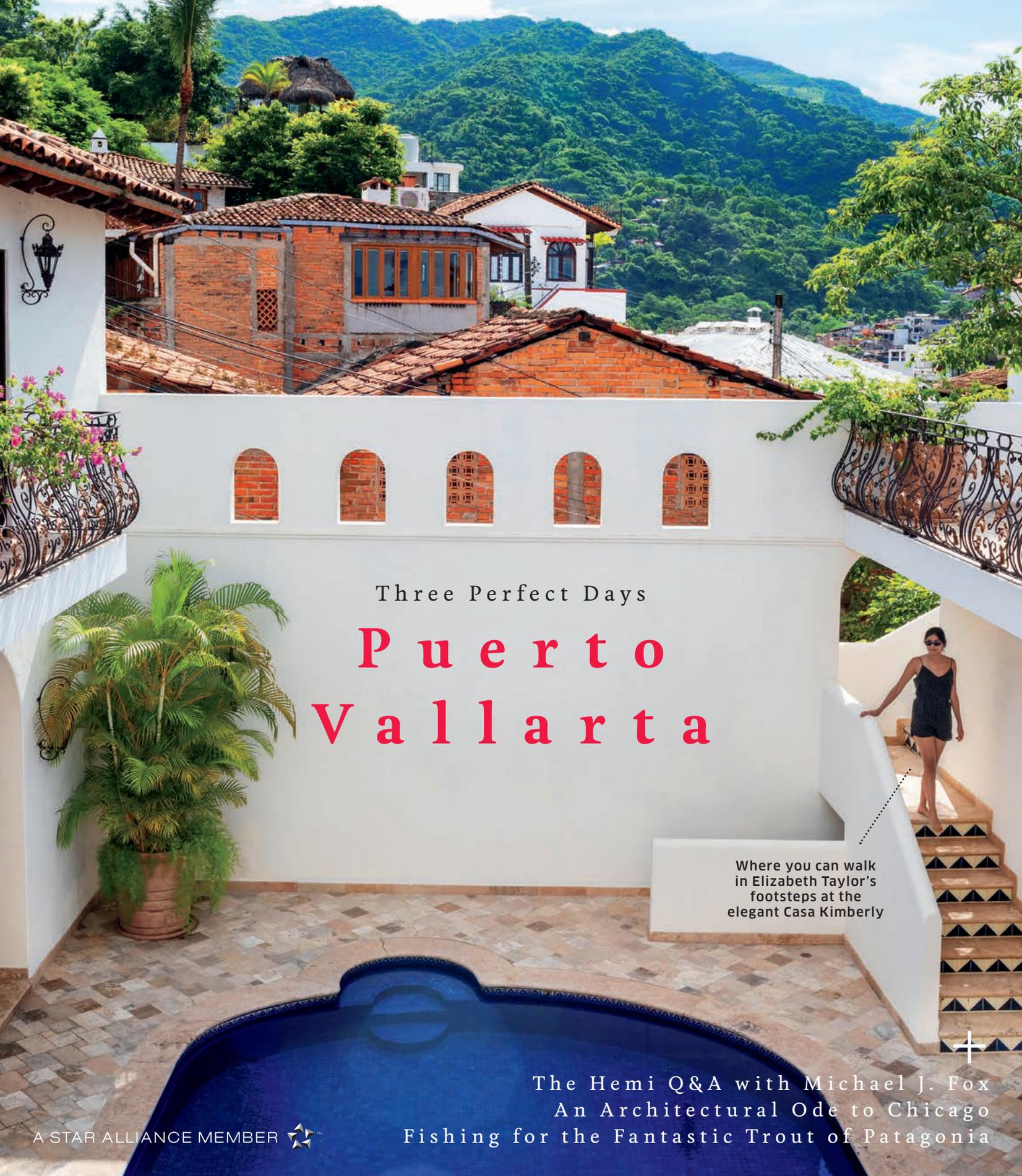


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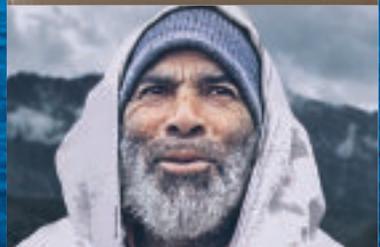
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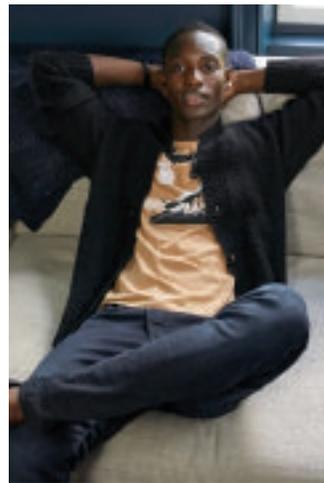
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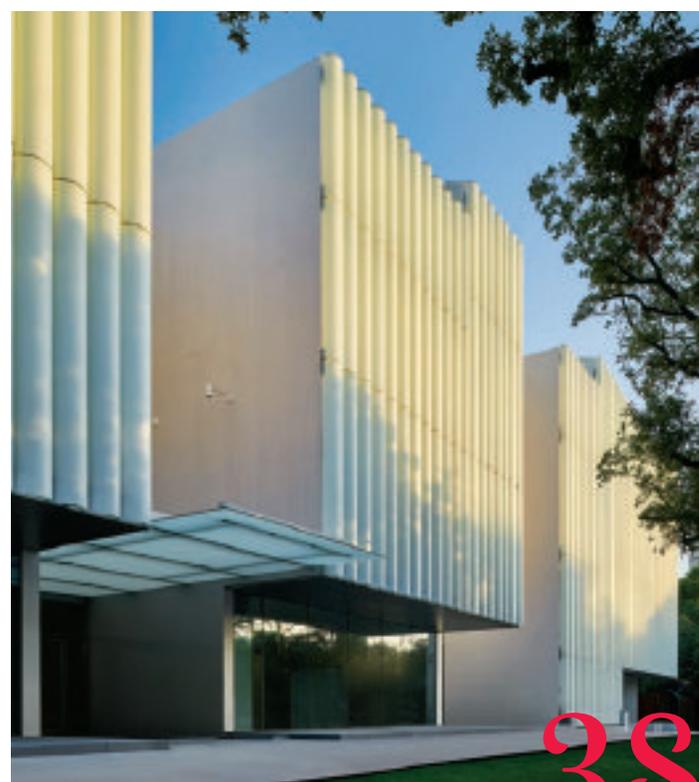
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Photos by Christopher Fay (top, far right), Robert Stevens (center), and Elvio Salazar (far left).

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A Message from Linda Jojo

Transforming the Travel Experience



The travel experience has certainly changed a lot in the past few months. As Chief Digital Officer at United Airlines, I have seen firsthand how technology can improve the travel experience for you, our loyal customers, and support our purpose at United of “Connecting People. Uniting the World.”

In pursuit of that mission, we want to ensure that when you choose to fly United, you do so confidently, knowing your health and safety is our number one priority. As your personal travel needs shift along with the rapid changes of COVID-19, we continue to be nimble, acting quickly to implement digital offerings that are important and relevant to how you travel today.

First, we are enhancing your travel journey by creating a seamless, touchless experience, especially if you use our mobile app. Second, in order to ensure you feel informed every step of the way, we are adapting not only the frequency of our communication with you but also the ways in which we connect—specifically when it comes to your mobile device.

That is why we recently debuted our enhanced United app—providing an improved customer experience that empowers you with more ability to self-serve and stay informed. We have refined our app to deliver information to you even easier than before, whether you’re logged into your MileagePlus account or not—but if you are logged in, check out the newly redesigned “My account” section! You can even chat with our team in our contact centers directly from

the app, if you prefer. This update also supports a more inclusive and accessible day-of-travel experience for everyone, especially those who are visually impaired

In addition to our new app, we have rolled out several new features on [united.com](https://www.united.com), including Shop by Maps—our latest collaboration with Google—and our Destination Travel Guide, both firsts for U.S. airlines. Shop by Maps allows you to explore flights to multiple destinations visually—perfect if you want to travel, are on a budget, and don’t have a location in mind. Our Destination Travel Guide lets you know of any current travel requirements or restrictions, so you can travel safe and secure once you find that perfect place to go.

Our entire team takes pride in finding new ways to make our app an indispensable travel tool, even as travel changes. As we approach the end of the year, it is our hope that these new tools help give you the confidence to travel safely, whether it is to visit family over the holidays or to conduct business face to face with one of your important customers.

Sincerely,

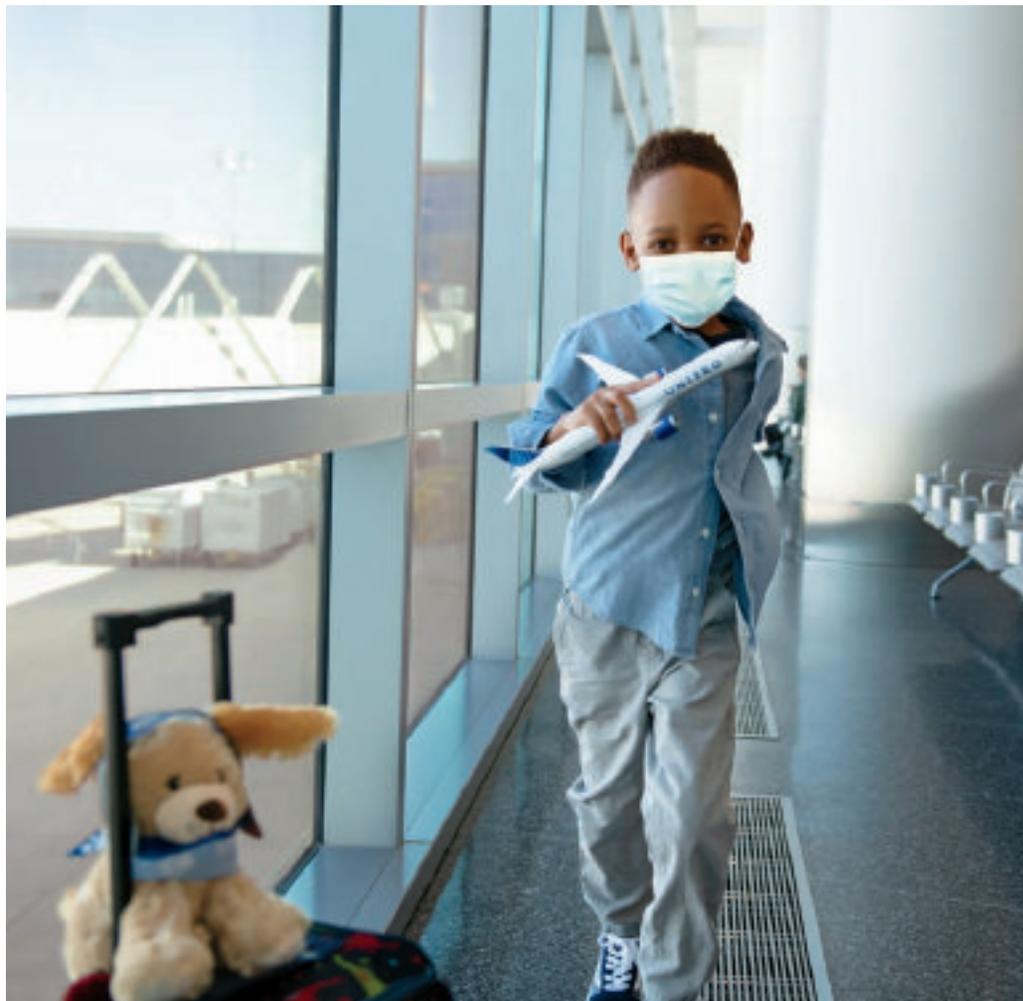
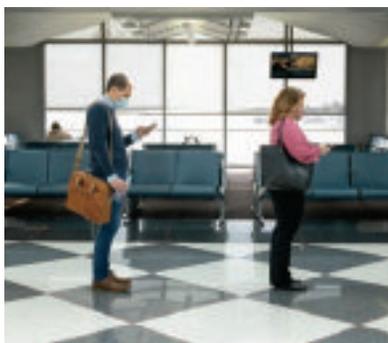
Linda Jojo
Executive Vice President Technology
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'Tis the Travel Season

Keep the festive spirit while planning your upcoming trip with us

By Daniel Kummerer

Holiday planning can be a lot to manage, and it can be extra tough when travel is a little different than it was in the past. You can keep the holiday spirit, though, as we're putting safety and cleanliness at the forefront of your travel experience through our United CleanPlusSM program.

The gift that keeps on giving. The holidays are a great time for touching hearts—even in a world where we are encouraged to be touchless. To help, download the United app for a touchless airport experience. You can check in for your flight, change your seat, and more.

Text the halls. Even if you've downloaded the app, we know you might still have questions about cleanliness and safety. We can answer questions about United CleanPlusSM and all the steps we've taken to help make your travel safer. Text "CLEAN" to FLYUA (or 35982).

Be festive and responsible. Winter is about wearing layers, and this year you'll need to add one more—a face covering. You're required to wear one at the airport and on board with us. You can have fun with your mask, though: There's no better time to show off a bedazzled

snowflake face covering or one with Yuletide cheer.

Treat yourself. Get cozy at a United ClubSM location knowing we're promoting social distancing, disinfecting more often, and serving pre-packaged foods that are better than your neighbor's fruit cake.

Sleigh bells and whistles. You'll notice some changes during boarding and while in flight. One thing you won't see—but which is very much present—is the high-efficiency (HEPA) filters we use on all United aircraft to circulate air and remove at

least 99.97 percent of airborne particles. Even Santa's sleigh doesn't have that!

A fresh coat. Along with electrostatic spraying on all aircraft, we use antimicrobial technology to add an additional layer of disinfectant on board most flights. It coats the cabin for up to seven days, like fresh snow after a blizzard.

...And to all a good flight. Visit [united.com/hemiclean](https://www.united.com/hemiclean) to learn more about how we're making your holiday travel as merry as possible. From all of us at United, happy holidays!

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What Are You Thankful for this Year?

“The ability to work remotely, the luxury of candlelit dinners with ample food and wine, and the continued love and companionship of my wonderful wife of over 36 years. I am also thankful for the privilege to vote on November 3!”
—William G.

“I have been able to move forward with several big projects, including rebuilding my front porch, removing a chimney, getting a new furnace/heat pump, and installing solar.”
—Chris C.

“I have been updating my house with the decor of places I’ve been.”
—Ward F.

“Extra time with family has been a wonderful gift!”
—Brad J.

“I found a new job during the pandemic, after my last one folded its U.S. operations. Health, family, friends, and waking up each morning with the chance to try something new and experience life. Things will evolve, and we’ll be traveling again. I miss being on a few flights a week and know that I’ll return to the skies again soon.”
—Anthony L.

While 2020 hasn’t always been easy, United travelers share why they’re grateful this holiday season

By Sara Hetland



“A safe, socially distanced journey from Dublin to Newark.”
—Julian M. (@JulianMalone360)

“More time at home so I can volunteer to help those in my community that aren’t as fortunate as I have been. It’s truly the highlight of my week to deliver boxes of food to my neighbors in need.”
—Mary F.

“My extended stay at home has allowed me to try new recipes and cook more healthy meals. I look forward to the day I can share some of this new food with family and friends.”
—Ellen C.



“I’m thankful for health and being able to return home to China after six months of being grounded in the U.S. My grandmother, who is 86 years old, contracted COVID and has a few days left to live. I am thankful that she had a long life and grateful that she was a positive role model for our family.”
—Christopher W.



“Grandchild #1 is due this week, and in a normal year I could be anywhere on the continent, but this year I’m close by.” —Alan D.
[It turns out Grandkid #1 arrived safely, and Alan was there! Congrats!]

“I’m thankful our family has been able to be together for six months and rediscover our community.”
—Catherina G.

I am thankful for the creativity that allows us to order food for delivery from supermarkets and restaurants so we can maintain a sense of normalcy and connection to society. I am thankful for our frontline workers.”
—Roger M.



“[Getting] back to work! United did a good job keeping things as safe as possible.” —Alexa S. (@AlexaSwinton)

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Navigator

A full-page background image showing a surfer in a red and black wetsuit riding a wave. The surfer is in a crouched position, leaning forward. The wave is breaking, creating a large splash of white water. In the background, a fishing boat with a green hull and a wooden deck is visible, slightly out of focus. The sky is overcast.

A New Ride

Catch a break on Ghana's Gold Coast

In the mid-1960s, filmmaker Bruce Brown traveled the world with surfers Mike Hynson and Robert August in search of the perfect wave. The resulting movie, *The Endless Summer*, became a touchstone for global surf culture, documenting destinations both commonly known, such as Hawaii and Tahiti, and less so, including the west African nations Senegal and Ghana.

Surfing has, in fact, been a pastime on Ghana's 300-mile Gold Coast for decades, although the area has seen its international profile grow markedly in the last 10 years, thanks in part to the efforts of Brett "Mr. Brights" Davies, a U.K. expat who founded the country's first surf school. Most travelers head to one of two towns: Kokrobite, a suburb of the capital, Accra, and Busua,

a fishing village about five hours to the west, where South African surf photographer Greg Ewing snapped this photo of a local riding the beach break. In spite of its newfound renown, Busua remains true to its humble roots, as one can see from the fishing boat in the background and, Ewing observes, the demeanor of its residents.

"In Ghana, the people are so friendly and welcoming—I think they call it Africa's Jamaica," Ewing says. "It's the opposite of, say, South Africa, which has a massive industry and is one of the most well-known [surf destinations] in the world."

Want to ride the waves in Africa's Jamaica for yourself? This spring, United begins three-times-weekly direct service from Washington Dulles to Accra. Surf's up!

THE SHOT

By Justin Goldman
Photography by Greg Ewing



THE STAY

By Ellen Carpenter
Photography by Tanveer Badal



Paradise, Reimagined

An ongoing multimillion-dollar update refreshes the historic Hotel del Coronado

When it opened in 1888, the Hotel del Coronado was the largest single resort in the world. The city of Coronado, which is located on a peninsula connected to San Diego, was actually established after the debut of “the Del,” as locals fondly call the hotel, which has hosted a star-studded guest list ever since. Eleven U.S. presidents have stayed there, from Benjamin Harrison to George W. Bush; Charlie Chaplin was a regular; Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz developed their Lucy and Ricky personas during an extended stay; and it served as the setting for *Some Like It Hot*, a film that the U.S. Postal Service memorialized in 2012 with a stamp featuring a ukulele-playing Marilyn Monroe and director Billy Wilder in front of the resort’s iconic turret.

All that history deserves a strong future, which is why the hotel is in the midst of a \$400 million “reimagination.” While the project isn’t set to be completed for another couple of years, there are plenty of new reasons to book a stay now.

