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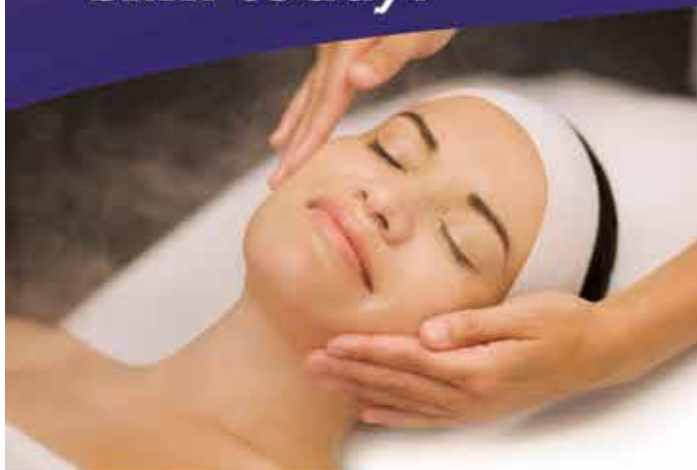
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NATALIE TYSDAL

Natalie Tysdal is a journalist at heart. She's also a wife and mother of three who loves her family time. When Natalie sought a path to combine these passions, a pair of owl bookends and her desire to craft in-depth stories and create her own niche were her guides. Visit our Inspirations pages to learn what the owls revealed to her.

20



Every home can benefit from bringing the beauty of nature indoors. Whatever your personal style, there are many ways to incorporate natural elements into your home décor.

28



When it comes to the holidays, there's no better time of year to forgo the conservatism and bask in the extravagance that the season provides.

38



Certain costs are expected when traveling, but sometimes we are surprised by little additions that take a large chunk out of our wallets.

40

contents

6	Welcome
8	Health
10	Ask the Expert
12	Spotlight
14	Culinary
16	Cravings
18	Beauty
20	Inspirations
24	Mother's Perspective
26	Finance
28	Home
30	Home & Design
32	Trendsetter
38	Fine Things
40	Travel
42	She Said Yes
44	Tie the Knot
46	Pets
48	Scene and Be Seen

COLLABORATION

Have an inspirational woman in your life?

If you or someone you know has a great story that you think should be told, please email us at linnore@herlifemagazine.com!



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Collaboration is defined as working with each other to do a task and to achieve shared goals. It is a process in which two or more people or organizations work together to realize shared goals—by sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus.

The editors-in-chief, designers and a few members of the *HERLIFE* Magazine team from all over the country recently came together in Kansas City to collaborate. It was exciting to meet other editors and exhilarating to be able to work with them to set goals and come up with a plan to create a better magazine in 2014. Not only did we have a better look in mind, but we worked on ways to serve our advertisers better as well as to produce a magazine that will provide our readers with excellent content.

For two and a half days, we met, argued, exchanged brilliant ideas, laughed and made valuable decisions. Overall, it was a great meeting of the minds. We came out of the meetings feeling energized and excited to bring you *HERLIFE* 2014! Having a group of smart and strong-minded women in a room can be tough and intimidating for some, but not for this group of women; we made progress as we all came together to achieve our goals and visions for the upcoming year.

Don't worry—it wasn't all work and no play. *HERLIFE* women also know how to have fun. The first night we had a wonderful dinner at Gaslight Grill. Not only did we enjoy delicious food and excellent wine, but we also played a fun game of "two truths and one lie" to get to know one another and break the ice. We found out right away that we didn't need the game to open up and bond with one another.

The following night we enjoyed excellent Italian food (and, of course, wine) as we created our masterpieces at Pinot's Palette. Everyone was excited to paint on canvas and show off what they created! It was amazing to see the talent and creativity in the room.

I left Kansas City energized and excited! As I made my way home, my mind spun with all the ideas I was bringing home. I can't wait to show and share our new vision for the upcoming year with all of you. This year has been wonderful, and I know that 2014 will be better!



Linnore Gonzales

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LEARN HOW TO SAVE A LIFE

by **catie watson**

Would you know what to do if someone you know or a stranger were to suddenly collapse in front of you? Do you know how to help someone who's having a seizure? Could you perform first aid for a serious wound?

Of course, the first thing to do is call 9-1-1 for any medical emergency. Emergency medical workers can start treatment as soon as they arrive on the scene, which is nearly always sooner than if you drove the victim to the hospital yourself. After you call 9-1-1, your next actions could make the difference between life and death.

When someone has collapsed and is unresponsive, there's a good chance that they're the victim of sudden cardiac arrest.

Because the heart stops beating during cardiac arrest, victims will have little or no signs of breathing and may not have a detectable pulse. Causes of sudden cardiac arrest include heart attack, heart disease and stroke as well as drowning, electrocution, drug overdose, suffocation and other serious injuries. Sudden cardiac arrest is more common than you may think. The American Heart Association reports that about 383,000 out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests occur annually, with more than four out of five cardiac arrests occurring at home.

The most important tool for fighting cardiac arrest when it occurs outside a hospital is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This lifesaving rescue technique uses chest compressions to keep oxygen in the blood and circulating throughout the body, increasing the victim's chances of survival until medical help arrives. CPR has been used as an emergency treatment for sudden cardiac arrest for decades. In the past, CPR guidelines suggested that mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be given before chest compression. However, recent research has found that, when a layperson is performing CPR, doing chest compressions alone can be an effective emergency treatment for cardiac arrest.

In response to this research, the American Heart Association released new guidelines for CPR in 2010. The organization now recommends that people who are not medical professionals focus on the "Hands Only" continuous chest compression technique. You can view a short video tutorial on Hands Only CPR on the American Heart Association website. The video shows two basic steps. First, call 9-1-1.



Second, place both hands in the center of the victim's chest and push hard and fast until help arrives. As a reminder on how fast to push, the video says to follow the beat of the Bee Gees disco hit "Stayin' Alive."

This new type of CPR was first introduced in Arizona, where it has tripled survival rates for some types of heart attacks. According to experts, the chest compression method is more effective because it's simpler to learn and easier to remember. "Saving lives just got easier" is how the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation describes Hands Only

CPR.

If you're really committed to saving lives, the American Red Cross suggests that you learn how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). An AED is a medical device that delivers an electrical shock to the heart to help re-establish normal rhythm.

Sudden cardiac arrest is more common than you may think. The American Heart Association reports that about 383,000 out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests occur annually, with more than four out of five cardiac arrests occurring at home.

With training, people who have no medical background can easily operate an AED. The Red Cross has taken the position that improved access to AED devices in public places combined with increased training could save an additional 50,000 lives per year. For more information about learning how to perform CPR and operate an AED, contact

hospitals or fire departments in your area or the American Red Cross, American Heart Association or National Safety Council.

Besides getting trained in CPR and AED operation, you can learn how to deal with life-threatening situations caused by choking, allergic reactions, seizures and serious wounds through first aid training. The American Red Cross is the best source for accredited First Aid training; the organization's classes are attended by more than 9 million people each year. Basic first aid training is usually a two- to five-hour class and covers treatment for life-threatening situations as well as burns, cuts, broken bones and a variety of other injuries. In addition to providing basic first aid training for individuals, the Red Cross offers specialized training for baby sitters, lifeguards, professional rescuers, nurse assistants and other health care providers. Visit the American Cross website or contact a local chapter to find out more about first aid training and register for a class. The National Safety Council and other non-profit organizations also offer first aid, CPR and AED training.

Sudden cardiac arrest, strokes, seizures and serious accidents can happen anytime, anywhere and to people of all ages. By learning how to provide emergency medical treatment until help arrives, you could make a difference in the outcome of a life-threatening event. ■

Sources: heart.org, sca-aware.org and redcross.org.

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HORMONE REPLACEMENT BASICS

Q. How do I get started on hormone replacement therapy?

Once I start, will I need to continue long-term?

A. We ask that you speak with your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of hormone supplementation. If your prescriber does not feel they have enough experience in this realm, Brown's Compounding Center can offer assistance in recommending which lab tests should be conducted for dosing recommendations and initiating therapy. Continuation of HRT is a personal choice. One patient may swear they will never go off because of how they feel. Another may use this treatment option to help weather the storm as they go through menopause.

Q. Do I need lab work to start HRT?

A. Some prescribers, but not many, will start a patient on hormone replacement therapy without labs as a tool for evaluation. We recommend that you have labs drawn prior to initiating therapy, as this helps provide a baseline for comparison.

Q. What are the side effects?

A. All therapies should be started using the lowest effective dose to minimize potential side effects. Typically, side effects are based on the hormone that is "out of balance." For instance, when estrogen levels are too high, symptoms like breast tenderness, water retention, weight gain and irritability or moodiness can occur. We have seen drowsiness, nausea, and, in the very rare occurrence, something like morning sickness when progesterone levels are too high. Testosterone side effects such as over-assertiveness and irritability occur when the dose is too high. All medication side effects should be reported to your healthcare provider or your pharmacist.

