WATERWAYS

THE INSIDER'S LIFESTYLE GUIDE TO WEST AUSTIN

Hot Spots

15 NEW PLACES
TO BRING YOUR GUESTS
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Gift Guides

GIFT IDEAS TO HELP
YOU HIT THE MARK

Deck the Halls

TIPS TO MAKE YOUR
HOME HOLIDAY-READY



Comfort & Joy

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THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

home

FOR THE HOLIDAYS









THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE IT.

May your home be filled with love, happiness and laughter this holiday season.

And if you are considering a move in the new year, please contact me.

April Womack

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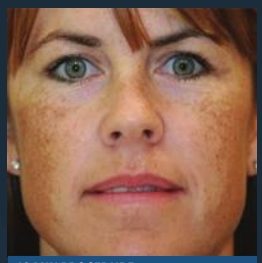
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ON THE COVER: The splendor of the season truly comes to life through a beautifully lit holiday tree. No matter what holiday you celebrate this season, we hope you take time to gather with friends and loved ones, to make magical memories and to celebrate what's most important. Enjoy reading through the issue and find new inspiration and new ideas to spark your holiday joy.


Happy Holidays
Love,
Tammy
People are often unreasonable and self-centered. FORGIVE THEM ANYWAY. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. BE KIND ANYWAY. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. DO GOOD ANYWAY.
— Mother Teresa
Just a few lines from a powerful poem that I love. I hope they move you as well.
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Let the Festivities Begin!

And just like that, we're nearing the end of another year. Whoever said time goes by faster when you're older knew what they were talking about. I suppose our busy lifestyles are partly to blame. The older I get, the more I seem to pile on my proverbial plate.

I know that December will fly by at warp speed as there are so many things to be done, festive events to attend and people to spend time with. Adding to the frenzy for me is that my wedding anniversary is December 15, one more cause for celebration between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

This year, I decided to change my ways. I got a jump-start on the holidays and have already looked ahead to 2022 and the New Year's resolutions I hope to keep.

Meanwhile, I plan to enjoy the holidays more than ever. We at *Waterways* hope that you will too, so to help with that, we've featured (among others) articles on holiday decorating, dressing for holiday shindigs, new places to bring out-of-town guests, charitable giving ideas, and gift guides for luxury items, subscription boxes, holiday books, colleague gifts, white elephant gifts, and gifts for the "sweet tooth" and the "impossible person" (who has everything) on your list.

I hope your 2021 has been filled with many more silver linings than gray clouds and that you will find time to slow down and live in the moment. I am excited to see what lies ahead in 2022. The possibilities are endless!



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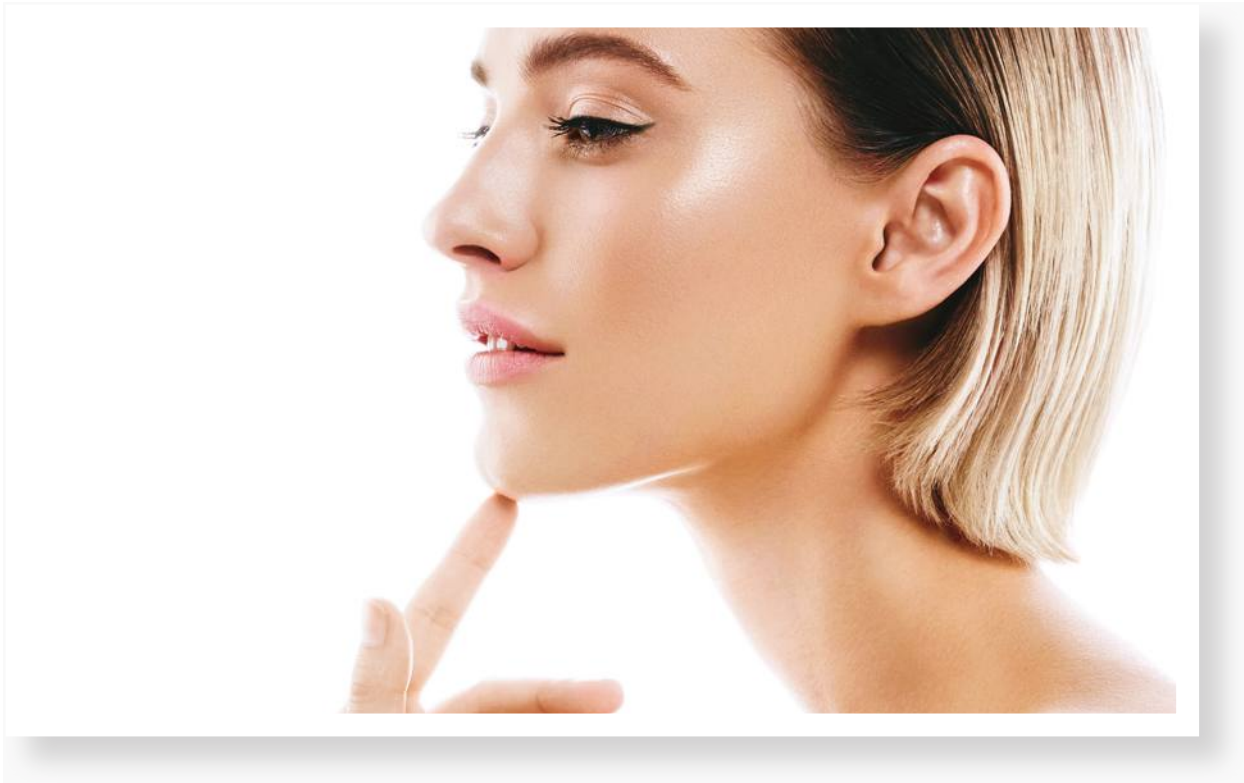






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Glow, Gorgeous!

5 Pro Tips for Giving Your Skin a Holiday Glow (with or without makeup!) *By Jaime Carson*

Jaime Carson of Carson Skin Rejuvenation shares five fabulous tips for keeping your skin looking its holiday best well into the new year.

Tip #1

Exfoliate with Enzymes

In the winter, cold air, indoor heat and the increased use of makeup for holiday parties can lead to extra-clogged pores and dry, dehydrated skin. This buildup can keep your skin from exhibiting that smooth, healthy glow you are after and can block your serums and moisturizers from penetrating your skin. By exfoliating with a gentle enzyme facial masque once or twice a week, you can ensure your skin will stay smooth, clean and bright. One of my favorites is the Naturopathica Sweet Cherry Brightening Enzyme Peel.

Tip #2

Stay Hydrated

Staying hydrated is essential for maintaining healthy, glowing skin. For that, I recommend that you divide your current weight by two and then drinking that many ounces of water daily. For example, if you weigh 140 pounds, try to drink 70 ounces of water each day. During the holiday season, we are often consuming more cocktails and other alcoholic beverages than we normally would, so hydrating both internally and externally is how we can counteract dehydration and keep our skin glowing. One of my favorite ways to topically hydrate the skin before a party is to apply a hydrating sheet masque. I love this style of masque because after allowing it to sit on your skin for 20 minutes, you massage the residual serum into your skin rather than washing it off, which instantly plumps and restores a dewy glow. A hydrating masque I prefer to use when my skin is looking parched is the Meder Beauty Hydra-Fill Mask.

Tip #3

Keep Pimple Patches on Hand

Extra sugar consumed during the holiday season can cause us to wake up with that surprise pimple we all dread seeing in the mirror. My solution for this is to keep medicated pimple patches in the beauty cabinet to quickly treat and flatten the pimple. These clear stickers are skin-savers. They can be worn day and night and offer the added benefit of protecting the healing pimple from our picky fingers. Picking one pimple can lead to a messy spread of bacteria, causing additional pimples and scarring. Hands off! Your skin will thank you. My favorite pimple patches are in Patchology's Breakout Box. >>



17301 FLINT ROCK ROAD

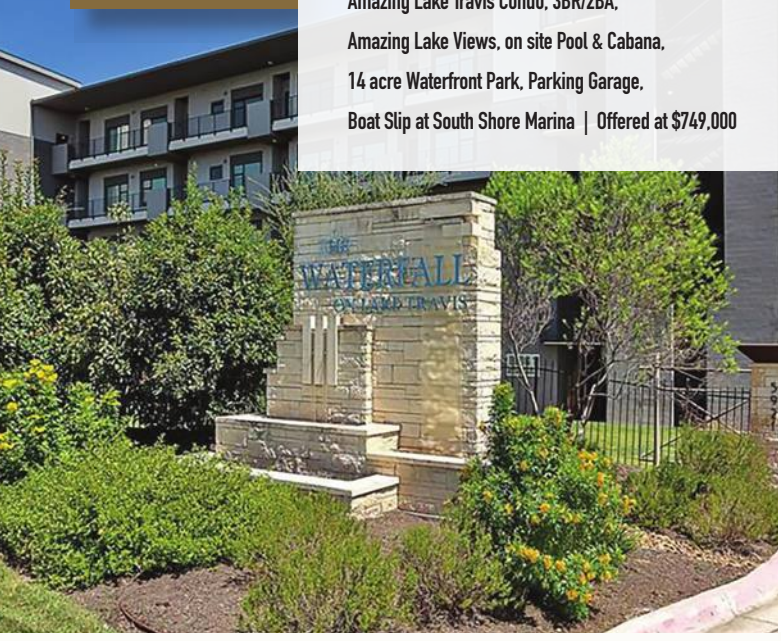
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During the holiday season, we are often consuming more cocktails and other alcoholic beverages than we normally would, so hydrating both internally and externally is how we can counteract dehydration and keep our skin glowing



Tip #4

Give Yourself a Glow

The days of matte, over-powdered skin are over for now. It's all about natural-looking, glowing skin this holiday season, and this look can be enhanced by adding a drop of shimmer beneath or mixed into your foundation. I am loving Supergoop's Glowscreen SPF 40. It looks gorgeous beneath makeup with an added shimmer that makes the skin look radiant, not sparkly or artificial like other illuminators I've tried. Visibly glowing skin will elevate your whole look!

Tip #5

Massage Your Face

Rich holiday treats, cocktails and occasionally a bit less sleep can have you waking up puffy, holding onto more fluid in your face than usual. I love to gently dry-brush my face in the morning to remove excess fluid from my complexion. To do this, gently brush the skin using long strokes toward the temples or ears, depending on which area of the face you are working on. Once you see that fluid retention is reduced, which can take two to five minutes of gentle repetition, begin gently brushing down the sides of your neck toward your collarbone to complete the drainage massage. This morning routine is both relaxing and rejuvenating for the skin, and you will instantly notice beautiful results. For this technique, I love using the Province Apothecary Daily Glow Facial Dry Brush.







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'Yule' Look Festive and Fabulous

A local personal stylist answers the 'what to wear' question for every holiday affair

By Edith Henry, Stylist and Image Consultant



The season of giving thanks and spending time celebrating with family and friends is upon us. And this year, more than ever, we are all ready to get gussied up and get out to finally, once again, enjoy the holidays and everything that comes along with them.

Whether it's a Thanksgiving family feast, a fancy Hanukkah dinner, a festive work party, a "white elephant" exchange with friends, a vacation in a tropical destination, or ringing in the new year, we've got you covered!

Holiday fashion trends typically bring glitter and sparkle and shine, and this year is no exception. But if glam is not your style, worry not! More than anything, being true to your style is what's most important. Still, there's a multitude of trends this year for you to consider so that you are appropriately dressed for the event while staying true to yourself.

Let's look at some options—but leave room to consider your unique personality, which can be expressed with the colors, patterns, and combinations you choose.

A **Thanksgiving** feast can range from casual to formal. Consider the host, their attire request and the time of day, but typically for women, a simple dress in a fall color or print paired with boots or booties is an easy and chic ensemble. Or why not consider one of this year's trends, the sweater dress? Choose from multiple styles and weights that work for your shape. (Note: A loose fit comfortably allows for that extra piece of pie!)

For men, unless the event is advertised as formal, a pair of chino-type or dress pants and a shirt will usually suffice. A sports coat will polish the look, and for footwear, choose either a Chukka-type boot, casual shoe or elevated sneaker.

