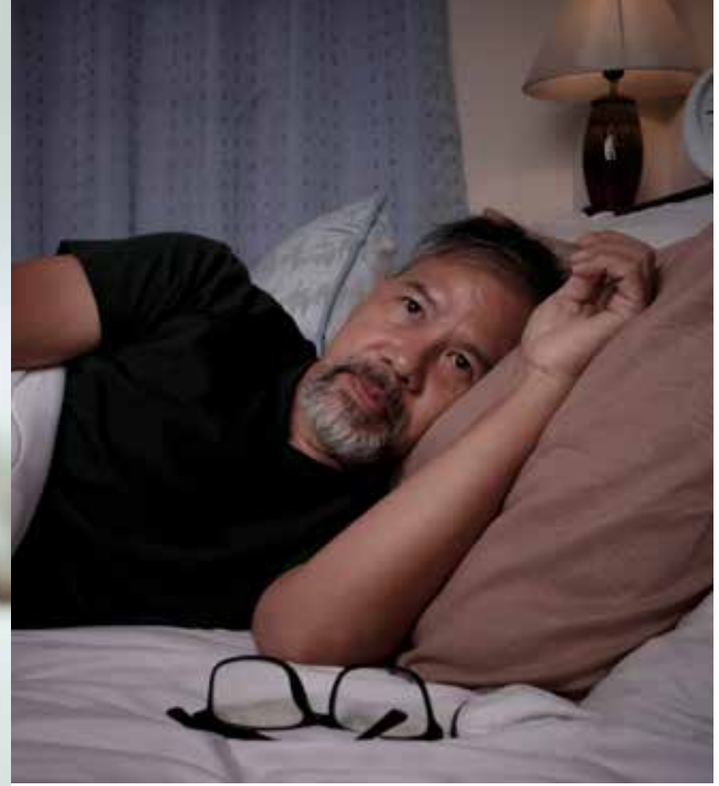
Strengthening and aerobic
Examples: *Dancing, Zumba*

Aerobic and balance
Examples: *Hiking, step aerobics*



The Ins and Outs of INDOOR AIR FATIGUE

written by:
MATTHEW BRADY





ONE OF THE GREATEST COMFORTS of winter is a cozy home. Thanks to the embrace of plush blankets, warm air circulating, and perhaps a roaring fireplace as the cherry on top, you can feel oh-so-separated from the frigid elements outside.

However, there's sometimes a cost for that potential contentment beyond your heating bill. Germs pass more easily between occupants, for example, spreading illness in your home. Some family members may start to feel confined rather than comfortable.

But have you ever felt mentally or physically worn down as winter drags on, apparently for no good reason? If so, you may be experiencing something else entirely: the slow, compounding impact of sealed indoor environments and the resulting poor indoor air quality, sometimes called indoor air fatigue. Understanding and addressing this situation—and the combination of environmental factors that can cause it—may be the first step toward getting you back to feeling like yourself in no time.

Why it's overlooked

Everyone's familiar with common winter-related maladies such as colds, the flu, and seasonal affective disorder. However, the problem with indoor air fatigue is that it isn't necessarily a health issue in the traditional sense, and its symptoms are often gradual and nonspecific. There's no clear moment where you think, *Maybe the air I'm breathing in all day is the problem.*

Its causes and effects

In winter, windows stay shut, ventilation drops, and carbon dioxide levels indoors can climb higher than you'd expect—especially in tightly enclosed places where you spend hours at a time, such as bedrooms and offices. Even moderate increases in these factors can contribute to brain fog, headaches, reduced focus, and that "Why am I so tired?" feeling.





So knowing other potential impacts of the indoors can be illuminating—and allow you to do something about it.

1. Dry air does more than dry skin
Heating systems tend to lower relative humidity, which may reduce the effectiveness of your respiratory defenses and make infections easier to catch. Other effects of dry air may include eye and throat irritation and even snoring. As a result, you're not just uncomfortable—you're potentially more vulnerable.

2. Pollutants build up more in winter
Cooking, candles, cleaning products, and even furniture release particles and chemicals. With less airflow during this season, they tend to linger longer. Some of the most common ways such pollutants can affect you are through aggravated allergies, increased inflammation, and worsened asthma.

3. Sleep can be compromised
As you've probably experienced, cool air supports better sleep. But winter bedrooms often become too warm and too dry in addition to often being poorly ventilated. This combination can stealthily reduce your sleep quality.

What to try

Now that you know what you may be up against, you can take better control of the situation. Some steps to take include:

- Cleaning and vacuuming weekly if you don't already
- Cracking a window for even five to ten minutes a day (yes, even when it's cold)
- Using a humidifier to keep your indoor humidity between 30–50 percent and adding an air purifier
- Adding a carbon dioxide monitor or air-quality sensor if you want even more specific data
- Running kitchen/bathroom exhaust fans more consistently to circulate air and humidity
- Avoiding overusing scented products indoors

Being stuck inside for much of winter is inevitable, but you can take control of some of its downsides. If you feel lethargy that's lasting a little too long, you may be experiencing indoor air fatigue. With a few simple adjustments to your routine, your remedy may be closer than you think.