Q. Are the hormones synthetic?

A. "Synthetic" is not a true representation of the hormones used in the therapies prepared for our patients. All chemicals used in medications are synthesized from one source or another. We like

to focus on the end product, which is identical to the hormones your body produces. Most hormones we use are derived from one of two sources, soy or yam. Brown's Compounding Center uses products synthesized from yam, as we have seen some interesting yet unexplainable sensitivities to hormones synthesized from soy products in patients with soy allergies.

Q. When I start HRT, how soon will I notice a difference?

A. Many different factors come into play regarding efficacy, including, among others, dosage, dosage form, patient compliance, patient metabolism and even the patient's body mass index. Our patients have noticed improvements in their symptoms as quickly as four or five days, but sometimes it can take a couple of months to get the therapy "dialed in" for a specific patient. That is the beauty of using Brown's Compounding Center; we can completely customize the therapy for each and every patient.

Q. What are the common hormones used in HRT?

A. The typical hormones used are estradiol, estriol, estrone, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA/7-ketoDHEA and pregnenolone.

Q. Do I need a prescription from a doctor to start HRT?

A. The simple answer is yes. All hormone replacement therapies prepared at Brown's Compounding Center must be accompanied by a prescription from a licensed provider. The pharmacists at Brown's Compounding Center are always available as a resource for your prescriber to help answer any questions as well as assist with dosing recommendations. ■

Darby Brown is the owner and chief pharmacist at Brown's Compounding Center which has been in business since 2004. He is an alumni of The University of Kansas – School of Pharmacy, member of International Academy of Compounding Pharmacy, American Society of Hospital Pharmacists, American Pharmacists Association, Colorado Pharmacist Society, and recently selected by the Colorado Board of Pharmacy as a member of the Compounding Task Force.





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Art du Coco

by kathleen m. krueger

photography by lightbox images



Natasha du Coco says she's addicted to Shabby Chic and, more specifically, to chalk paint. It's not surprising. While she was growing up as a little girl in Russia, her father often allowed her to "help" him paint. He made his own chalk paint and even made his own brushes. He was an artist, just like his mother, and whatever medium he found available, he used to create beauty. He created detailed, vintage-looking postcards with his colored pencils. He painted on their furniture and doors. Natasha was surrounded by artistic beauty as a child and desired the same Old World beauty in her home as an adult.

Since leaving Russia in the 1980s, Natasha has lived in six different countries. It was through her work in international commerce that she met her husband, Gert. They were living in his native Netherlands when they married eight years ago and have lived in different areas of the United States both prior to and since their marriage. They also spent time living in Prague for a time to be close to Natasha's father after his cancer diagnosis. Following her father's passing, Natasha and Gert moved to Denver and purchased a five-bedroom home for their family.

Desiring to turn their new house into a welcoming home, Natasha began selecting furniture and painting it. She used chalk paint and distressed the pieces to give a look of wear and paint layers. She decided not to keep a few of the pieces she'd painted and put them up for sale. People loved them! Before long, people were asking for more.

As this unexpected business developed, Gert and Natasha realized that it would be important to select a preferred product for Natasha's work. Gert sourced three different brands of chalk paint products for Natasha to compare; he found one that was both easier to use and provided a much more appealing finish. It also had the extra bonus of carrying the name of a well-known Dutch painter, van Gogh.

Gert discovered the Studio van Gogh brand fossil paint in his search and couldn't resist contacting the owner, Kathy van Gogh, whose business is located in Canada. Kathy, he found, was a true descendent of the great Dutch painter, Vincent van Gogh. Gert had grown up visiting the van Gogh art museum as a child, and he and Natasha had also visited that sanctuary of masterful art often when they lived in the Netherlands.

Kathy was thrilled with their interest in her paint products and flew to Denver to meet with them. Kathy educated them further on the uniqueness of the van Gogh Fossil Paint™ products and how to use them. As a result, Natasha and Gert's business, Art du Coco, became the exclusive distributor of van Gogh Fossil Paint products for Colorado and California.

Fossil paint, or chalk paint, in the generic sense, is nothing new. Gesso is an Italian term well known among art students; its literal meaning is "chalk." Chalk has been mixed with binding agents and pigment for thousands of years to be used as paint. It was used by Rembrandt in his masterpieces and has been used on walls and furniture, as well. Its Old World matte finish and amazing versatility have brought it back into vogue through the popularity of the Shabby Chic and French Provençal, or country French, design trends.

Chalk paint requires a finishing coat to protect it. The van Gogh Beeswax Finish product was one of the strongest distinguishing points between this product and the others that Natasha tested. The beeswax is a completely natural product and doesn't contain the chemical additives that were found in most of the finish products she tried. It even has a pleasant honey-like fragrance.

Natasha is now sharing her love of Shabby Chic design and van Gogh Fossil Paint through workshops and her personal creations. She has done more than a half-dozen kitchen cabinet upgrades in the last few months, turning out-of-date cabinets into trendy new painted

finishes. Her customers receive a new look to their kitchen in less than two weeks and at a price that can be as low as one-third the cost of replacing their cabinets.

Natasha's business, Art du Coco, has now partnered with three privately owned Ace Hardware stores in Highlands Ranch, Aurora and Longmont, which will be selling van Gogh Fossil Paint products. Natasha will be providing training workshops for those purchasing the paint for personal or professional use. More stores have expressed interest in selling van Gogh Fossil Paint products, so you can expect to find them close to you soon.

Natasha was born into a lineage of artists; it was bound to take hold of her sooner or later. "Whenever I'm painting, I think of my father," Natasha related. Denver happened to be the location of destiny, where that artistic seed chose to bloom. ■

You may purchase Art du Coco finished pieces at The Barn in Castle Rock, Colorado and the American Classics Marketplace in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For up-to-date information on Art du Coco offerings and van Gogh Fossil Paint™ products, visit ArtduCoco.com.





PREPARING A VEGETARIAN THANKSGIVING

by **sherry l. granader**

Sharing a meal together with family and friends over a Thanksgiving feast can be one of the most memorable events of the year. However, you may have some vegetarian guests who you need to accommodate, and the first thing to remember is to not stress out about it.

Ask your vegan or vegetarian guests in advance for any preferences. You may be surprised that they offer to bring a few of their favorite dishes to share on the big day. If not, it is easy to make a few simple substitutions in the dishes that you are already preparing. For example, use vegetable broth instead of chicken or turkey broth in your stuffing and gravy. Use soy milk or almond milk and olive oil instead of butter in the mashed potatoes. Even if you make a mistake, your vegetarian guests will likely appreciate your efforts to accommodate their meatless lifestyle.

Some vegetarians are happy to enjoy all the delicious side dishes while others may prefer a turkey substitute such as Tofurky® or a homemade loaf made with blocks of firm or extra-firm tofu combined with soy sauce, sesame oil and dry sherry, and seasoned with pepper. Encourage a picky vegetarian family member to prepare some of the side dishes to ensure they are made with the right ingredients.

Tofurky can be glammed up with marinades and glazes, or you might want to try a deep-fried Tofurky. There are several brands of vegan and vegetarian meatless turkey substitutes that have hit the market over the past few years. Try them all!

Stuffing is probably the easiest vegetarian side dish to make using vegetable broth, olive oil, cranberries, cornbread or whole-grain bread. Take some inspiration from the South by making sweet potatoes with orange juice, ground ginger, a pinch of brown sugar and a sprinkle of toasted pecans. Green bean casserole is still a holiday favorite and can be made using olive oil instead of butter, and nutritional yeast and sliced mushrooms to create that creamy sauce.

Creating a meatless gravy can be a challenge, however. Use vegetable broth instead of the pan drippings or animal fat and add fresh herbs, chopped mushrooms and other flavor enhancers such as nutritional yeast and miso, available at many grocery stores. A wild rice pilaf made with dried cranberries or stuffed acorn squash makes a delicious side dish that is easy and quick to prepare.

Preparing a vegetarian soup to go with Thanksgiving dinner will still leave plenty of room for potatoes, stuffing and pumpkin pie. A butternut squash soup made with crisp fall apples, apple juice, veg-

What would Thanksgiving be without pumpkins? To enhance your dinner celebration, try a vegetarian pumpkin soup made with pumpkin puree, vegetable broth, onion, soy or almond milk and nutmeg.

etable broth, olive oil and seasoned with chipotle seasoning will make a lasting impression and plenty of leftovers. Many traditional Thanksgiving dinners include a gelatin salad of some sort; however, there are healthier options to try, such as a fresh spinach salad topped with cranberries and pecans, broccoli salad or simply a mixed green salad. Salad dressings can be made quickly, simply by whisking together an oil and vinegar mixture or mustard vinaigrette that is sure to please everyone.