Attending a fancy **Hanukkah** dinner? For the ladies, how about a beautiful silver lamé or satin pant paired with a blue blouse or sweater, finished with a velvet pump? Or a blue dress with silver boots or heels?

Fancy usually calls for a suit for men; a gorgeous blue suit jacket paired with a white shirt and silver tie is dapper. Or try the opposite: a silver suit with a matching blue shirt and tie. Men can deliver additional color in the form of a pocket square fan, which will let their personality shine.

Invited to a festive **work party**? Again depending on the venue and type of party, there are various options for ladies and gentlemen alike. But one thing is certain: Keeping it classy at a work party is a must. Women can consider a pantsuit, pant or skirt ensemble or dress, again keeping in mind that these are people who you (or your partner) work with and a company that you (or your partner) represent.

Consider the host, their attire request and the time of day, but typically for women, a simple dress in a fall color or print paired with boots or booties is an easy and chic ensemble. Or why not consider one of this year's trends, the sweater dress?







Booties, heels or even sneakers (depending on the event) can work with almost every ensemble. To be a little different, opt for colors that are suited to the holidays but a bit unexpected, such as burgundy and hunter green instead of Christmas red and green. If it's a relaxed function, men can take a more casual approach with jeans or dress pants and a sweater and sports coat. If sneakers are worn, they should be polished sneakers, not running shoes.

Headed to a casual **white elephant** exchange with friends? Have fun and think of a theme if you're the host. Maybe a classic "ugly Christmas sweater" exchange party or a holiday headwear party? Or a pajama party? If it's simply casual with no theme, this year's abundance of comfortable leisurewear can be perfect, finished off with a scarf and sneakers. Or you can't go wrong with jeans and a comfy sweater, boots and beanie.

Men might choose jeans, a shirt and a casual vest, or maybe a sweater topped with a bomber jacket. The options for being casually appropriate are limitless.

Spending the Holidays sipping piña coladas instead of eggnog at a sumptuous **tropical destination**? You can look festive and cute on the beach or in a cabana even if you're surrounded by white sand instead of snow. Consider a red swimsuit with a white cover-up or a lightweight sundress in a pretty green with metallic sandals. Or a shimmery jumpsuit with red sandals. Oh, the possibilities!

Men can don holiday swim trunks (yes, they are found on Amazon) or a short-sleeve shirt in a festive color to pair with linen pants or shorts. Have fun with it. Remember, you're on vacation!

NYE! Sequins and sparkles and shine will always be appropriate on this night! Pick out a cute cocktail dress with strappy pumps and an ostrich feather clutch, or embrace this year's oversized suit jackets with a pair of leggings and boots. Tonight is the night to go all out!

Men, too, can express themselves in flashy attire if they wish. Consider dress pants or jeans with a shirt and sports coat or a suit. Almost anything goes, including dashes of color. And they should not forget the "2022" hats or glasses and the party favors.

The most important part of all holiday festivities is to not forget to celebrate and enjoy them with your loved ones. Be grateful for all you have and what you can look forward to in a fresh new year. Chances are good that 2021 was a better year for you than 2020, and 2022 should be better still. Gratitude never goes out of style!



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GOOD TIDINGS & CHEER







Sure to please gift ideas
for everyone on your list

New & noteworthy hot spots
to check out this holiday season!

And more...

WHAT'S NEW?

15 new places to bring your guests this holiday season

By Cindy Brzostowski



Lutie's Garden Restaurant

Expecting some friends and family to visit over the holidays? While the pandemic has certainly put local businesses to the test, exciting new establishments have continued to sprout up all across Greater Austin. Get out of the house and bring your loved ones somewhere new with a trip to one of these spots.

WEST

1. The Gramercy

At The Gramercy, it feels like you've traveled back to New York City during the Roaring Twenties. This classy restaurant, bar and lounge offers not one happy hour but two: Tuesday through Friday from 4 to 6 p.m. and Tuesdays from 10 to 11 p.m.

1516 Ranch Rd. 620 S, Building F, Suite 200, Lakeway

2. The Garden at Ellera

New England meets Italy at The Garden at Ellera, which serves Boston-inspired Italian cuisine like pizza, lobster rolls and antipasti. There's plenty of room to sit indoors and out, and dogs are welcome too!

12432 Bee Caves Rd., Bee Cave

3. Frontyard Brewing

The whole family is welcome at Frontyard Brewing, a nine-acre space with a taproom and brewery. They brew all of their beers in-house and also serve house-made root beer and hard-seltzer cocktails. You can book the outdoor pickleball courts in advance.

4514 Bob Wire Rd., Spicewood

4. Westlake Wine Bar

If you wine and dine at Westlake Wine Bar, you can not only pick something off the extensive wine list but also order bites of European-influenced cuisine. While walk-ins are welcome, they appreciate it if you call ahead.

3801 North Capital of Texas Highway, Suite A-180, Austin

DOWNTOWN/CENTRAL

5. Tiki Tatsu-Ya

Tiki Tatsu-Ya is the place to go if you love a good tiki bar that serves up a slew of colorful cocktails. The immersive interior design may make you feel like you're at a theme park, and you can specify which table you want when you make a reservation.

1300 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX

6. Lutie's Garden Restaurant

Situated at the Commodore Perry Estate, Lutie's Garden Restaurant is visually stunning with a luxe interior that combines a sophisticated garden cafe and a romantic vintage bar. Make a reservation if you want to visit because this place is known to book up well in advance.

4100 Red River St., Austin

7. Simi Estiatorio

For modern Greek cuisine, visit Simi Estiatorio, an elegant establishment located right by 6th Street. They serve brunch, lunch and dinner and just recently launched a seasonal pre fixe menu option for early diners on weekdays.

601 Congress Ave., Suite #110, Austin

8. Smash ATX

Expect elevated comfort food with a side of ping-pong at Smash ATX. You can stay entertained here for a while given the 10 ping-pong tables, full bar, and menu items like crispy hot chicken and beer-battered cod.

213 W. 5th St., Austin

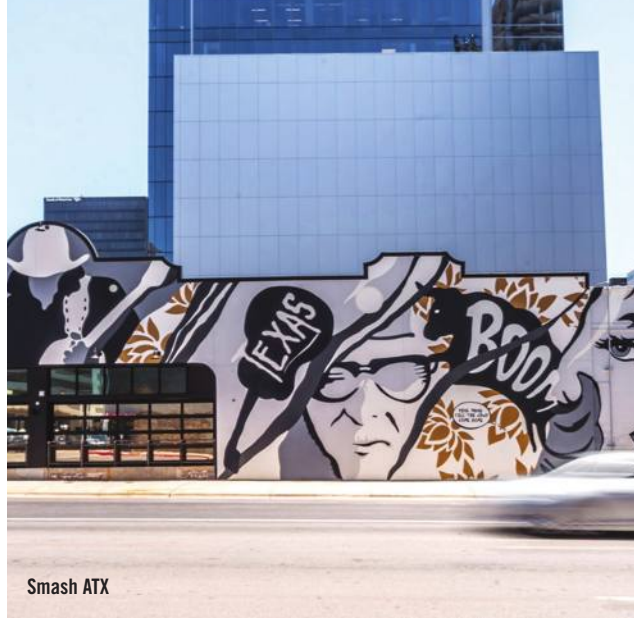
9. The Well

Found in the 2nd Street District, The Well offers health-focused fare in an inviting atmosphere. The entire menu is gluten-free, dairy-free, soy-free and refined sugar-free, and vegans and vegetarians can choose among numerous options.

440 W. 2nd St., Austin

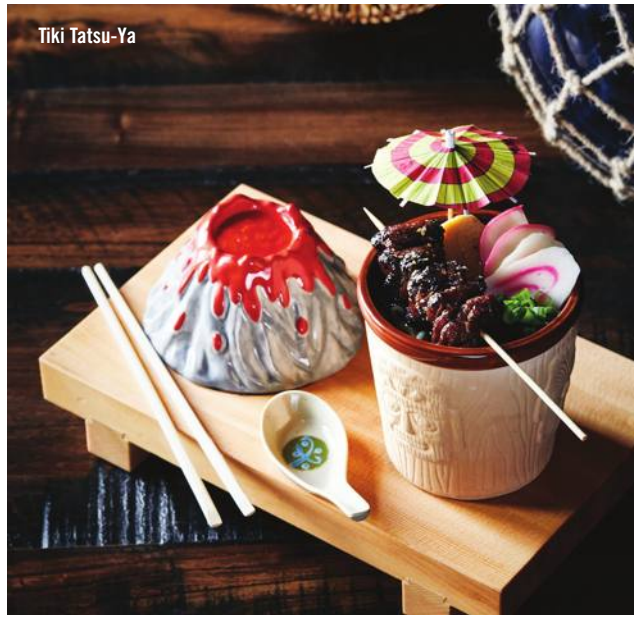
10. Codependent Cocktails + Coffee

In Austin's tallest residential condo tower, you'll find Codependent, a cocktail and coffee lounge with chic, Italian-inspired

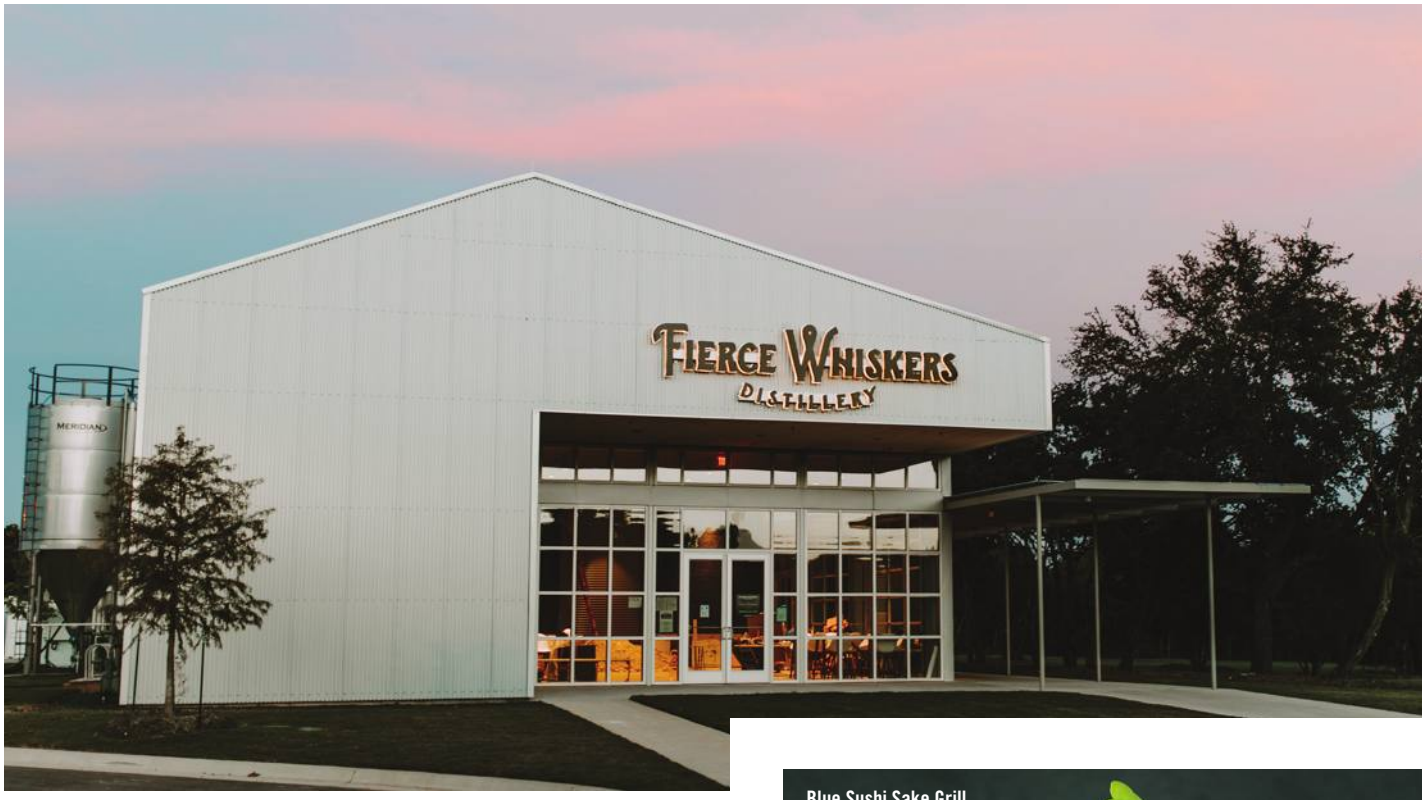


Smash ATX


Simi Estiatorio


Tiki Tatsu-Ya

THIS PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARKER NESTOR; EMMA RAMIREZ; JODY HORTON. OPPOSITE PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN.