***If you're feeling any symptoms of illness during winter, be sure to contact your doctor.**

GALENA: SMALL TOWN, BIG ADVENTURE

written by: MATTHEW BRADY ***photography by:*** GALENA COUNTRY TOURISM, UNLESS NOTED



When people consider Illinois travel, Chicago might immediately spring to mind. This is understandable considering the Windy City is the nation's third-largest city. But the state also boasts plenty of smaller cities and towns worth the detour.

One such place is Galena, an acclaimed city (population: 3,200) that sits among rolling hills in the Drifter's Region, approximately three hours from Chicago. Its location is part of its allure: It is less than fifteen minutes from Wisconsin and thirty minutes from Iowa. Combine that with its charm, history, and activities, and you've got a must-see destination that's affectionately known as Galena Country.

MAIN STREET IN WINTER

Galena thrives on its history while also being remarkably modern. More than 87 percent of Galena's buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, so the town carries a strong sense of continuity with its past. As you enter the downtown area, red brick facades and narrow streets highlight the city's nineteenth-century architecture, so your first walk feels like stepping back in time. In winter, snow settles along rooftops and window ledges, highlighting those architectural details even more and drawing your attention upward as you move.

Start on Main Street because it packs so much into a few blocks. The district features more than 125 independent shops, galleries, restaurants, and specialty stores, allowing you to shop to your heart's content without experiencing long stretches in the cold.

Look for amenities such as small-batch foods, handmade items, and regional products along the way, which will allow you to bring the Galena feel back home with you. You may initially plan to browse quickly, but the slower pace encourages you to stay longer to enjoy the ambience and offerings in each shop. Seasonal lights and window displays remain in place through winter, so the street looks like a Hallmark card even on shorter days.

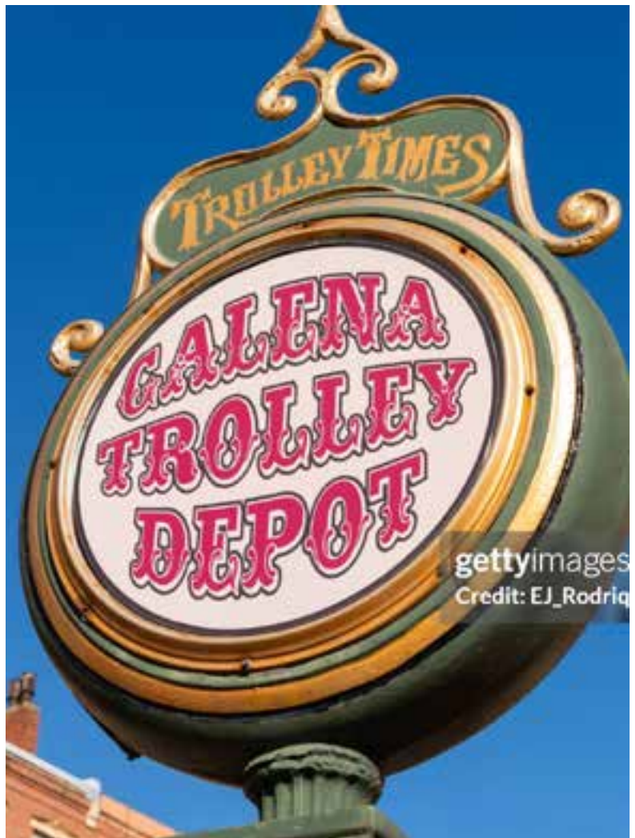




INDOOR COMFORTS

During cold Midwest weather, you'll also want to enjoy warm, hearty meals, and Galena certainly delivers. Many menus lean toward comfort foods, including roasted meats, fresh bread, and seasonal vegetables. For Italian, Fried Green Tomatoes and Cucina Bella provide fine dining in a welcoming atmosphere, while Charlie's Place is a popular casual stop for breakfast.

You also have hundreds of places to choose from when it comes to settling in. But consider lodging in the historic district, if possible, since proximity reduces planning while on vacation, making so much of it walkable. Inns and bed-and-breakfasts are popular here, as are historic places like the circa-1855 DeSoto House Hotel, the oldest continuously operating hotel in the state.



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HISTORIC LANDMARKS

Galena celebrated its two-hundredth anniversary in 2026, a milestone worth noting as you explore. So be sure to set aside part of your day to visit Galena's historic sites, landmarks that cement its place in U.S. history. Begin at the Ulysses S. Grant Historic Site, where you can walk through the former president's home and grounds. And visit the Galena & U.S. Grant Museum at its new, beautiful location directly across the street for the ultimate deep dive into the life and impact of our eighteenth president.

Another must-see place is the Belvedere Mansion and Gardens, which include not only the circa-1857 titular mansion but also the Dowling House, the oldest home in Galena. Stroll by this destination on Park Avenue to take in the architecture, which contrasts nicely with the larger buildings nearby, or take guided tours of the Belvedere buildings and grounds (available starting in May).

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Credit: Alexis Gonzalez

GETTY IMAGES

OUTDOOR VIEWS AND WINTER LANDSCAPES

Balance indoor stops with short outdoor visits, because the surrounding landscape defines Galena as much as its buildings. For example, you can head to Casper Bluff Land & Water Reserve, where open land and historical markers (including protected American Indian mound sites) reside, adding another layer to the setting, including views of the Mississippi River. These stops do not require long hikes, so you can spend time outside without overextending in the cold.