What would Thanksgiving be without pumpkins? To enhance your dinner celebration, try a vegetarian pumpkin soup made with pumpkin puree, vegetable broth, onion, soy or almond milk and nutmeg. Pumpkin muffins or breads add a delicious, filling accompaniment to any meal, including the holiday meal. Try adding sweet potatoes to pumpkin soup, muffins and breads for a different taste.

Everyone looks forward to dessert, whether it is apple or pumpkin pie, or you may want to serve a pumpkin cheesecake made with tofu. Classic pumpkin pie can be made with tofu instead of the eggs that serve as a binder, and is perfect for Thanksgiving dinner. A vegan pumpkin spice cake can be made easily with pumpkin, tofu, flour, vanilla extract, sugar, baking soda and baking powder, with the usual spices of cinnamon and nutmeg.

If you are not in the mood to cook or have no interest in creating an entire vegetarian meal, try picking up some vegetarian turkey and potatoes, and top it off with gravy for a quick meal. It is possible to order an entire vegan or vegetarian Thanksgiving feast online or at your local Whole Foods Market. They offer a complete pre-cooked meal with plenty of vegetable sides to choose from à la carte. Look for vegetarian Thanksgiving cooking classes weeks before the holiday to get some ideas on creating an enticing vegetarian meal with or without a turkey.

Planning the perfect vegetarian Thanksgiving dinner can be done with some simple, easy changes that will add creativity and taste delicious. With all the choices available in the market, it is easier than ever to create a meal that is sure to please the strictest of eaters. Here's to creating the perfect meal—enjoy! ■

Source: wholefoodsmarket.com



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Farro Italian Restaurant

by **judi fulton** | photography by **lightbox images**

I have found my nirvana. With flavors of creamy gorgonzola, garlic and tomatoes still lingering in my mind, I will forever consider this intimate Italian haven to be among my top ten dining experiences.

Farro Italian Restaurant, located at County Line and Holly Streets, fuses a unique blend of classic Italian dishes with fresh, earthy, succulent specials and an atmosphere that calms the senses yet entertains the taste buds. Items such as the Tuscan-style meat-loaf, made with roasted aromatic veggies, beef and farro, topped with porcini mushroom gravy and served with garlic mashed potatoes, and the whole grilled lobster over spaghetti with fresh tomatoes, garlic, chilies and basil were among the choices of my neighboring diners,

who were full of compliments to the chef.

Matthew Franklin, executive chef and owner, brings a lifetime of experiences inside these Tuscan walls. Matthew spent 17 years as a chef at a notable Denver restaurant and claims that owning his own restaurant is “every chef’s dream.” His dream came true more than five years ago, after nudging from wife, Christine, who encouraged him to open his own restaurant right around the corner from his home in Centennial. His culinary talents are coupled with his gregarious personality, evident as he walked the floor to greet each customer, taking the time to share the ingredients behind his success. The impeccable staff mirrored his charismatic personality, treating each customer like



Norm from *Cheers*.

I started my evening with the Three Beet Salad, something I would never have chosen; it was graced with yellow, Chioga and roasted red beets, finished with Farro's signature homemade vinaigrette and sprinkled with fresh cracked pepper. It was delightful! Warm Italian breads were served with a special homemade blend of crushed vegetables and herbs, vinegar and olive oil, revealing the chef's creativity. As I dined, I was entertained by the liveliness of the entire staff, enjoyed by new customers as well as the three-time-a-week regulars. The full bar and user-friendly yet not mainstream wine list allowed me to choose a perfect pairing for my menu choices.

As I scanned the brightly lit dining area, I smiled as my waitress catered to a gluten allergy family with ease. A vegetarian dining with her significant other teased him for his choice of grilled Pork Loin Salad, which he dismissed with every scrumptious bite. Another intimately lit room held a nice blend of couples and business chatter over drinks and desserts. The Limoncello Mascarpone Cheesecake was seemingly a popular choice and a big hit.

I inquired about the Strozzapreti, a pasta dish that arrived with chicken, prosciutto, and tallegio fonduta. The couple next to me leaned in as my waitress described the dish as long, hollow pasta twisted at the end, which absorbs the flavor of the creamy cheese sauce.

A small group arrived, asking for a waiter by name. Since they were clearly regular customers, I stalked their table with my eyes to determine what their favorite dishes were. A variety of salmon, grilled sea bass, and traditional spaghetti and meatballs arrived just in time for me to decide upon the salmon.

The main dish of salmon and spinach risotto arrived while I was asking about the Seafood Farro. My waitress offered a taste of the cioppino dish, which had my mouth watering for more. Satisfied with my salmon choice, I have vowed to return for the seafood dish, as well as an extra slice of that graham cracker-encrusted limoncello cheesecake!

Farro Italian Restaurant's menu has something for everyone, from brick oven classic pizzas to chicken parmesan, sea bass to lamb chops. Whether you seek a romantic evening, business meeting, girls' night out or family celebration, you'll find your nirvana inside these Tuscan walls. ■

Farro Italian Restaurant is located on the northeast corner of County Line and Holly Streets at 8230 South Holly Street in Centennial, Colorado. Reservations are recommended and may be made by phone at 303-694-5432 or on the website, farrorestaurant.com, which offers menu previews and hours. Holiday and business catering are available.

Judi Fulton has a BA in communications from Elizabethtown College, PA, and has been in advertising for 25 years. Before joining the HERLIFE Magazine staff, she worked in many media such as outdoor, digital media, direct mail and radio, in addition to her years with Time, Inc. in New York. She moved quite a bit while her husband was in the Air Force, but made Denver her home after his retirement. Judi spends her free time cheering on her three children, Taylor, Sydney and Noah, who are competitive in sports in the Denver Metro, and loves finding great restaurants to share with her family and friends!





MOISTURIZER, LOTION, BODY BUTTER, OIL- WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR BODY?

by hallie sawyer

Finding a body moisturizer these days almost requires a hearty snack and a good stretch before heading down the drugstore aisle. The sea of lotions, body creams and oils are enough to make your head swim unless you know exactly what to look for as well as what your body needs. So how do you know which one is right for you? We have some tips to help you find exactly what you're looking for.

Knowing the key ingredients in each moisturizer is important to make sure you are getting what you need. For example, many moisturizers contain humectants or emollients. Humectants pull moisture from the air to your skin while emollients sink into the crevices of your skin, making it appear healthier and younger. Lotions, oils and body creams all serve different purposes and are not considered equal. While they all moisturize, they do it in different ways.

Lotions are typically made from ingredients like aloe vera, vitamins, keratin and shea butter. These ingredients are meant to penetrate the skin and hydrate it, leaving it softer. They replenish lost moisture, giving skin a more youthful appearance as well as helping to repair damaged skin.

Oils are highly concentrated liquids derived from roots, fruits, flowers and leaves. They are easily absorbed into the skin and should be free from chemicals. Many people think that oils block pores,

causing breakouts and make the skin greasy, but this is not the case. Actually, natural oils are not greasy and non-comedogenic (meaning won't block pores). Oils protect the skin's lipid barrier and keep moisture from escaping. The use of oils and animal fats as moisturizers goes far, far back in history, and today body oils are used more than any other moisturizer in Europe.

Body cream is thicker in consistency and sold in a jar or tub. It is made of water and oil and often used to moisturize extremely dry skin. It tends to be used more in the winter months or in more arid climates. Common ingredients found in body creams are often the same as in lotions, however, with a heavier oil-to-water ratio.

So what's best for you? That depends on your skin type, the portion of the body that needs attention, and the season. Lotions are great for those with normal skin, those who want to keep their skin hydrated in the summer months, and those living in more humid climates. Facial moisturizers should always be non-comedogenic, and it's advised to consider a facial lotion that contains sun protection, giving you a moisturizer and sunscreen all in one. If you have sensitive skin, it is recommended you look for hypoallergenic and fragrance-free creams and lotions.

You may think those with oily skin should use only lotion, but natural oils are easily absorbed into the skin and are considered

non-comedogenic. The key is to know your oils, steering clear of mineral oil, which is a processed petroleum product, and seeking out cold-pressed jojoba, olive, sweet almond and avocado oils. Some body oils are considered mood enhancers; for example, oils that contain rosemary enhance alertness, while lavender body oils increase restfulness. When you are feeling unsure of yourself, it is said that jasmine body oil helps to increase your level of confidence.

If you have extremely dry skin, consider a body cream to keep ahead of the dryness. Also, body creams are recommended throughout the winter months, when moisture in the air is at a minimum. They


Dermatologists recommend seeking out moisturizers with organic or “green” ingredients to avoid absorbing potentially toxic substances into your skin. Also, when looking for the right product, consider natural ingredients that fight free radicals, which are what damages DNA.

are also great for moisturizing knees, elbows and heels, which tend to be the toughest body parts to keep hydrated. Also, creams are recommended for application to the face and body before bed, giving your skin time to recuperate and hydrate before facing the elements each day.