design. Enjoying each other's company is even easier nightly after 6 p.m. and all day on Sundays when the establishment prohibits the use of screens.
301 West Ave., Suite 110, Austin

NORTH

11. Plank Seafood Provisions
Seafood lovers will want to visit Plank Seafood Provisions, a family-friendly restaurant at The Domain. Passionate about responsible sourcing, the appropriately nautical-themed establishment serves a variety of seafood from raw and chilled to wood-grilled fare.
11410 Century Oaks Terrace, Suite 136, Austin

12. Blue Sushi Sake Grill
Another spot at The Domain, Blue Sushi Sake Grill has an interior design that's as attractive and vibrant as the dishes served. In addition to nigiri, sashimi and maki are a variety of creative plates. Consider ordering one of the fun house-made cocktails or mocktails.
11410 Century Oaks Terrace, Suite 144, Austin

13. The Crossover
There's fun for the whole family at The Crossover, an expansive sports, wellness and entertainment facility. Current tenants include an ice rink, IV bar, gym and more. There's no need to worry about membership fees as the center is open to the public.
1717 Scottsdale Dr., Leander


Blue Sushi Sake Grill


Codependent

THIS PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUSTIN COCHRAN ; RICHARD CASTEEL; SOPHIE EPTON PHOTOGRAPHY.
OPPOSITE PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD CASTEEL; MIKI ASH; AMANDA WITH MY TRUTH PHOTOS


Plank Seafood Provisions

SOUTH

14. Fierce Whiskers Distillery

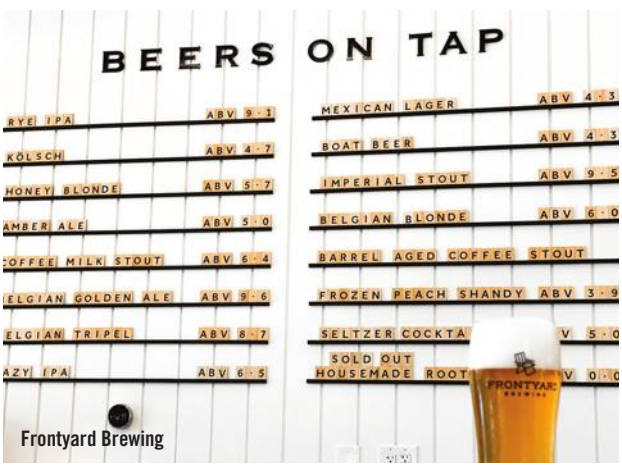
When you stop by the Fierce Whiskers Distillery tasting room for a cocktail, you can also join one of the daily distillery tours to learn more about how they make their whiskey. There's also loads of outdoor space where you can chill and a yakitori food truck on-site.

5333 Fleming Ct., Austin

15. Armadillo Den

Armadillo Den is a casual neighborhood hangout where you can expect a nice selection of beer on tap, live music every night, multiple food trucks and plenty of yard games. There's even a large off-leash dog park, so feel free to bring your furry friend (but no armadillos, please).

10106 Manchaca Rd., Austin



Frontyard Brewing


The Well

Live or Give IN LUXURY

These luxe gifts are worth the splurge

By Cindy Brzostowski

In the mood to spoil someone with something more extravagant than you usually give? A luxury gift isn't just something with a higher price tag. It's something that brings a delightful feeling of decadence that rises far above the mundane and feels like a celebration. If you're searching for a gift that's on the more sumptuous side, consider one of these.



PAUL STUART ROBE

The right robe can make just lounging about the house feel luxurious. The robes of Paul Stuart's Made on Madison collection are handcrafted by tailors at their Madison Avenue flagship store. There are options in cotton, cashmere, wool, velvet and silk, and they come in a variety of colors and patterns so you can find the perfect match to help your special someone feel like royalty. **paulstuart.com | Robes from $425 to $1,895**



EMEPELLE SERUM

Know a woman who loves a good skincare product? Help them take their facial care routine to the next level with Emepelle Serum. Specifically geared toward women in menopause and perimenopause, this silky serum is designed to restore estrogen-deficient skin. The non-hormonal, daily-use solution works to reduce wrinkles, enhance hydration, improve firmness, and brighten skin tone. **biopelle.com/emepelle | Emepelle Serum, $175**



IMPERIA CAVIAR JAPANESE WAGYU AND CAVIAR

When you think of foods that embody luxury, caviar and Wagyu steak rank high on the list. If your recipient is a discerning foodie, they'll appreciate the Wagyu and caviar combination from Imperia Caviar. The rib-eye is of melt-in-your-mouth quality while the caviar is known for its buttery, mild flavor. Imperia Caviar uses insulated packaging and overnight shipping to ensure your order is fresh on arrival. **imperiacaviar.com | Two eight-ounce Japanese Wagyu rib-eye steaks + 100 grams Kaluga Hybrid Reserve caviar, $309**



PARKER CLAY LEATHER GOODS

Handcrafted in Ethiopia, Parker Clay's premium leather goods range from fashionable wallets to chic weekender bags. The Merkato Signature Tote is a beautiful choice for everyday use while the Valley Wine Tote, a new item in their collection, serves as an elegant and sturdy solution for carrying your favorite bottle to the picnic. Whichever product you choose, you can count on it being built to last thanks to the use of full-grain leather. **parkerclay.com | Bags, $98 to $558**



BRAND NAPA VALLEY WINE

Founded in 2009, the BRAND Napa Valley estate can be found atop Pritchard Hill, one of Napa Valley's premier wine-growing subregions. Crafted to reflect the "power, opulence and finesse" of their vineyards, their flagship wine is the 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon, which has notes of blackberry and sage. To order an exclusive bottle directly from the producer, sign up for their waiting list online and you'll be notified when you can make a purchase. **brandnapavalley.com | 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon, $300 2018 Proprietary Blend, $250**

Something FOR EVERYONE

Stumped at what to give someone? Try one of these picks *By Cindy Brzostowski*

We all have at least one person in our lives who seems impossible to shop for. Maybe every time the holidays roll around, they say they don't want or need anything. Maybe they have such particular tastes that it feels like an impossible task to find them a present. Here are some gifts that even the most challenging recipient is bound to enjoy.



HOTEL COLLECTION CANDLE

Can you ever have too many candles? The best candle is one that can transport you to another place just by fragrance alone. Hotel Collection's hand-poured, soy-blend candles are inspired by iconic luxury hotels around the world such as the Aria Hotel in Las Vegas and 1 Hotel in Miami. Light the wick, enjoy the sophisticated scent and let yourself imagine you're on vacation. **hotelcollection.com Candles from $39.95**



VOCHILL

VoChill, an Austin-based brand, wants to make drinking wine even more enjoyable. Suitable for an assortment of glassware shapes, their sleekly designed chiller pulls heat out of the glass to help whites, rosés, sparkling wines and reds all reach their ideal temperature whether you're indoors or outside. That's important because temperature can make a big difference in a wine's taste. VoChill could be the product your recipient never knew they needed until now. **vochill.com | VoChill, $44.99**



WHISPERING WILLOW LAVENDER NECK WRAP

Self-care isn't always on the top of people's priority lists, but you can help encourage that special someone in your life to slow down and relax with this lavender neck wrap. To use it, you just spritz it with some water, heat it in the microwave for a minute and then place it around your neck and shoulders. It works to loosen muscle tension while providing some soothing aromatherapy. A zen feeling is just around the corner. **whisperingwillowsoap.com | Lavender neck wrap, $33**



MANNI OLIVE OIL

Whether your recipient is a novice in the kitchen or an enthusiastic chef, one thing they're bound to have and use is olive oil. Give them something of quality with MANNI Oil, an award-winning, organic extra virgin olive oil beloved by renowned chefs such as Thomas Keller and Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Gwyneth Paltrow even called it "pure liquid gold." The bottles are shipped directly from the mill in Tuscany. **mannioil.com | Olive oil bottles from $59**



CHAPPYWRAP

ChappyWrap's cotton-blend blankets check the boxes of being soft, durable and attractive. Depending on who will be doing the snuggling, you can buy the blankets in a variety of patterns and sizes ranging from mini (30" x 40") to royal (90" x 90"). Your recipient will also be pleased to learn that the easy-to-care-for blanket can be machine-washed and dried. It might just become their new favorite blanket. **chappywrap.com | Blankets from $135**

Sweet TREATS

Satisfy your loved one's sweet tooth with one of these gifts

By Cindy Brzostowski

What's the holiday season without some delicious treats? They say the way to someone's heart is through their stomach, and if you're looking for gift ideas that will leave someone feeling the love in every bite, these sweets are sure to hit the spot.



FOLIEPOP'S

FoliePop's imaginative creations are as delightful to look at as they are to eat. Their signature namesake menu item consists of a pastry base that's filled with cream and then topped with a chocolate sphere, which has its own coulis filling. Extra fun comes in when you crack the sphere before digging in. Other gift-worthy options include a selection of jelly-filled tartelettes and signature cakes (one designed in the shape of Texas and another as a pair of juicy red lips). FoliePop's has an online ordering option for store pickup. **foliepops.com | Signature cake, $6.99. FoliePop's boxes from $45. Assorted tartelettes (box of 36), $58**



DELYSIA CHOCOLATIER CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

For the chocoholic in your life, consider giving a box of chocolate truffles from Delysia Chocolatier. Located in Cedar Park, this award-winning chocolatier handcrafts its creations, which range from white to milk to dark chocolate. Decorated with Christmas and winter motifs, the holiday-themed boxes feature truffles with flavors that capture the season, such as candy cane, hot toddy, eggnog, and sticky toffee English pudding. The company offers curbside pickup at their shop as well as local delivery. **delysia.com | Nine-piece Taste of Winter truffle collection, $34.95. 16-piece Winter Wonderland truffle collection, $55.95**



COOKIE RICH

Austin-based Cookie Rich has its own spin on the classic cookie. The bite-sized treats look almost like mini-burgers with two domed cookies sandwiching a sweet filling. Flavor combinations range from chocolate chip cookies with dark fudge filling to toasted coconut cookies with salted caramel filling. Gluten-free varieties are also available. Cookie Rich offers local pickup and delivery and ships nationwide. **getcookierich.com | Build-your-own four-pack, $15. Build-your-own dozen, $33**



TINY PIES

Tiny Pies' artisanal pies—each one handmade and perfectly sized to hold in your hand—are sure to bring a smile to your recipient's face. Among the assorted flavors, the Texas Two Step (a pecan pie layered with a dark chocolate brownie) is especially delicious. Looking for something larger? While the company is famous for its adorably petite pies, they do offer "Not So Tiny Pies" as well. Tiny Pies has four locations around Greater Austin, including one in Westlake and a newly opened pop-up in Lakeway, and they do local deliveries as well as nationwide shipping. **tinypies.com | Six-pack of tiny pies, $30.90. 12-pack box, $61.80**

A Token of APPRECIATION

These gifts are a great way to show your clients you care

By Cindy Brzostowski

Finding the right gift for your valued clients and business partners can be tricky. You want something that strikes the right balance between thoughtful and useful, and it's important to stay within the appropriate price range depending on the industry you're in. Here are some gift ideas to help you hit the mark.