The Pool and Sun Deck

The new resort pool opened in July, replacing the Olympic-size saltwater Turquoise Pool from 1934. Guests can now rent private cabanas—complete with fully stocked fridges, flat-screen TVs, and midday fruit delivery—for a



full day of relaxation, or simply do some laps and take a dip in the Jacuzzi. Feeling peckish? Head up to the Sun Deck bar and restaurant, the ideal spot to watch that big orange ball dip below the Pacific—preferably with a Coronado Sunset, a blended cocktail made with Aperol, tequila, orgeat, lime, and mint, and topped with a mezcal float. Finish the evening with a plate of charred octopus and, if it’s chilly, a seat by one of the fire pits.

The Cabana Rooms

These 97 rooms surrounding the pool got a serious makeover, with a fresh blue and sand-gold color palette, pristine bathrooms with walk-in showers, and either a balcony or a covered terrace offering a

Clockwise from above: the Hotel del Coronado’s new pool; a dish at the Sun Deck; a renovated Cabana Room

beautiful view. All of the guest rooms at the Del—from the “Victorians” in the main building to the cottages and villas at Beach Village—will eventually be updated, and the hotel is also unveiling a residential-style “resort within a resort” along the south side of the property, bringing the total room count to 901.

Serea

New food and drink options abound—including Eno Market & Pizzeria and a redesigned Babcock & Story Bar—but Serea, which opened in the summer of 2019, is the property’s peerless fine-dining destination. Reserve one of the ocean-facing outdoor tables and feast on chef JoJo Ruiz’s sea-to-table California-

Mediterranean cuisine, including local halibut ceviche, a packed-to-the-gills meze platter (olives, salsa macha, addictive whipped farmers’ cheese...), and a wood-grilled whole red snapper that’s deboned tableside. Raise your Lagoon cocktail (tequila, watermelon, coconut liquor, and lime juice) to another 132 years of paradise on the Pacific.





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THE 'HOOD

By Katy Spratte Joyce
Illustrations by Francesco Zorzi



"I go to Archetype Coffee every morning for an iced chocolate latte and breakfast egg rolls. They roast their own beans and are artists when it comes to coffee."

Isaiah Sheese, owner of Archetype Coffee, recommends:

"Noa Brides is an indie bridal shop that offers vintage party dresses and tons of cool accessories. The cozy, inviting aesthetic makes you want to plop right down on the couch with a glass of bubbly."

Rachel Campbell, owner and stylist at Noa Brides, recommends:



Christina Mainelli, owner of The Green House, recommends:

Omaha Little Bohemia

This compact neighborhood on the south side of Omaha takes its name from the Czech immigrants who began arriving in the 1880s, and in July a strip of South 13th Street was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Little Bohemia isn't living in the past, though: An influx of trendy new businesses, from funky boutiques to cocktail bars, is reinvigorating the storied quarter's, ahem, bohemian charm.



"Beercade 2 has a great beer selection, friendly staff, and super-awesome games. Try the balanced and delicious Fairy Nectar IPA from local favorite Kros Strain Brewing Company."

Ash Preheim, co-owner of Beercade 2, recommends:



"The Green House is a jungle haven of a shop that is a dream for both plant experts and beginners alike. Christina stocks unique plants at great prices and so many meaningful plant accessories and goods in a beautifully curated and ethical setting."

Zoey Sterba, owner of The Chute, recommends:

"The Chute is a great concept—a woman-owned, sustainable streetwear boutique featuring fashion designed primarily by females—and I'm loving all the jewelry there, especially the funky earrings."



Katie Timperley Mock, co-owner of Fizzy's Fountain & Liquors, recommends:



"Tiny House is a spot with artistic flair that has the best craft cocktails. From the glassware to the decor to the dripping absinthe fountain, you can really see the creative juices flowing."

Megan Malone, co-owner and managing partner of Tiny House, recommends:

"Fizzy's Fountain & Liquors has a 1950s hometown diner feel and an original soda fountain. Don't miss their boozy ice cream drinks and weirdly good fried bologna sandwich."



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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

THE DRIVE

By Robert Hanson

Hollywood's Sandbox

A tour of Southern California's cinematic deserts leads to the otherworldly scenery of Death Valley



THE ROUTE





The journey to Death Valley from Los Angeles is an escape into some of the most spectacular desert landscapes in North America. About an hour north of LA, just off the Antelope Valley Freeway, I encounter **Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park**, which boasts a jagged sedimentary formation that's familiar from countless films and TV shows, including the original *Star Trek* series (think Captain Kirk battling the reptilian Gorn). A little more than another hour up the road comes **Red Rock Canyon California State Park** (pictured at right), an ideal place to stretch my legs and enjoy crimson cliffs, buttes, and hoodoos that have provided cinematic backgrounds for everyone from Howard Hughes to Beyoncé.

My real destination, though, is another 170 miles northeast. Furnace Creek is the central hub of activity for **Death Valley National Park** (which, at 5,347 square miles, is the largest national park in the lower 48 states) and a logical base for a multitude of outings. One excellent choice is **Mosaic Canyon**. Found at the end of a 2.3-mile unpaved (albeit easily navigable) road, this slot canyon has polished marble walls dotted with compressed, multicolored rock fragments that explain the attraction's name. Plus, at the end of a 2-mile hike, after scrambling around a couple of boulder jams, I come upon a breathtaking natural amphitheater.

A few miles in the opposite direction from Furnace Creek, meanwhile, I find two of the park's signature outlooks. **Zabriskie Point** provides views of the rippling, dramatically patterned hills of



Death Valley's badlands, with the Panamint mountain range in the distance. And **Dante's View**, a windy perch more than 5,700 feet above Badwater Basin, offers a panorama of the entire valley, which rolls out like a strange world below. I can't help but think of Tatooine: Some of the desert planet scenes in two of the original trilogy *Star Wars* films—*A New Hope* and *Return of the Jedi*—were shot in the park, and as I look down I can practically hear Obi-Wan Kenobi telling Luke Skywalker, "You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy." I don't know, Obi-Wan—I think it looks pretty nice.

The Hottest Place Around: Aside from its beauty, Death Valley is known for its summer heat, including a record of 134 degrees Fahrenheit. Thankfully, autumn is milder! To make the drive from LA, book a flight to Los Angeles International Airport.

THE CAR

2021 Subaru Forester Touring

Most drivers associate Subarus with snowy mountain passes, but the stalwart Japanese vehicles have many other talents. The 2021 Forester Touring, with 8.7 inches of ground clearance and symmetrical all-wheel drive, is made for the dirt tracks that get you to the best sights in Death Valley. Particularly useful is the SUV's X-Mode, which at the press of a button activates controls of five different systems—including the throttle and transmission—to maximize traction and allow the Forester to chew through hard-baked washboards and gravel inclines. As I return to camp from Dante's View, X-Mode's Hill Descent Control function lets me focus on steering while the car does the rest. As Obi-Wan might say, the Forester is a more elegant vehicle for a more civilized age. From \$34,895, subaru.com



THE DRINK

By Debra Kamin



Holy Spirits

An Israeli whiskey brand is racking up awards and making its way to American shores

Barrels at M&H Distillery's Tel Aviv warehouse; below, from left: the Classic Single Malt Whisky; checking readings on a still at the facility

In recent years, the land of milk and honey has found surprising acclaim for its wine. Now, an intrepid Tel Aviv distillery is showing that Israel could also be uniquely positioned to produce spirits—in particular, whiskey.

The M&H Distillery, which launched under the name Milk and Honey back in 2012, has emerged as a dark horse in the spirits world, thanks in part to the Middle Eastern country's diverse climate. The heat and humidity in Tel Aviv, it turns out, help the spirit extract flavor from the barrel faster than it would in Scotland or Ireland. M&H, meanwhile, is also experimenting with aging some of its whiskeys in the dry, crisp air of the area around the Dead Sea, amid the arid sands of the Negev Desert, and in the deeply forested Galilee region. "We like to say we are bringing terroir to the whiskey business," says M&H Distillery CEO Eitan Attir.



With the mugginess of Tel Aviv urging it on, the M&H Classic Single Malt Whisky, which is aged in bourbon and red wine casks for three years, takes on the traits of much more mature bottles. It's fruity and light, with flavors of apple and honey opening into layers of caramel, nutmeg, and oak, and it has impressed the experts, earning gold medals at the Frankfurt International Trophy 2020 and the International Spirits Challenge 2020, as well as a Double Gold Medal on the 2020 "The Fifty Best" list.

Now, M&H is gearing up for the next step in the Jewish whiskey diaspora, as it makes its way to the U.S. In August, five M&H Distillery products—four whiskeys, including the Classic Single Malt, along with M&H's Levantine Gin—became available in more than 20 states, including New York, New Jersey, Florida, Illinois, California, and Washington.

"Our goal was always to go global," says Gal Kalkstein, M&H

Distillery's owner and founder. "Our aspiration with M&H Classic was to make a great single-malt whiskey that will appeal to everyone, from connoisseur to beginner, and to honor the traditional method of single-malt while incorporating our Israeli twist." *Public tours of the M&H Distillery in Tel Aviv are available Sunday through Thursday, from \$16, mh-distillery.com*

L'chaim: United recently expanded service to Tel Aviv, with nonstop flights departing from Chicago O'Hare, New York/Newark, San Francisco, and Washington Dulles.



Courtesy of M&H (barrels); Assaf Amram (bottle); Tali Shohar (tank)



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Green, Green Wine

Four wineries that embody the eco-friendly ethos of Portugal's Alentejo



The Modernist Herdade do Rocim winery

Sustainability is a buzzword throughout the wine industry, but few regions are more serious about the environment than the Alentejo. Growers in this part of southern Portugal have banded together to create the Wines of Alentejo Sustainability Program, a voluntary membership initiative that began in 2015 and now has around 400 members. Here, in the land of *vinho verde*, are four places that are making wine that's *really* green.

Herdade do Rocim

Designed by architect Carlos Vitorino, this Modernist facility is all clean lines and natural light, and because it's made out of an age-old, adobe-like material, it needs no air-conditioning. The wine-making process too mixes technology and tradition: In one room, robotic arms punch down grapes as their juice ferments in stainless steel tanks, while in the next room workers do the same with rakes and century-old amphorae. In keeping with the split identity, 50 percent of Rocim's grapes are farmed organically.

TRY: The Sparkling Brut Nature Rosé, a refreshing nose-tickler made from 100 percent *touriga nacional*. rocim.pt

Herdade de Coelhoiros

Climb aboard winemaker Luis Patrão's mud-splattered Land Rover Defender before your tasting to see his vision for a complete vineyard ecosystem up close. "Our vineyards are covered with a floor of natural grass to keep the moisture in the soil," he says. "We have a thousand head of sheep to keep the grass under control. We replanted cork forests to refresh the oxygen and control the CO₂."

TRY: The Coelhoiros White, a blend of *arinto* and *antão vaz*. coelhoiros.pt

Adega da Cartuxa

This winery is decidedly old-school: It inhabits a 16th-century monastery, the amphorae in its cellars date to 1875, and as for screw tops? "It's not even a conversation," says export manager Vitor Nunes. At the same time, Cartuxa has reduced water usage by a third, thanks to 21st-century steps such as satellite mapping of its fields. "We needed to change, so we changed," says assistant winemaker Duarte Lopes. "The way we use the water, the way we work in the winery—everything."

TRY: The Cartuxa Tinto Colheita, the winery's signature red blend. cartuxa.pt

Herdade do Esporão

Esperão began farming its estate-grown grapes organically in 2014, and the winery has been at the leading edge of sustainability ever since. The vineyard (pictured below) uses no herbicides, encouraging natural ecosystems to flourish—and it also has an underground bottle-aging cellar that looks like a Bond villain's HQ.

TRY: The 2015 Colheita, Esperão's first fully organic red. esporao.com



Courtesy of Herdade do Rocim (Rocim); courtesy of Herdade do Esporão (Esporão)

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THE MEAL

By Sydney Otto
Photography by Paul Crispin Quitoriano



Plenty of Fish in the Sea

At New York City's Oceans, executive chef Andy Kitko scans the seven seas for this seafood tower, which draws on Japanese, Peruvian, Spanish, and French influences

• The tower's crowning jewel is perhaps its most straightforward element. "The lobster (3)," Kitko says. "We simply steam it."

• Kitko steams littleneck clams (1) from Virginia and mussels (2) from Maine in white wine, garlic, and herbs, and he also serves mussels in a Mediterranean-style salad (9) with smoked paprika, sherry vinegar, olive oil, and roasted red peppers. "It's very common in Spain," he says.

• Calamari (6) is an unexpected seafood tower choice. Kitko grills the squid, slices it thin, and dresses it with olive oil, lemon juice, roasted red peppers, celery, and herbs.

• "The Atlantic bigeye tuna is all wild and caught sustainably," Kitko says. Two traditional Japanese preparations tie into the restaurant's global theme: Tuna goma-ae (4) (Japanese for sesame sauce) is marinated in sesame oil, sesame seeds, and soy sauce, and topped with shredded nori, while sashimi (11) is dressed simply with olive oil and sea salt.



• The tower includes **oysters (12)** from both coasts. “I like East Coast oysters to be very salty, very briny, very crisp,” Kitko says, “and then I like West Coast oysters to be mild and a little creamy, like a cucumber brine.” He serves them with a traditional French mignonette—vinegar, macerated shallot, black pepper, and tiny parsley—and tiny bottles of Tabasco.



• The **ceviche (7)** “is one of our signature dishes at the restaurant, so we wanted it on our tower,” the chef says. His Peruvian-style *ceviche mixto* features branzino, scallops, and octopus, marinated with lime juice, *ají amarillo* chilies, cilantro, and “grilled pineapple to give a little sweetness and smokiness,” then topped with crunchy *maíz tostado*.

• **Peekytoe crab (5)** appears in a “bright, light, refreshing” salad with olive oil, charred grapefruit, hearts of palm, honeydew, and shaved radish. The “very meaty” **Alaskan king crab legs (8)**, meanwhile, are served on the half shell, with lemon dijonaise and horseradish cream.

• **Shrimp cocktail (10)** is a seafood tower staple, but Kitko adds a twist: “We poach the shrimp in a chili and grapefruit court bouillon, which adds a little spice and a little bit of that floral note.” He also updates the classic cocktail sauce by using Meyer lemons, “which are a little more fruity and not as acidic as a regular lemon.”



THE INITIATIVE

By Allegra Zagami



Sacred Task

A hotel in Peru's Sacred Valley seeks to save jobs by saving the environment

Joaquin Randall spreads seeds on the mountains above Ollantaytambo; below: saplings growing at El Albergue; the pastoral hotel

Nestled in the Sacred Valley, near Machu Picchu, the town of Ollantaytambo normally bustles with travelers. But with Peru hit hard by COVID-19, tourism has ground to a halt, leaving many locals concerned for their livelihoods.

One business here, the El Albergue Ollantaytambo hotel, has responded to the challenge of the pandemic by shifting focus. When the historic, family-owned property was forced to shutter for the foreseeable future, general manager Joaquin Randall faced the prospect of having to furlough his staff. Instead, in March, he provided labor for 20 employees by launching a reforestation effort in the mountains around town.

“The lockdown has allowed us to do a project we have always wanted to do: help our community and replenish our environment,” Randall says. “This area is called the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Sacred valleys are green valleys, so let’s make it sacred and take care of it.”

Randall’s goal is to plant 50,000 trees on the mountainsides, which have been



denuded by years of overgrazing and fires. His staff converted part of the restaurant’s organic farm into a nursery to raise native trees—25,000 saplings are now growing there—and the team has experimented with seeding directly on the landscape, ascending more than 4,000 feet with backpacks full of seeds to disperse across the soil. The community at large has supported the project too, with volunteers ranging from local families to artisans and dance troops lending a hand.

While the project has given the hotel’s employees a measure of immediate

relief as they await reopening (Randall is hopeful for this coming March), the goal is also to make a long-term impact in the fight against an even greater threat than COVID-19. “This is a vision for a better future for our valley, our community, and our natural environment,” Randall says. “This pandemic will pass, but we will still have climate change, deforestation, and other environmental problems to deal with when it’s over. We can’t learn to live with climate change. We need to start fixing this problem now.” elalbergue.com



Adam Rosenberg (Randall); Allegra Zagami (saplings); Carmen Rabago (hotel)

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Kiawah Island, South Carolina

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A gorgeous live oak tree served as the inspiration—and centerpiece—for this striking modern home on Kiawah Island, just 21 miles from Charleston. Floor-to-ceiling windows showcase the tree and also offer views of the Ocean Course (host of the 2021 PGA Championship) and the Atlantic. A 19-foot glass-enclosed sky bridge connects the house's east and west wings, and an elevator climbs to the third-floor main suite, which features a fireplace and sitting room, a bathroom with heated floors, and a sundeck. There's also a rooftop observation deck, where you can thank your lucky stars that you get to call this place home. kiawahisland.com



Patrick O'Brien (Kiawah); © 2018 Durston Saylor (beach, Baha Mar)



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THE FREQUENT FLYER

By Ellen Carpenter



Jennifer Canale

Get to know your fellow passenger

What do you do for a living? Do you fly most for work or pleasure?

Up until COVID-19, I worked in the live events industry: trade shows, conventions, sporting events, concerts, and festivals. While most of my flying is business, I tend to think of it more as pleasure/adventure. I also fly all over the world for half and full marathons, particularly with the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series. What a way to see the world!

What's the most transformative or meaningful trip you've ever taken?

It was definitely the first time I flew across the pond solo. This was before Wi-Fi was everywhere, so I had no Google Maps to help me find my way. I flew SFO-LHR and then had to navigate up to Liverpool for the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon. I learned that good manners and a big smile will help you get wherever you are going. The people in Liverpool were incredibly warm and welcoming, and I've since become a Liverpool FC supporter and fly over a few times a year for a match and to run the marathon. YNWA!

What's the best thing you've eaten on your travels?

Pastéis de Nata. I had read about them in "Three Perfect Days Lisbon" and decided to go find out how

good they tasted. Oh, and I ran a half marathon while over there just to have an excuse to eat as many as I wanted!

What's your favorite souvenir from your travels?

I buy a magnet from every place I visit and put it on my fridge. Anytime I need a little pick-me-up, I just look at all of them and remember how lucky I am to have visited so many places.



What's your favorite United flight you've been on?

Last year I attempted to run all five of the United hub Rock 'n' Roll Marathon races. The last race was in Chengdu, so I flew ORD-SFO-NRT-CTU. Polaris all the way! Everyone at all the United Clubs knew I was doing this crazy quest, so they gave me cheers and well wishes on my journey throughout the year. The SFO-NRT flight crew was outstanding—each member wanted to hear my story and see all the pictures. I landed in CTU, ran the race, flew back to NRT the next morning, and had the same flight crew on my NRT-SFO leg. They couldn't believe I ran a half marathon and got back on a plane.