Some companies add potentially harmful fillers to their lotions and creams, such as parabens, synthetic chemicals or petroleum by-products. Dermatologists recommend seeking out moisturizers with organic or “green” ingredients to avoid absorbing potentially toxic substances into your skin. Also, when looking for the right product, consider natural ingredients that fight free radicals, which are what damages DNA. Damaged skin cells speed up the aging process, produce dark eye circles, dry out your skin and give it a dull appearance. Look for ingredients such as green tea extract, alpha-lipoic acid, acai oil, vitamin C, rose hip seed oil (a healthy alternative to Retinol), Coenzyme Q10 and caffeine to take your anti-aging regimen to another level.

Finding quality ingredients for your skin is just as important as having a healthy diet and a regular exercise regimen. Giving your skin the best treatment possible may not be as difficult, or as expensive, as you think. ■

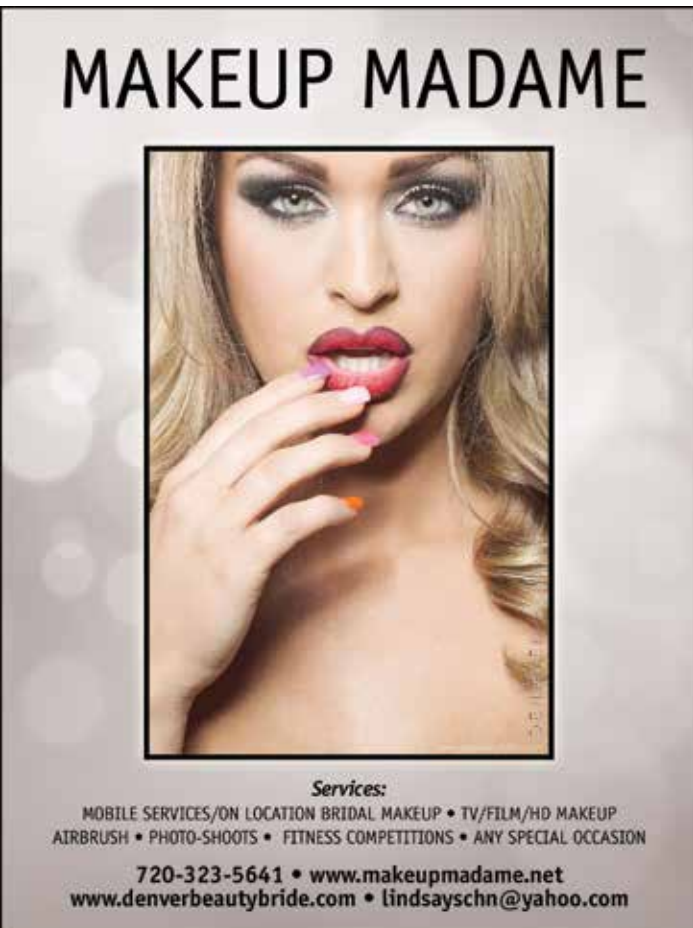
Sources: WebMD, Organic Gardening and TLC.com.



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The advertisement features a gold and purple color scheme. At the top, the brand name 'Les Boutiques' is written in a cursive font, with 'INTIMATES & APPAREL' in a smaller, sans-serif font below it. Three photographs are displayed: a mannequin in a pink bikini, a mannequin in a floral dress with a blue handbag, and a close-up of a patterned handbag.



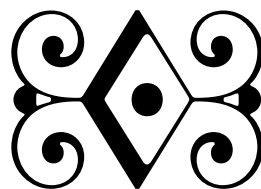
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The advertisement features a close-up photograph of a woman with blonde hair, heavy eye makeup, and bright red lipstick, with her hand near her mouth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.





Natalie Tysdal: Family, Wisdom and Truth

by **kathleen krueger** | photos by **lightbox images photography**

stylist **kristen at polished personal style** | clothing **alicia the boutique**

Ever wise. Always true.

Those two phrases are bookends for Natalie Tysdal, in both a literal and philosophical sense. The words are inscribed on bookends that her husband received from his mother and that have a place in their office. They are also parenthetical for Natalie's 20-plus years in journalism; she has always sought to showcase both wisdom and truth in the stories she covers.

Natalie has been well-known in the Denver area during the last 11 years as one of the news anchors for KWGN Channel 2 and FOX31 TV stations. Prior to moving to Denver, Natalie and her husband, Tyler, had moved from state to state and city to city, following the call up the ladder in her journalism career. It wasn't long after they moved to Colorado that Natalie and Tyler decided they'd found the perfect place to put down roots and raise a family. Tyler made Denver his permanent home base for his business, and Natalie enjoyed becoming a part of Denver's morning news on KWGN Channel 2 and eventually a new talk show called EVERYDAY on FOX31.

Before moving to Denver, Natalie was an evening news anchor, and she found that the late hours worked well when she had just one toddler. The morning hours were the best option when she moved to Denver, and they allowed her to have a "second job" as a mom after school. Although this did allow her to be home with her children after school and let the whole family spend the evening together, her schedule still had its down side.

Taking the early morning news shift meant getting up at three o'clock in the morning and heading off to work while the children were still sleeping. It also meant going to bed just as early as the children. There were no special late nights when Mommy needed to be in bed by 9:00 p.m., and that meant just six hours of sleep before a live four-hour broadcast each morning.

It was the wish for a more flexible schedule that would permit her the freedom to spend more time with her children that prompted Natalie to begin looking for another career option. She is passionate about journalism. She is a storyteller at heart. She just needed to find a way to do the work she loved, on her own terms, rather than having a schedule dictated by the timing of news broadcasts.

There was one thing about her journalism work in television that had always been a frustration to Natalie; it was the limited amount of time that she was allotted to communicate a story. Natalie often felt she was doing an injustice by trying to package the valuable message of a story into the three- or four-minute slot she was allowed by the constraints of a news broadcast.

It was Natalie's desire to tell a fuller story, combined with her impetus to work a more family-friendly schedule, that prompted her to resign her position as the morning news anchor at KWGN and the talk show she helped create on FOX31 in May 2013. She chose the timing of her resignation to be just before the summer in order to enjoy two luxuries—no alarm clock and no makeup—for three months.

Education is priority for Natalie, not just as it relates to her children, but as it encompasses society in general. She formed a committee that founded the magnet school her children attended for elementary school. And several of the nonprofits she supports and is involved in also have connections to education.



"It's been really wonderful!" she enthused. This was a change in routine for the entire family. Natalie's three children weren't used to having her there with them in the morning. They had become pretty self-sufficient in their routines and didn't really know where she fit. "Now, I'm kind of in their way," Natalie joked. "They like having me here and they like me doing the things I never got to do before, like brushing their hair or making a special lunch for them." The kids were used to having Mom home in the evening, but without her early morning working hours, Natalie says she is more "present" and no longer sets their bedtime based on her own.

This new life has also made it easier for Natalie to be more involved in all the kids' schools. Education is priority for Natalie, not just as it relates to her children, but as it encompasses society in general. She formed a committee that founded the magnet school her children attended for elementary school. And several of the nonprofits she supports and is involved in also have connections to education. With a more flexible schedule, Natalie is also finding more time to enjoy the many outdoor activities that she loves and seldom had time for with her schedule in the television journalism industry.

Natalie loves the opportunity to be available for her family, but she hasn't given up her love for journalism. Her new adventure includes the founding of her own production company, Everwise Entertainment. "It's my hobby and my business," admitted Natalie. It is what she is enjoying most in this new journey, beyond the time she now has with her family.

There were so many news stories that Natalie had been involved in over the last 20 years that she felt deserved something more. These stories were the first to be added to the list of potential projects for her new production company. "I wanted to tell stories that did justice to these people," explained Natalie. "Having the luxury to spend time crafting a story has been fulfilling."

Everwise Entertainment's signature approach to communicating corporate and nonprofit messages is one that has its roots in the power of a good story. The name and tagline for the company was inspired by the inscription on their owl bookends, "Be ever wise. Be always true," and embodies the company's commitment to truth, longevity and integrity. "In our family, we are always asking our children, 'Are you being wise about that?'" And I wanted to be wise about this new business," Natalie related. If you look closely, you'll see the small emblem of an owl incorporated into the business logo.

In their corporate videos, the company focuses more on telling the story of the business rather than a more commercially-based format. One of the first stories Everwise Entertainment produced was the story of a new wine importer. Since the wine label includes the name of Frances Mayes, the author of the book *Under the Tuscan Sun*, the production crew of Everwise Entertainment spent ten days in Italy filming with Frances and telling the story of how the company, Tuscan Sun Wines, all started.

Everwise Entertainment has several different areas of storytelling included under its umbrella: documentaries, cable television entertainment and the corporate/nonprofit sector. In each area, the expertise of the talented team that Natalie has assembled uses their combined creativity to capture stories in ways that are compelling, both in their narratives and visual dynamics.