WINTER RECREATION NEARBY

For a more active outing, drive to Chestnut Mountain Resort. Located just minutes from downtown, this skiing and snowboarding mecca sits above the Mississippi River, giving you a wide view of the valley while you move. Even if you do not ski, ride the lift or spend time near the overlook; the scenery alone justifies the stop. For a less adventurous option, take advantage of one of the nearby trails suitable for snowshoeing or winter walking.

SPRING OPPORTUNITIES

If you intend to wait until spring to visit, adjust your pace rather than your plan because the town changes gradually. By late March, the snow begins to recede, and patches of green appear along the hills, which makes outdoor time more comfortable. Keep Main Street as your base, but spend more time outside as temperatures rise. Drive to Horseshoe Mound Preserve for a clear overlook of the hills; its awe-inspiring elevation gives you a broad perspective in a short amount of time.

Both there and at Casper Bluff, the trails become easier to navigate and colorful views come alive with the season. Take a scenic drive through the surrounding countryside to enjoy rolling terrain that reveals early wildflower growth. In addition, Chestnut Mountain Resort transforms into a warm-weather adventure zone starting in late May with zip lines over the Mississippi River Valley, an alpine slide, Mississippi River cruises, and more.

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Galena's compact layout supports a flexible itinerary because most of its destinations sit within a short distance of one another. Winter provides a mix of indoor exploration and brief outdoor stops, creating a wonderful balance, whereas spring's temperate conditions allow for more time outdoors, including extended nature visits and scenic drives. The variety of experiences will likely beckon you to stay beyond a single night.

Centrally located and historically significant, Galena is the perfect day or weekend trip for a range of travelers, especially those visiting larger neighboring Midwest cities. Whether you take the two-hour trek from Madison or even the five-hour journey from St. Louis, one thing's for certain: a getaway to Galena Country is well worth it.

For more info, go to
visitgalena.org









WARDROBE *WELLNESS*

written by: MICHAEL RUSSELL

YOUR BODY COMPENSATES CONSTANTLY, EVEN for what you wear. A worn-down sole, a sleeve that limits range of motion, or a waistband that shifts your posture by half an inch is mostly invisible—until you feel the soreness later. Clothing can take a physical toll. The question is whether your body can afford it.

START WITH YOUR SHOES

Footwear arguably has the most impact. Research on footwear biomechanics consistently shows that what you put on your feet directly shapes how load travels through your ankles, knees, hips, and spine. When that foundation is compromised by anything that shortens your stride or shifts your weight forward, such as worn-out sneakers or unsupportive flats, your body adjusts through the hips and lower back.

Those adjustments accumulate. You may have attributed the resulting stiffness to age. Podiatrists and physical therapists tend to look at your shoes first. A properly fitted, supportive shoe doesn't need to be orthopedic or expensive. It needs to match the shape of your foot and hold up across a full day of use.

FIT AND FABRIC TOGETHER

Fit is about what you're allowed to do while wearing it and apparel that constricts limits more than it comforts. Research has found that wearing pants that are too tight reduces hip mobility and alters trunk muscle activity, leading to discomfort alongside those physical changes. Overly loose clothing can create its own problems by affecting your comfort and movement, potentially straining your neck and lower back over time.

Fabric also factors into how your body manages temperature. The honest picture from the research is nuanced: Most controlled studies find little measurable difference in core temperature between natural and synthetic fibers. The difference tends to show up in comfort perception—how the fabric feels against skin as moisture builds through the day. Natural fibers like cotton, linen, and merino wool tend to feel drier and less irritating across extended wear. That gap is rarely noticeable in the morning but can be practically unignorable by afternoon.

Contrary to common perception, your clothing style and physical ease aren't competing priorities. The ones that serve you best are simply chosen with both in mind.

LIVING WITH *seasonal* ALLERGIES

written by: THOMAS MAYE

Seasonal allergies aren't something you can necessarily cure. What changes, and what makes them more bearable, is exposure. Pollen, mold, and dust mites trigger the immune system to release histamines, producing the familiar sequence of congestion, watery eyes, fatigue, and the low-grade irritation that follows you indoors. The severity is often correlated with how much of the allergen you encounter. Reduce that, and relief may follow.

Know what you're dealing with

Pollen follows a reliable calendar. Tree pollen arrives first, typically from February through May, depending on the climate. Grass pollen takes over through summer, then ragweed and other weeds extend the season into October.

Mold is less seasonal, thriving wherever moisture collects, such as in bathrooms, basements, and leaf piles, and can persist year-round in humid climates. Indoors, dust mites accumulate in bedding and upholstery. Identifying which trigger is worst for you is the first practical step because the management strategies differ.

Outdoor tips

Pollen counts shift by the hour, and a few habits built around that timing can go a long way. Counts tend to run higher in the early morning, making late afternoon a reasonable time for a walk or outdoor exercise. Light rain often temporarily lowers airborne pollen levels. You can check a local pollen tracker the night before so you can adjust your plans.

Wraparound sunglasses can reduce how much pollen reaches your eyes. Showering and changing clothes when you get home helps keep pollen off your furniture and out of your bed, which are the two places where accumulated exposure tends to add up.