What place is at the top of your bucket list?

I've never been south of the equator. A bucket list thing to do would be to fly into Johannesburg and have an Anthony Bourdain-esque adventure throughout Africa, stopping at all of his favorite places and finding some new ones of my own.



Which famous person—living or dead—would be your dream seatmate?

OK, this is cheesy, but it would be a dream to meet my future partner on a plane. Hey, it could happen! Wedding in the skies for my millionth mile. We'd both be famous then!



Anfield, the home stadium of Liverpool FC

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We Have Liftoff

With a flashy new building, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston stakes its claim as one of the world's great arts institutions



By Justin Goldman

For some art museums, the building itself is just as compelling as the works on the walls. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston is now placing itself among those ranks, thanks to its brand-new Nancy and Rich Kinder Building, which opens on November 21.

“I think it joins a handful of museums around the world that have iconic spaces, such as the Guggenheim New York, the Guggenheim Bilbao, and the Louvre Abu Dhabi,” says Gary Tinterow, the museum’s director and Margaret Alkek Williams chair. “I think people will soon say The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.”

Designed by Steven Holl Architects, the 237,213-square-foot glass-clad concrete building features a swirling three-level atrium and gallery spaces that are naturally lit, and it instantly

becomes an anchor for the MFAH’s 14-acre Susan and Faye S. Sarofim Campus, and the city’s Museum District as a whole. As much as the new structure stands out, though, Tinterow notes that it’s intended to work in concert with its surroundings, not outshine them.

“It’s different but compatible,” he says, adding that the Kinder Building is “deferential” to the MFAH’s adjacent Caroline Wiess Law Building, which famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe worked on. “It bows to the building across



The Kinder Building's three-level atrium

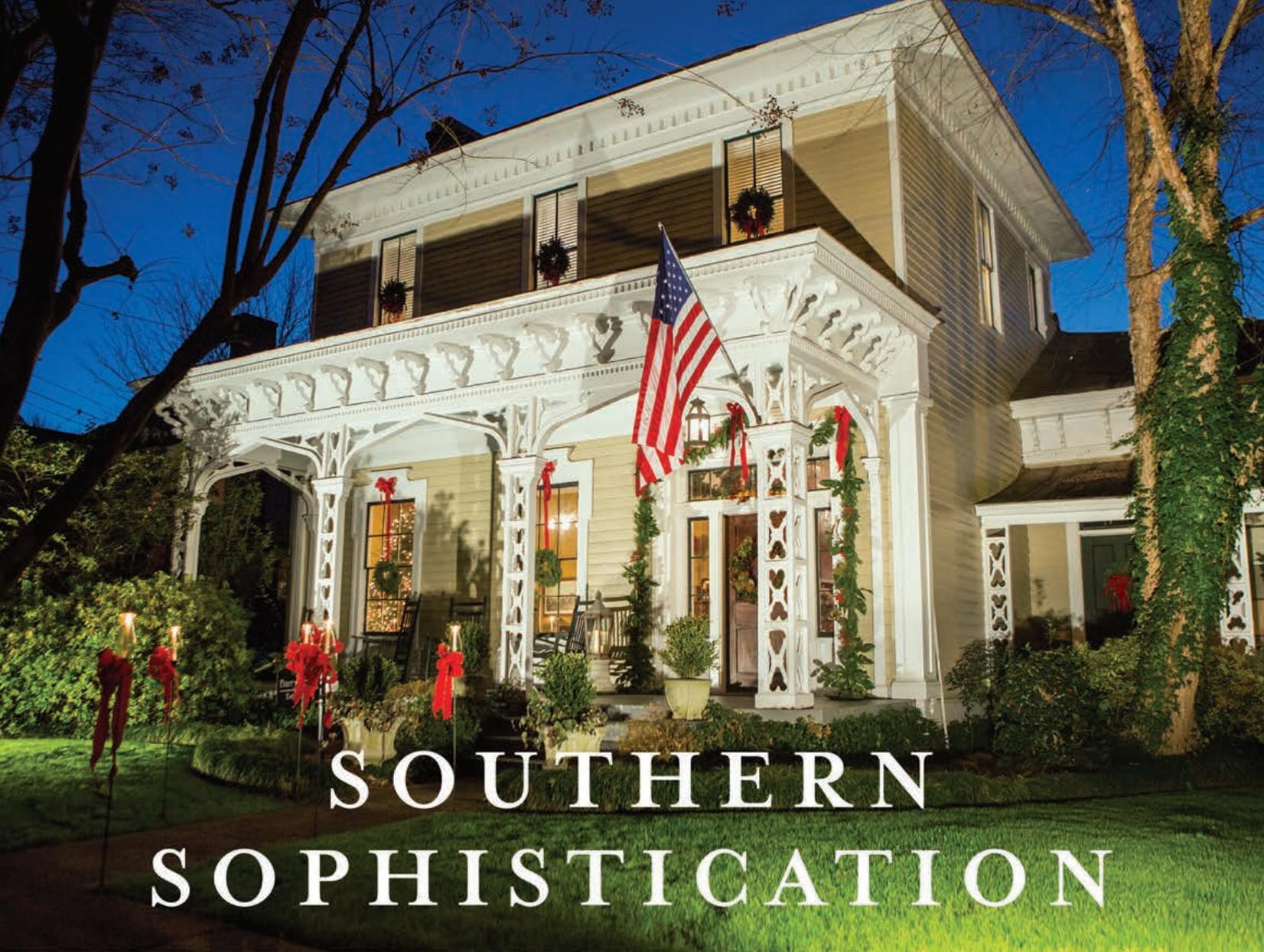
the street, and acknowledges it in the sweeping curve on Bissonnet Street.”

Just as important as the architectural statement is the opportunity the Kinder Building’s 102,366 square feet of exhibition space affords the museum. Tinterow says that the MFAH will be able to “show over a thousand works of art, of which [only] two dozen were on view previously.” Highlights include galleries dedicated to the museum’s collections of early 20th-century American Abstract Modernism, postwar Latin American Modernism, and photography going back to the mid-19th century, as well as recent acquisitions such as Kara Walker’s *Slaughter of the Innocents (They Might be Guilty of Something)* and Yayoi Kusama’s *Aftermath of Obliteration of Eternity*. In addition, the MFAH

commissioned eight site-specific works, ranging from Ai Weiwei’s *Dragon Reflection* sculpture to a fountain by Spanish installation artist Cristina Iglesias.

This month’s opening signals the end of a long road—the project was commissioned eight years ago, with planning and construction taking five—and while there have been bumps along the way (“Two hurricanes, unexpected tariffs, visa restrictions, COVID—you name it, we’ve dealt with it,” Tinterow says), the director, a Houston native, is ecstatic to be at the finish line. “It’s truly thrilling and tremendously exciting,” he says. “I think it’s a great asset for the city.”

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A Masters Unlike Any Other

For the first time,
Augusta's signature
golf tournament tees
off in autumn

By Joe DeLessio

For nearly a century, the rites of spring in the South have included the Masters Tournament teeing off at Georgia's Augusta National Golf Club during the first full week in April. It's an event steeped in tradition, but the postponement of this year's championship to November 12–15 because of the COVID-19 pandemic means that the 2020 Masters will look a tad different. It'll take place without fans, for one thing, and instead of being the first major on the calendar, this year it's the third and final one (with the British Open canceled). Here, four changes to keep an eye out for.

Dwindling Daylight

Sunset on November 15 will be at 5:24 p.m., some two and a half hours earlier than it would have been on the final day of the originally scheduled April tournament. Augusta National is famously tight-lipped about its planning, but two-tee starts—in which half the field starts on the first hole, while the other half plays the back nine first—are a possibility. It wouldn't be the first time: Last year, a bad Sunday afternoon weather forecast forced organizers to speed up the final round with a two-tee start.

Course Correction

Augusta National uses a SubAir vacuum system to regulate moisture and



The Augusta National Golf Club in the fall

temperature on its greens, which should allow them to play as fast as ever. The rest of the course is a different story: While Masters competitors are accustomed to playing on ryegrass in April, this month they'll encounter a combination of rye and Bermuda grass. (The club closes each year from late May until mid-October while the course undergoes an overseeding process.) Darren Davenport, who cut fairways at Augusta National for four years in the 1990s and is now the course superintendent at the nearby Bartram Trail Golf Club, says that the ryegrass will likely play softer in the fall than it would in the spring. "They'll be wanting to hit tee shots higher, so they'll carry farther," he notes. "If it's soft, they won't have any rollout. I don't think you'll see as much bouncing as you do in April."

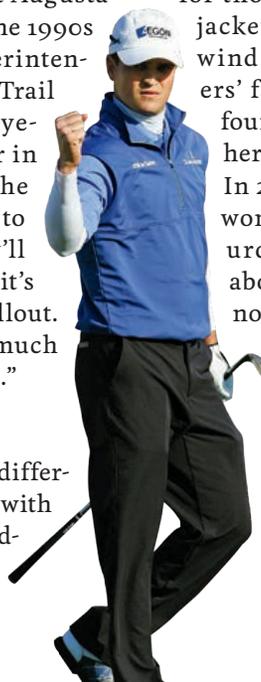
Fairway Foliage

The course won't just play differently; it'll look different, too, with its 80,000-plus plants providing a palette that's distinct

from the spring's. The oak and dogwood trees should be changing color, but most of Augusta's famous azaleas—there are 30 varieties on-site—won't be in bloom.

Bundle Up

The average high temperature in Augusta is about 10 degrees cooler in November than it is in April—perhaps providing a little extra motivation for those in the hunt for the green jacket?—and an autumnal north wind could be blowing into players' faces on three of the course's four par-5 holes. A chilly weekend here wouldn't be unprecedented: In 2007, Zach Johnson (pictured) won a tournament that saw Saturday temperatures never rise above the mid-50s, and in which no player finished below par for the first time in more than 50 years. "It wasn't very pleasant," Johnson recalls. "Obviously, I'd welcome similar weather, but my blood has thinned out, and I'm not a 31-year-old anymore, so I prefer ideal temperatures."



Augusta National/Getty Images (Augusta National); Andrew Redington/Getty Images (Johnson)

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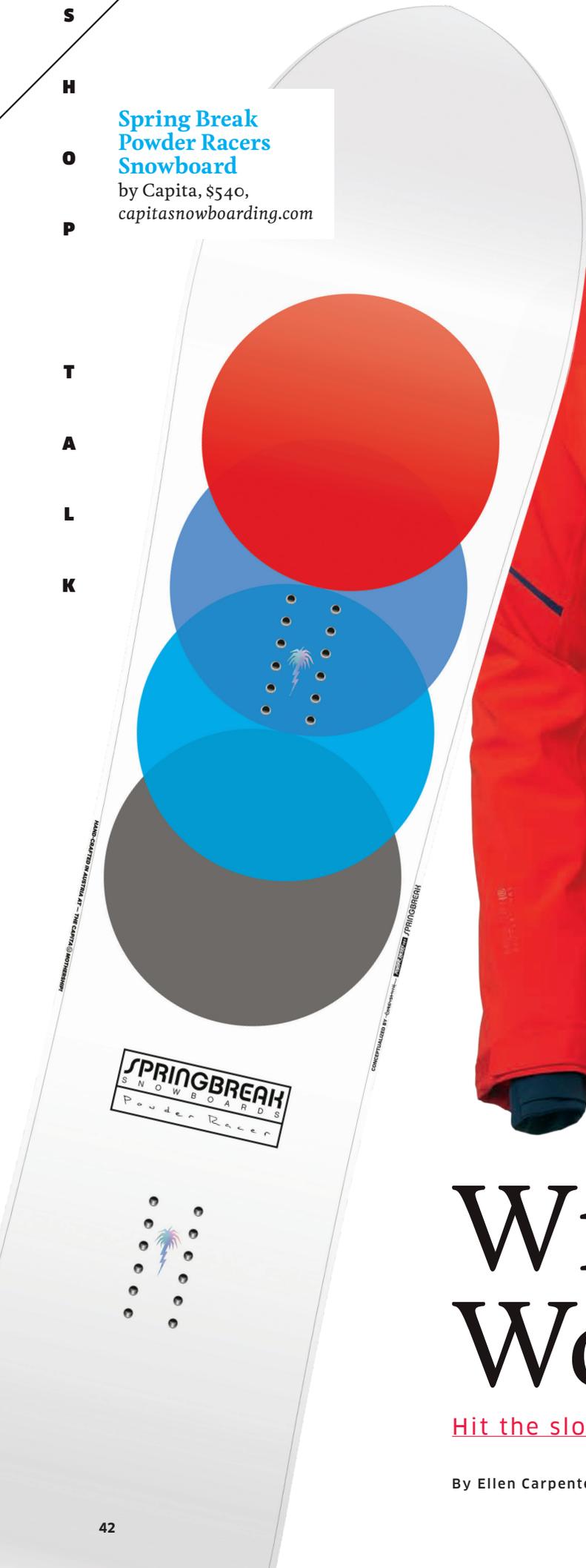
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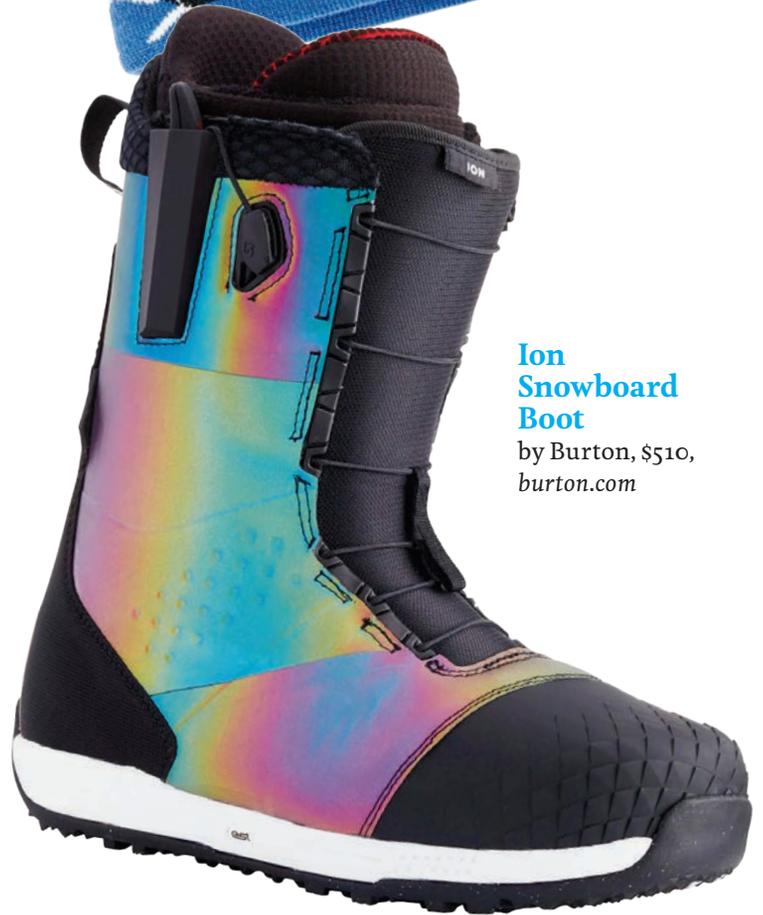
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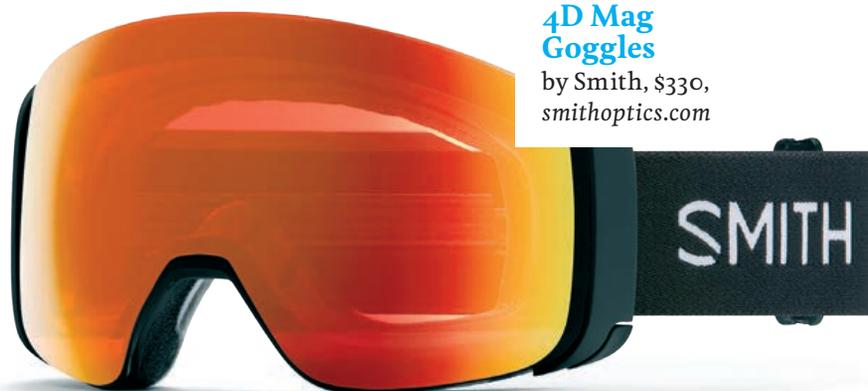
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Workers at IC3D assembling 3-D-printed face shields

Imagination Saves Lives

An Ohio makerspace shows the power of innovation in the face of the pandemic

By Brendan Bures

Back in March, when the Western world began to realize how big a problem the novel coronavirus was going to be, a band of makers and entrepreneurs in Ohio looked for ways to help. An opportunity quickly appeared: Frontline workers needed personal protective equipment (PPE), which was in paltry supply, and the initial pandemic lockdowns had halted traditional manufacturing.

IC3D, a 3-D-printing business that's a part of a Columbus-based group called the Idea Foundry, sprang into action. Inspired by volunteers in Italy who had 3-D-printed ventilator valves that saved hundreds of lives, the company designed a face shield that would fit the needs of medical workers at local hospitals. (The

National Institutes of Health would later post the specifications on its website so that others could replicate the face shields.) On its own, however, IC3D could crank out only 700 shields per day. "That wasn't enough," says Kimberly Gibson, the company's CMO (Chief Mischief Officer).

IC3D CEO (Chief Extrusion Officer) Michael Cao, a former Honda engineer, tapped into his network, reaching out to individual makers—including hobbyists, local labs, and other small businesses—for help. Almost overnight, he was able to manifest a complex supply-chain distribution model. Corporations offered discounts on materials, individuals with printers worked free of charge, and IC3D coordinated transportation needs. At one point, the

company had doubled its employee count, from 12 full-time workers to 24, including some who had been furloughed or laid off from other jobs, to assist with assembly. As a result, IC3D was able to print over 60,000 face shields within the first three months of the pandemic's outbreak in America.

"I think in times of crisis everybody wants to be utilized," Gibson says. "And we were in a unique position to utilize the skills and resources we had."

Unique is a good word to describe the Idea Foundry as a whole. The community's 12-year-old downtown Columbus makerspace has positioned itself as a sort of WeWork that's open to the blue-collar set. Yes, it has ping-pong tables and other familiar startup-era amenities, but the emphasis here is on removing barriers

and encouraging makers of all stripes and skills to innovate. In that spirit, members can access everything from podcasting equipment to plasma cutters. Don't know how to use the equipment? The Idea Foundry has you covered, with classes that teach basic woodworking, laser-cutting, welding, and 3-D design. Women-only technical classes also exist, helping to break down potential barriers.