PHILIPS WATER GOZERO UV

A well-designed water bottle will always come in handy. This one from Philips Water does far more than just hold liquid. This self-cleaning smart bottle uses UV-C LED technology to disinfect and remove odors, activating automatically every two hours. It's also well-insulated, keeping drinks at the right temperature for longer. **GoZero UV, $55 to $77.65 on Amazon**

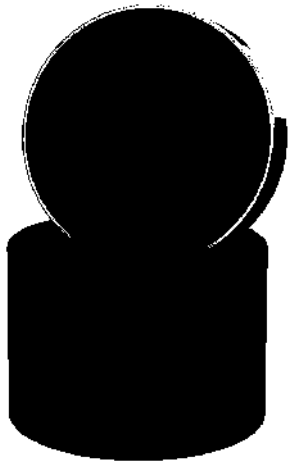


GIFTEN MARKET GIFT BOX

Who wouldn't like a box full of goodies? Giften Market offers many different themed boxes, but three in particular that could be great for your client are the Refuel, Movie Marathon and Deluxe Brunch crates. The first comes with cozy items like tea and soft socks; the second includes treats like popcorn and candy; and the third has all the supplies needed for a decadent brunch, including pancake mix and coffee. **giftenmarket.com | Refuel gift box, $45. Movie Marathon gift box, $60. Deluxe Brunch gift crate, $105**

LECTROFAN MICRO2 SOUND MACHINE + BLUETOOTH SPEAKER

This small, portable device does double duty as a Bluetooth speaker and a sleep-enhancing sound machine. Stream audio over it from your smartphone, or choose one of the eleven built-in sounds, which include fan, white noise and ocean surf. This soothing extra feature is particularly handy for those who have trouble sleeping while traveling. **soundofsleep.com | LectroFan Micro2, $34.95**





WILLIAM JAMES HOLIDAY LOVE GIFT BASKET

For another gift basket option, consider one from William James Gifts. Each of the food products in their packages is gluten-free and comes from a small business. A fitting choice for the season, the Holiday Love gift basket includes chocolate chip cookies, smoky maple bacon mustard, black lava sea salt caramels, dried mango slices, hot fudge and more. **williamjamesgifts.com | Holiday Love gift basket, $88**



NOMATIC BACKPACK

NOMATIC's sleek, water-resistant backpack, which can also conveniently be held like a briefcase, is great for going to work or even jet-setting. It has more than 20 thoughtfully designed features, including a lockable security pocket, a protective shell for sunglasses, a magnetic water bottle pocket and a retractable key leash. With its built-in expansion, the backpack can accommodate 20 to 24 liters. **nomatic.com | NOMATIC Backpack 15L, $250**

The Gift that KEEPS ON GIVING

As presents, these subscription boxes prove it's fun to think inside the box

By Cindy Brzostowski

What's more fun than receiving a Christmas present? Receiving multiple presents throughout the year! Gifting someone a subscription box membership means they'll continue to experience the joy and surprise of your present long after the holidays have passed. All you have to do is find a subscription box that suits their interests and awesome products will be delivered right to their door. Here are a few options that are sure to please.



BESPOKE POST

Bespoke Post is all about products that make life a little better, from men's grooming supplies to food items to travel gear. While you are welcome to buy individual items on their site, they offer a subscription box for stylish goods curated around various themes. Bespoke Post also gives you the option to swap or skip a box if a selection is not to your taste. You can give a single box or else one box to be enjoyed right away plus a gift card for boxes to be delivered later. **bespokepost.com | Single box, $55; box + gift cards available**



BREO BOX

If you know someone who loves playing with the latest gadgets, BREO BOX will definitely bring a smile to their face. With a new offering curated each season, BREO BOX comes with five to eight cool lifestyle tech products and gadgets worth up to $300 altogether. Past boxes have included items such as a UV sanitizing wand, light therapy lamp and mini-projector. When purchasing BREO BOX as a gift, you can decide whether to send one, two, three or four boxes. **breobox.com | 1 box, $159; up to 4 boxes, $589**



COCOCLECTIC

For that person who can never get enough chocolate (specifically dark chocolate), consider Cococlectic, a monthly chocolate subscription box. Boxes feature high-quality, small-batch chocolates made in the U.S., and all are vegan and non-GMO. Each delivery brings four full-sized bars, each one usually in the range of one to three ounces. Cococlectic doesn't ship in July and August, but subscribers aren't charged for those months. **cococlectic.com | Subscription from $43/month**



THE BOX BY DR. AVA

Skincare lovers will have fun rummaging through the goods inside The Box by Dr. Ava. Unlike other beauty subscription boxes, this one includes products handpicked by board-certified dermatologist, Dr. Ava Shamban, M.D.—and they're all full-sized, so no settling for sample sizes. Subscribers have access to a private Facebook community with answers to their skincare questions. This quarterly subscription service can be purchased per box or prepaid for a full year. **theboxbydrava.com | Subscription, $250/quarterly or $850/annually**

White Elephant GIFT IDEAS

Everyone will want to snag one of these fun, affordable gifts *By Cindy Brzostowski*

Enjoyed among friends, family and coworkers, a white elephant gift exchange is a holiday classic. Because the fun comes more from the blind choosing and competitive swapping than the value of the items themselves, chances are there will be a price limit. If you're stumped by what to bring to the table that fits the bill and isn't a complete gag gift, consider one of these items. Bonus: They make great stocking stuffers.

UNDER $15



LOLLIA RELAX SHEA BUTTER SOAP ($12)

Packaged in a beautiful floral box, this shea butter soap from Margot Elena's Lollia brand smells of lavender and honey. Even washing your hands with this fragranced soap can feel luxurious. Soap is always a safe choice when it comes to gift-giving, and this one, in particular, makes for a special treat that anyone can use and enjoy. **margotelena.com**



PUREWINE WAND 4 PACK ($12)

The Wand from PureWine is designed to purify your wine without altering its natural taste or aroma. By removing histamines and sulfites, the product is meant to help drinkers avoid those pesky wine headaches that come from wine sensitivities. Each single-use wand is BPA-free and conveniently portable. You just have to place it in your glass of wine for at least three minutes, though you're free to leave it in for as long as you want. **drinkpurewine.com**



TEXAS SAKÉ COMPANY SAKÉ BOTTLE (FROM $11.50)

Headquartered in Austin, Texas Saké Company sells a variety of boldly flavored sakés. For under $15, you can pick up one of their 375-ml bottles of Junmai, Nigori or Oak saké, each of which is 14-percent ABV. Junmai tastes clean and bright; Nigori is creamy and sweet; Oak has a smoky aroma. The bottles are slightly cheaper when purchased at their taproom in south Austin rather than online. **txsake.com**

UNDER $10



LEVEL NATURALS SHOWER BOMBS ($9)

You know bath bombs, but what about shower bombs? Level Naturals makes shower bombs that you place on the floor of your shower, under the water stream, releasing a soothing scent from the steam. Each package contains four shower bombs, and you can decide among eucalyptus, lavender and cucumber. **levelnaturals.com**



SKREWBALL PEANUT BUTTER WHISKEY (50 ML, $3 TO $5)

Peanut butter and whiskey might seem like an unusual or even bizarre combination, but Skrewball Whiskey aims to prove how delicious it can be. A 50-ml bottle of their peanut butter whiskey makes for a fun gift, not just for whiskey lovers but also foodies who love to try new things. While you're certainly welcome to drink it straight, this unique spirit also works well in a variety of cocktails. **skrewballwhiskey.com**

ELEMENTS TRUFFLES ARTISANAL CHOCOLATE (FROM $7)

Ayurveda-inspired Elements Truffles' small-batch chocolate bars are free of any dairy, refined sugar, gluten, soy or preservatives. Some of their delicious flavors include rose with cardamom, orange quinoa with turmeric and peppermint with lavender. While the tastiness of the chocolate is enough reason to buy, the company donates one-quarter of its profits toward the education of underprivileged children in India. **elementstruffles.com**







Deck the Halls

Tips to Make Your Home Holiday-Ready

By Jamie Twitchel

They've been sitting in the dark recesses of our homes, waiting patiently for Thanksgiving to pass, and now the time has finally come for us to dust off those boxes of Christmas decorations and let them bring holiday cheer to the season. As ornaments, garland and baubles in every color of the spectrum fill the room, all in differing styles and sizes, making them work together to create a beautifully decorated home can seem daunting.

Jessica Love, Principal Interior Designer of Urbane Design, recommends tying the cacophony of differing decorations together with a common color or style. "You can unify décor by coordinating lights, ribbon and bow colors or your Christmas tree skirt," she says. "DIY your own bows to add a personal touch while offering a great way to blend the old with the new. This also helps coordinate wreaths and garland throughout your home for a cohesive feel."

To Theme or Not to Theme

"I don't believe you have to pick a new theme every year or that your kid's art can't adorn your tree—it should be fun for the entire family," Love says. However, theming can help you decide which décor style you want to emphasize and which decorations should go where. For example, if you have an assortment of handmade ornaments, you may forego putting their store-bought counterparts on the same tree.

Choosing a décor scheme in one color or two complementing colors is a popular "theming" method that lends itself to contemporary and minimal design styles. Color pairs of white and gold and traditional red and green are prevalent, as are monochromatic themes in all white. What the décor lacks in color variety can be compensated for by using differing textures, such as shimmering and matte ornaments, soft ribbons and rough-edged, flocked holly.

What's Old Becomes New Again

There's no need to buy more décor when you can get a new look by changing up how you use what you have. "Recycling old ornaments is a great idea," Love says. "Use them to create >>

I am so happy that I hired Eileen. She stood out from all the other RE Agents I interviewed. She staged my property and it looked fantastic!!! She is extremely knowledgeable and professional. Her legal background – again – set her apart from all the other agents I considered. My property sold very quickly and the entire process was smooth and I credit that to Eileen.

-Monica C.

Eileen Depew did a fantastic job selling my land near Lake Travis. She handled everything through closing without a single stumble. I recommend her. She is a real professional and has a great attitude. **-SIM D.**

Eileen was very helpful in explaining the home buying process in Texas (as we are new to the state) and she was also very insightful in the contract process based upon her legal background. She raised considerations we would never have had, and we truly appreciated her professionalism. 5 stars. **-Jeff S.**

Check out Eileen's listings on The Open House Show, Sundays at 11:30 on KVUE

LAKEWAY NEW CONSTRUCTION



118 Carefree Circle, Lakeway, TX 78734
4 Bed/3 Bath | Approx 2,564 Sq. Ft | Open Floor Plan
Gameroom | One Story | Covered Back Patio | Walk in Pantry

LAKEWAY NEW CONSTRUCTION



116 Carefree Circle, Lakeway, TX. 78734
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wreaths, attach them to garland or even add them to bowls around the house for a fun pop of color and joy."

A simple, festive fix for blank spots on bookshelves and side tables is to group and display holiday tins and boxes. For those living in small spaces, the same containers can hide the trinkets you removed to make room for your holiday décor.

Mirrors, chandeliers and mantelpieces benefit from draped strings of lights, beads, garland or boughs of greenery. These areas tend to blend with the rest of the room's décor, so draw attention to these spots and increase interest by adding bows and natural elements like holly, berries and pinecones to greenery.

Speaking of natural elements, greenery, berries, pinecones, nuts and fruit are abundantly available and make beautiful holiday décor. Arrange holly, evergreen branches and poinsettias in vases, and add cloved oranges (whole, unblemished oranges with numerous cloves pushed into the peel) to bowls throughout the house to create a fragrant, if old-fashioned, décor option.

Go Big or Stay Small

"The great thing about decorating for Christmas is there are no rules," Love advises. Because there are no rules to decorating, there are no minimums or maximums either. So, whether you believe less is more or more is more, you're right. "I've done as little decorating as draping fresh garland over a mantle and staircase," Love says. "So one could choose to hang a wreath or set up a Christmas tree with just a few ornaments. Decorating should be fun and stress-free."

As for Christmas trees, if you don't have space for a tree or the desire to fill your house with foliage, try zigzagging lights from narrow at the top to wide at the bottom on a bare wall to create a makeshift version. This is a great option for people with curious pets or small children with grabby hands in their home as this tree of lights ensures no ornaments are harmed over the holidays.