Natalie's 12-year-old daughter recently had an assignment for school in which she was asked to describe the different members of her family. In her description of Natalie, she listed four traits that seem to encapsulate just who Natalie is. According to her daughter (and those who know her well), Natalie is: "Always there; likes to help people; very determined; and likes to tell stories." Yes, that pretty well says it. ■



HELPING YOUR CHILD MEND A BROKEN HEART

by **heather noble**

Recently, when my son was at a local playground, he fell and scraped his knee. His tears quickly stopped as I attended to the injury. I used an antiseptic wipe and applied antibiotic ointment. Possibly most important to his healing, I applied a bandage that featured his favorite Disney character. The minor cut was well on its way to healing.

The next week, my son came home from school appearing quite distraught. A good friend of his had said he no longer wanted to play with my son, and he learned that another, especially close friend of his was moving far away. I was initially at a complete loss, as I knew he ached considerably for these very natural, yet also very upsetting emotional pains of life. His heart hurt, and my make-shift medicine bag and knowledge for treating cuts would not suffice. I needed to think in a more complex way for healing on this level. However, it was not as simple to just “apply the cure.”

Though children's needs are sometimes manifested and met in somewhat different ways from that of adults, there is still a surprising parallel for what mends a broken heart among all of us. As we navigate life events, we fare best when surrounded by some of the most healing ingredients possible in the environment. These include compassion and understanding that is communicated by others and inoculates the wounds we incur, along with love and trust in meaningful relationships that will sustain us and lead us to feel even stronger.

Acknowledge What Hurts

Too often, we are tempted to not address emotionally painful issues, because it is hard to know what to say and what will be most helpful. Quite honestly, it can also feel messy to point to something that hurts. Yet, children of all ages need to feel validated for what they are experiencing. It is possible they may not want to talk about or address an issue right then and there, but an acknowledgement that something has occurred or is happening, along with an invitation to talk about it at any point in the future, goes a long way.

Engage with What Works

While it certainly is helpful and important to address what is painful for children, this also needs to be balanced with encouraging them to remain connected to people and life activities that are sustaining and rewarding. When they are ready, children should be engaged with play and hobbies that have been especially fun for them in the past. Also, ensure they are surrounded by others, children and adults, who are nurturing. This will enable them to continue working through what is stressful and distressful, while also cultivating healthy outlets for increasing energy and finding relief.



Children may especially be scared if they are experiencing something emotionally painful, unlike anything they have ever encountered before. They may need more active guidance to find their way. Even if the experience is not something completely new, children can still feel quite anxious about whether they will ever feel better.

Instill Hope

Children may especially be scared if they are experiencing something emotionally painful that is unlike anything they have ever encountered before. They may need more active guidance to find their way. Even if the experience is not something completely new, children can still feel quite anxious about whether they will ever feel better. Hope is the belief that the uncomfortable feelings, including intense

sadness, will change and improve with time. For children, hope can be instilled by hearing stories of how others experienced something similar, including the emotions involved, and how that process was successfully navigated. A strong figure in the child's life, such as a parent, other caregiver or teacher, can be especially instrumental for this. If you can fulfill this role of story-telling for a child, think back to how you experienced the distress, including all of the thoughts and feelings that it involved. With the child, find a time you might share your story, directly acknowledge how you felt hurt and describe how you found support from others and eventually felt better. Your story will instill hope for the child that there is a way out from the pain.

As an adult invested in a child's life and wellbeing, you have a powerful role to support development and healing. You can provide considerable comfort. At the same time, know that not all of this has to rest on your shoulders. If you and/or the child have strong and ongoing concerns, a consultation with a mental health professional might be warranted and prove helpful. A broken heart, from time to time, is a natural experience in life. However, it is equally important that mending it also be part of that experience. ■

For more information, visit apa.org, cfw.tufts.edu and kidsmentalhealth.org.

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Technology has brought major changes to the banking industry in recent years, from ATMs replacing local bank branches to online stock trading. Thanks to banking websites and mobile apps, you can check account balances, transfer funds between accounts and pay bills from any location 24/7. For consumers who are comfortable with technology, banking has become far more convenient.

If you do most of your banking online and from ATMs, it may seem like a natural transition to switch over to a direct online bank. Some of the major players in the online banking field include ING Direct, Ally Bank and Capital One 360. These “virtual banks” operate in cyberspace without the traditional network of branch offices. The savings in infrastructure costs are typically passed on to customers in the form of higher savings interest rates and lower loan interest rates compared to brick-and-mortar banks. According to *Forbes.com*, the top six banks with highest average savings interest rates in 2012 were all online banks.

Before you make the switch to direct online banking, it's important to understand their pros and cons. The biggest advantages of online banking are their convenience and cost. You can quickly set up a checking or savings account by filling out an online application. According to *CNN Money*, direct online banks usually charge lower

fees for checking accounts and other services as well as offering better interest rates. Online banks provide free 24-hour access to accounts and frequently provide more online services than traditional banks that have a customer website. If you want to complete banking transactions from a smartphone or tablet, direct online banks were quicker to expand to mobile platforms. Many traditional banks are catching up, so this is becoming less of an advantage.

Now let's consider some of the disadvantages of direct online banking. Although you may save money in account fees, those savings could be offset by ATM fees. Most internet-only banks don't have their own ATM networks, so you'll be charged out-of-network fees when you use other banks' ATMs. The larger online banks have negotiated with ATM networks to eliminate fees. For example, ING Direct customers have free access to 35,000 Allpoint network ATMs. Another direct online banking disadvantage affects consumers whose employers don't offer direct deposit. If you're in this category, you'll have to use snail mail to deposit your checks. This means it could take five or more days before you can access your deposit. Many online and traditional banks are overcoming this hurdle by allowing customers to make online deposits by uploading check images with a smartphone or tablet.

Your technology comfort level is another

INTERNET/ MOBILE/ ONLINE BANKING PROS & CONS

by **catie watson**



factor to consider before switching to internet-only banking. If you don't mind navigating your way through a website, adapting to web-

To protect your identity and your money, be on the lookout for phishing emails that appear to be sent from your bank but actually direct you to a fraudulent website when you click on a link.

site changes and being patient when your bank's website goes down, then you shouldn't have many problems. If, on the other hand, you enjoy face-to-face interaction with a bank teller or officer, you won't find that with an online bank. You also won't get as much in-person help when it comes to resolving problems and completing complex transactions. If personal support from your bank is a service you value, you are probably better off sticking with a traditional bank.

Many consumers worry about the security of online banking. If you choose an online bank that's backed by the FDIC, you'll be covered for losses up to \$250,000 (just like a traditional FDIC-backed

bank). When it comes to online transactions, sophisticated encryption that's mandated by U.S. law ensures that your online banking transactions are safe. This doesn't mean you are completely protected from online scamming or identity theft. Your online password and ATM personal identification number (PIN) can be stolen by hackers, leaving you open to online fraud. However, this problem is not specific to direct online banks—accounts in traditional banks are also subject to hacking and fraud.

To protect your identity and your money, be on the lookout for phishing emails that appear to be sent from your bank but actually direct you to a fraudulent website when you click on a link. Your bank should never send legitimate emails asking you to access your account via an email link. When in doubt, call your bank to verify questionable emails. You can also protect your online accounts by only logging in through a secure connection. Public WIFI connections in airports, hotels and coffee shops are easy to hack into and should never be used for banking transactions. Finally, make sure you keep your computer secure by installing and running state-of-the-art anti-virus software and enabling a firewall. This will help keep your system safe for both online banking and shopping. ■

Sources: Forbes.com, CNN Money, U.S. News & World Report, Investopedia.com and ING Direct.

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DECORATING USING NATURE AS INSPIRATION

by catie watson

Every home can benefit from bringing the beauty of nature indoors. Whether your personal style is modern, traditional, country, minimalist or eclectic, there are many ways to incorporate natural elements into your home décor without compromising your style.

The most basic way to create a nature-inspired home design is by choosing natural materials, such as furniture made from wood or rattan and upholstered with linen, cotton or leather. If you like a rustic feel, try wooden pieces that look weatherworn. Shop for natural floor coverings made from wool, sisal or seagrass. Hardwood or cork flooring will also give your home a natural feel.

When it comes to the color scheme for your home, let Mother Nature be your guide. Look to the natural landscapes that you're most drawn to for inspiration. If you love mountains and forests, use browns and greens. If you're happiest near the water, choose blues and neutrals that remind you of your favorite lake or beach. A color scheme that focuses on white, black and gray can be used to evoke a snowy winter scene. If you'd rather surround yourself with bright colors, use a flower garden for inspiration. Besides using natural color schemes when painting walls, you may want to consider wall treatments that feature trees, plants or flowers. If wallpaper is too permanent a change or not to your taste, try removable wall decals.

Maximizing natural light is another way to bring nature into your

home. Sunlight can enhance the look of natural décor and brighten your mood. Using natural light can also save you money on your electricity bill. The best type of window covering is blinds made from natural materials like wood or bamboo since they will allow you to control the amount of light that enters your home. If you prefer drapes, choose sheers in natural fibers that allow some light to come through even when closed. Installing skylights in rooms that receive the most sunlight is another way to bring more natural light into your home. Also, be sure to trim back outdoor landscaping that may be blocking your windows and keeping out sunlight.