About half of the Idea Foundry's 600 members self-define as entrepreneurs, and about another 40 percent are professional hobbyists. The final 10 percent or so are full-time freelancers—coders, designers, even some lawyers. Over the years, founder and CEO Alex Bandar realized he wasn't just providing tools to customers; he had created a home for a new kind of community. "The common thread running through all of these people is they are optimists," he says. "They think that tomorrow is better than today, that they can learn a new skill, make a new project, and, frankly, make a new friend. That sense



of shared optimism is what I really think a makerspace offers."

It hasn't all been roses; when COVID-19 struck, the space closed to the general public, and Bandar was forced to lay off managerial staff. (Fortunately, he was able to begin rehiring employees in the fall). Members retained access to the facilities throughout the spring and summer, though, and in addition to IC3D's face shields, Idea Foundry affiliates have manufactured masks, strap extenders,

and emergency hand-washing stations—and even invented a fumigation system that can decontaminate a room in four hours or less. "COVID-19 really did highlight a gap in flexible innovation on the side of large corporations," Bandar says. "It emphasized the strength of makerspaces to fill that role."

That role is likely to grow in the coming years. A 2019 Upwork study found that 57 million Americans freelanced either full-time or on the side, generating nearly \$1 trillion in income. With the pandemic accelerating this and other economic shifts, those numbers could quickly increase. The Idea Foundry is continuing to add members, and Bandar has consulted with cities such as Philadelphia and Indianapolis about opening similar spaces—perhaps showing us all a path to reshaping our economic futures.

"We are doers, we are makers, we are dreamers, all of those things," Gibson says. "And COVID allowed us to prove we can walk the walk in a very big way."



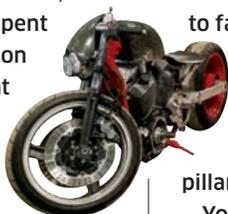
From top: creating a podcast with Idea Foundry equipment; using the makerspace's blacksmithing tools

ON THE MAKE

Five of Idea Foundry's Finest

Todd Perkins Design

An industrial design firm that built an electric motorcycle from scratch; the bike spent a month on display at the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame.



Columbus Fashion Alliance

A collaborative community that provides equipment and technologies to fashion entrepreneurs. "Learn, make, innovate, and experience' are our core pillars," says member Yohannan Terrell.

Bigger Tuna

A product design company that cocreated a room decontamination fumigation system and built multiple hand-washing stations throughout Columbus when the pandemic hit.



Khamsa 3D

A maker of 3-D-printed prosthetics for people who can't afford conventional ones; also offers upgrades to the preexisting electric scooter technology in conventional wheelchairs.

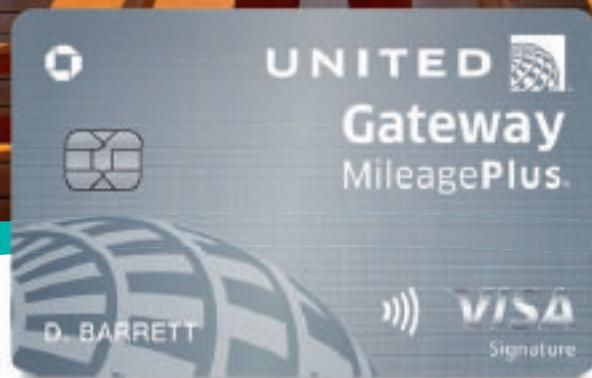
Bee Collective

A business that provides pollinator habitats and partners with local operators to help sustain the native bee population in Ohio.



Science Photo Library/Getty Images (bee)

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An Army of Volunteers

Team Rubicon's Jake Wood explains why fellow U.S. military veterans form the backbone of his disaster response organization

By Justin Goldman • Illustration by Fabio Consoli

Between the West Coast wildfires, Hurricane Laura, and COVID-19, Jake Wood, CEO and cofounder of the nonprofit disaster response organization Team Rubicon, had his work cut out for him this summer. But the decorated former Marine, who saw combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan, could handle it. He has been doing this for 10 years, since he put together what he calls “a ragtag group of folks,” made up largely of fellow U.S. military veterans, to go on an impromptu aid mission after an earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010. Today, Team Rubicon, which has worked on everything from Hurricane Sandy to the Syrian refugee crisis, is made up of 130,000 volunteers, 70 percent of whom are veterans, and Wood argues that their abilities are his organization’s greatest strength. “When we were in Port-au-Prince, that situation was so chaotic,” he says. “The only analogy was a battlefield. It became evident that the skills and experiences that we gained in the military were uniquely suited for that environment.” Here, Wood, whose memoir, *Once a Warrior: How One Veteran Found a New Mission Closer to Home* (Sentinel), comes out November 10 (the day before Veterans Day), tells us about his work.

On veterans’ training for disaster:

“We think of it in two categories: hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills, there’s not a task that presents itself in a disaster environment that the military does not have an occupational specialty designed for. It could be water sanitation, information synthesis, operating unmanned



aerial platforms—you name it, the military has trained somebody to do it, in the most austere circumstances imaginable. Then you have soft skills. It’s people who know how to lead, know how to follow, who understand the operational planning process, who have a bias for action and this mentality of mission accomplishment that is really critical to getting the job done in tough circumstances.”

On veterans’ attributes for the broader job market:

“I think a lot of hiring managers fail to imagine how a veteran’s experience is applicable to what they do, because they’re coming in with résumés that are unconventional. What I try to stress is these are, typically, proven team players with an inordinate amount of leadership experience relative to their age. You’ll be hard-pressed to find a 24-year-old that’s three or four years out of college that has led a 40-person team in stressful

conditions, but every platoon commander in the army has. And they tend to be highly trainable. People learn how to learn in the military. Just give them an opportunity—put them through a three-month crash course of on-the-job training and see what they can do, because they’re gonna bring all these other skills to the table.”

On Team Rubicon’s COVID-19 response:

“We moved aggressively into a COVID-response posture back in late February, early March. We augmented Feeding America with 10,000 volunteers all across the country at their food banks. In partnership with Google, we operated dozens of mobile testing sites across the country. We augmented the Indian Health Service in Navajo Nation with about 100 medical providers at the time when that was the worst outbreak in the country. And we managed distribution of all PPE for the entire city of Chicago for two months. A lot of unforeseen things happened in the first couple months of this, but we were able to have a lot of impact because we moved quickly.”

On the next steps for Team Rubicon:

“We have this vision for how we can build a platform that allows veterans across the country to serve in their communities’ greatest time of need. The analogy we use is that we’re building a 21st-century volunteer fire department—completely reimagining what citizen service looks like for the country—and we’re excited about that vision and that opportunity.”

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Three Perfect Days

Puerto Vallarta

By Nils Bernstein
Photography by Andrew Reiner



Chile en
nogada at Café
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opposite page:
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Puerto Vallarta's incongruities are its charm. It's a metropolis of almost 400,000 people that's bordered on one side by a dense jungle in which jaguars run wild and on the other by remote beaches that are unreachable by land. It's a region with centuries-old indigenous and colonial traditions, and it's also a cutting-edge culinary destination and a global center of LGBTQ culture. Vallarta sits smack in the center of the perfect horseshoe that is the *Bahía de Banderas* (Banderas Bay), 60 miles of sandy shoreline running from Punta Mita in the north to Yelapa in the south. Yet it remained largely unknown until the 1964 film *The Night of the Iguana* broadcast its allure to the world. As Tennessee Williams wrote in the play that inspired the film: "Let's go down and swim in the liquid moonlight."



► Porcupine puffers, “nothing soup,” and a bath with Liz Taylor

I find out the hard way that it’s not a good idea to laugh while snorkeling. But it’s near impossible not to at **Los Arcos National Marine Park**, where tropical fish, eels, rays, and the occasional octopus, sea turtle, or seahorse perform among the coral reefs—a veritable Cirque du Soleil of sea beasts competing for attention.

A school of king angelfish enters my sight line like a liquid light show, their deep blue bodies streaked with white, ombré-ing to an iridescent blue at the edges, their neon-yellow

tails flapping behind. As they mob a lumbering, oblong fish, it suddenly puffs up, more than doubling in size, like a balloon covered in spikes. I guffaw into my mask and get a mouthful of saltwater—an unexpected defense mechanism of the so-called porcupine pufferfish.

Los Arcos comprises three small granite islands just off **Playa Mismaloya** that jut abruptly out of the sea in natural arch formations. Despite its popularity as a snorkeling and scuba spot—and its location less than 200 feet from shore—it offers the densest and most colorful marine display in the region, thanks largely to its having been a protected marine reserve since 1984. There may be constant development in the Puerto Vallarta area, but these kinds of unspoiled paradises seem to be everywhere.

My guide is Texas-born, Mexico-raised Jet de la Isla, who’s been in Vallarta since 2016. “I made a quick stop here to check out the snorkeling and decided to stay for a month,” he says. “It wasn’t long before I fell in love with the friendly people, beautiful beaches and marine life, lively streets, and nightlife that never stops. I took a side job as a tour guide and used any excuse to extend

my stay—‘Whale season is in two months,’ and then, ‘They say the rainy season is beautiful...’—and decided I needed to keep doing what I loved.” (“I came to visit and ended up staying” is a common refrain among the people I meet in Vallarta, Mexicans and expats alike.) His company, **Jet’s Private Boat Tours**, now has an eight-guide team specializing in customized excursions, using boats ranging from small pangas for couples to luxury yachts for groups, and even offering the area’s only nude outings. De la Isla also runs a gay youth hostel in the heart of town.

After our excursion, I ask him to drop me on the north side of town, which gives me a scenic survey of the beaches that sit within the city itself. By law, all beaches are public, even those that are part of large resorts. Heading up the coast, the 20-minute boat ride whizzes by *playas* La Garza Blanca, Palmares, Punta Negra, Las Estacas, Conchas Chinas, Los Muertos, Olas Altas, Rosita, Camarones, and finally Playa Tranquila.

Seeing all those fish made me hungry (although maybe not for the porcupine puffer), so I walk to **Lamara**, which was recommended by friends from Guadalajara. The restaurant’s menu consists mostly

of *aguachile* (spicy shellfish ceviche) and ceviches of local whitefish or tuna. The effortlessly chic decor and stylish servers remind me of my part-time home of Mexico City, apart from the fact that the fish was caught a few blocks away. I order double-decker tostadas of *aguachile* Amora (shrimp, cucumber, jicama, peanuts, and hibiscus salsa), and ceviche Flat (sliced tuna with ginger, red onion, and serrano







From above: Casa Kimberly's Velvet Suite, which pays homage to the Elizabeth Taylor film *National Velvet*; cocktails at Iguana

chile on a bed of avocado), washing them down with a Xakúa lager from the neighboring state of Michoacán.

It's a quick Uber ride to the **Plaza de Armas**, the ocean-front central square of Old Town Vallarta, a neighborhood

that's a maze of alluring cobblestone streets, peek-a-boo vistas, and crooked staircases lined with citrus trees, pomegranate bushes, and passion fruit vines. On the square stands the **Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe**, a stately edifice that looks at first glance like many of Mexico's colonial churches—albeit one bathed in ocean mist. On closer examination of the building, which broke ground in 1903, I find an architectural hodgepodge of Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassical styles, topped with an immense, ornate crown that was reconstructed in 2009 by sculptor Carlos Terrés.

Unlike many Mexican beach towns—Ixtapa, Cancún—Puerto Vallarta wasn't developed as a tourist hub. Nor was it the "sleepy little fishing village" that's become part of its mythology. In the 1800s, it was an important port and administrative center for nearby

silver mining towns, and starting in the 1920s it moved toward agriculture and commercial fisheries, with trickles of tourism. It only emerged as an international destination after the filming of *The Night of the Iguana* and the breathless

“Old Town Vallarta is a maze of cobblestone streets, peek-a-boo vistas, and crooked staircases.”

tabloid coverage of the affair between its star, Richard Burton, and Elizabeth Taylor, who flew down to join him during production in 1962, despite both of them being married.

Burton put Taylor up at **Casa Kimberly**, a beautiful colonial





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Clockwise from above: colorful buildings in Old Town Vallarta; the bar at La Leche; the Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

villa just across the street from his house in Old Town. He even built a bridge, the *Puente del Amor* (Bridge of Love), connecting the two homes so they could maintain a glimmer of discretion (he gifted her the home in 1964). Now, the two homes make up a single hotel, and I'm lucky enough to be staying in Taylor's original master suite—over 2,500 square feet of opulence overlooking the bay.

I head to the hotel's open-air rooftop restaurant, **Iguana**, to get my first glance of Vallarta's famous sunsets. Iguana is a popular spot for Taylor-Burton fans, with views of the Sierra Madre foothills and the bay. There's a seemingly endless magic hour until the sun dips below the horizon and the sky takes on surprising shades of orange, pink, violet, and lavender, with a halo of the palest lime green to match my margarita.

Once night has fallen, I take a taxi north to the *Zona Hotelera*, or Hotel Zone. This area is populated mostly with faceless resorts, but it's also where one of the city's most

“The sky takes on shades of orange, pink, violet, and lavender, with a halo of lime green to match my margarita.”

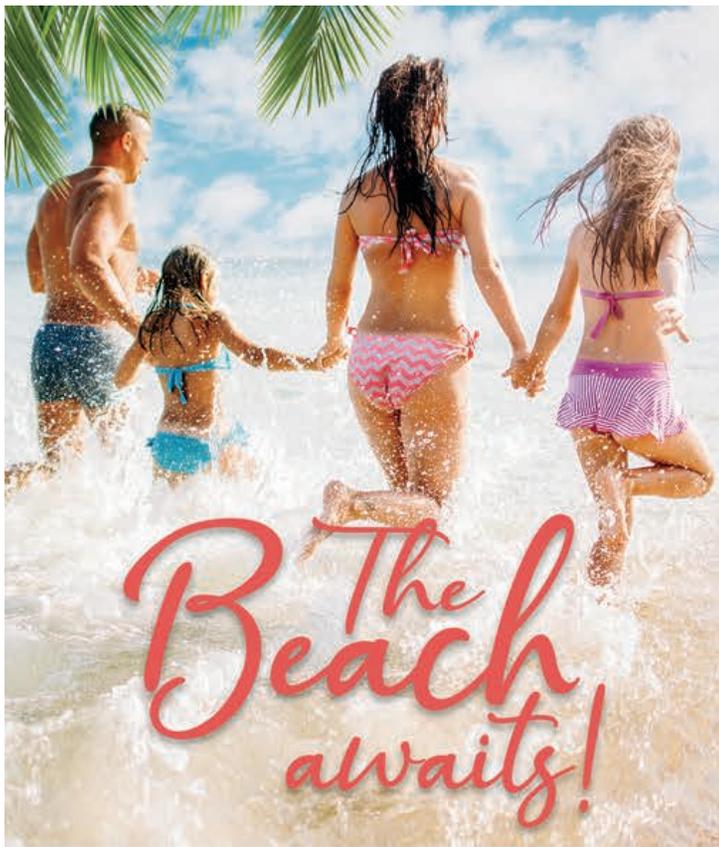
exciting restaurants is located. **La Leche's** monochromatic interior looks like a milk-colored Louise Nevelson sculpture, a fitting backdrop for what Chef Alfonso “Poncho” Cadena calls *cocina irreverente*. Cadena is part of a youthful, creative culinary clique whose restaurants stand in welcome contrast to the Señor Frog's-type party palaces that line the streets near the beaches. I start with parrotfish—one of the more colorful fish I spotted while snorkeling today—paired with an avocado vinaigrette and little pearls of lime tapioca. My second course, the “*sopa de nada*” (nothing soup), is actually an ethereal cauliflower

cream, and I finish with the locally famed roast duck, one of the few dishes that rarely leaves the menu.

Back at Casa Kimberly, in a bathroom that's twice as big as my apartment, I take a long bath in Taylor's original, custom-made, heart-shaped pink-marble tub. Due supposedly to a translation mishap, the tub is shaped like an anatomical heart rather than a valentine, and it is all the more elegant for it.



Poly Isepan/Getty Images (Old Town)



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DAY



► Discovering remote beaches, chasing chachalacas, and drinking tuba

The appeal of waking up in Elizabeth Taylor's bed can't be overstated, but I have a long day ahead, so I force myself up and over to the private pool for an invigorating dip. Still, it's tempting to linger over the view of Old Town, with its roofs of sun-worn terra-cotta barrel tiles creating a mottled mosaic that reaches to the sea.

It's a short walk from the hotel and past the Plaza de Armas to the waterfront

Puerto Café, which a friend told me has the best coffee in Vallarta. I'm not disappointed with my dripped-to-order cup and fresh-baked banana bread. Even better, they're blasting Queen's bizarre, underrated *Flash Gordon* soundtrack on an old turntable, while the audiophile barista explains how the placement of the giant vintage speakers interacts with the acoustics of the century-old space and its high, wood-beam ceiling. I get a bottle of cold-brew concentrate to go—fuel for the day.

The 30-minute drive to the **Vallarta Botanical Gardens** follows the coastline south before cutting inland, into dense jungle. Established in 2004, it's already one of the largest and most diverse gardens in Mexico, with extensive collections of orchids, bromeliads, agaves, and cacti among thousands of native plant species. My favorite part is the vanilla plantation trail, along which hundreds of vanilla vines spiral up posts and trees,

interspersed with cacao trees. (Both chocolate and vanilla are native to Mexico.) I learn that vanilla is the world's second-most expensive spice, after saffron, largely due to the fact that each vanilla bean ripens at a different rate and must be individually hand-harvested.

I love seeing the plants but am truly seduced by the many birds that seem unfazed by human intrusion. "I can name at least 50 birds that hang out here," a worker tells me as I shoo away a few butterflies and one pesky hummingbird. I spy parrots and woodpeckers and what I think are vultures and hawks. I consider it a good luck sign to spot a citreoline trogon, a bright-eyed, yellow-bellied stunner closely related to the rare quetzal, a sacred bird in pre-Hispanic culture.

From the botanical garden, it's only a few minutes by taxi to Boca de Tomatlán, the hub for the so-called South Shore beaches, most of which are reachable only by the water taxis that congregate there.



This page: a fancy pour at Puerto Café; opposite page: a fish market in Colonia 5 de Diciembre





This page, from top: a water taxi at Boca de Tomatlán; Wixárika art at Tierra Huichol; opposite page: a ceviche tostada at Mariscos La Tía



(They pick up on Los Muertos Pier, too.) Instead, I opt for a hike to tiny **Playa Colomitos**. The walk is brief—about 35 minutes—and not too strenuous, alternating between well-marked trail and concrete steps, with views of the water almost the entire way. At one point I hear a jarring sound, like strained machinery, which I trace to a flock of turkey-like birds munching on fallen guavas. It turns out the sound is the quick-stuttering “song” of the West Mexican *chachalaca*.