If you do want a tree, Love offers a way to keep the tree bottom from needing to be barren. "The lower area can still be decorated with ribbons, bows and unbreakable ornaments," she says. "Don't skip it completely; just rethink the strategy."

Thankful for the Memories

Most of us have spent a lifetime collecting the ornaments that adorn the tree, the miniature village homes, stores and people that cover our side tables and credenzas and the angels that pray on our mantelpieces. Each ornament may differ in color and size and shape, and nothing may match on the mantel, but each piece is tied to the others by its owner and the memories it holds. As we lift each item out of the storage bin it called home for the past eleven months, we remember when and where and why it came into our lives.

We smile and laugh and tear up as we share these memories with our friends and family, and that is when your décor is most beautiful. Love agrees that Christmas decorating should be led by feeling rather than fads. "Holiday decorating is extremely personal, so we should have fun with it," she says. "Every year, you can spot trends in colors and décor perusing retail stores, but in my opinion, decorating should be less about trends and more about what brings you and your family joy."











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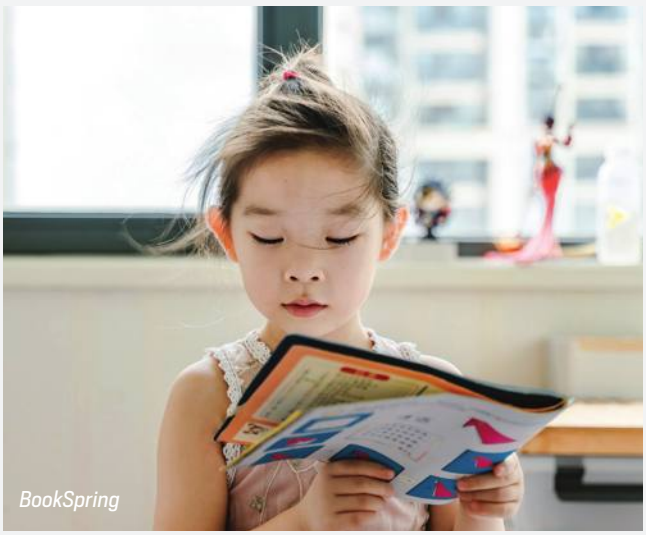
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BookSpring


Lighter Loads ATX

Tis Better To Give

Make the holidays brighter one donation at a time *By Jamie Twitchel*

The holidays are upon us. It's a time of finding gifts for our friends and loved ones to show how much they mean to us, a time of revelry, decorating and merrymaking. Yet not all among us will be able to celebrate in warm homes. Not all will find gifts under the Christmas tree, or even a tree. Not everyone has a support system to show them love and kindness. That's where the following nonprofits come in. They seek to help the less fortunate, and with your help during the holidays, they can continue helping them year-round.


Wags Hope and Healing

The Comfort Crew

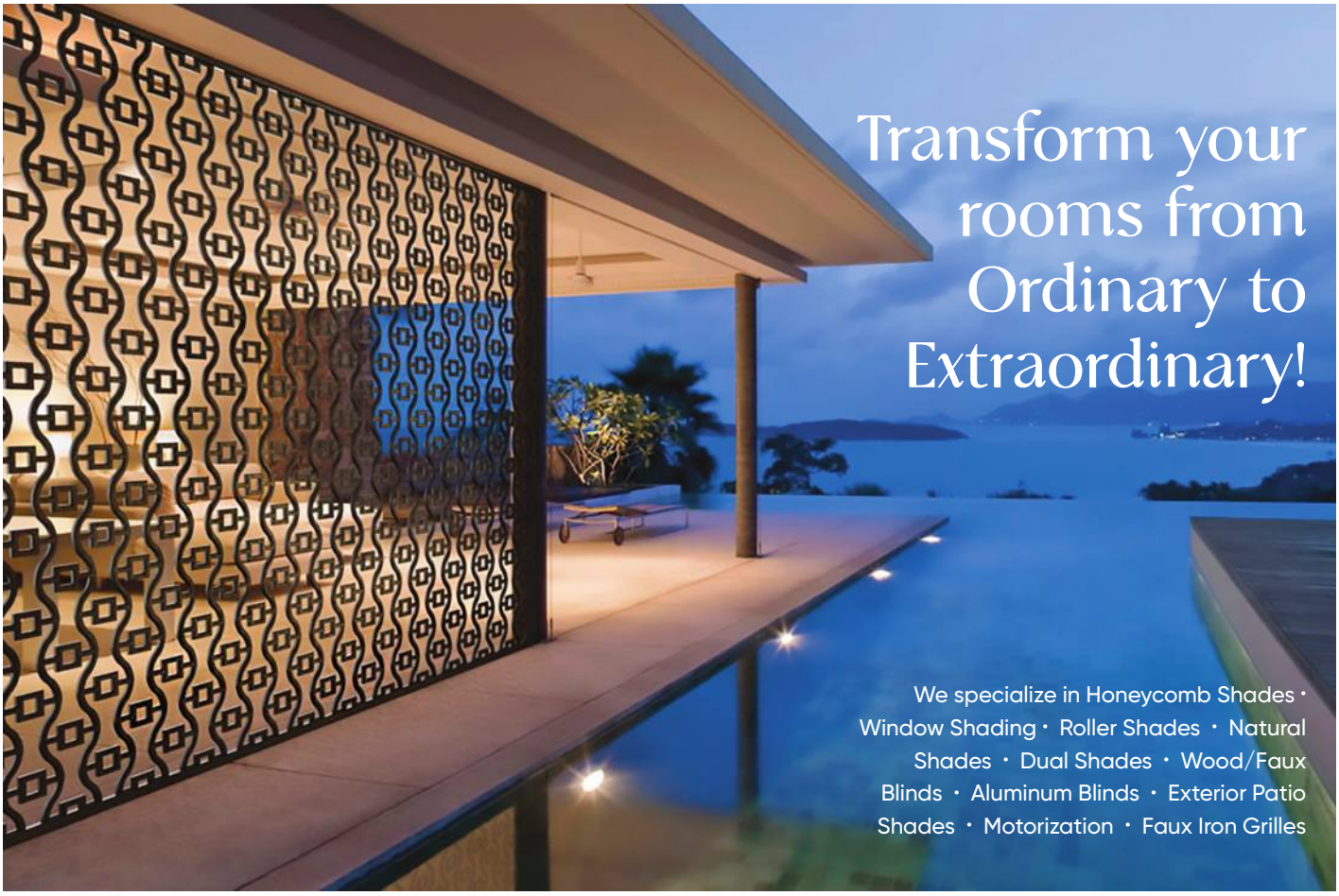
For the estimated two million children with a parent in the service, being in a military family comes with unique challenges. From frequent relocation and multiple parental deployments to familial separation and witnessing a parent's injuries, whether visible or invisible, these challenges exact an emotional toll. It's a burden many children shoulder alone, and it often leads to emotional, behavioral and academic problems.

That's where The Comfort Crew for Military Kids comes in. The Comfort Crew provides a Comfort Kit to school-age children, with each kit created to address and assist with a specific challenge or transition associated with growing up in a military family. Kit types include:

- "With You All the Way!" to help with separation due to deployments
- "Together Again!" to help families reconnect after a period of separation
- "Taking Care of You!" to provide support for children of injured service members
- "Helping Military Children Handle Loss" for those experiencing grief over the loss of a family member

Using humor and personal stories to open kids up to talking about the "tough stuff," the contents of each kit include an animated DVD, a journal, a family guidebook, a stuffed animal and other items. These allow kids to talk about serious subjects in a way that is accessible to them. Over the past decade, the Comfort Crew has assisted >>

LIGHTER LOADS ATX PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF LIGHTER LOADS ATX



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Not everyone has a support system to show them love and kindness. That's where the following nonprofits come in.

more than 500,000 military children. You can help them continue their work by sponsoring a Comfort Kit at comfort-crew.org/donate_choose.html

Wags Hope & Healing

Animals do not have voices we understand, but like us, they feel fear and pain and hunger. Unfortunately, not all creatures live in warm, loving homes with families to care for them. For those that don't, there's Wags Hope & Healing.

Believing that animals should be free from hunger, thirst, pain and disease, Wags Hope & Healing rescues animals from death, cruelty, abuse, neglect and homelessness. Injured and sick animals are cared for in a separate area from healthy ones, and all are provided fresh water, plenty of food and their own climate-controlled "apartment," protecting them from the elements. To provide enrichment and stimulation, Wags' furry residents have access to playscapes, pools, puzzle feeders, scents and playmates. Once an animal is rehabilitated, a loving home is found for them.

Because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, Wags provides resources for pets and their owners along with a spay-and-neuter program to prevent overpopulation, promote health and keep pets in homes and out of the streets and shelters.

Support Wags Hope & Healing by purchasing items for their shelter on their Amazon wish list (wagshopeandhealing.org/shopourwishlist) or making a donation in your name or in someone's honor at wagshopeandhealing.org/waystogive

Lighter Loads ATX

For those experiencing homelessness, basic human dignities such as hot showers and clean clothing can be few and far between. Some rinse off in gas station bathrooms or use the outdoor water spigots on the outer walls of businesses, which is demeaning and illegal.

That's where Lighter Loads ATX comes in. Each Saturday, they bring their portable shower and laundry trailer to a venue (announced on their Facebook page and website) in Austin and host a "block party." Participants can receive a hot meal, take a hot shower and have their clothes laundered. They also receive hygiene kits and clothing and are offered additional services such as shaves and haircuts (when a volunteer hairstylist is available).

Lighter Loads ATX needs professional stylists, chiropractors and others willing to donate their time and services. There is also a need for men's and women's socks and underwear. Other ways to give include volunteering your time at (or sponsoring) a block party or donating at lighterloadsatx.org/donate Lighter Loads ATX also participates in the AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) program.



BookSpring

Through its literacy programs, BookSpring aims to grow the number of active child readers and improve the vocabulary, literacy rates and language proficiency of children in areas identified by the American Community Survey to be high in poverty.

- BookSpringEd seeks to engage readers ages five to twelve with its Books for Me and Summer Success programs. Books for Me provides children in high-poverty areas with three free books of their choice per year, while the Summer Success program provides kindergartners, first and second graders ten books at their reading level to read over the summer break.
- BookSpringRx offers the ReadWell program, which has BookSpring working with medical clinics to distribute books to families during their children's wellness visits. For healthcare practitioners who make house calls to low-income families, BookSpring offers customized pediatric literacy kits, such as books tailored to reading to infants.
- BookSpringGo features BookSpring Days, a one-day event when families can take home three children's books from their pop-up reading room to keep. The Early Books for Me program is for kids under age five who attend child development centers. The children enjoy a reading session and other activities that promote literacy. Then there are the Parent Book Clubs, which offer literacy training programs for parents and caregivers of kids under five. Finally, BookSpring Delivered partners with other organizations working with children in disadvantaged areas to distribute children's books to those in need.

Learn how to support BookSpring through the gift of time, money or books at bookspring.org/support

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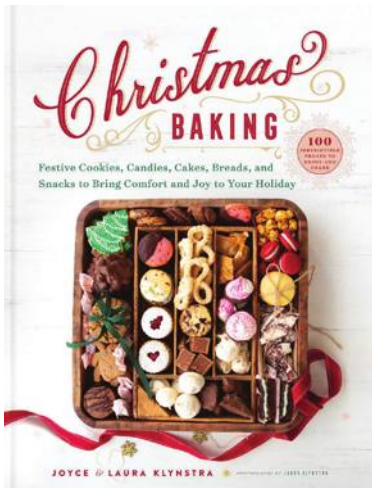
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Happy Holiday Reading

Make Christmas merry with these classic and festive tales *By Jamie Twitchel*

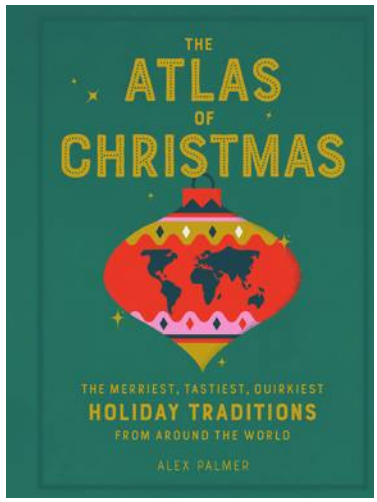
The holiday season is in full swing, and as we put up our decorations, break out the baked goods and sing along to our favorite carols, it's nice to take a breather from all that merrymaking to enjoy a good read. Festive and fun, these books are sure to put and keep you in the holiday spirit.