On-the-road advice

When traveling, keep in mind the previous tips. In addition, air-conditioned rooms with closed windows replicate what works at home. The downside: If your hotel room is musty, it can lead to mold exposure over several days. So make sure to pack antihistamines and a saline spray. Having them on hand can reduce your scramble once symptoms begin.





PAYING ATTENTION TO PLATELETS

written by: MICHAEL RUSSELL





A BRUISE APPEARS, AND YOU CAN'T RECALL HOW.
A small cut bleeds longer than it should. A nosebleed comes out of nowhere. These medical issues are easy to dismiss individually. Together, they may be your body flagging something worth checking: your platelet count.

WHAT PLATELETS DO

Platelets are tiny cell fragments that help blood clot. The moment a vessel is damaged, even if it's a paper cut or scraped knee, they rush to the site, cluster together, and begin forming a plug. Clotting proteins then reinforce that structure into a stable seal. The whole process unfolds in minutes.

WHEN THE NUMBERS FLUCTUATE

A normal platelet count runs between 150,000 and 450,000 per microliter of blood but can fluctuate temporarily due to illness, medications, or other physiological changes. For example, a drop below normal can suggest a viral infection, a vitamin deficiency, reactions to certain medications, or an autoimmune response. The signs are usually visible: bruises that appear without clear cause, gums that bleed when brushing, or cuts that take longer to close. Another sign is flat, reddish-purple pinpoint spots on the skin, typically the legs, that don't fade when pressed.

A normal platelet count runs between 150,000 and 450,000 per microliter of blood but can fluctuate temporarily due to illness, medications, or other physiological changes.

Elevated counts are less discussed but worth understanding. Your body may produce more platelets after surgery, during inflammation, or in response to an iron deficiency. In some cases, the cause is a bone marrow disorder. High counts can increase the risk of unwanted clotting, which may affect circulation, though many people notice no symptoms. That absence alone is reason to stay current with routine blood work.

WHEN TO ACT

A standard blood panel includes a platelet count. If results fall outside the normal range, your PCP will likely repeat the test for accuracy before acting since a single reading can reflect something temporary. New or worsening changes in how you bruise, bleed, or heal should always be discussed further with your doctor.


MIDJOURNEY

guard your home

AGAINST MOSQUITOES

written by:
ANDRE RIOS

Like clockwork each spring, mosquitoes emerge from the darkness to continue their seemingly endless war against our communities, dooming us to slap our necks every time we step outside and scratch our reddened skin for days after. But you need not fear these purveyors of annoyance! Here are a few steps you can take to help keep them at bay, turning a potential swarm into a smaller, more manageable issue.

Eliminate standing water

A good place to begin your quest is their literal breeding ground: your yard. Water nurtures mosquito eggs so well that in a mere eight days, these pests can mature from egg to bloodsucking adult. Don't give them refuge—pour out any standing water from containers, add filtration features to fountains and ponds so the water doesn't remain stagnant, and examine your gutters to ensure that they drain properly. Then put away clutter like stray buckets and close open trash bins to prevent puddles from forming. You may also want to inspect your yard's irrigation and drainage setup. If it's poor, contact a landscaping service to address any drainage issues.

Install fans

Mosquitoes are weak to more than just a firm slap; they're also feeble flyers, so much so that a decent breeze can send them whirling away. But rather than hope for a windy day when entertaining, add fans to your outdoor gathering space, such as by installing one on your porch ceiling or placing floor models beside your seating. Flick these appliances on, and you'll not only protect your guests from pests but also enjoy some cooling airflow.





Dressing your garden with flowers and herbs such as marigold, lavender, rosemary, and catnip can fill your yard with mosquito-repelling scents while also setting a beautifully vibrant and fragrant scene for you to enjoy.

Repair bug screens

One of the joys of spring's return is the freedom to open your windows on a beautiful day—a perk that can also reduce air-conditioning costs and even improve indoor air quality. But before you do, inspect any bug screens for tears or holes, repair or replace them accordingly, and install new ones where they are missing. This is notably important in bathrooms and the kitchen, where it may be especially advantageous to let humidity out and some pleasant air in.

Tend a fragrant garden

Did you know that some plants are actually natural deterrents? Dressing your garden with flowers and herbs such as marigold, lavender, rosemary, and catnip can fill your yard with mosquito-repelling scents while also setting a beautifully vibrant and fragrant scene for you to enjoy (another good reason to pop open a window!). Just be sure that you nurture these protective plants properly. If you don't apply mulch or soak them when watering, you can unintentionally create standing water that ends up doing you more harm than good.

Utilize natural treatments

As popular as bug zappers and mosquito traps may be, these products only help mitigate the problem, not prevent it. If you're seeking a truly impactful solution, you can't go wrong with good old-fashioned sprays. Store-bought pesticides are certainly an effective option, but many of them also harm beneficial insects like butterflies and ladybugs. So to simultaneously keep out mosquitoes and protect other wildlife, combine about seven ounces of water, a splash of vodka (yes, really), and about two dozen drops of an essential oil such as lemongrass. Spray this mixture throughout your yard for a powerful deterrent that could turn the upcoming mosquito season into a far more enjoyable one.



making wellness MORE CONVENIENT

written by: THOMAS MAYE

HEALTHY HABITS WORK BETTER WHEN YOUR ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS THEM. For example, a foam roller in your closet gets used twice, but if you keep it beside your favorite chair it's more likely to become part of your routine. The difference is placement. A small, well-positioned collection of tools can make a huge difference.