Colomitos is the smallest beach in the area, a sliver of sand hugged by massive rock formations. The water is clear, warm, and shallow, and my swim feels like a spa bath. With no vendors or partiers in sight, it’s a postcard of the sort of Mexican beach that everyone looks for but that has been condoed and hoteled nearly out of existence. There are only

four other beachgoers, and two of them invite me to nearby Playa Quimixto, which offers a 30-minute hike (or horseback ride) to waterfalls, but I’m getting hungry, so I grab a water taxi to the Los Muertos Pier.

“I hear a jarring sound, like strained machinery, which turns out to be the ‘song’ of the West Mexican chachalaca.”

Although **Playa Los Muertos** isn’t the most bucolic of Vallarta’s beaches, it’s great for people-watching, and the pier is an easy meeting place. Walking on the *malecón*, the waterfront promenade, I spot a

white-suited man with a giant clay jug being swarmed by bees. He’s serving *tuba*, a traditional drink of fermented coconut palm sap that’s a remnant of the 250-year galleon trade between western Mexico and the Philippines. It’s slightly fizzy and gently sweet, garnished with chopped apples and pecans—a perfect partner for my leisurely 30-minute stroll along the beach to lunch.

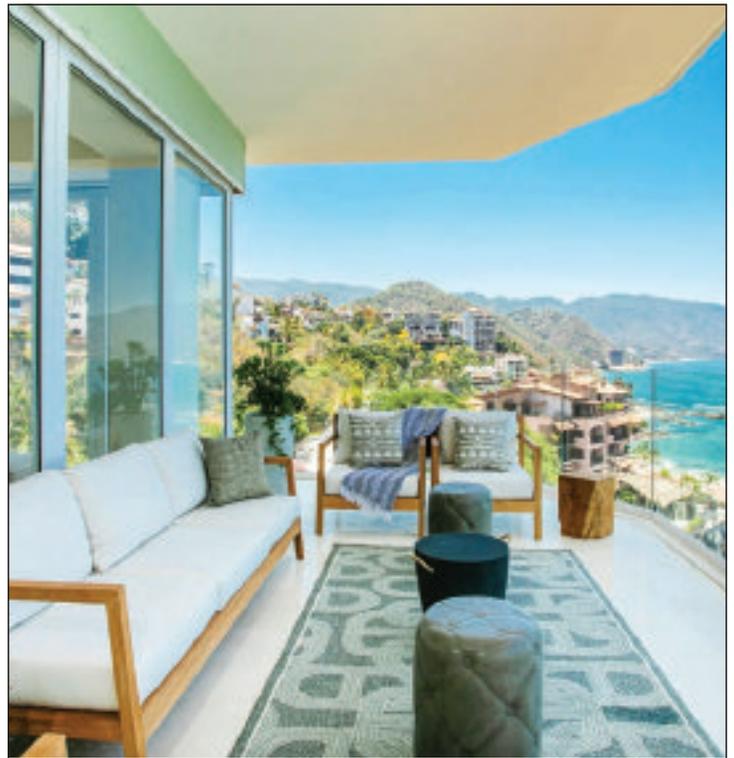
Colonia 5 de Diciembre is a neighborhood full of markets, schools, and tiny taquerías, and it feels a little less touristy than Old Town, especially as you move farther from the sea. **Mariscos La Tía** is packed—a good sign, even though it means a 20-minute wait for a table—and I catch no English within earshot. It’s another all-seafood restaurant, and I order a steaming cauldron of marlin, shrimp, and octopus in a rich shrimp stock, along with a ceviche tostada



topped with *cueritos*, or pickled pork rinds.

Walking back down the *malecón*, I see **Tierra Huichol**, a gallery specializing in the folk art of the Wixárika people, natives of the region who make vivid beaded sculptures and yarn “paintings” that represent shamanistic visions of the universe. I’ve seen these in craft shops elsewhere in Mexico, where there’s no assurance that the artists are being paid fairly or not being pressured to change their practice to fit commercial demand. Tierra Huichol has worked directly with Wixárika artists for years and is committed to compensating them properly and helping sustain the independence of their communities. I buy a beaded eagle, considered the messenger between the gods and man, adorned with images of peyote—which makes a lot of sense, given the kaleidoscopic color scheme.

Just up the beach from here, I’m meeting Erick Fierro, a friend of a friend, for mojitos at **La Bodeguita del Medio**, a branch of a Havana restaurant that’s an oasis from the beachfront tourist traps that surround it. (Pro tip: It’s also where to buy Cuban cigars to bring home.) Fierro is a real estate agent who started a face-mask assembly project during the pandemic as a way to support women who had lost their jobs. By September, he had 12 women making masks, and they had sold more than 6,000 masks (with the money divided equally between the women). He notes that Vallarta is unique among vacation towns not just for its tight community of full-timers but because expats are both embraced by and eager to support the community. “One day, I needed three sewing machines,” he says, “and an hour later I had five.”



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A band performs and patrons dance at La Bodeguita del Medio

As I enjoy my cocktail, I witness Fierro greet countless friends. “Socializing here is old and young and poor and rich and dark and white,” he says. “I’ve lived in many cities and never had this

sense of belonging. It’s like a family—you can trash them, but if someone from the outside trashes them, you defend your people.”

I thank Fierro for the drink and head to dinner at

Café des Artistes, which, over the course of 30 years, has morphed from modern French cuisine into one of the best Mexican restaurants in the country. Chef-owner Thierry Blouet was born in Puerto Rico to French parents, came

“Socializing here is old and young and poor and rich and dark and white.”

to Mexico in 1978, arrived in Vallarta in 1987, and never left. I order cactus *aguachile*, a *cabeza* (beef cheek) taco with dandelion greens, risotto with foie gras and Mexican morels, suckling lamb two ways, and one of the most inspired and tasty desserts I’ve had in ages: a whole roast habanero chile draped over passion fruit mousse. Then it’s straight back to Liz’s bed.

COLORFUL KEEPSAKES

The art of the Wixárika people (better known by their Spanish name, Huichol) is as singular and flamboyant as any of the world’s folk art traditions. They make carved figures—usually animals—ornately decorated with tiny beads that they affix by hand with beeswax, as well as obsessively wrought yarn artworks on wooden boards.

While the psychedelic colors and designs make some sense in the naturally vibrant

environment of Mexico, these works don’t represent the physical world. Rather, they’re manifestations of an ancestral cosmology passed down by Wixárika shamans over generations.

In a sense, it’s religious art, but instead of Christ or Buddha, the symbology is of deities such as deer, corn, and peyote cacti. And as the Wixárika language didn’t start becoming a written language until the mid-20th

century, the art also serves as a communication tool, a form of storytelling.

It’s very skilled work, and some Wixárika artists, such as Santos de la Torre and José Benítez Sánchez, have reached international status. A piece of Wixárika art isn’t just a meaningful souvenir from a trip to Puerto Vallarta and the Riviera Nayarit; it could be your own portal into a life-changing vision of the universe.



Shelly Rivoli/Alamy Stock Photo (Huichol art)

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DAY

3

► The Tail of the Whale, chocolate clams, and sea turtle hatchlings on the Riviera Nayarit

After enjoying a room-service breakfast of coffee and tropical fruit on my terrace, I hit the road, headed northwest to **The St. Regis Punta Mita Resort**. One of the most breathtaking peninsulas in North America, Punta Mita is surrounded almost entirely by the bay and the ocean (generally speaking, Punta Mita refers to the entire peninsula, and Punta de Mita to a nearby village), with most

of the land on it taken up by the St. Regis and Four Seasons resorts, plus the two golf courses they share.

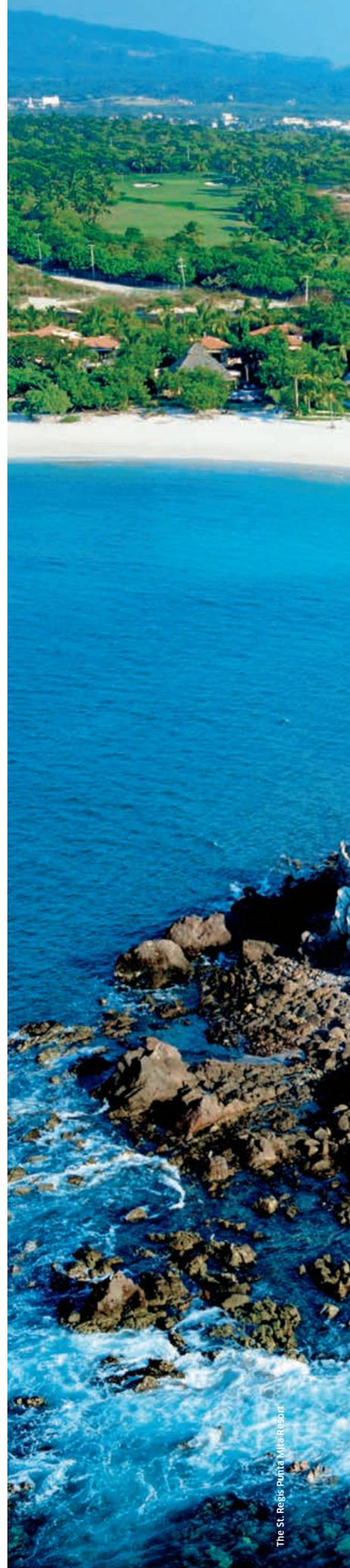
It's early for the welcome drink I'm offered in the Altamira Lobby, but I can't resist celebrating when I see the ridiculous panorama of palms and pools cascading down to the ocean. Any number of water activities are on offer, but even I, a non-golfer, have heard of the **Punta Mita Golf Club**, and I want to check out the fairways for myself.

In effect, the two adjoining courses here (the Pacifico borders the ocean; the more challenging Bahía, the bay) amount to a private national park, with some of the best views of my whole trip. My golf pro, Luis Ituarte, says that some call it "the Pebble Beach of Mexico," and he notes that it's entirely sustainable in terms of water use, thanks to treated wastewater and collected rainwater.

The scene-stealer is the hole on the Pacifico course known as the Tail of the Whale, a 181-yard par-3 whose water hazard is, well, the ocean. It's an optional hole located on a black-rock island, said to be the world's only natural island green, and it is accessible only at low mid-tide. (You can take your initial tee shot at high tide and return later to steer your cart across the ocean floor and putt it in.) After a few failed drives into the Pacific, I cart over anyway, for a quick scenic round-trip.

I tell myself that my golf failings are because I'm so distracted by the setting, even if I don't see any actual whale tails out in the ocean. (Their migration won't bring them here until December.) Anyway, I decide to stow the clubs and explore the coastline. The Riviera Nayarit stretches from the northern part of Puerto Vallarta to the port of San Blas, about 90 miles by car. Each coastal town has a distinct personality, and while

The famed Tail of the Whale hole at the Punta Mita Golf Club's Pacifico course



The St. Regis Punta Mita Resort





From above: the beach at The St. Regis Punta Mita Resort; sea turtle hatchlings crawl toward the ocean

I won't get far today, I'm taking notes for my return trip.

First stop: lunch. The long and winding dirt road to **Litibu Grill**, located outside the tiny village of Higuera Blanca, doesn't instill much confidence, but the reward is well worth it. This hidden seaside gem lets you swim in the ocean or laze in hammocks between courses of giant charcoal-grilled chocolate clams (so named for the color of their shells), fresh-caught fish, and octopus with spicy potatoes and olive salsa. Dog lovers take note: The host/mascot is an amiable, human-size Great Dane that adds to the restaurant's mellow charm.

Although I'm tempted to spend the whole day on the beach, I manage to get myself up the road to the town of San Francisco, aka San Pancho. Considered the cultural capital of the Riviera Nayarit, it's

a colorful *pueblo* that offers as much inland as it does on the lively white-sand beach. I pop into **Entreamigos**, a community center that has a library, gallery, eco-design center, and even a children's



Big Cheese Photo LLC / Alamy Stock Photo (turtles)

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From left: *chochoyotes* (corn dumplings) at Carolina; sidewalk restaurants in Sayulita



circus school. The gallery sells crafts made locally from recycled materials, and I pick up a few wild-eyed stuffed octopuses made from bedsheets.

Fifteen minutes down the road lies the town of Sayulita, where about 2,000 full-timers enjoy the arc-shaped Playa

Sayulita and a laid-back vibe that's equal parts hippie and hipster. It's a good place for surfers of all skill levels (the waves get bigger as you move north on the beach), with the prime season going from December to April.

I've heard that Playa Sayulita is one of the beaches where Olive Ridley sea turtles lay their eggs, and that "turtle releases"—ushering the hatched babies into the sea—are a fun sunset activity. I head over to **Campamento Tortuguero Sayulita**, a volunteer turtle protection and conservation organization, to learn more. It turns out that not all turtle releases are created equally. To suit tourist demand, some places put turtle eggs in sand-filled "hot boxes" that allow for a faster incubation period, potentially rushing turtles that may not be sufficiently mature to move to the sea. The boxes may also create more females than males, since turtle sex is temperature-dependent (warmer sands

produce females), which is a problem, as there's already a shortage of males, in part due to climate change.

The folks at Campamento Tortuguero Sayulita, meanwhile, relocate nests from all over the beach to protect them from poaching, predators, and unintentional human damage. They incubate the

"I'm thrilled to help usher dozens of these little 3-inch babies to the sea."

eggs naturally in beach sand until they hatch and the turtles can return to the sea on their own. It's estimated that the turtles from only about one out of every 1,000 eggs will reach reproductive maturity, making work like this all the more crucial, and I'm thrilled to help usher dozens of these little 3-inch babies to

WHERE TO STAY

Casa Kimberly

Aside from the obvious historical and romantic allure, staying in Elizabeth Taylor's former love nest comes with a great many perks. Each of the nine suites at this villa is appointed in a mix of modern and colonial styles (and plenty of Liz-inspired art), along with bathrooms the size of a New York City apartment. The rooftop Iguana restaurant has some of the best views in the city, and the Iguana Tequila Bar offers an impressive selection of the area's best spirits.

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The St. Regis Punta Mita Resort

One of the two resorts that cover most of the dramatic Punta Mita peninsula, the St. Regis is the ideal combination of scenery, service, and amenities: three pools, six restaurants, an on-site Remède Spa, a kids club, and, perhaps most notably, two famed Jack Nicklaus-designed golf courses.

The property also offers a perfect location for alternating between the action of Puerto Vallarta and the tranquility of the Riviera Nayarit.

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the sea—even knowing the sad fate that awaits most of them.

Walking back to the car, I pick up some souvenir *raicilla* (a type of mezcal typical of this region) at **Sayulita Wine Shop** and drive back to the St. Regis for dinner at **Carolina**, a fine-dining restaurant that attracts local foodies as much as hotel guests. Chef Miguel Soltero Rincón puts a spin on classic Mexican cuisine, sourcing ingredients as close to home as possible, including an extensive list of Mexican wines. I start with a crab-salad tostada topped with oat-crusted soft-shell crab and served in a bowl of tomato broth. Grilled lobster comes with a “taco” of chorizo-stuffed plantain. For dessert, there’s an ice cream of *totomoxtle*, or burnt corn husk, which has a not-unpleasant flavor of hot dog.

Geomorphologists believe that Banderas Bay is roughly where the southern tip of Baja California broke off the North American Plate over 5 million years ago, creating the Baja

California Peninsula and the Gulf of California. Effectively, it means that Los Cabos and Puerto Vallarta were once the same place. In our current era of seismic environmental shifts, there’s something reassuring about how Vallarta has preserved its biodiversity and physical beauty even as it has become the most progressive city in Mexico. On my suite’s terrace, I ponder plate tectonics and sip a nightcap of organic Mexican rosé from the Solar Fortún winery while perusing real estate listings online. After all, whale season is soon, and they say the rainy season is beautiful...

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WITH

Michael J. Fox

In a new book, the actor and Parkinson's research activist shares how his optimism overcame its toughest test yet



If there's one thing you should know about Michael J. Fox, it's that he's an optimist. But when he calls one cool September morning to talk about his new book, *No Time Like the Future* (Flatiron), he's worried. His 12-year-old, 110-pound "Great Dane-ish" dog, Gus, is supposed to be released from the vet today, after complications arising from the removal of a tumor from his spleen. Fox, who's 59 but retains a Marty McFly boyishness, loves this dog—so much that for his 54th birthday, his wife, Tracy Pollan, had a bench in New York's Central Park, where they go for morning walks, dedicated to "Mike Fox and Gus, True New Yorkers." "I'm realizing that however short our time is here, my dog's time is shorter," he says. "It just seems so unfair."

It would be easy to argue that Fox hasn't been dealt a fair hand either. In 2018, he also had a tumor removed (from his spine), and after the dangerous, complicated surgery he had to relearn how to walk—a basic act that's already a challenge due to the Parkinson's disease he has lived with for nearly 30 years. When he finally recovered, after months of physical therapy, he fell and shattered his left arm, and had to start again from scratch. The experience tested Fox's trademark positivity (see his first two books, *Lucky Man* and *Always Looking Up*), but he emerged stronger than ever and full of gratitude—for his family, his acting career, the impact

of the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, and for good ol' Gus. So he wrote a book about it.

The subtitle of your book is "An Optimist Considers Mortality." But you note that some day you'll survive yourself in reruns, so I suppose you have some level of immortality. Does this make you happy?

I don't know if it makes me happy. It doesn't make me *unhappy* [laughs]. I don't think that's important to me, but I like that our footprints remain. And in time, no matter how high up on the beach

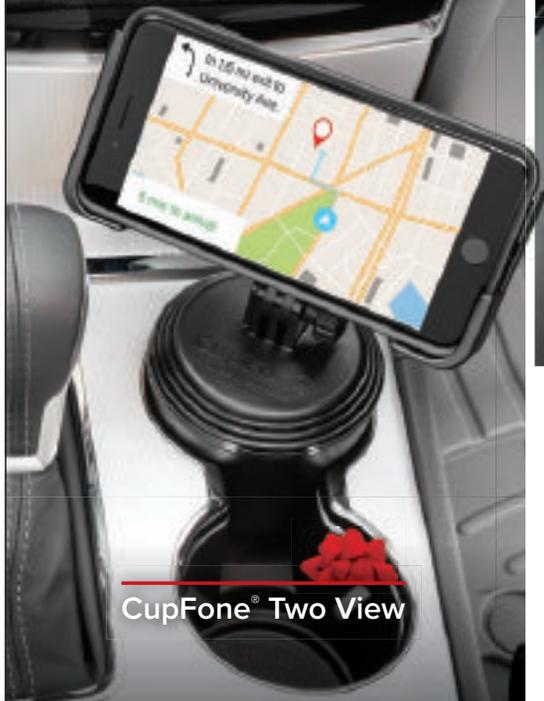
those footprints are, the tide will eventually reach them. When Flatiron and I first started talking about my ideas for this book, I was talking about fear and loss and all this stuff. And they said to me, "Like mortality?" And I thought, it does all tie into mortality. It ties into this experience we're living now—we know it's finite, and we want to get everything we can out of it and be our truest self. So I started taking a few notes and exploring a little bit. I can't type and I can't write reliably anymore, so I dictate to Nelle [Fortenberry], my producing partner, and she writes it. But very quickly *this* thing happened—this, this...