Christmas Baking: Festive Cookies, Candies, Cakes, Breads, and Snacks to Bring Comfort and Joy to Your Holiday

By Joyce Klynstra

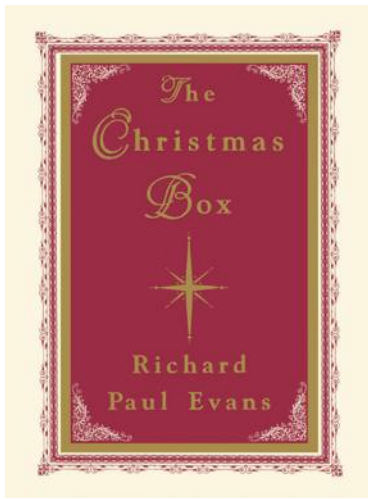
Throw out the scale and put your dentist on notice as *Christmas Baking* is bursting with cookies, bars and confections laden with chocolate, nuts, fruits and sugar. Try your hand at making rugelach, eggnog bread pudding, dark chocolate truffles and more. Packed with enticing photos and more than a hundred recipes to choose from, you're sure to find a new holiday favorite among them.



The Atlas of Christmas: The Merriest, Tastiest, Quirkiest Holiday Traditions from Around the World

By Alex Palmer

Did you know that Christmas is celebrated in Provence with 13 desserts? Or that Bahamians hold an elaborate, colorful parade the day after Christmas and on New Year's Day? *The Atlas of Christmas* (hardcover) explores myriad customs, traditions and the fascinating history of the holidays and will give you new ideas on how to celebrate the season.



The Christmas Box: 20th Anniversary Edition

By Richard Paul Evans

Hidden away in the attic of an old Victorian mansion is a wooden box. Designed to hold the family Bible, it instead contains the Christmas memories of the mansion's elderly, widowed owner. When a young family is brought in to care for the woman, the father stumbles across the box. He soon discovers that the poignant lessons of the past still ring true and that the greatest gift of Christmas can't be found in any store.

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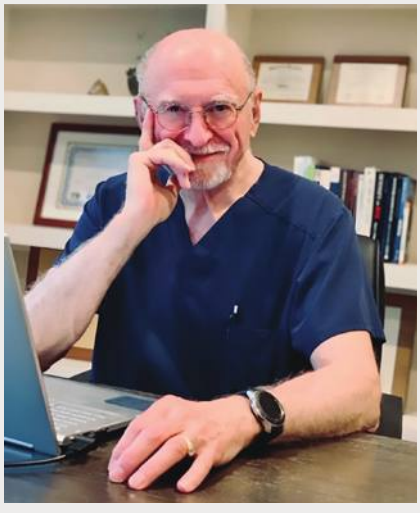
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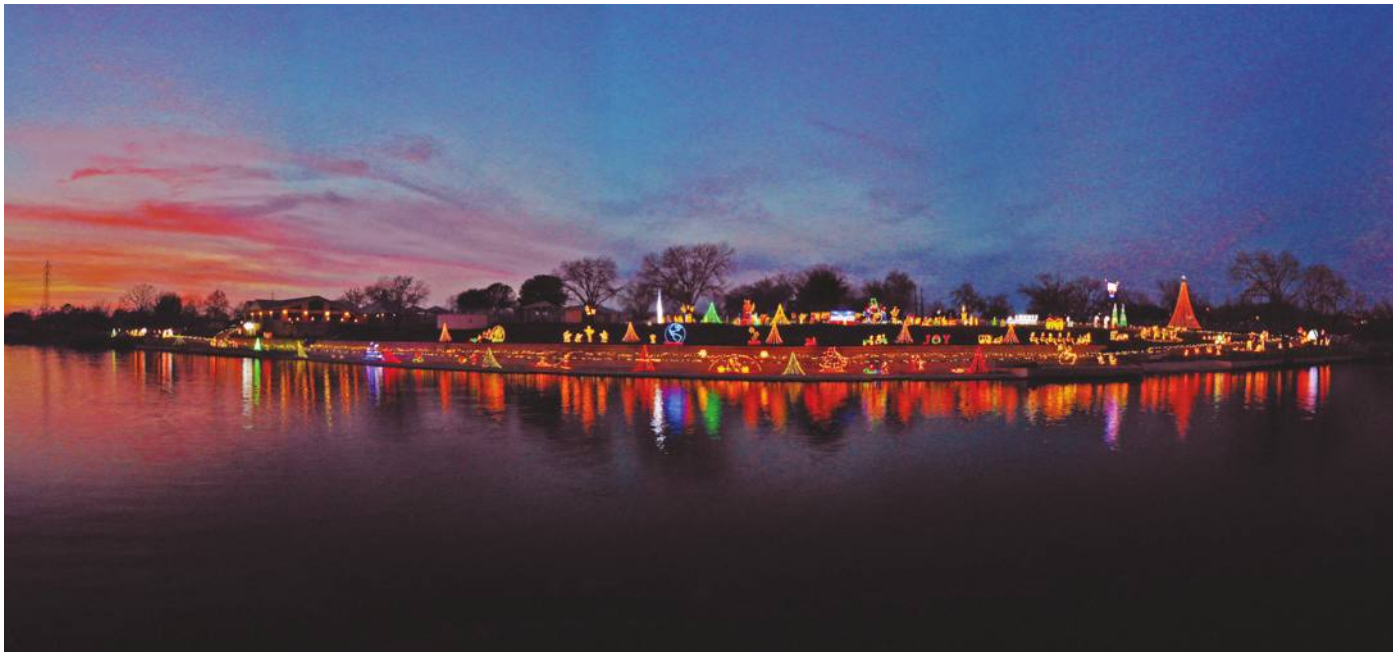
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Have a Holly, Jolly Holiday at Marble Falls

This small town's celebrations make it easy to get into the Christmas spirit *By Cindy Brzostowski*

As the air gets cooler, the decorations come out and the holiday spirit takes over, you and your loved ones may be searching for fun spots where you can embrace some Christmas magic. Cue Marble Falls and their holiday celebrations. For 31 years, the town has been hosting Christmas festivities for the public, and this year, the events continue for 44 nights through January 1.

"There is something undeniably wonderful about the Texas Hill Country during the holiday season," says Erin Burks, the Downtown Coordinator for Marble Falls. "Articulating joy with the season of giving, Marble Falls is ready to celebrate."

It all kicked off on November 19 with the annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting, the lit-up Christmas parade down Main Street and the opening of the beloved Walkway of Lights. With more than 350 lighted sculptures and two million lights, the Walkway of Lights is the crown jewel of the holiday celebration. It's open every night during the festivities from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Enter at Lakeside Park. To further sweeten its appeal, the Walkway of Lights is entirely free to visit, although donations are welcome.

Along with admiring these spectacular lights, you'll find plenty of other family-friendly activities going on that are full of holiday cheer, such as the winter ice skating rink. Visit on one of the designated "Snow Nights," and you can enjoy the magical experience of skating as "snow" falls around you. Other fun events include breakfast with Santa, a Christmas market and Sip 'N' Shop—when local shops offer extended holiday hours and wine tastings. With all the festivities, you'll surely need some fuel, and you can count on finding some tasty holiday treats like hot cocoa and cookies at concession stands.

"Whether it is live music while you stroll through the Walkway of Lights in the crisp winter weather or browsing through boutiques in downtown Marble Falls while sipping hot chocolate," Burks says, "Christmas cheer inspires the calendar of events that create these holiday memories for a lifetime."

Plan Your Visit

Ready to celebrate the season at Marble Falls? Note that there are two main parking lots for event visitors, both free. One is at the west end of Buena Vista Drive near Lakeside Park; the other is the overflow lot at the corner of Yett and Main. For visitors' convenience, a trolley runs from downtown (Fifth and Main) to the Walkway of Lights.

Dogs are welcome at the Walkway of Lights, so feel >>

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For 31 years, the town has been hosting Christmas festivities for the public, and this year, the events continue for 44 nights through January 1.

free to bring your furry friend along with the rest of the family. Just remember to have your pup on a leash!

While it's possible to buy day-of tickets for the ice rink at the ticket booth, it's best to purchase them online in advance to ensure they haven't sold out for your desired time slot. Your ticket includes the skate rental and one hour on the rink.

On rainy days, the Marble Falls team sometimes closes the Walkway of Lights and the ice rink at 3 p.m. For updates, check Christmas in Marble Falls' social media pages or call (844) MF-LIGHT (844-635-4448).

Mark Your Calendar

Each weekend during the holiday season brings more fun at Marble Falls. Keep these scheduled activities in mind while planning your trip, and stay up to date with all of the upcoming event details by checking out the Christmas in Marble Falls website (visitmarblefalls.org/christmas-in-marble-falls) and the town's online event calendar (visitmarblefalls.org/events).

Thursday, December 2

- Hill Country Chamber Orchestra Concert
- Santa at Ms Lollipop
- Dog Night at Walkway of Lights

Saturday, December 4

- Breakfast with Santa
- Christmas Market on Main
- Ice Cream with Santa
- Downtown Sip 'N' Shop
- Ice Sculpture on Main
- Walkway and Wine
- Santa at Walkway of Lights
- Sugar Mama Kids' Christmas Party

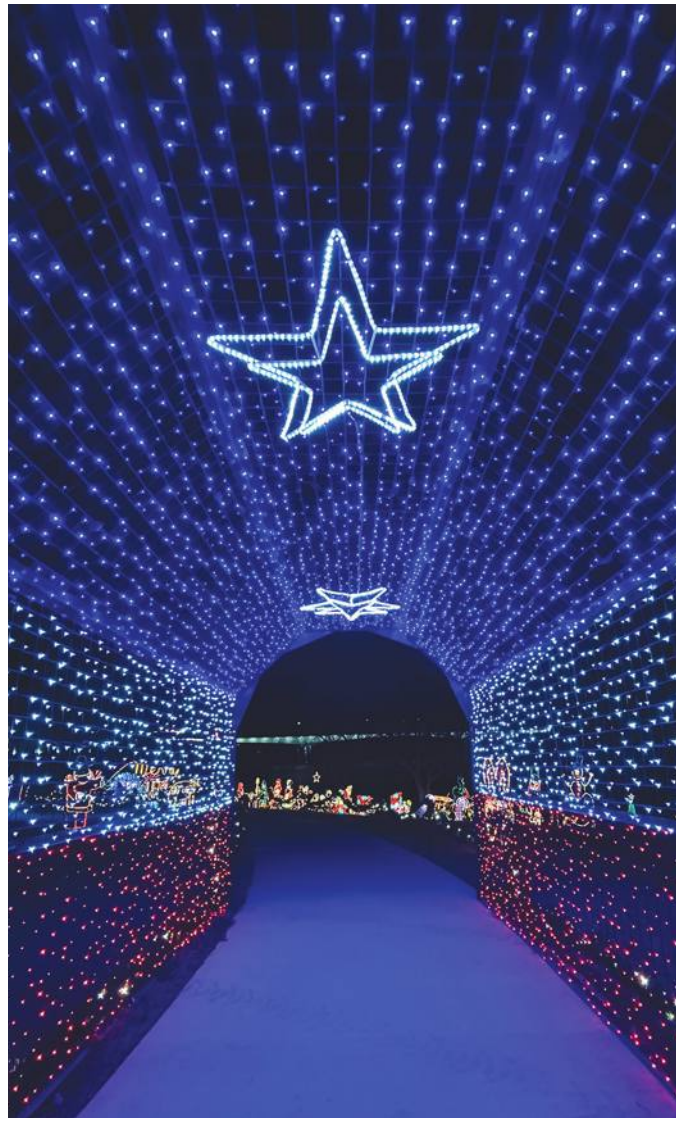
Saturday, December 11

- Birdie's Pop-up Flower Market
- Downtown Sip 'N' Shop
- Holiday Open House: My TX Santa
- Walkway and Wine at Walkway of Lights
- Santa at Walkway of Lights
- Artist at the Easel
- S'mores Night at Walkway of Lights
- Tacky Sweater and Karaoke Party

Friday, December 17

- Peppermints, Pajamas and Polar Express
- Ice Skating Snow Night at Walkway of Lights
- Santa at Walkway of Lights
- Mom's Night Out
- "Hands Off My Funnel Cake" Food Truck





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Skip the Resolutions and Visualize Instead



Launching New Traditions for Success *By Stephanie Puente, Certified Life Coach*

Tradition has a solid, consistent and ingrained feel to it. When you hear the word tradition, you might think about the food you share with your family each Thanksgiving or the parade you watch with friends every year on the Fourth of July. But tradition is not limited to holidays or culture. You can harness the steady, constant power of tradition to create success in your individual life too. Creating new traditions based on your goals, values and desires can help you forge a clear and concrete path to success.