RECOVERY: MAINTENANCE FIRST, REPAIR SECOND

These are different needs. Daily muscle recovery maintenance can be handled well by a firm foam roller since some studies suggest foam rolling may help reduce muscle soreness and improve short-term recovery. For targeted repair after strength training, a massage gun can address specific areas with more precision than a roller can. For travel days or long periods on your feet, graduated compression socks can reduce leg fatigue.

SLEEP AND AIR QUALITY

Bedroom air quality has a direct effect on sleep quality. Research has found that poor ventilation and elevated particulate levels are consistently associated with more disrupted sleep and lower next-day performance. An appropriately sized purifier can handle your larger rooms reliably, making a consistent difference for anyone sensitive to dust or allergens. If you reside in a drier climate or a heated home, consider a model that automatically maintains comfortable overnight humidity.

KITCHEN AND TRAVEL

Time (or the lack of it) usually trumps skill when it comes to cooking well. Keeping a blender on the counter makes a good breakfast a two-minute task. An air fryer, left accessible rather than stored, produces satisfying meals with minimal oil and less cleanup. For cookware, opt for ceramic surfaces that wash easily. On the road, using an insulated water bottle can keep your hydration consistent, while resistance bands let you work out in your hotel room. A pill organizer prevents missed supplements when packing is rushed.

ONE UPGRADE AT A TIME

Identify the gap that costs you most, and address it with a single well-chosen tool. Add only as the next need becomes clear. A small collection maintained over time might just outperform a larger one that requires management.









THE BEST SENSE FOR *MEMORIES*

written by: THOMAS MAYE

SUNSCREEN. PIPE TOBACCO. A PARTICULAR HAND LOTION YOUR MOTHER WORE. THE SMELL ARRIVES BEFORE THE MEMORY DOES, AND SUDDENLY YOU'RE TRANSPORTED BACK IN TIME.

No other sense does this as reliably. Sight and sound travel through the thalamus, the brain's relay station, before reaching areas tied to memory and emotion.

Smell takes a shortcut. Odor molecules connect directly to the olfactory bulb, which in turn links to the amygdala and hippocampus. These are the structures that handle emotion and store autobiographical memory. The result is a link between scent and personal history that research describes as more visceral and emotionally charged than memories triggered by photographs or songs—and, notably, one that tends to pull from much earlier in life. Studies consistently find that scent-evoked memories cluster in the first decade, whereas visual and verbal cues tend to surface memories from adolescence and early adulthood. This is why scent memories tend to arrive whole.

Researchers call it the Proust phenomenon, after the novelist's famous passage about a madeleine soaked in tea and the flood of childhood memory that followed. Neuroscientists have since confirmed what Proust described as a measurable feature of brain architecture, not literary license.

Most people experience this passively when they are surprised by a smell. But the mechanism runs in both directions. A fragrance worn consistently through a significant period becomes retrievable later; a candle burned only on certain evenings begins to mark time as reliably as a calendar. Retailers and hoteliers have understood this for years. The same logic applies at home: A scent, applied with consistency, shapes not only how a space feels in the moment but also how it will be remembered.



The popular online chef, creator of the multifaceted brand Royale Eats, discusses what food and community mean to him and shares recipes from his new cookbook, *Let's Get Into It*.

Davon Moseley GETS INTO IT

interview with: DAVON MOSELEY
written by: MATTHEW BRADY
photography by: STEPHEN BUCHANAN

Where did you grow up? How did your upbringing shape your relationship with food? I was born in DC and raised in Maryland, but both sides of my family are from a small town in North Carolina. We went back and forth a lot, so I feel connected to both areas. The traditions I grew up with, especially around food, really come from my family in North Carolina, though. Food was always present. No matter what the occasion was, we were cooking.

When did cooking shift from something you enjoyed to something you wanted to understand? I was always curious. While everyone else was in the living room or outside, I was in the kitchen watching. My grandmothers and aunts didn't necessarily explain what they were doing, but I paid attention. Over time, I started to understand that food wasn't just about eating; it was how people came together. That made me want to learn the process, not just the result.

My father was the first person who taught me cooking step by step. Of all things, he walked me through how to make spaghetti—something simple, but it mattered.

You didn't go to culinary school. Instead, you studied kinesiology and later health and wellness coaching. How did that influence your work? It helped me understand the body and how food affects it. In my master's program, I also learned how to communicate: how to guide people and explain things clearly. That's a big part of what I do now. It's not just cooking; it's helping people feel like they can do it too.

When did you kick off your brand, Royale Eats? What pushed you to share your cooking publicly? I was at home a lot during COVID, just cooking and posting on my personal page. Friends kept asking where I got the food, and I'd say, "I made it." They encouraged me to start a food page. I hesitated at first. I wasn't someone who loved posting, but I gave it a try and named it using my middle name and my passion for food. People responded to it pretty quickly, with many requesting my recipes, and it just kept growing.

Your brand feels approachable by design. Was that intentional? Completely. The foundation is comfort. I want folks to feel comfortable in the kitchen. Not everyone has confidence there, but they still want home-cooked meals. My goal is to make recipes that meet them where they are—especially beginners—and help them build from there.