Fox with his family at the Michael J. Fox Foundation's gala in 2019

Mark Seiger (portrait); Jamie McCarthy/Getty Images (family)

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William H. Forman Jr., JD
Attorney at Law

Formally retired from the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Forman achieved the role of judge advocate for the international law division. Since then, he has served as an associate in private practice and a professor at the Naval War College.



Mary P. Garrahan-Masters
Gerontology Researcher (Ret.)

Ms. Garrahan-Masters has achieved more than two decades' experience in the field of medical administration. She was the social services director for Dowden Nursing Home and director of admissions for the St. Francis Country House.



Pam Hall
Environmental Consulting Firm Executive
Normandeau Associates Inc.

Ms. Hall's career with Normandeau spans 50 years, 32 as CEO. An industry trailblazer for women, she grew and diversified the company to achieve a national presence. She is passionate about corporate social responsibility and volunteerism.



From top: Fox and Christopher Lloyd in *Back to the Future*; playing guitar with Joan Jett at the Michael J. Fox Foundation gala in 2018

Pandemic?

Yeah, pandemic. And so we were doing FaceTime. And I'm writing about my life and my experiences, and I'm quarantining with my family. It's this whole dystopian world, but on our level we're having a celebration, an affirmation of family. And then there are pictures of people with their faces pressed up against the glass trying to see their loved ones who are expiring on the other side, and they can't get at them. And that's the most intense, searing pain that can happen. And you say, "How can these two things exist at the same time? How can they both be the result of the same agent?" I didn't want to jump ahead to that in the book, because it wasn't a part of the story. But I did an epilogue where I talked about that. It's the same feeling—we all feel like our lives have been altered by something we didn't do, something unexpected and completely inexplicable. Yet we adjust and hopefully we'll get to the point where we think the needle is more on the plus side than the negative side.

Your book is shaped by your own health problems over the past couple of years. But somehow you manage to stay upbeat. Where does your optimism stem from?

I always kind of homed in on my grandmother, who was Irish, from Belfast. She always believed in me. I was a small kid, odd and strange and into writing and drawing and all this stuff that most of the kids in my family weren't into. And people would worry about me and say, "What's going to happen to Mike?" and she'd say

[adopts an old lady voice], "Oh don't you worry about Michael, he'll be fine. He'll be famous." She didn't want me to be called Mike; she wanted me to be Michael. "He'll be famous and everyone will know him as Michael." We always put a lot of stock in her as a psychic, and she predicted all of these things to happen, and they came to

"The things that kept me positive were slipping away, and I had to find them again."

pass. That was always stunning to me: that she believed in me to the extent that she could say I was going to do something that would be in the public eye and people would know me as Michael. So I've just always been

a self-identified optimist.

But it's one thing to say you're an optimist and another thing to live it.

What was weird about this sort of crisis period that I went through is that that really came into question, and it was such a fundamental part of who I was, a fundamental part of how I presented myself to people and how I persuaded other people to adopt that point of view in dealing with something very difficult. And all of a sudden I felt this tremendous responsibility. I had presented myself as this thing, and then when push comes to shove... I was facing problems that were certainly arduous, but on the misery index not going near what some people experience—loss of children or lung cancer or just awful things. Although, it was *bad*. I mean, it was losing my ability to walk and altering my lifestyle drastically. But it just became this period of time where I went, "Who am I to say optimism is an answer for everything?" And then I tried to observe my life, and what did make me optimistic? And I realized it was my gratitude that made me optimistic. With gratitude, optimism



Photo 12/Alamy Stock Photo (movie still); Jamie McCarthy/Getty Images (with Joan Jett)

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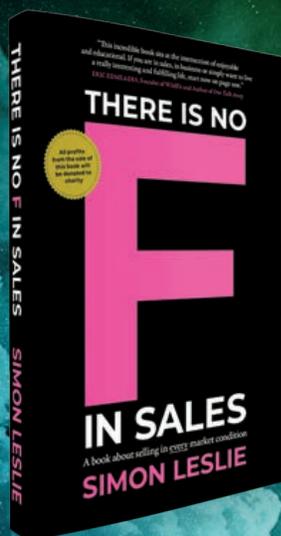
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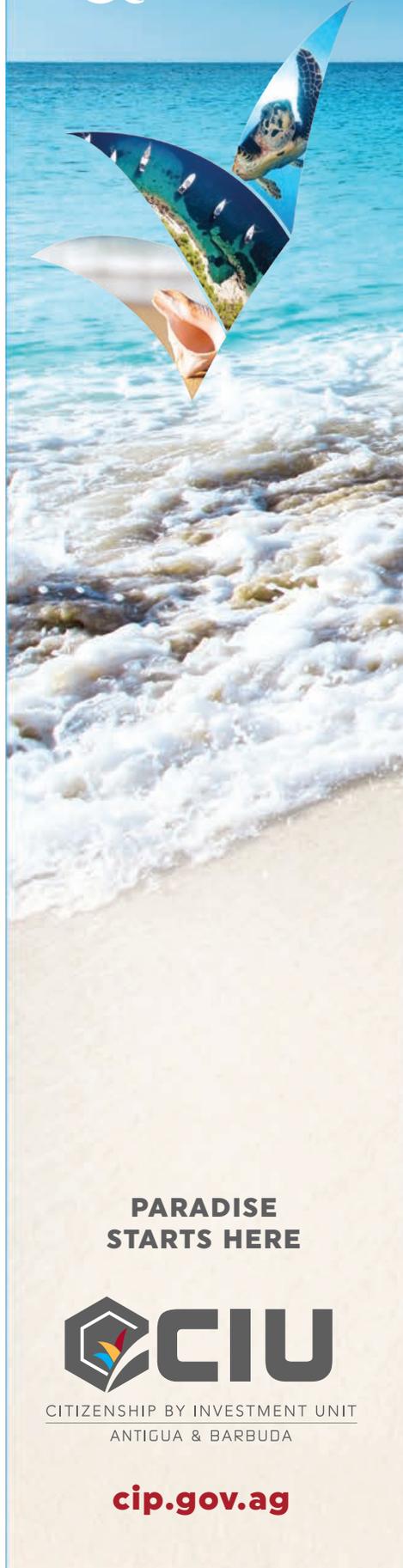
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The Hemi Q&A with Michael J. Fox

is sustainable. If you have gratitude, you have things to be positive about.

I remember one day a couple of years ago coming into my building and saying, “How are you?” to a temp worker at the front desk. Instead of just saying “good,” he said, “I’m grateful.” And that had a profound effect on me.

Yeah: “How are you?” “I’m getting more than I’m putting out.” I’ve always felt that way. So when I got into that place where I didn’t feel that way—where I felt like there was more being taken from me than I was giving back—that was odd for me. My whole balance, the things that kept me floating, kept me positive, were slipping away, and I had to find them again. I was thinking this morning that with illness and affliction, they always want you to be the patient first and not *yourself* first. So it’s kind of a battle between who you are and what these imposed maladies want you to be. And I was struggling to stay on the *me* side of the ledger.

You write about how this dark period was fueled by fear. Was that period of time scarier than when you were initially diagnosed with Parkinson’s?

Yeah, because when I was initially diagnosed, it was just confusing. It’s like someone said, “You’re an aardvark.” OK, I’m an aardvark now, what does that mean? I eat ants and I’m gonna set out across the desert or plain or wherever aardvarks live? And so it was odd, and it took a while for Tracy and me to grow into it and see the disease slowly progress. I liken it to being stuck in the middle of Fifth Avenue and you hear a bus coming. You don’t know where it is and how fast it’s going and when it’s going to get there, but the bus is going to come one day and hit you. With the spinal thing I had removed, we knew it was there, but we were waiting for it to do something, which it did; it started to bleed and then we had to go into “go” mode and get rid of it. But the thing with the broken arm, while it was certainly the least serious of the three things, it was the most jarring in terms of its violence and its suddenness. It was just, *bam!* Everything I had labored through the first part of the year was gone, and I had to start all over again. And I was just a baby about it [laughs]. For the first time in my life, I really felt sorry for myself. It was discombobulating.



BY THE NUMBERS

5



Primetime Emmy Awards
(plus 13 more nominations)

2015

Year Marty McFly jumps forward to in *Back to the Future II*

29

Age at which he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease

\$1 BILLION

Amount the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research has funded in research programs

2011

Year he was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada

26

Number of times he uses the words “optimist” or “optimism” in his new book



7021

Address on Hollywood Boulevard of his Walk of Fame star

32

Years he has been married to Tracy Pollan, who played his girlfriend on *Family Ties*



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Growing up with a dad in the military, do you think that made you more stoic, more able to accept Parkinson's and your other health issues?

Yeah, absolutely. There's a real stoicism, like, "That's all you got? I can take that." Here's a thing my dad would say, and take this the right way; it's hyperbole, but it's funny and shows his sense of humor. Like if you're eating food and you say, "I don't like it," he'd say, "You don't get hit for not liking it, you get hit for not eating it." And he never hit me. But the idea is, it doesn't concern me what your *feeling* is about it; it's what you're going to *do*. And you have to face things as they come.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Michael J. Fox Foundation. You've funded \$1 billion in Parkinson's research. What are you most proud of in regard to the foundation's work?

One of the factors that caused me to start it and leave *Spin City* in the prime of my life—while I still had the energy and the strength to do it—was there's an identification with Parkinson's that it's an older person's disease, but there's such a large percentage of patients that are young-onset. And I thought those people are still able to be dynamic in their age and their situation and what they can contribute and how they can participate. So [we created] a Parkinson's community. And that was important to me, because it was a disease you could hide and not tell people about. I hid it for seven years. And a lot of people hide it because it's so misunderstood and people have a natural aversion to movement disorders, and ignorant people imitate it. There's a stigma. But we get people out and involved in the community. We have Team Fox—people run marathons, they climb mountains, they ride bikes, they do all this stuff to raise money, and it brings in the community; it makes them active participants in their own rescue. We're the people who are going to raise a billion dollars to help ourselves.

How does it feel when people tell you you're an inspiration?

Ahhhhh ... I mean ... It's nice! I'm so lucky I found something that works for me. At the same time, it doesn't

Fox as lawyer Louis Canning on CBS All Access's *The Good Fight*

make me feel any obligation, like, "Oh, I gotta do this for those folks." I gotta do this, and if it inspires people, that's great. I'm not like, "Win one for the Gipper," you know? I want to win one for us.

I was really happy to see you return as the smarmy lawyer Louis Canning on *The Good Fight* this spring. Because everyone in the world loves you, are you drawn to characters like Canning or Dwight on *Denis Leary's Rescue Me* or even the fictionalized version of yourself from *Curb Your Enthusiasm* because they're unlikable?

It's so nice for me to have the opportunity to play those kinds of characters. I love being Louis Canning a lot, and

"The force and the power of the people around me is what saved me."

I loved to do that thing with *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. The thing with Denis was really fun. I don't know what he was thinking hiring me—it's such a stretch, such a different role for me. I wrote in the book, "Alex Keaton, we hardly knew ye," because it was so different. We did the first scene, and Denis sees this guy in front of him who he thinks is Mike, and I'm this nasty, mean, drunk, stoned s***head, and it just threw him. He didn't come up to me between scenes because

he said, "I didn't know who you were!" [Laughs.] And it was just so *fun*. This [character] is a guy who was an extreme athlete and he had been at a hockey game with his brother, and driving back they got hit by a drunk driver, and his brother was killed and he was paralyzed. And he made a choice on some level to drown himself in drugs and sexual addiction and all that stuff, and I realized I could relate to that because that was a choice I *didn't* make. I made a choice to go the other way, but the same forces were against me. For some reason I lucked out—and this is what I try to get across in the book: The force and the power of the people around me is what saved me.

I showed my 8-year-old son *Back to the Future* last week, and it blew his mind. If you could go back in time just to watch a moment from your life—not change it, because, as Doc says, we don't want to mess with the space-time continuum—what would you pick?

There are ones that are seared in my mind: the first time I met Tracy, when I saw my children being born, the first audience taping of the pilot of *Family Ties*. But I don't know if I want to go back and see those again, because they're so etched in my brain. I think it would be some lost moment: on the bus coming home from skating on a Friday night with my friends in fifth grade. A moment in a hockey locker room when I was 12 and I'd scored a goal. Just one of those little lost moments. They may be informative or helpful or solve some mystery that that moment held, an answer to some question I didn't know I had. Like Scrooge and the ghost, taking me where I need to go.