There are three traditions that I have found to be hugely impactful in creating new results, no matter who you are, where you are starting from or what success means to you. You can think of them as catalysts for full-spectrum life success and fulfillment and apply them to your life starting today. You'll create momentum going into the new year and start 2022 ahead of the game.

Excellence is an art won by training and habituation.
—Aristotle

Success Tradition #1: Choose Consciously

One of the most pervasive obstacles to success is going through life unconsciously. When you're unaware of what you're doing, you can't change your patterns or behaviors. You end up being a passive character, reacting to whatever comes your way rather than being a true creator in your life.

In order to change, you must first become conscious. When you are conscious, you are intentional and accountable with your choices. You become the architect of your life, so another year doesn't pass you by with the same repeating patterns and results as the year before.

Once you've recognized this power of choice, success comes from repeatedly making new and better choices. In doing so, you create a new normal with more desirable results. But most of us are on autopilot with our habits, repeating the same old thoughts and decisions and getting results to match. So, you have to be deliberate in taking action to cement new choices until they become your new reality. >>

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Conscious action: On a 2022 calendar, schedule non-negotiables such as travel, important events and celebrations and major milestones. This will keep you accountable and on track in doing things that really move the needle forward in your life.

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.

Success Tradition #2: Be Vision-Driven

Once you are sitting in front of the new calendar, you may be unsure about what you want to put on it because you've been going through the motions for so long. Maybe you haven't allowed yourself to envision anything outside your current comfort zone.

Begin by asking yourself the question, "What would I love?" Then turn off your logical mind, which wants to tell you what you "should" do, what is practical and what is reasonable. Instead, periodically spend time listening for the voice that seems to come from your heart or your gut. Some themes or ideas are likely to keep coming up, for example: "I would love to buy a ranch outside of the city" or "I would love to work less and fully take weekends off."

You won't necessarily know how to make this new vision a reality, but that will come. Just schedule what you can on the calendar, and look at it each day. Visualize yourself doing the things you want to do, and feel yourself doing it. The more you embody that energy and the more you start to live from that place, life will present opportunities on that wavelength.

Vision-driven action: To take daily steps toward your vision, generate ideas from the vision, not your logical mind. Ask yourself, "What can I do today to be the person in my vision and achieve my goal?" In the same way that Edison received the inspired ideas he needed to create the incandescent bulb—something that he had no idea how to do—you will receive ideas that get you on track to living the life you were born to live.

Think of yourself as dead; you have lived your life. Now take what is left and live it properly. *—Marcus Aurelius*

Success Tradition #3: Prioritize What Matters

Sometimes when you think of a vision, you will focus on tangible goals having to do with money, career, material things and lifestyle. Those are all important but are not fulfilling in themselves. Without love, connection and relationships, material success becomes empty and joyless. When you create a vision and start taking steps to achieve it, make what truly matters in your life the priority.

When you imagine something like buying a ranch, working less or being able to send your kids to college, ask yourself why you want it. Beyond the goal or desire is a deeper core desire for more love, connection, joy or peace of mind.

Once you know your "why," focus on what it will feel like to experience that fulfillment. You will know what goals are most important to you, and any distractions will fall away. Oftentimes, you will find that there are obligations, commitments or responsibilities that aren't contributing to your authentic success, and you can let them go.

Prioritized action: Schedule time on your calendar for fun, self-care, relationships and family. We are spiritual beings, and we need more than love and connection. We need to feel alive too! Just look at how children play, and it's obvious that fun is needed for the spirit. It's an important part of feeling fulfilled, and when you allow yourself to have more fun, good things tend to happen.

Leaning into these traditions of being conscious, vision-driven and dedicated to what matters most in your life can lead to greater success and fulfillment. You'll not only gain clarity, direction and perspective on your goals and dreams; you'll become a version of yourself you are truly proud of. And that's a new tradition worth having.

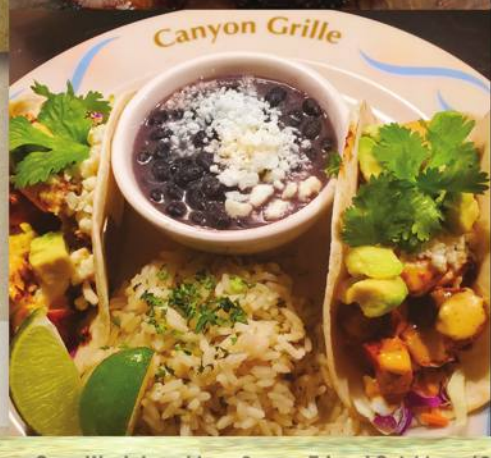
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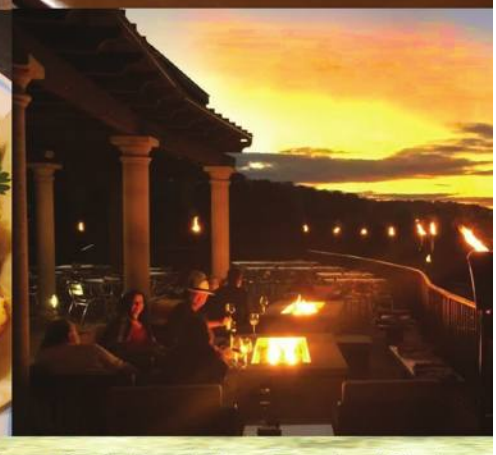
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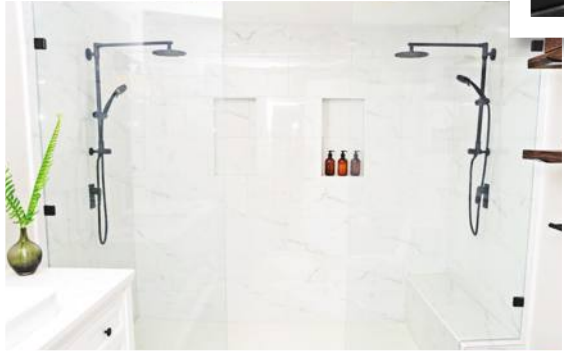
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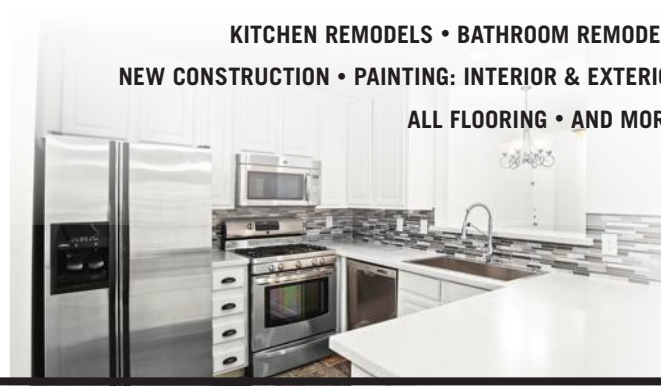
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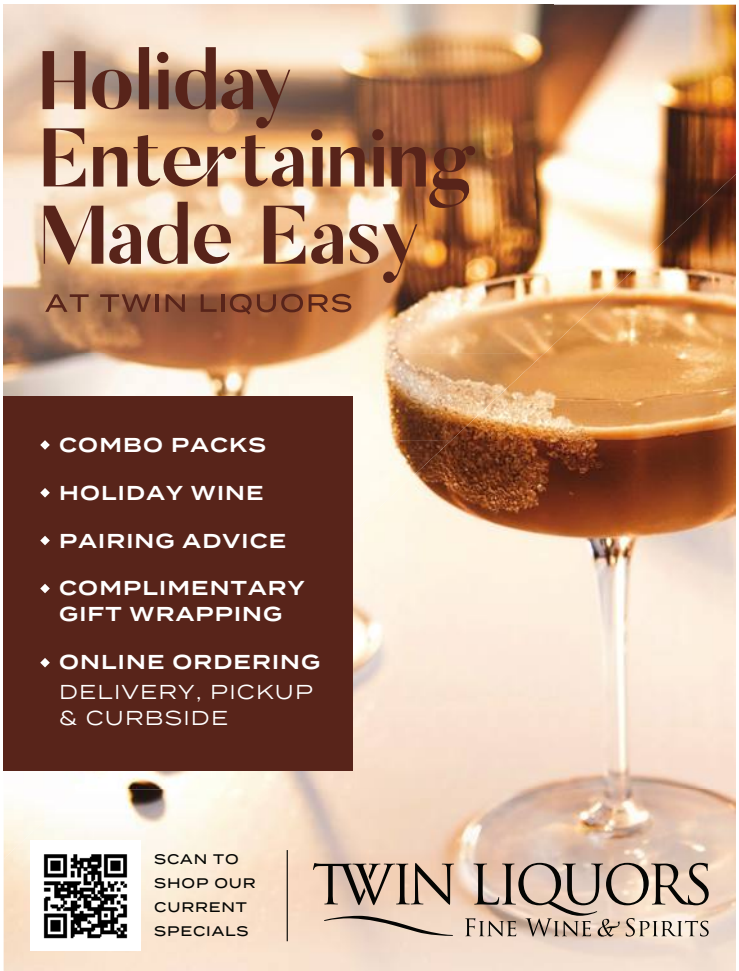
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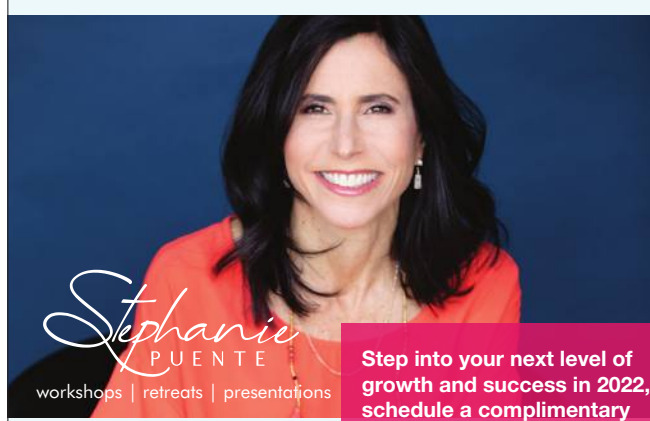
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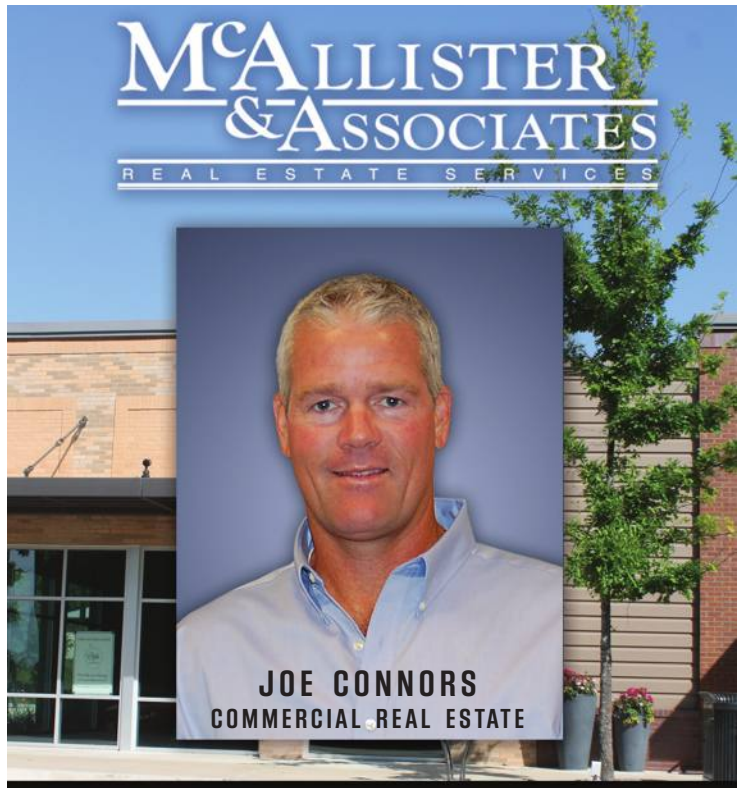
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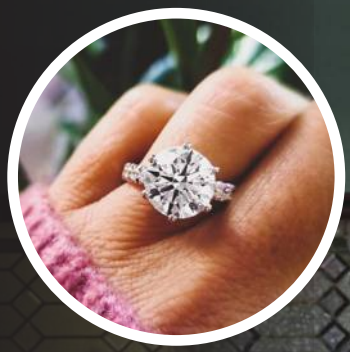
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Escape the Everyday —From Home