Your work often emphasizes community. What role does food play in that? Food is a tool: It brings people together in a positive way. For example, it's hard to stay upset with someone when you're sharing a good meal. For me, the most rewarding part is hearing from people who tried a recipe and felt proud of it or even served it to their family and got a positive reaction. That means more than anything.

With all you do, you seemingly need to think about food 24/7. Do you ever need distance from it? Absolutely. I love food, but constantly working with it can be exhausting. Sometimes I have to step away: go out, focus on something else, and reset. If I don't take that time, I can't give everything my best effort.

What has kept you levelheaded during this venture? My mindset. I was raised to stay grounded—to never think I'm better than anyone but not to think I'm less, either. That keeps me centered. No matter where this goes, I want to remain someone people can relate to as they enjoy my cooking.

For more info, visit royaleeats.com

Keep reading to get a pair of recipes from Davon's new cookbook, ***Let's Get Into It***.

Scan the
QR CODE
to get the full ***Let's Get Into It*** cookbook.



Recipes from ***Let's Get Into It: 130+ Comfort Food Recipes for Novice Cooks*** by Davon Moseley. DK Publishing, 2025. Photography by Stephen Buchanan.



Hibachi STEAK

SERVES 4

If I'm not in a chicken mood, then I am definitely ordering the steak. Tender steak bites tossed in a flavorful sweet and savory sauce are a home run. With a few different recipes, my goal is for you to have hibachi nights at home to treat yourself and your loved ones. Maybe you can even have your family sit at the counter while you cook!

measure

- 2 pounds sirloin steak
- ¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup hoisin sauce
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- Neutral oil, to cook

make

1/ Pat dry the steak. Cut the steak into 1-inch pieces. Set aside.

2/ In a large bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, hoisin sauce, sesame oil, minced garlic, and ginger until combined.

3/ Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add 1 tbsp. neutral oil. Once the oil is hot, it will easily move around the skillet and shimmer. Add the steak pieces in small batches to cook. You do not want to overcrowd the skillet as too many pieces in the skillet can cause them to steam and reduce the chances of getting a good sear on each piece. Add just enough so each has room to cook. (You'll need to sear in 3 or 4 batches.) Cooking time will depend on your preference of steak doneness. I like medium and cook the steak for 1 to 2 minutes, flip, then cook 1 to 2 minutes on the other side. For well done, I recommend cooking for 2 to 3 minutes each side. For a medium-rare cook, increase the heat to high and cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute on each side. Once the steak is cooked to your preference, remove from the skillet and set aside on a plate. Repeat with all the steak cubes.

4/ Once all the steak is cooked to your preference, reduce the heat to medium and add all the steak back into the skillet. Toss in the sauce and cook for about 2 minutes, until the steak is coated in the sauce. Serve and enjoy.

recipe by: DAVON MOSELEY
photography by: STEPHEN BUCHANAN



Garlic & Herb MASHED POTATOES

SERVES 6

There are a lot of dishes that people can debate over whether they're good or not. However, I've never heard anyone say they didn't like mashed potatoes. This is my favorite way to make mashed potatoes because they're buttery, rich, and sure do satiate. I like to serve these with almost every entrée in this book—they all work!

measure

- 2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes
- 4 tbsp. (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste

make

1/ Rinse, peel, and chop the potatoes into 1-inch pieces.

2/ Add the potatoes and about 1 tablespoon of kosher salt to a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil, and cook for 10 to 12 minutes, until the potatoes are fork-tender. Remove from the heat and drain the water from the pot, keeping the potatoes in the pot and allow the steam to release.

3/ Meanwhile, make the butter mixture: In a small pot over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Once melted, add the garlic and cook for about 1 minute, stirring frequently, until the garlic is fragrant. Next, pour in the heavy cream and add the fresh thyme and rosemary. Stir frequently for 2 to 3 minutes and bring to a low simmer. Simmer for about 5-10 minutes to allow the cream to infuse. Once done, remove the thyme, rosemary, and garlic from the pot. Remove the pot from the heat.

4/ Using a potato masher, mash the potatoes in the pot to your desired consistency. (You can also use a potato ricer.) Pour in ¼ of the butter and cream mixture at a time and fold it into the potatoes. Repeat the pouring and folding until the mashed potatoes reach your desired consistency, folding until just combined to avoid overmixing. You may not end up using all of the butter mixture.

5/ Season with salt and black pepper. Optionally, top with chives. Enjoy hot.

recipe by: DAVON MOSELEY
photography by: STEPHEN BUCHANAN



Mentally Well, PHYSICALLY FIT

interview with: ARNICE FOSTER ***written by:*** ANDRE RIOS
photography courtesy of: ARNICE FOSTER, UNLESS NOTED

ARNICE FOSTER, A HEALTH AND BUSINESS COACH, FITNESS AUTHOR, and attorney, offers a glimpse into her signature Foster Fit Method, a personalized and mindset-centered approach to living healthy from the inside out.





GETTY IMAGES



Tell us a bit about your fitness program:
I created the Foster Fit Method and wrote a book on it as well. It's all about taking a mindset-first approach to weight loss, wellness, and becoming more active. I focus on trying to retrain the brain. At the core, I help people change the way they think so healthy habits can feel natural instead of forced.