Incorporating found items as accessories is an inexpensive way to give your home a natural feel. You can display single items, such as placing an interesting piece of driftwood on a shelf or mounting a tree branch on the wall, or you can showcase small collections, such as groupings of river rock or seashells. A collection of living plants or terrariums is another way to bring the outdoors inside. The great thing about natural accessories is that you can change the look of a room as the seasons change by switching out your display items. If your style is more minimalist and collections aren't your thing, you can add a natural motif to your décor with floral and animal prints for upholstery and pillows. For artwork, choose botanical prints or photos that depict natural beauty.

Demonstrate your love of nature by creating a home that's eco-friendly as well as inspired by nature. Shop for furniture made from sustainable, non-toxic materials. For example, furniture constructed from

Bamboo is another eco-friendly and sustainable choice for wooden furniture. It is one of the greenest substitutes for hardwood because it grows very quickly and can be harvested annually without destroying old-growth forests. Bamboo is as strong as many hardwoods and can be used with non-toxic adhesives in furniture construction.

wood certified by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) is guaranteed to have been produced in an environmentally friendly manner. Bamboo is another eco-friendly and sustainable choice for wooden furniture. It is one of the greenest substitutes for hardwood because it grows very quickly and can be harvested annually without destroying old-growth forests.

Bamboo is as strong as many hardwoods and can be used with non-toxic adhesives in furniture construction.

Furniture made from recycled and repurposed composite materials is another eco-friendly choice. Eco composites are created from scrap, salvaged wood and other recycled materials. Kerei board, manufactured from reclaimed sorghum straw, is an example of a beautiful, eco-friendly substitute for wood. Recycled plastic and metal are also used to create materials for green furniture. When shopping for furniture made from composites, avoid pieces that contain formaldehyde. Emissions from formaldehyde can cause a variety of health problems for sensitive individuals.

When it comes to eco-friendly fabrics for your home, look for organic fabrics to avoid the risk of pesticide residue. All treatments and finishes that are applied to furniture fabrics should be non-toxic; flame retardants in particular should be avoided due to the toxic dust that they emit. Paints and stains used on sustainable furniture should have low VOC emissions. These products release fewer volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which means less air pollution in the home and an overall healthier living environment.

The natural world relaxes, refreshes and nourishes the soul. By incorporating elements from natural environments that most inspire you when decorating and furnishing your home, you can create a personal interior environment that mirrors the soothing qualities of the outdoors. ■

Sources: HGTV, Better Homes and Gardens and SierraClubGreenHome.com.

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DECORATING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by **linnore gonzales**

Q. I HAVE A BLENDED FAMILY. HOW DO WE FIND THE PERFECT HOME WITH MY BLENDED FAMILY IN MIND?

CAROLYN — DENVER

A. The process of starting a life over with a stepfamily in a new home can be both exciting and challenging. Whether you are moving across the country or across town, the pressures of blending two families can be stressful on everyone. It's important to make sure each family member has a voice in choosing the new residence and creating an environment everyone can call home. Here are four tips to create a smooth transition into a new home while taking your blended family into account.

Carefully consider the size and the floor plan of the home you buy. While there is no single "right" home for a blended family, a house with many bedrooms and bathrooms will allow your family the opportunity to learn how to live with one another without feeling too crowded and on top of one another. Allow the children to decide if they prefer to have their own bedroom or to share a bedroom with a sibling.

Turn a first floor den into a bedroom. If you are able, consider turning the lower level room into a bedroom for teenage children or a college student to allow them to feel independent and maintain their privacy.

Consider a renovated house with bedrooms at both ends. Buying a home with bedrooms on both ends and a common living space in the center allows blended families to maintain a degree of physical distance, while still meeting in the middle at mealtimes and for recreation.

Include everyone in the decorating process. Involving the entire family in decorating the new home makes starting over much easier and allows all members to feel included. Give a few options for different elements of shared spaces and let each family member share their opinions.

Q. THE WINTER MONTHS ARE HERE. HOW DO I KEEP MY HOME COMFORTABLE AND WARM DURING THESE COLD WINTER MONTHS?

LAURIE — ENGLEWOOD

A. You can make small changes in your décor that will bring the warmth into your home and make it a welcoming retreat at the end of a cold, gray day. Below are some ideas.

Rich colors: Add pillows and artwork with splashes of rich warm colors, such as reds, oranges and gold.

Plush fabrics: Introduce soft and plush fabrics in cushions and upholstery that you want to snuggle up in—velvet, mohair and chenille.

Throw: Use warm afghans, quilts or down throws over chairs and sofas to invite cuddling. The layering of fabrics adds richness and texture to the room.

Spicy scents: Place candles with spicy scents around the home; vanilla or cinnamon evoke feelings of comfort. Place mirrors behind the candles to magnify the candle's warmth and reflection. Candlelight always softens and warms a room.

Layer rugs: Layer oriental or kilim rugs on the floor to add texture, dimension and elegance.

Rich drapes: Add rich drapes to create a cocoon of warmth in the room, but make sure you leave them open during the day.

Fireside: If you have a fireplace, move your sofa and chairs closer to maximize the warmth and intimacy it gives the room.

Extra lighting: To combat the added gloom of winter, add extra lamps with warm incandescent lightbulbs. Use lamps instead of overhead lighting for a more intimate ambiance. ■

Linnore Gonzales is also the owner of a full service decorating company, Decor & You. "Decor & You furnishes and refines residential and commercial interiors. Our designers have the power to simplify how people achieve comfort, style and value in their homes and businesses. It's an ambitious goal, and Decor & You delivers it – right to your door!"

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ROCKIN' EVER AFTER

photography by feld entertainment

Get ready to rock out with some of the most magical idols of all in a musical showcase that features the hottest tunes and talent from across the kingdom in Disney On Ice presents Rockin' Ever

After! Jam to a Scottish jig as a group of royal contenders from the latest Disney•Pixar film, *Brave*, competes to win the heart of headstrong, sharp-shooting Merida, making her ice debut! Experience a show-stopping performance as Sebastian breaks out of his shell for one night only to make waves with Ariel. A chorus of harmless hooligans from *Tangled* unleashes musical mayhem when they get a visit from the sassy and spirited Rapunzel and her charming ally Flynn. Get your feet moving as the Beast and his castle's enchanted entourage take center stage in a spectacular show for Belle.

This brand-new spectacular show visits Denver from December 5 through 8, 2013, for nine total performances at Pepsi Center. Tickets are \$15, \$22 and \$27. Opening night tickets start at just \$15! (Additional fees apply. Excludes Front Row and VIP seats) A limited number of VIP tickets (\$45) and Front Row tickets (\$75) are also available. All seats are reserved; tickets are available at disneyonice.com, tickethorse.com, Pepsi Center Box Office or by calling TicketHorse at 866-461-6556.











LAVISH HOLIDAY DINNERS

by **lisa taranto butler**



When it comes to the holidays, there's no better time of year to forgo the conservatism and bask in the extravagance that the season provides. While typical holiday dinners might include Aunt Connie's corn casserole or cousin Ken's crinkle cookies, this year, why not go a "little over the top" and celebrate with excess? Throwing a holiday party filled with fabulous food, delightful drinks and more-than-remarkable sparkle will leave your guests feeling honored and you feeling like an extraordinary holiday hostess.

The Perfect Plan

When it comes to serving up an unforgettable and sumptuous soirée, planning is key—and pre-planning can never begin too early. Will you have a theme? Will you decorate in a certain color or style? Is your dinner party bejeweled with bling, comfortably rustic or fashionably formal? Choosing a theme right away will make for easier decisions later in the planning process.

During the holidays, evenings fill up fast, especially weekends, so send a save-the-date as early as possible to earn your dinner party a special spot on the calendar. Follow up with a formal invitation at least a month before the actual date to get the best return on your R.S.V.P.

Invitations

Which brings us to those party summons requests—the R.S.V.P. R.S.V.P. stands for "répondez, s'il vous plaît," a French phrase that means

Party favors or small gifts are a great way to add to the festivity of your lavish dinner party. No need to break the bank with overpriced gifts, but a simple parting present may be just the thing that makes the night memorable long into the New Year.

"please reply." These days, printed invitations for dinner parties are certainly not the norm, but if luxury is what you are looking for, an email or Facebook invite just won't do. A simple but traditional mailed invite is classic, charming and just waiting for a "yes" reply. Try working with a printer for a special version or make your own through various online programs. Use quality cardstock and handwrite the envelopes, as this will add anticipation to the evening.

Menu

Probably the most important part of your fabulous festivities is the food that will be served. Choose a menu early, making sure it suits the

season while keeping the palates of your guests in mind. Regular ham and turkey won't cut it for an extraordinary dinner, so try Cornish hens, sumptuous seafood or a hearty meat. Keep your vegetarian friends happy with a few meatless choices and make sure to dish up something you have served before. Have an easy "fallback" food already prepared in case something goes wrong with the main course.