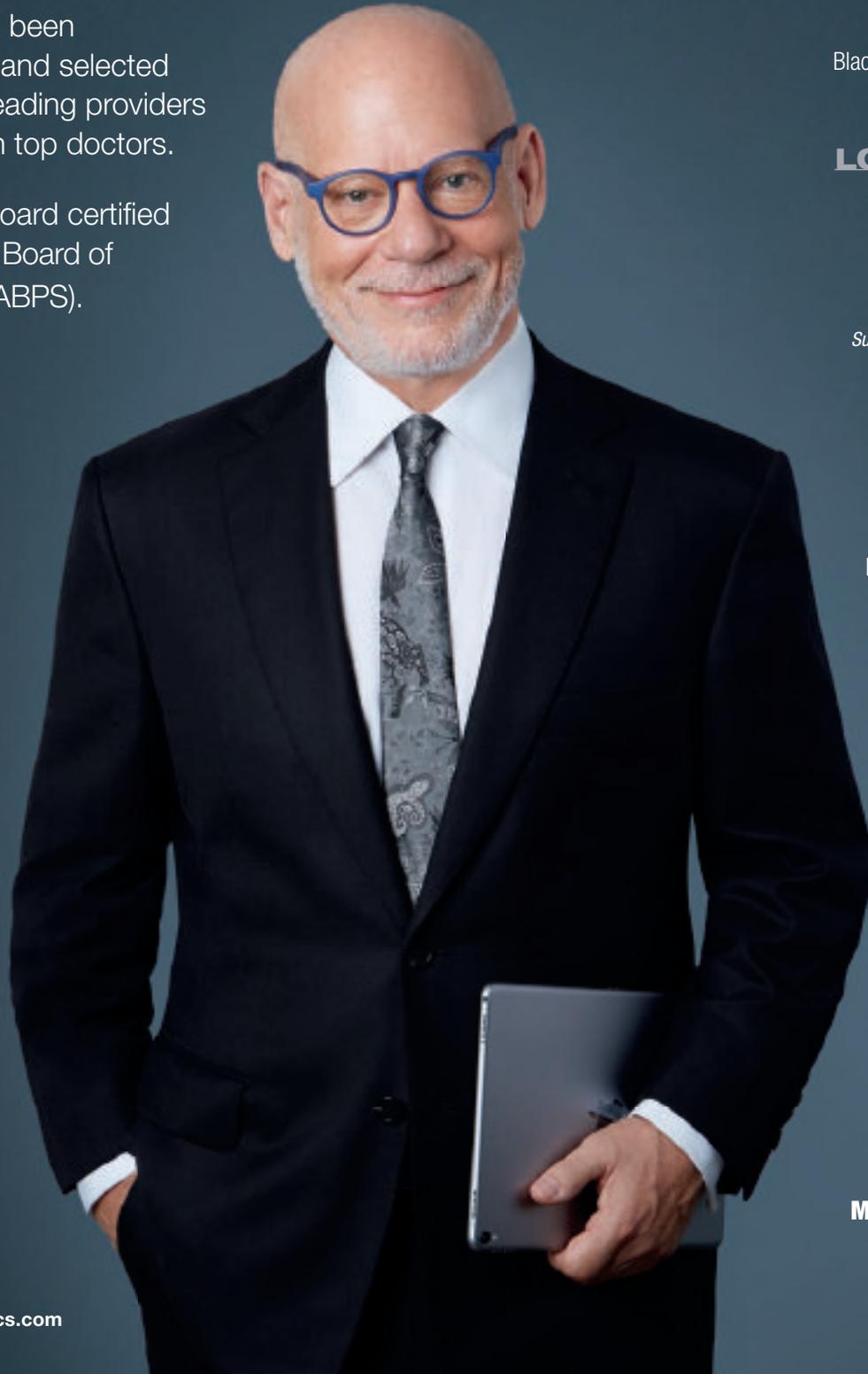
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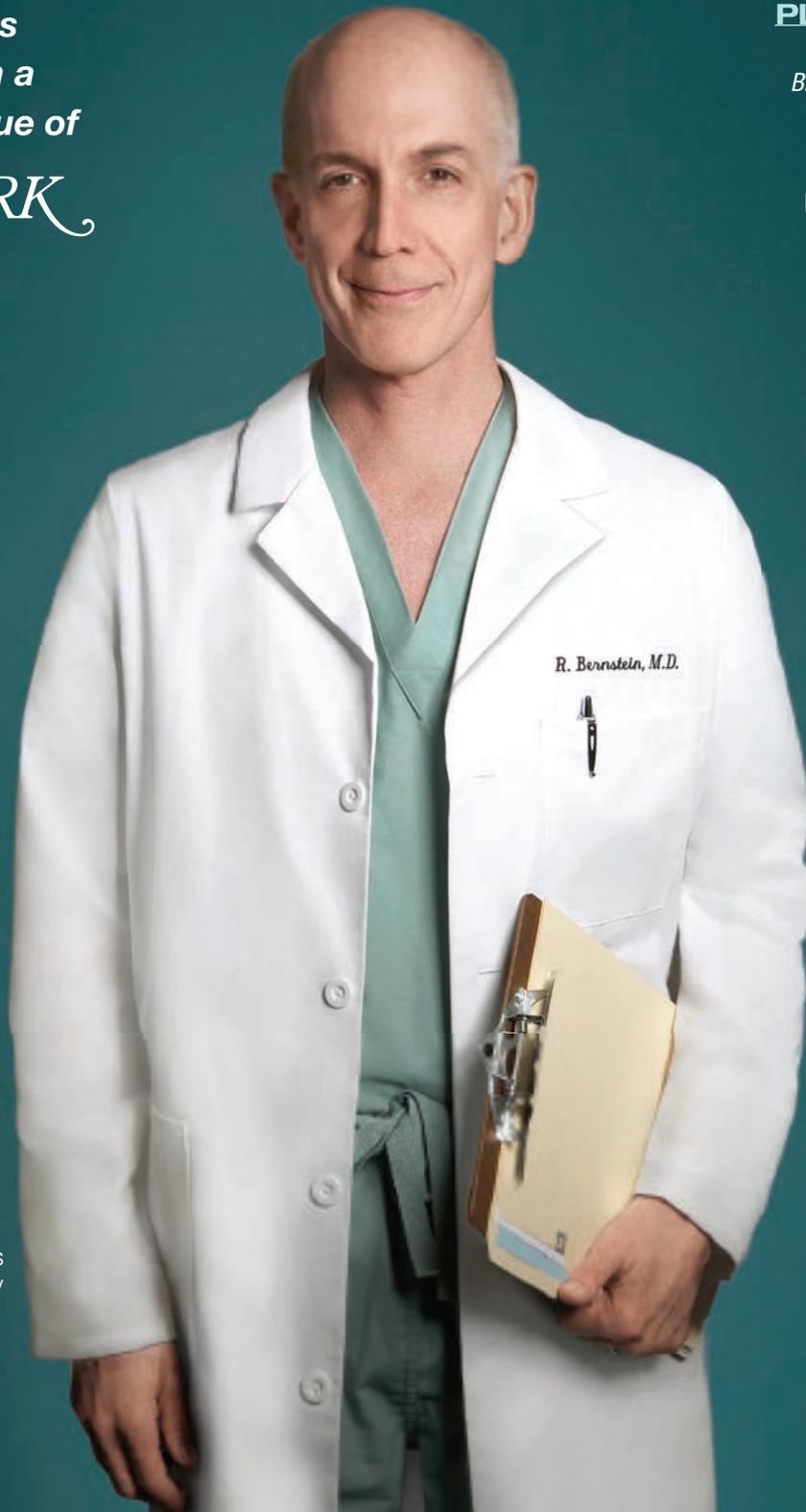
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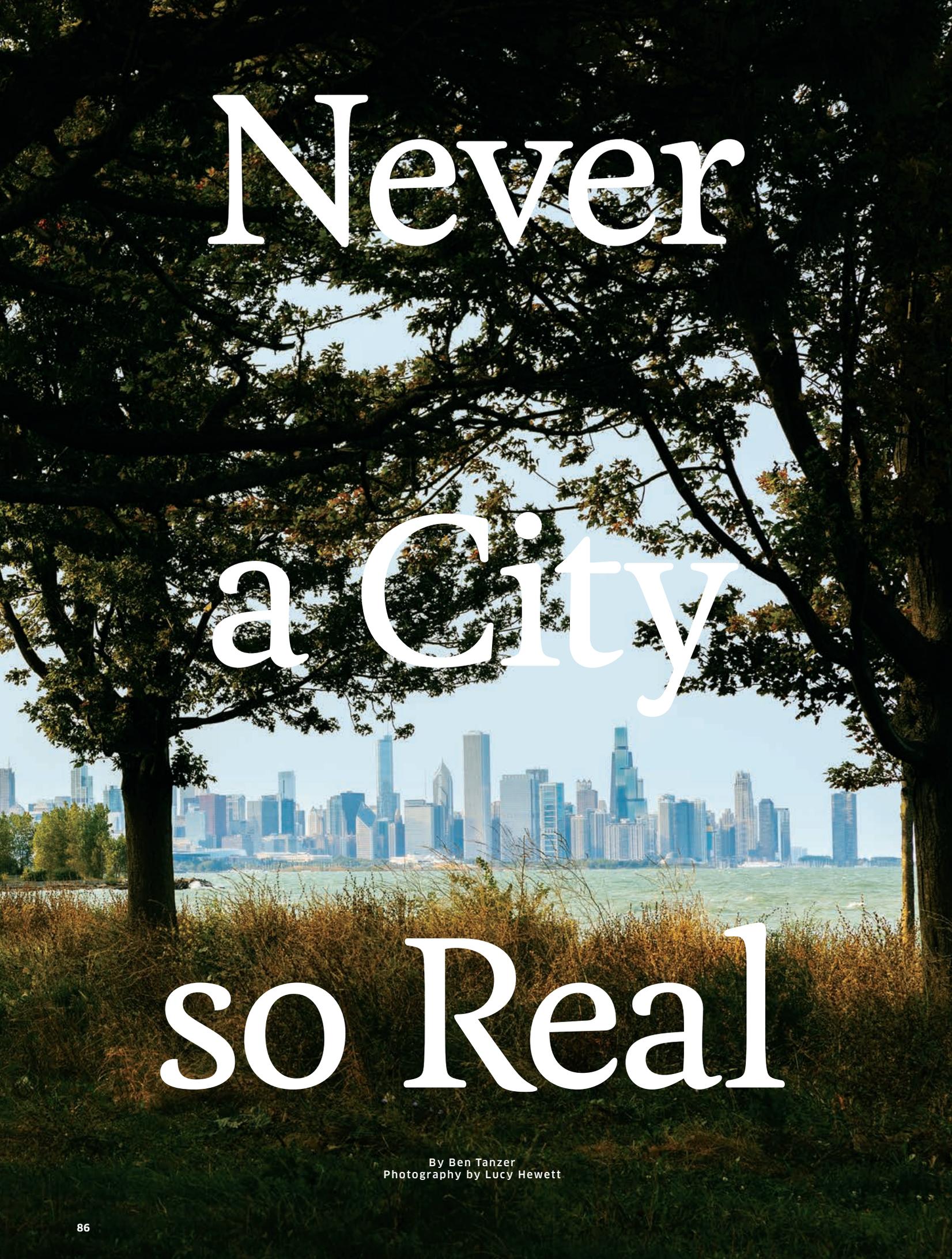
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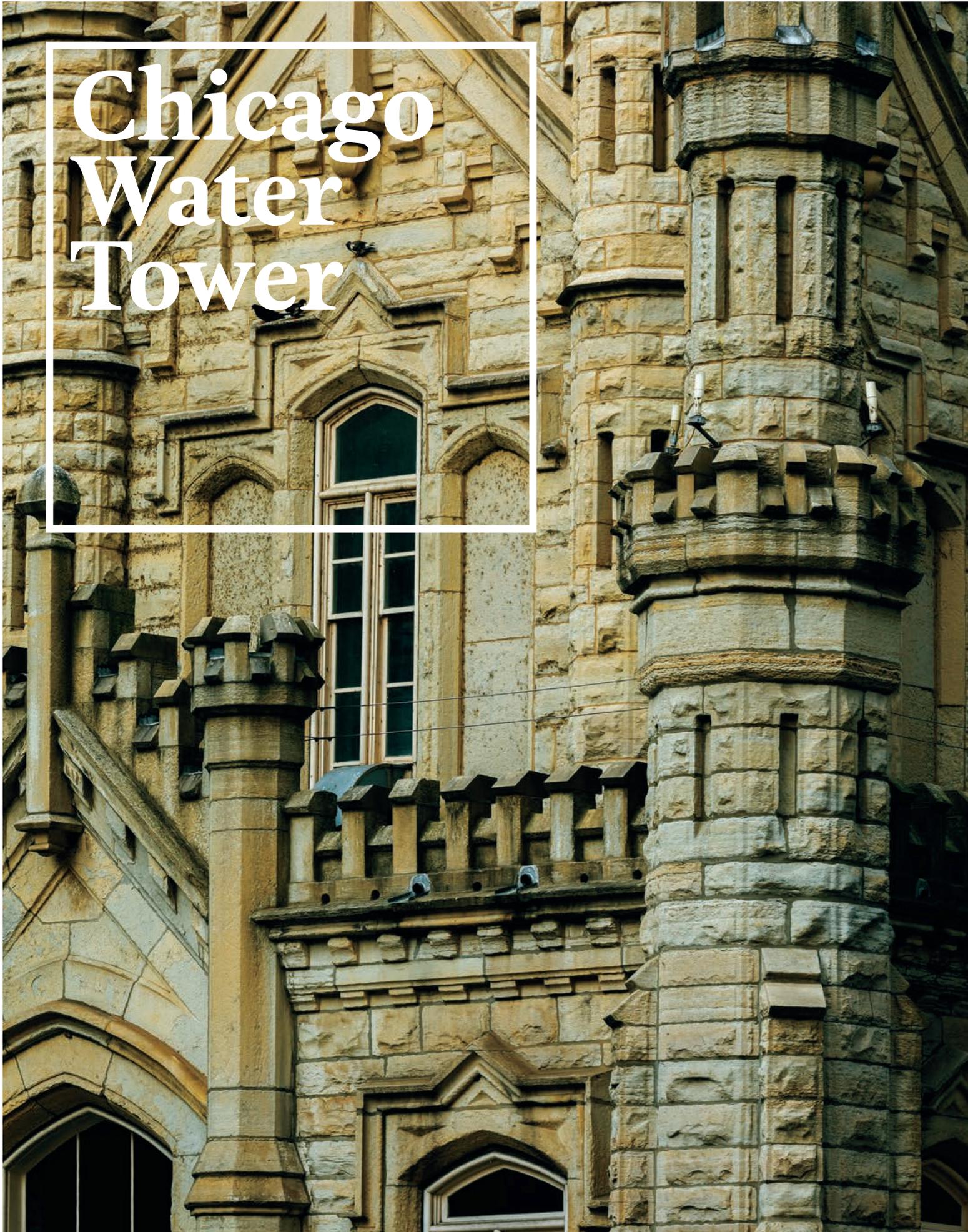
Never
a City
so Real

By Ben Tanzer
Photography by Lucy Hewett

A writer pays homage to six landmarks that define the architectural audacity and resilient spirit of Chicago

The great author Nelson Algren wrote of Chicago that “once you’ve come to be part of this particular patch, you’ll never love another. Like loving a woman with a broken nose, you may well find lovelier lovelies. But never a lovely so real.” In the 25 years since I came here from New York City, I’ve attended graduate school at the University of Chicago, worked in the fields of HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and child abuse prevention, written eight books, and built a family. In that time, I’ve found this city to be as real as any place I’ve known, and I’ve duly come to love it. Even when Chicago falls backward, the city is constantly seeking a way to refresh, rediscover, and rebuild itself. This spirit is perhaps most evident in the city’s great buildings. This summer, as the pandemic lingered and the streets remained unsettled, I visited a few of these architectural marvels, hoping to reaffirm my connection with my adopted hometown. Algren also wrote that Chicagoans “all had hustler’s blood,” and as I wandered around, I was thrilled to discover that remains true.

Chicago Water Tower





Despite its long history, Chicago can still find itself defined by an event that occurred nearly 150 years ago: the Great Fire of 1871. The fire, allegedly started by Mrs. O’Leary’s cow, ignited on the southwest side of the city and for 30 hours headed north. When all was said and done, several hundred people were dead and thousands of buildings had been destroyed. But not the Chicago Water Tower.

The Water Tower was new then. The city had erected a 135-foot-tall iron standpipe to address its water supply needs, then decided to hide it in an ornate Gothic Revival castle that was constructed

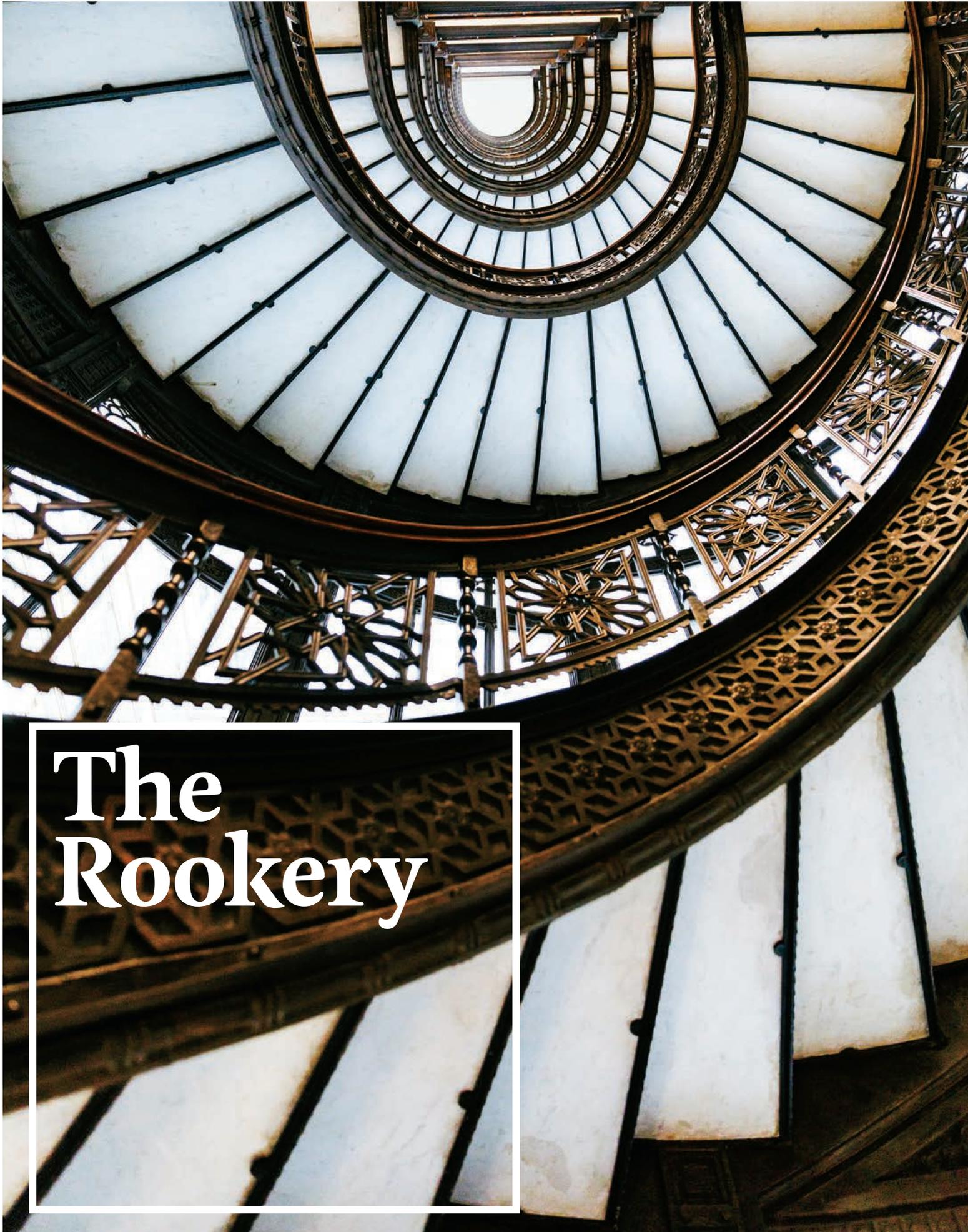
Above: the Water Tower, surrounded by its modern neighbors; **opposite page:** the building’s Gothic Revival facade

between 1867 and 1869 by the prolific local architect William Boyington. The fairytale castle he designed now stands as an ode to Chicago’s fantastic aspirations, as well as an ongoing rallying cry that you won’t find on any plaque but that is still integral to the city’s DNA all these years later: “We will rise from the ashes.”

It’s not clear to me how many people are aware of this, however, as I stand in front of the yellow Joliet limestone tower today, then stroll around the park at its base. Instead, the landmark feels like an afterthought lost in the muddle of more contemporary spots, such as the Water

Tower Place mall, on the retail-mad avenue known as the Magnificent Mile. People of all shapes, sizes, and addresses rush through the park, shopping bags and briefcases in hand, children in tow, heads down, thoughts elsewhere.

We live in stark times. No one knows what Chicago will look like when the pandemic is over. Yet the sight of the Water Tower serves as a comforting reminder that the city will surely rise from this disaster as well. With all this top of mind, I want to yell, “Stop! Catch your breath and look! Do you people realize how important this building is to Chicago’s definition of itself?” But I don’t. Who, amid their daily hustle, would have the time to listen?



The Rookery



The volunteer tour guide sweeps her arms to indicate the light, space, and grandeur that is The Rookery Light Court lobby. (Yes, despite so many places being closed, public tours of The Rookery continue.) “After the fire,” she says, “people came here to make their name.”

Like many others, I came to what Algren called the “City on the Make” to make a name for myself, to work in the kind of buildings I had only read about. Places where decisions were made and people pulled the levers that make the world turn and tilt. My path started at the University of Chicago and led me through an array of offices around the Loop, and while it never brought me to a desk inside The Rookery, this building embodies both my aspirations and those of the city at large.

Designed in 1888 by leading architects Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn Root, The Rookery arose from the aftermath of the Great Fire as a clarion call for bespoke brilliance, a demand for the city to be recognized as a place where greatness could be achieved.

Its outside is a celebration of both historical design, with Moorish and Venetian influences, and contemporary ingenuity, with load-bearing walls and a “floating raft foundation” to support its great size. Yet it’s the dynamic two-story lobby that truly causes one to gasp.

A swirling, incongruous *mélange* of *Alice in Wonderland*, Dalí, and Prairie Style architecture, the lobby dazzles as much

Above: The Rookery’s ornate Light Court lobby; **opposite page:** the spiraling oriel staircase

today as it did in 1905, when it was refreshed and augmented by Frank Lloyd Wright. It is a mix of metal, urns, dazzling light fixtures, white marble adorned with gold patterns, floors that shift from mosaic tiles to glass blocks, and a twisting, surreal oriel staircase connecting the ground level and the mezzanine. All of this is captured under a glass and iron roof that provides a fantastical leaping-off point to the offices above. This is a space that demands greatness from its admirers—as I have found that the city has demanded greatness from me. Chicago insisted that I, too, create something from nothing. After all these years, I find that it still does.

875 North Michigan Avenue

The 100-story,
X-braced former
John Hancock Center

It was my grandmother who introduced me to the John Hancock Center. Or so I thought. She worked as a secretary for John Hancock in New York City, and she once gave me a commemorative paperweight she had been awarded by the insurance company's president during a visit in the 1950s. The paperweight was Lucite, with a bronze coin embedded inside it, and on one side a building that in my memory was always the Hancock Center in Chicago.

It turns out the building in that paperweight wasn't the Hancock Center—it was the Berkeley Building (aka the Old John Hancock Building) in Boston. Even so, for me, 875 North Michigan Avenue, as the Hancock Center is now known, will always be Chicago's grandest building. In a city that is constantly remaking itself, this skyscraper, which was designed by Bruce Graham and Fazlur Khan of the architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and completed in 1969, can get lost, despite its 1,128-foot height, in discussions of what's new and next. It's old-school and elegant, existing somewhere between the Water Tower and The Rookery and whatever is yet to come. Staring up at it from the bottom, I get lost in its X-shaped, crisscrossing, lattice-like steel beams (also known as "X-bracing"), which minimize the need for internal support columns. The tapered tubular structural system allowed architects to think more expansively about how skyscrapers could be shaped, how much floor space could be preserved inside, and just how far into the sky buildings could climb.