Most people approach fitness with dread: *I have to get up and go to the gym,* or *I have to eat healthy.* Even the language feels heavy. So many people think healthy living means giving up joy, flavor, fun, or comfort.

I help clients reframe that entire experience. Instead of punishment, wellness becomes empowerment. Going to the gym becomes something that energizes you and helps you feel strong, confident, and alive. Healthy eating becomes an act of self-respect instead of restriction.

"So many people think healthy living means giving up joy, flavor, fun, or comfort.

If you've had a hard day, pizza, fried chicken, or cheesecake may feel like comfort—but real self-care is giving your body what helps it thrive. Once people learn how delicious healthy eating can actually be, everything starts to shift and transformation begins.

What does a coaching session look like?
Our minds operate in patterns and loops. We tend to say the same limiting things to ourselves over and over again until those thoughts begin to feel true. At Foster Fitness, one of the techniques we use is called the "stop technique." When clients express limiting beliefs, we interrupt the pattern and repeat their words back to them so they can truly hear what they're saying.

That interruption creates a mental space. And in that space, we can install new empowering beliefs, thoughts, and healthy behaviors. As I teach in my work, your thoughts shape your feelings, your feelings drive your actions, and your actions create your results. If you start with empowering thoughts, positive results will likely follow and your life will change.

Do clients ever resist your advice?
Absolutely—especially when it comes to food. And honestly, I understand why because food is never just food. Food is culture. It's family. It's memories. It's celebration and comfort. Cornbread, rice dishes, and stews are tied to love, tradition, and identity. Some people fear that eating healthier means disconnecting from who they are or where they came from.

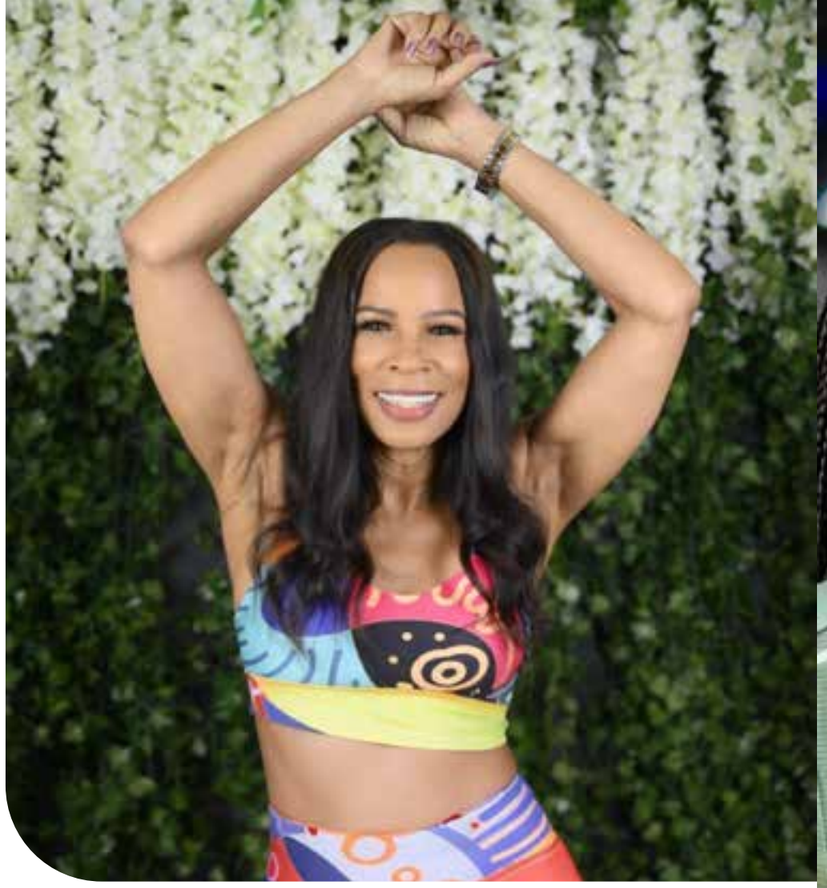
I also hear many people assume that cardio is the only path to weight loss and health. But strength training is incredibly important, too, especially as we age. Building muscle helps support metabolism, confidence, mobility, and long-term health.

What kinds of wellness plans do you recommend to clients?
I help clients create realistic and sustainable ways to become more active. We build meal plans based on the proper calories and macros—proteins, carbohydrates, and healthy fats—that still fit their lifestyle. Then we use tracking tools for workouts and nutrition so clients can clearly see their progress.

From there, I become their accountability partner. We evaluate what's working, where they're struggling, and what adjustments need to be made. My goal is never perfection; it's progress and consistency.

How did you end up in this field?
When I was a young mother in law school, I realized I needed to get my thinking right if I wanted to succeed. I started listening to personal-development tapes. And pretty quickly, my grades improved, my energy increased, and I found myself making decisions faster and with more confidence. I remember thinking, *This is powerful*.

I opened my law firm in 2005, but I was always drawn toward coaching and transformation work. Eventually, I pursued certifications, including training through the NeuroEncoding Institute, Tony Robbins, and Zumba. I've now been practicing these methods professionally for over twelve years.