Just because it's the holiday season doesn't mean everything has to be heavy. Most folks are happy to have healthy dishes from which to choose, and they will remember your thoughtfulness in the New Year to come.

Décor

While the food takes center stage at a lavish dinner party, decorations should also be divine, and going "all out" is required. Stick to your original theme and decorate each room similarly throughout. At holiday time, it is easy to embellish each room with a festive approach while staying within the color and theme of the party. But be bold. Red and green seem a bit ho-hum, but Tiffany blue and silver are merry and bright.

The true centerpiece of the evening is the dining room, and when your guests finally sit down they should feel transformed into the holiday spirit. Use only your best dinnerware and stemware, and make sure everything is sparkling.

Drinks

When it all comes down to it, drinks can make or break a holiday party. Plan some pre-dinner cocktails before the meal is served. Guests can mingle as they create their own merry-making cocktails at an open bar stocked with the basics—wine, liquor, soda, juices and sparkling water. Make sure guests have enough time to sip a cocktail or two before the meal. And, of course, consider your guests' safety and offer sober drives home or taxicabs at your door.

A Lasting Impression

Party favors or small gifts are a great way to add to the festivity of your lavish dinner party. No need to break the bank with overpriced gifts, but a simple parting present may be just the thing that makes the night memorable long into the New Year. Use monogrammed ornaments or candles by each guest's plate or place small gifts in a basket near the front door, so you can say goodbye with a gift and end the party on a high note.

There's no need to hire a party planner for an exquisite and memorable holiday dinner. Free your imagination and let yourself go overboard in bling and flair. Go online to Pinterest and other party planning sites for ideas and inspiration. Just remember, the holiday season is a time for overdoing it. Use your resources and the sky is the limit. ■

Sources: etiquettescholar.com and freshome.com.



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LITTLE TRAVEL FEES THAT ADD UP TO A BIG EXPENSE

by **bre roach**

An airline certainly loves a surcharge; that's become very apparent in the past few years. Many of us have experienced this in one way or another. Most recently, airline staffing has been reduced due to budget cuts, so now we pay for our bags as well as stand in line for two hours before they make it through the metal detector. But it's all part of traveling, right? Certain costs are expected when traveling, but sometimes we are surprised by little additions that take a large chunk out of our wallets. We all would like to have a little bit more money to spend on the actual vacation as opposed to burning it all before we arrive.

You've carefully planned your vacation right down to the dollars that you'll expend on food and even cushioned a little to accommodate in case you lose your shampoo, but you managed to wind up broke and confused on the fifth day. Sound familiar? Sadly, this is all too common. We don't account for the fact that hotel prices have increased every year with the exception of 2001 and 2008, according to twincities.com. When you look at fuel prices and how they go hand-in-hand with up-charging for airline tickets, you start to feel a bit

hopeless. What are we to do when it feels like prices are never going to drop back down?

One cost-saving strategy when traveling with an airline is to pack extremely light. Of course, there will be times when that's virtually impossible, but there are some effective, quick solutions for avoiding the up-to-\$50 baggage fee. Scottyvest's Transformer Jacket (\$160) has 20 pockets designed to accommodate everything from a water bottle to an iPad. He even incorporated a pocket that will allow you to control your iPhone. If you absolutely must pack five pairs of shoes, then make them fit in your carry-on bag and buy the rest of the items you need when you arrive. Chances are you can find toiletries for under \$50. Also, be cautious of purchasing a flight and then changing the date. Many airlines charge so much to change your flight that it's often cheaper to purchase an entirely new ticket, so check other options before finalizing with an agent on the phone.

Pay close attention when reading the details online. Spirit Airlines, for example, charges an extra \$5 when you skip the kiosk and ask the customer service agent for help, according to *USA Today*. Yes,

Be cautious of purchasing a flight and then changing the date. Many airlines charge so much to change your flight that it's often cheaper to purchase an entirely new ticket, so check other options before finalizing with an agent on the phone.

that's correct. They are charging you for talking to a real person. Virgin America started charging \$20 to upgrade your seat. These little items seem like no big deal. How many times have we heard ourselves say, "Oh, I'll just pay the \$20?" Yet when that \$20 is charged five times, suddenly you're out \$100—the money you had budgeted for going out to eat during the trip.

Let's say you've survived the airport with minimal damage to your pride and wallet. You will be driving an hour to your aunt's house and you'll need a car to do that. You may expect that's no problem. Yet if you think renting a car is easy and fun, think again. For example, some car rentals charge extra for a car seat, something every parent

will need; after all, who wants to lug a car seat around the airport? You may be asked if you want a navigation system, and that seems like a great idea because you're in New York City and don't know how to get around. And they'll charge you for a navigation system, too, when chances are your phone's navigation system will get the job done for free. Enterprise also charges a Young Driver Surcharge for drivers between the ages of 18 and 24. They tally up your car charges and then tack on the surcharge later, so you think you're renting a car for \$40 but later find out it's nearly \$100 after the surcharge.

Not only have these additional fees made us rethink our vacations, they have also helped us become more frugal travelers. Even though we now have free in-flight meals, pillows and headphones, at one point people used to fly with a carry-on bag and no meal. While you can definitely avoid travel fees, you can also help yourself travel a little less luxuriously by reminding yourself of these factors. Use smart strategies to help the headache of traveling go away.

So the next time you catch a killer flight for \$54, remind everyone that you're leaving on a jet plane and paying only what the ticket cost because you've done your research. And don't be ashamed that you can pinch a penny so hard that Abraham Lincoln grits his teeth. We like to call that being resourceful. ■

Sources: scottevest.com, twincities.com, usatoday.com and washingtonpost.com.



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Alyson & Brendan

by **marilyn isaminger** | photography by **jm photoart**

Alyson Burchardt and Brendan Hildum met the summer of 2010, when Brendan joined Alyson's soccer team in the Boston recreational soccer league. Alyson, feeling cooped up in her office at Brandeis University, was playing soccer on weeknights around the city to stay active, and Brendan was working on a project to dredge a contaminated lake.

After their first match, Brendan was interested in this athletic Norwegian woman; after the second match, Alyson was intrigued with Brendan, and she tracked him down to, naturally, discuss World Cup soccer. They set up brackets for the final rounds of the competition; Alyson chose Spain, Brendan chose the Netherlands, and the loser would buy the winner a beer. During July, while Alyson was home in Colorado, they texted back and forth, discussing the matches, each bragging to the other that she/he would win. As it turned out, both their teams competed in the World Cup final: Spain versus Netherlands, and Spain—and Alyson—were the victors. And so, on July 17, 2010, Brendan took Alyson on their first date and bought her the beer

that let them to their futures.

Brendan proposed on March 8, 2012, employing a bit of misdirection to keep Alyson off guard. She smiles, "I went to school early in the morning. Brendan, studying for his master's at Boston College, was on spring break. He gave me the impression that morning before I left that he was going to hang out at home and be lazy. I missed my usual train coming home so I called Brendan to let him know I missed my train. Fortunately, I caught a ride home with a friend. Brendan texted and asked me to be sure to pick up the mail since he'd been 'so lazy' that day he hadn't left the apartment. When I arrived home, there was a single red rose in the mailbox. I remember thinking, *liar*, as I walked up the stairs. On the door was another red rose and a red tulip; then I really got suspicious. I opened the door and saw a candle-lit path of red rose petals; Bren was standing in the living room in his nicest suit and tie. On the coffee table were more red roses, red tulips, a bottle of champagne, and a box from Mike's Pastry containing their famous cannolis. He said to me, 'I lied... I've



actually been really busy today.' I was completely taken aback and was desperately trying to take off my coat and backpack, throwing everything onto the floor. Brendan looked so excited and nervous that, as he got down on one knee, he was almost shaking. He said to me, 'Alyson, I love you, and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you marry me?' And of course I said 'YES!' We spent the evening drinking champagne, eating cannolis and just laying on the couch together."

Brendan had spoken with Alyson's dad two weeks earlier on Skype, asking for her hand in marriage, and had purchased the ring in January. Since about 3 p.m. that day, in a hot apartment with no AC, he had been dressed in his suit and tie. Alyson shared, "I normally took that 5:35 train home but sometimes I leave earlier, and he couldn't be sure. So he was ready. I was pretty horrified at how long I made him wait there for me, but he said it was worth it, because he completely surprised me, and I think that was the point."

The blissful couple tied the knot on September 14, 2013, at Crooked Willow Farms in Larkspur, Colorado, in a special ceremony with family and long-time friends present to witness their commitment to each other. ■





Elizabeth + Cecil

Tied the Knot
June 22, 2013

by **marilyn isaminger**
photography by **kb digital designs**

Elizabeth Breaker Courtney is 30, and attended Wheat Ridge High School and Metro State University, where she majored in psychology. She chose to make her maiden name her new middle name, as a way to keep it close to her heart! Elizabeth and Cecil live in Lakewood with their chocolate lab, Mad-dy. She's proud to say that she is a Colorado native.