By Shelley Seale

We've all seen drool-worthy Instagram and Pinterest posts of stunning vacation homes or browsed through Airbnb villa descriptions with wanderlust in our hearts. But if an upcoming vacation isn't in the cards for you right now—or you just want to give your place a makeover—don't despair. There are a lot of ways to bring resort vibes into your home, making it a retreat you never want to leave.



Create outdoor living spaces

This has been one of the most popular trends in recent years—and for good reason. Expanding your outside areas into livable space is the easiest way to enlarge your home's footprint without actually having to expand—and when you live in a place like Central Texas that enjoys good weather much of the year, you might as well take advantage of it.

Start by creating a cozy conversation corner with outdoor lounging furniture and maybe add a fire pit in the center. Decking or pavestones and a few plants can immediately add depth and interest, and string lights cast a magical glow. Add the equipment needed for recreational activities such as croquet, ladder ball, or cornhole as surefire ways to get your kids (or you!) off screens and outdoors. And if you want to splurge on water features, consider a fountain or pond.

Bring the outdoors in

You don't have to keep the outside vibe outside. Bringing it indoors with elements like rattan furniture, tropical plants and airy textiles is a sure way to improve the mood, especially on rainy or cold days.

The trick to this look is to incorporate natural fibers as much as possible. Don't hesitate to even use pieces that seem to belong poolside, such as a hammock, hanging chair or bamboo chaise.

When it comes to color, play with beach hues such as blues and greens, sunshiny yellows and tropical patterns. These can be incorporated in paint or wallpaper, pillows, throws and artwork. >>

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Go big

Have you ever noticed that most luxury hotels and resorts incorporate large, dramatic pieces of art? One huge painting or screen print can bring a real wow factor to any room.

Think about the statement you want to make with such a piece, your personal preferences and the design style that already exists in the room. Choose something that you will want to live with for a while, and have some fun with it. The best art makes you smile each time you see it.

While we're on the subject of big decor statements, they don't have to be limited to art. You might also think about incorporating oversized plants or lighting fixtures.

Add a room service-worthy bed

You know that feeling you have when you're staying in a lovely hotel and you wake up in the most comfortable bed with a plush bathrobe at your feet and room service just a phone call away?

Part of a good self-care routine is giving yourself permission to sleep in or indulge yourself from time to time. Think about what makes the bedrooms in great resorts and luxury vacation homes so 'loungeable.' It's all about the mattress and the linens.

It makes sense to spend a bit of money on a quality mattress. After all, a good one will last five to ten years, and it's the home staple piece most important to splurge on because you spend about one-third of your life on it. Invest in a top-notch mattress that you can feel yourself sink into, just like those hotel beds you never want to climb out of.

Once that foundation is laid, make it up with luxury linens. Down pillows and duvets have that 'sinkability' we all crave. Classic, crisp white linens further the hotel feel, but you don't have to go stark white. Opt for a soft cream to avoid a hard look, and dress it up with color in the pillows or other accessories.

If you want to really bring in the romance or drama, go for a canopy bed, and adorn it with airy netting that brings in whispers of islands.

Turn your bathroom into a spa

This is one area where it's fairly easy to make changes that pack a punch with little investment. Start with the shower and tub by adding a rain-shower head and a soft bath pillow. If your tub isn't deep enough for a good soaking, there's a quick and dirty fix: an overflow drain cover. This allows you to fill it almost to the brim. Don't forget the thick, soft, after-bath robe—the type worn at resorts and spas.

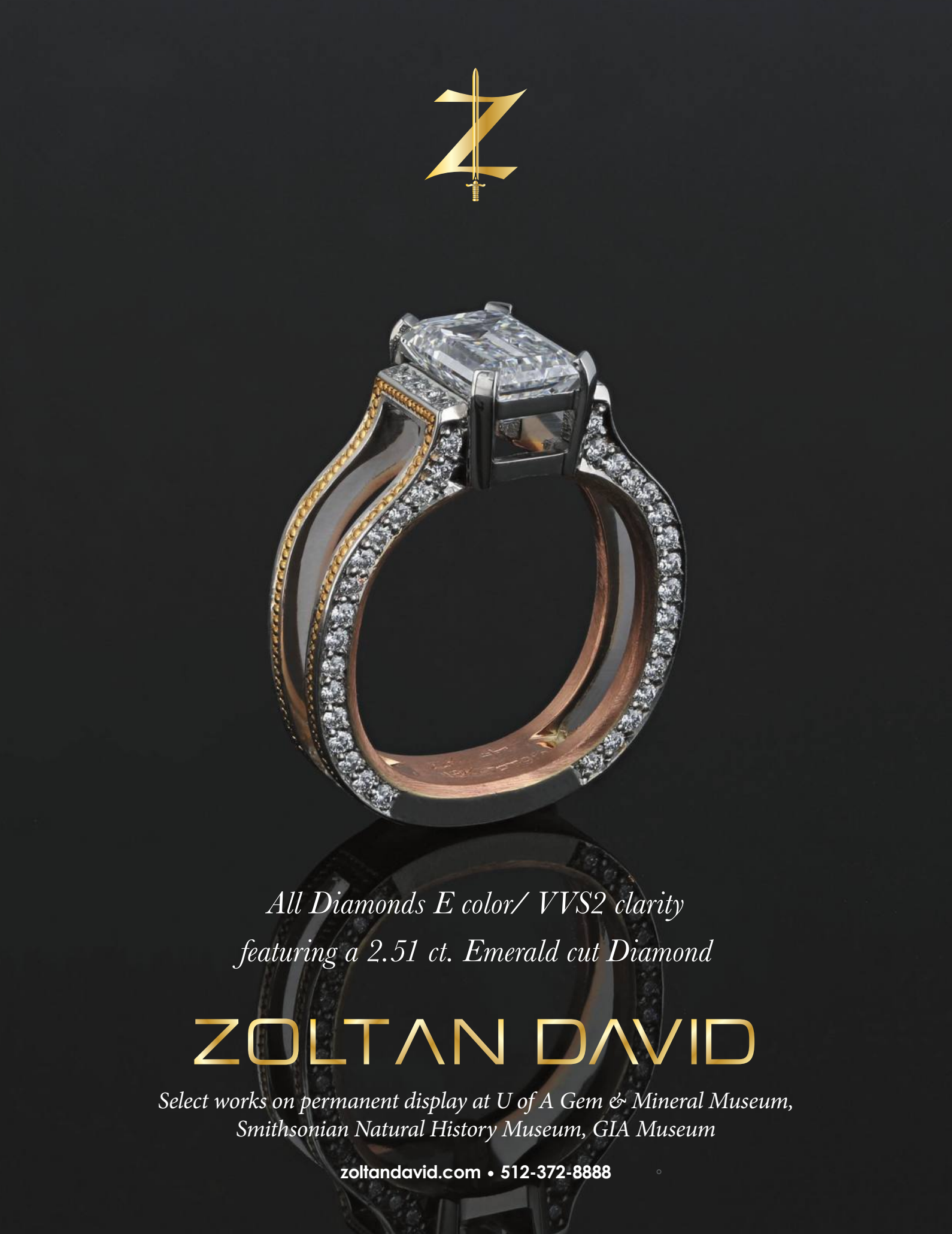
Add in some bath oils and salts, and relaxation is guaranteed. Other simple upgrades for the bath include new towels, bathmats (or try a bamboo mat), candles and perhaps a coat of paint. Peel-and-stick wallpaper and floor tiles make changing out the look a creative adventure.

Design your own home theater

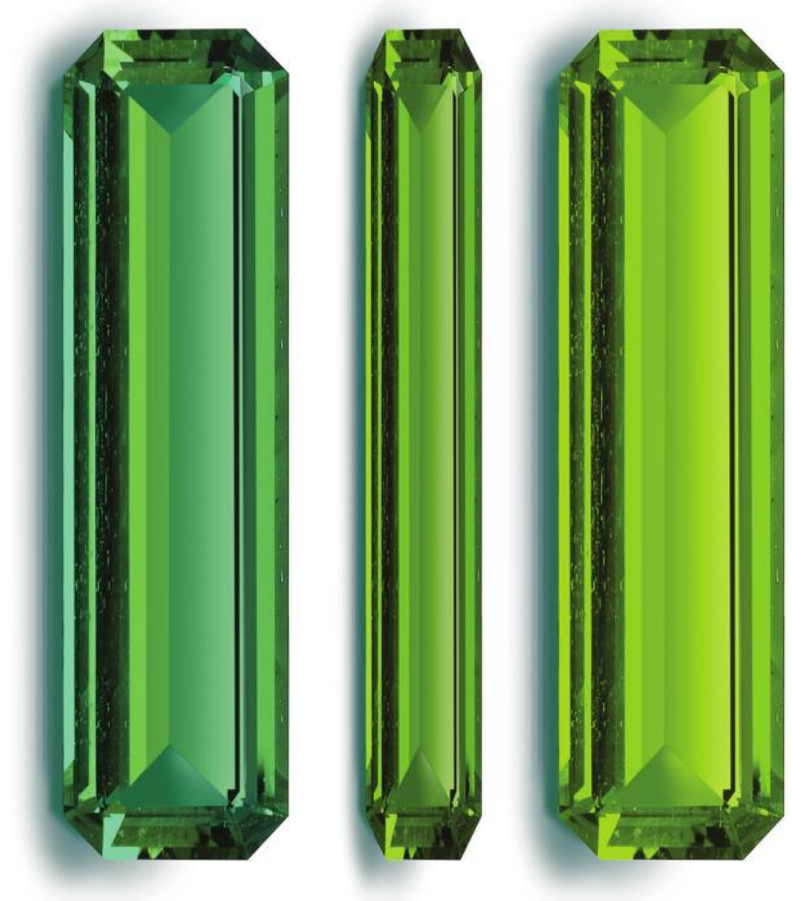
This might sound daunting, especially for smaller homes, but it's not as difficult as you might think. Of course, if you already have a separate living area for entertainment, it's a cinch to upgrade speakers, add blackout curtains and install theater seats or recliners.

Even for a small or shared space, think about what makes the movie-going experience so fun. It's all about the lounging (be sure you have a comfy couch or reclining chairs), the picture and sound (invest in a larger screen and quality sound bar or surround-sound speakers) and amenities (consider a popcorn machine with an assortment of flavor toppings).

By choosing the elements that are most important to you and making a few changes, you can turn your home into a retreat-worthy place to escape the everyday.


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