My father grew up with traditional Texas eating habits, and sadly, he passed away from complications related to diabetes. After losing him, I made a decision: I did not want to live that story. I wanted to be physically strong. At the time, I had gained weight, and I made up my mind that I wasn't just going to *want* to be fit—I was going to become someone recognized as a fit person. That decision changed my life.

What is the most important advice you could share?
Your body was designed to move. The key is finding movement you genuinely enjoy. Some people love basketball. I am not those people. [*Laughs*] I love Zumba, Pilates, and now weight training.

Fitness doesn't mean you have to become Serena Williams overnight. It simply means doing a little more today than you did yesterday. I want people to understand that being healthy can be joyful. It can be simple. It can fit into your real life.

For more information, visit
Arnice Foster Coaching International at arnicefoster.com

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A Guide to Taking

AN ADULT SPRING BREAK

written by: MATTHEW BRADY





SPRING BREAK IS OFTEN A RITE OF PASSAGE FOR THE YOUNG, MARKED BY TIME AWAY FROM SCHOOL AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES. HOWEVER, IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE RESERVED FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS. HERE'S HOW TO PLAN ONE THAT ACTUALLY FEELS LIKE A BREAK.

DECIDE YOUR WHY

Before picking a destination, ask yourself your purpose for going. If you're physically drained or mentally burned out, for example, a quiet, low-stimulation place like a spa or a secluded oasis in the woods might be ideal—essentially, anywhere that offers unplugged time. If you're simply craving something different, the novelty of visiting a new city or attending a new event might pique your interest.

SET A GUILT-FREE BUDGET

People often make the mistake of planning first and pricing later. Budgeting your getaway from the get-go helps you stay in financial control from start to finish. Begin by picking your threshold number—the total dollar amount that would lessen the spending stress—and then divvy it up into three main vacation categories:

50%	30%	20%
TRAVEL/LODGING	FOOD	EXPERIENCES

Stick to your breakdown, and you can enjoy a balanced vacation with less impulse spending.

CUT COSTS WITHOUT CUTTING JOY

You may be concerned that eliminating spending waste will also eliminate fun. But smart spring breakers know the budget hacks that work, including:

- traveling midweek instead of weekends
- booking early-morning or late flights
- looking for free activities (parks, museums, or local events)
- earmarking one notably memorable experience (i.e., a splurge), such as a tour or show, and one "treat yourself" moment like a spa treatment

BALANCE YOUR ITINERARY

As you might have experienced, packing wall-to-wall activities rarely results in feeling like a break. Ideally, you want structure without pressure. Try to aim for one or two planned things per day, filling the rest with built-in downtime and flexible blocks for either more fun or relaxation.

Also, be mindful of the small rituals that will allow you to take a deep breath, such as a morning coffee or a walk by the water. And what should definitely not be part of your itinerary is work, so be sure to set your out-of-office auto-reply to protect your precious time away.

PREVENT POST-SPRING BREAK REGRET

Vacation bliss can feel like a miss when it results in financial strain after you return home. If possible, don't finance your getaway; either use cash only or charge what you can immediately pay off. To help with this, always keep your allotted budget breakdown in mind, and even consider casually tracking your spending while you're there. As a bonus, this could allow you to leave [illegible] so you [illegible] only th[illegible] home with you from your spring break jaunt are great memories, a sense of renewal, and a smile.

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.




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

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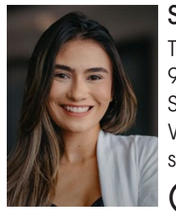

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Front of Tear Out Card 2



garlic & herb
MASHED POTATOES

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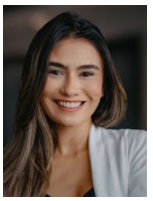

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Back of Tear Out Card 2

garlic & herb
MASHED POTATOES

SERVES 6

make

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- 4 tbsp. (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 c. heavy cream
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- Chives (optional)

Recipe from ***Let's Get Into It: 130+ Comfort Food Recipes for Novice Cooks*** by Davon Moseley. DK Publishing, 2025. Photography by Stephen Buchanan.

measure

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2. Add the potatoes and about 1 tbsp. of kosher salt to a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil, and cook for 10 to 12 minutes, until the potatoes are fork-tender. Remove from the heat and drain the water from the pot, keeping the potatoes in the pot and allowing the steam to release.
3. Meanwhile, make the butter mixture: In a small pot over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Once melted, add the garlic and cook for about 1 minute, stirring frequently, until the garlic is fragrant. Next, pour in the heavy cream and add the fresh thyme and rosemary. Stir frequently for 2 to 3 minutes and bring to a low simmer. Simmer for about 5 to 10 minutes to allow the cream to infuse. Once done, remove the thyme, rosemary, and garlic from the pot. Remove the pot from the heat.
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5. Season with salt and black pepper. Optionally, top with chives. Enjoy hot.

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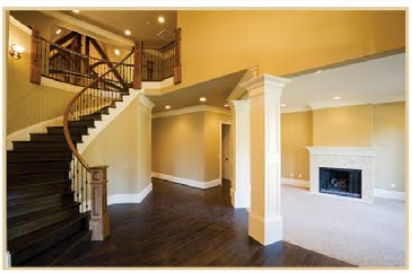





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