Cecil Calvert Courtney, Jr., is 34; he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1997 and served until 2001. Originally from Pittsburgh, Cecil moved to Colorado in 2001 after his honorable discharge from the Marines. Upon arriving in Colorado, he decided to embark on a new path and completed a five-year apprenticeship program through Pipe Fitters Local Union 208 and is now a Journeyman Pipe Fitter. Cecil loves Colorado, and he enjoys the outdoors, camping and four-wheeling.

Elizabeth and Cecil "knew" each other for an entire year before ever really speaking. "We were neighbors, and I thought the guy who lived upstairs, with the sweet Jeep and beautiful chocolate lab, was

pretty darn cute! Cecil was a man of few words when we would pass each other in the parking lot. The only time that I actually spoke to him was when I was on my way to a Broncos vs. Steelers game. He had a Steelers shirt on. I was dressed in my Broncos gear, so without even thinking I started to razz him (and flirt with him, of course), not knowing that he's from Pittsburgh and is a die-hard fan. It probably wasn't the best way to win his heart! After another six months, we actually connected. One night in July 2010, I went to a local bar to grab a drink with my co-worker and saw Cecil. I decide to break the ice, walked up to him and said, 'Hey, aren't you my neighbor?' The rest is history!"

Elizabeth smiles as she remembers Cecil's proposal. "Our proposal was very sweet. Cecil and I love to go four-wheeling whenever we can; on Sunday morning, October 16, 2011, we headed to Idaho Springs. We had our usual breakfast at our favorite spot in town and drove up the mountain. After a little while, Cecil said he wanted to show me a new trail. When we arrived, it was absolutely gorgeous.



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We walked around for a bit, taking in the scenery. I started to run toward Maddy, our chocolate lab, when Cecil stopped me. My back was still turned when he said, 'Wait, I have a question to ask you.' When I turned around, he was standing there with the box open and said those four beautiful words, 'Will you marry me?' I ran into his arms and said 'YES' a million times! It felt like we were on top of the world."

The blissful couple tied the knot on June 22, 2013. Elizabeth's sister, Amy Breaker, was Maid of Honor. Bridesmaids were Katie Breaker, Riley Duffie and Kelly Lewis. Cecil's best friend, Tim Campbell, was his Best Man. Danny Roberts, Matt Warner and Derek

Schroding were groomsmen. Cecil's nieces served as flower girls and ring bearer.

The couple put many personal touches into the wedding reception. Elizabeth notes, "Cecil and I made just about everything with our own two hands, from the cupcake stand and card box to the hand-drawn fingerprint tree, all of the centerpieces and the flower girl signs. It was so fun and fulfilling to see all of our hard work come together perfectly on our special day!"

The couple honeymooned in Clearwater, Florida, a beautiful beach town with perfect, white sandy beaches and gorgeous views of the Gulf Coast. ■

GETTING YOUR PETS READY FOR WINTER

by **linda r. price**

As responsible pet owners, we need to prepare for the drop in temperatures that winter brings. If your pets stay outdoors year-round, then they must have shelter with warm bedding, fresh water and additional rations to offset the extra energy burned keeping warm. Try to raise the bed off the ground and insulate it with hay instead of blankets and towels as these absorb moisture. Wet bedding can lead to chills and hypothermia. Check on the animal and its shelter frequently. Water can freeze in extreme weather; a heated water dish with a heavy bottom is available from pet stores. If you use heating elements for the animals, be sure they are designed for animal use and not human use as these can be dangerous. Add a couple of favorite toys for those long, lonely hours.

Even if you are like most pet owners and live in the city, you will need to make adjustments for when your pets stay inside for longer periods and the time they can be outdoors is limited. The first need that comes to mind is potty breaks. Cats use litter boxes with little trouble, and dogs, especially the smaller breeds, can be trained to use one too. Larger dogs may continue to use outdoor facilities if snow and ice are kept shoveled off a small area in the yard and a pathway leading to the spot is cleared. Older larger dogs, puppies and sick animals should not be let outside in the elements as their systems won't be able to resist the severe weather. They can be trained to go in a specific area of the house, perhaps on a porch or in the garage.

Some owners use booties on their dog's feet in inclement weather. Booties help protect the feet from snow, ice, gravel and salt. They can be removed when entering the house or apartment and thus help keep the home tidier. If you don't use booties, check the paws to remove any debris that got caught between the toes. Rinse, dry and rub a thin layer of petroleum jelly over the paws to prevent cracks from forming.

Along with booties, many owners like to buy sweaters and coats

for their pooches. (Most cats will resist clothing strenuously!) This is fine, but keep an eye on your dog since coats, sweaters and even booties can get caught in wires or branches and might cause harm to the animal. Especially if you walk your dog at night or when the skies are gray, you may want to invest in a reflective coat and collar with LED lights or blinkers for extra safety.

Pets need to preserve their stamina, so give extra rations as



Antifreeze is a highly toxic substance that is deadly to pets. It is thick and sweet. Cats can be killed by licking very small amounts off their paws. Dogs are also highly susceptible.

needed. Their mental and physical health is stimulated by regular walks. Even if you don't feel like it, bundle up and get outdoors for a short walk with your dog. The exercise will be good for both of you.

It often seems that pets suffer from more illnesses in the winter months. Routine immunizations are important year-round but critical in harsh weather. Regular vet visits may spot any potential problems and help keep them at bay.

The holidays bring their own dangers to pets. I'll never forget the year I bought two very expensive new, handmade ornaments for my tree. They had folded ribbons held in place by hundreds of straight pins. One of my dogs (I had three yellow Labradors at the time and suspected, but never identified, the culprit) completely destroyed one

of the ornaments the first night it was on the tree. I was on pins (!) and needles for days wondering whether any of them had swallowed pins from the ornament. Keep ornaments out of reach of your pets (or close the door where the tree is). Avoid using glass or edible ornaments as the pet may decide to knock the tree over to get at them.

Other treacherous items are cords from lights that may be chewed and shock the pet. Mistletoe, holly, poinsettia, chocolates and alcohol are all poisonous to pets. Tinsel can be ingested and cause intestinal blockage.

Antifreeze is a highly toxic substance that is deadly to pets. It is thick and sweet. Cats can be killed by licking very small amounts off their paws. Dogs are also highly susceptible. Carry any pet suspected of ingesting antifreeze to a vet immediately for treatment.

Cats and kittens (squirrels, too) love to shelter in and around the warm engine of a car. Blow the horn and bang on the hood to scare off any animal that may have taken refuge there.

Above all, remember that a new puppy or kitten is not a toy. It requires a stable environment and extra care. Try to resist the temptation to give one as a Christmas present. The American Kennel Club suggests giving a gift representative of the prospective dog, such as a toy, a leash, or a bed, instead. ■

Sources: akc.org, hardwarehank.com, webmd.com, webvet.com

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THE ULTIMATE WILLY WONKA PARTY AT ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE CINEMA

photography by **lightbox images**



On Wednesday, September 25, Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in Littleton hosted “The Ultimate Willy Wonka Party” with a screening of the 1971 classic *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. The audience was treated to a variety of candy, special props and a post-film Q & A with three of the actors from the film, Paris Themmen (Mike Teevee), Julie Dawn Cole (Veruca Salt), and Denise Nickerson (Violet Beauregarde).



JOVIAL CONCEPTS PRESENTS PEACE DAY

photography provided by **donna gisi**



On September 21, Jovial Concepts presented Peace Day on the 16th Street Mall. Each year the United Nations designates an International Day of Peace to be observed around the world dedicated to strengthening the ideals of peace among all nations. Peace Day festivities in Denver featured booths spanning the center of the 16th Street Mall with live music, art, and activities for all ages. Although countries around the world participate in Peace Day, Denver boasts one of the largest celebrations. To learn more, visit jovialconcepts.org.



GINO VELARDI FASHION SHOW

photography by **lightbox images**



Denver's own award-winning fashion designer, Gino Velardi, put on what was called the best event of the year on Thursday, October 3, at the EXDO Event Center in the RiNo Arts District. The impressive New York-style runway showed 84 gorgeous designs on 25 models with hair inspired by *The Great Gatsby* to a sold-out front row and applauding Velardi superfans. The evening was a benefit for the 41-year-old, self-taught designer who has battled colon cancer this year and a stroke back in 2006. Funds raised go toward medical bills. "After all my hard work, all the stress, I walked out onto the runway after my show and felt a huge wave of support. I was touched and so grateful to see the number of people there for me," shared Velardi. For more event photos and to keep in touch with the designer, go to facebook.com/GinoVelardiDesigns.



"Success is getting what you want.
Happiness is wanting what you get."

- Dale Carnegie



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