There is also the rush of zipping toward the clouds on the elevator, ears popping, and emerging on the 95th floor at the Signature Room. The Signature Lounge, one floor higher, charges no cover and offers the chance to have a drink with views of, well, everything: east over Lake Shore Drive, Navy Pier, and the lake, which seems to extend forever; north toward Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Wrigleyville, and beyond; south, through the Loop's densely clustered buildings of various shapes and heights; and west, where the world slowly flattens to the plains.

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Promontory Point

Do we sometimes need to look back so that we can look forward?

I'm ruminating on this as I approach Promontory Point, located at the south end of Burnham Park (named after the architect of The Rookery, who was also the designer of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and the 1909 Plan of Chicago) on the city's South Side.

Even if I don't find my way to the South Side often anymore, my Chicago journey started here. For two years I traveled to Hyde Park from where I lived on the North Side to attend classes at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration, a sleek building designed by the renowned modern architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The South Side, as I discovered then, is often overlooked when we talk about what makes Chicago special—a function of who is allowed to tell the

story of this great city, something I—a white, cisgender, middle-aged male author of privilege, connections, and access—am well aware of as I write this.

Promontory Point, however, offers a space for all. Its man-made peninsula juts out into Lake Michigan, both following and creating the sine curve undulations of the shore beneath the layered rocks known as “council rings.” These are covered with groups of people of all sizes, cultures, and races—as befits life on the South Side and amid the academic environs of Hyde Park—jumping from rock to rock, chattering and picnicking.

This park, which allows for both social interaction and solitary contemplation of nature, was designed in 1937 by Alfred Caldwell, following the 1933–34 World's Fair,

with support from the Works Progress Administration—a program that provided work to my grandfather and stability for his family during the Depression. I wonder, will similar policies focused on public good arise from our current moment? So far, I've heard no aspirational discussions of how public works can support the unemployed or build things both great and necessary during this period of loss and fear. Yet, to look back, here and now, is to know that investment in community during times of retraction and destruction

pays rich dividends, both in the present and the future. It involves believing in what might be and looking beyond the immediate state of the world—something Chicagoans know better than most.

Lake Michigan washes up on Promontory Point





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Nichols Bridgeway



The Nichols Bridgeway exists on a plane all its own, seeming to defy gravity. Designed by famed Italian architect Renzo Piano and completed in 2009, it carries pedestrians from Millennium Park to the Modern Wing of the Art Institute of Chicago (another Piano creation). It also stands as the most recent example of how Chicago views itself: forward-thinking and never settling for fly-over state clichés about how we prefer the bland, easy, or simple—not when something more celebratory is possible.

As with the Water Tower, The Rookery, and the Hancock building before it, the Bridgeway emerged from the need to solve a practical problem and the desire to do it in a fantastic way that no one had tried

before. In this case, the question was, How does one move between two worlds—Millennium Park and the Modern Wing—while avoiding the traffic and crowds of Michigan Avenue? The answer: a minimalist, freestanding, anti-slip, heated piece of floating public art.

Aside from its practical and symbolic significance, the Bridgeway also serves to showcase the city, with sublime views of the avenue, the lake (always the lake), and the park. The park itself is a reclamation project, overseen by the second Mayor Daley, that refreshed a once mostly deserted and decrepit urban space by introducing Wrigley Square; the

sculptor Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate*, aka "The Bean"; Jay Pritzker Pavilion, Frank Gehry's mind-bending band shell; Lurie Garden, a veritable oasis beneath the Bridgeway; and *Crown Fountain*, artist Jaume Plensa's pair of 50-foot glass block towers that bookend a shallow reflecting pool and project video portraits of a range of Chicago denizens for all to see.

While it may be a tad on-the-nose to point out that bridges make connections, the Bridgeway does indeed link two of Chicago's grandest institutions—and the modern, innovative way in which it does so once again invokes the city's bold vision of itself.

The Nichols
Bridgeway crosses
East Monroe Street,
with the Legacy at
Millennium Park
building in the
background

The B_Line



Like all things in this city, the B_Line illustrates the ways Chicago has been, and will be, an ongoing, explosive experiment in inequality and re-creation.

The original Hubbard Street Murals project began in 1971, under the direction of School of the Art Institute of Chicago graduate Ricardo Alonzo. As Chicagoans pushed back against racism, public art became entwined with social issues, and Alonzo was inspired to create a message focused on the environment and wildlife. He received city funding and employed students to create murals along the concrete train viaducts on Hubbard Street, west of the Fulton Street Market meat-packing district. In 1979, the funding ran out, and Alonzo took a job in Arizona.

Over the ensuing decades, the murals faded, despite several efforts to revive the project. Yet a living, breathing street-art museum was always there, waiting

to be rediscovered. With the Fulton Market District seeing tremendous growth—in the form of bars, hotels, and tech businesses—in recent years, B_Line chief curator and managing director Levar Hoard sought to update the murals as well.

Inspired by Miami's Wynwood Walls, in the last three years Hoard has brought in 75 artists from across the city and the world to share their visions. The viaduct walls now bear a swirling mass of styles and colors, with smiling moons, birds in many shapes and sizes, children with big ears and furry pajamas reminiscent of *Where the Wild Things Are*, portraits of Frida Kahlo, homages to Warhol and Lichtenstein, and much more. The participating artists, including Muebon, Afrokilla, Felipe Pantone,

The B_Line mural honoring frontline workers by Sam Kirk/Provoke Culture

Eva Carlini, and Sick Fisher, demand we pay attention to people and ideas we might otherwise ignore. Most relevant, perhaps, in our current moment is a brand-new mural by celebrated Chicago artist Sam Kirk that features four

frontline workers—Latino Union of Chicago's Veronica Sanchez, postal worker Carilla Hayden, domestic worker Maggie Zylinska, and school lunchroom manager Juan Burrell.

These works, both in their aspirations and their rootedness, remind us that while Chicago continues to face myriad challenges, it's a city where innovation, creativity, and authentic voices can bloom. A city where people of all backgrounds, and from all places, can make a name for themselves—when given the space and opportunity to do so.



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The Beasts of the Southern Wild



By Darrell Hartman

An angler gets hooked on the big
country—and big trout—of Patagonia



Casting from a boat on Chile's Rio Palena; below: a remote stretch of wild river reached by helicopter

The helicopter threaded through a lush valley, over weathered small farms that broke up the landscape of evergreens and beeches like moth holes in a woolen coat. As the chopper swung around a shoulder of snow-patched mountain, a tiny lake came into view.

About 20 minutes later, I was fishing that lake from an inflatable row boat that my guide, Arturo, had flown up with

from Eleven Experience's Rio Palena Lodge earlier that morning. The bushy, reedy shoreline reminded me of bass ponds I'd fished as a child in Maine. But here, in Chilean Patagonia, I was learning, things worked differently. Inside this alpine lake were reputed to live some monster trout.

My fishing partner—Ruaridh, an amiable Scotsman—and I cast fuzzy streamer flies from the boat, aiming to land them as close to the shore as we could without snagging. We used sinking lines in order to get the lightweight

lures down to the fish, only a little sorry that the added weight prevented us from executing the effortless lofted casts that are—for me, at least—one of the chief pleasures of fly-fishing.

A River Runs Through It this was not, then, but at least I could feel a little vain about the vintage tackle I'd brought along, mostly for aesthetic reasons. My old Orvis Battenkill is the sort of reel fishermen

“Here it was, the first morning of my Patagonia fishing trip, and I'd already caught the largest trout of my life.”

used decades ago, and it whines dramatically when there's a good fish on the other end of its line. I've used it many times in the Catskills and New England, where I do most of my fly-fishing, and on trips out West as well. I figured that it might be a little underpowered for the wild, well-fed trout of Patagonia—but that it would ultimately be up to the test.

Then I hooked into my first fish of the morning and was forced to reconsider.



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Fishing beneath
Andean peaks on
the Rio Palena





The heavy brown trout leaped several times, flashing yellowed flanks in mid-air and showing itself to be as long as my thigh. Then it plunged, tugging the line so stubbornly that I had to pump my rod the way a marlin angler might in order to heave him back toward the boat. I wasn't used to muscling trout, and so I let this one run awhile and enjoyed a sweet earful of singing reel. When Ruaridh, who'd politely reeled in, started commenting on the scenery, I understood that the time had come to play my recalcitrant fish a little harder, even if it meant risking a break-off. Fifteen minutes or so after being hooked, it was in Arturo's net, recorded in my phone's camera, and promptly placed back in the water.

Here it was, the first morning of my Patagonia fishing trip, and I'd already caught the largest trout of my life—by a long shot.

I learned to fly-fish 30 years ago, at my family's lake camp on an island in the north woods of Maine. My dad taught me to cast in the efficient, somewhat rigid style he'd learned from his grandmother there a half century before, and we fished for brook trout, the beautifully speckled species that is indigenous to the American Northeast. We usually paddled out in a canoe at dusk, when sticky-winged insects were likeliest to be hatching on the surface, attracting the attention of feeding brookies. We also caught homelier chubs and yellow perch, "coarse fish" that Dad tossed back into the lake with showy disdain.

We fished beneath low mountains that had been eroded down to camel humps and scarred by clear-cutting. And we fished in the shadow of the past, or so it seemed. Dad talked nostalgically about the childhood summers he spent on the island, when the hotel across the lake was a classy joint that hired an orchestra to play on Saturdays. Now, though, it catered to the rafting crowd, and our neighbors

were Floridians who owned cigarette boats and water skis.

The centerpiece of our camp's main cabin was a broad chimney assembled of stones from the lake. There were two daybeds and a collection of jigsaw puzzles, which we used often, and an old writing desk and half a dozen precarious-looking kerosene lamps, which we didn't. Mounted high on the walls were several trout that my great-grandparents had considered impressive enough to be given an afterlife as decor. And who could blame them? The fish were behemoths.

Three-pound trout like that hadn't been taken from the lake in decades. We now considered a 10-inch brookie a nice one, and it was a favorite euphemism of Dad's that eight inches—two above the legal minimum for keeping—was "good eating size." I learned how to clean the fish with my Swiss Army knife and pan-fry them in cornmeal and butter for breakfast.

What I did not learn was the finer points of catching trout. Dad knew where in the

"During occasional short breaks from fishing, I became swept up in the scenery. Basalt mountains were veined with waterfalls, bushy eyebrows of misting clouds hanging over them."

lake to find them, and could unspool his line with painterly grace, but he did not approach fishing with the rigorously analytical frame of mind that defines the sport's most successful practitioners. The elite angler is part entomologist, part detective. This really only dawned on me a couple of years after I turned 30, when I got into fishing in a way I never had before.

“I shambled up to the Argentine border station like a character out of a John le Carré novel. The guard who checked my luggage was less amused by the scenario than I was.”

Living in New York, I brought a rod with me on weekend trips to the Catskills. I grilled fly-shop clerks about which flies to use and how, and I put some of this new knowledge to use in Maine, when I visited camp in summer, and out West, where I arranged for Dad and me to float a few rivers with guides who taught us both plenty.

Still, I knew I had a lot to learn. The fisherman’s classroom is enormous, and I’d visited only a few corners of it. So when I got a chance to head down to fly-fishing paradise in Patagonia last December, I jumped at it. Autumn, when I put away my waders and fly boxes until spring, is usually a bittersweet time. But that fall, I was buzzing with anticipation.

After the helicopter excursion, I spent two more days fishing out of Rio Palena Lodge. One was on a much larger lake, where I landed one nice fish before the afternoon wind kicked up white caps; the other had me floating the milky-emerald Palena, where a slow morning gave way to a rare sunny stretch and half a dozen hook-ups with lively rainbow trout. The silty, glacial blue of the river brought trout into view in dream-

like fashion—they emerged whole from depths, like visions, rather than in the shimmering, split-second flashes that I was used to.

During transfers to and from boat sites and occasional short breaks from fishing, I became swept up in the scenery. Basalt mountains were veined with waterfalls, bushy eyebrows of misting clouds hanging over them. Elephant ears and enormous ferns proliferated in the volcanic soil, lending a Jurassic lushness to the surroundings that was unlike anything I’d experienced on a fishing trip before.

It had taken three commercial flights and three hours in a sturdy pickup to get here, and half of that drive on unpaved

road. True, the tourist season was just beginning. But it felt like the ends of the earth, a place that only a devoted few ever made it to. I could count the number of boaters, let alone fly-fishermen, that I saw in three days on one hand.

Life was good. After each day on the water, I returned to the lodge, with its nubby woolens and handsome stone-and-wood decor. The post-fishing circuit at Rio Palena consisted of hot tub soaks, cigars, Pisco sours, and a full-on asado cookout. I was sad to leave, but not too sad. Three days of fishing in Argentina awaited.

Some elements of this trip—the barbecues, the high-end American fishing gear—reminded me of the States. My arrival in Argentina very much did not. For obscure bureaucratic reasons, my Chilean hosts had been obliged to drop me, with profuse apologies, at an unmarked bridge in the no-man’s-land between the two countries, leaving me to drag my roller-bag along a stretch of dirt road and shamble up to the Argentine border station like a character out of a John le Carré novel. The unshaven guard who checked my luggage for contraband was less amused by the scenario than I was.

Alex and Alejandro, rangy Argentine guides who could have been mistaken for brothers, were waiting for me at the border. Later they told me that they had never had to pick up a client this way. I guess most anglers who come to Patagonia decide on one country or the other.

I’d left the Chilean rain forest for a parched highland just east of the rain-snatching Andes, and the difference in landscape was striking. If you’ve driven far enough inland from coastal Oregon or Washington, you’ve made a similar transition. A key difference here was that there was barely a soul in sight—certainly not on the working *estancia* (ranch) whose owners had granted my Argentine outfitters, Patagonia River Guides (PRG), exclusive private access.

The plan was to stop and fish a tributary of the Rio Corcovado on our way to PRG’s Lodge at Trevelin, where I’d booked a three-night stay. The three of us pulled on waders, hopped a cattle gate, and stepped around thorny *calafate* (barberry) bushes, bright yellow clumps of



A soaking tub at
Rio Palena Lodge;
opposite page: a
rustic sauna at
the lodge





Spanish broom, and gumdrop-like *neneo* bushes, which Alejandro told me gauchos will sometimes light on fire in order to send each other smoke signals. Then we descended toward the river.

I fished narrower, stonier water that afternoon than anything I'd seen in Chile. Alex tied on a dry-dropper rig: a winged dry fly floating visibly on the surface, a nymph coasting through the

current below. In the sparkling riffles and pocket waters, fish attacked both of them. The problem was, as they say, angler-related: I was not setting the hook with authority, and in the explosive first seconds that followed strikes, I lost better fish than I landed. A late lunch of fresh salad, reheated chicken stir-fry, and a can of stream-cooled lager helped me put regrets aside and appreciate that here it was, early December, and I was drifting dries over hungry trout in essentially my own private Idaho.

That night, back at the lodge, which overlooks Trevelin, a mill town founded by Welsh settlers, I recounted the day to my hosts, Rance Rathie and Travis Smith, over glasses of the property's own Gewürtzraminer. Native Montanans and accomplished guides themselves, they started PRG 18 years ago and have

From above:
fishing on
Argentina's
Rio Grande;
a trophy-size
brook trout

put service squarely at the center of the business. "We don't hire guides," Rathie told me as we headed to the communal table for a dinner of pumpkin-and-blue-cheese ravioli. "We build them." The sole exception, they told me, was Leo, who previously worked at a lodge in

Chile—and who would be taking me out the next morning.

Leo was the talkative one, several people at the lodge had told me, and by the time we signed in at the *estancia* where we would be fishing I knew not only all about the cabin he was building and the two daughters he was raising, but also that we were both "romantics" (Leo's word) about our chosen outdoor pursuit. We both loved old books about fly-fishing and the painstaking craftsmanship of traditional bamboo rods.



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“We are trying to defeat nature, but we give the fish a chance. You have to remember, they’re perfectly designed to stay safe from us.”

This ranch—another one where PRG claimed sole fishing rights—lacked the topography of the property of the day before. Long tufts of *coirón*, the coarse desert grass favored by Patagonian sheep, stretched across flat terrain as far as the eye could see. Once again, it paid to be fit and mobile. A half-hour walk in the sun brought us to a section of spring-fed creek that had yet to be fished that season.

I told Leo that no amount of coaching was too much. Stealth was key, he urged above all—“samurai-style.” I crouched behind the grass lining the bank, so that only my monofilament leader would hang over the current. Cast the dry fly upstream and tight to the bank, Leo told me. This I did, even though it left my view of the fly obstructed and my line resting sloppily on the grass. “Set!” I raised the rod at Leo’s command, and found myself hooked tight to a streaking rainbow.

Leo hadn’t seen the fish take the fly off the surface, he told me as I released my catch. He’d heard it: *gloop*. I suspected then that I’d found my guru. That first fish, caught on the first cast, set the tone for the day. We worked our way upstream methodically, advancing maybe 40 yards in two hours. With its clay-and-gravel bottom, the shallow spring creek did little to hide the trout from view and gave them few ways to escape once hooked. The fourth one I caught chased my fly from a greater distance than either Leo or I had anticipated, extending the take in dramatic fashion. (“Expect the unexpected,” Leo counseled.) Upstream, rainbows hurled themselves a foot out of the water to get at buzzing damselflies. There were more trout with more energy in this pastoral

stream than I would have thought possible, and straight dries were proving so effective that we didn’t think for a moment of trying anything else. Anglers will tell you that it doesn’t get much better than this.

By the time I hauled the largest brown of the day, a leopard-spotted slab, away from the far bank and into the net, I’d entered a deeper groove than any I’d ever known while fishing.

Overwhelmed, I put my rod aside and sat down in the grass. A great contentment settled over me, as though internal wrinkles somewhere above my belly button had been ironed out. I desired nothing, except maybe to savor the moment a little longer.

Where other guides might have raised an eyebrow, Leo simply nodded. “That’s perfection,” he said. “We are trying to defeat nature, but we give the fish a

chance. You have to remember, they’re perfectly designed to stay safe from us. A big brown trout like that, especially, he knows how to survive.” Most anglers want to score one fish after another. For him, Leo explained, outsmarting a canny old brown in just-so fashion was as satisfying as a 20-fish tally once had been.

There on the riverbank, I thought about how far I’d come since my days as a kid in Maine—and how far I still had to go. Although I savored Leo’s wisdom, I knew it might take me a lifetime to get entirely on his wavelength. One perfect catch was rewarding, but I also really liked hooking trout all day. Why not try for both?

We got back to fishing.

From above: rabbit and leek strudel with caramelized carrot at The Lodge at Trevelin; the lodge’s asado grill



Matt Jones Photography

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The New York Times Crossword

No. 0814

Puzzle by Nam Jin Yoon

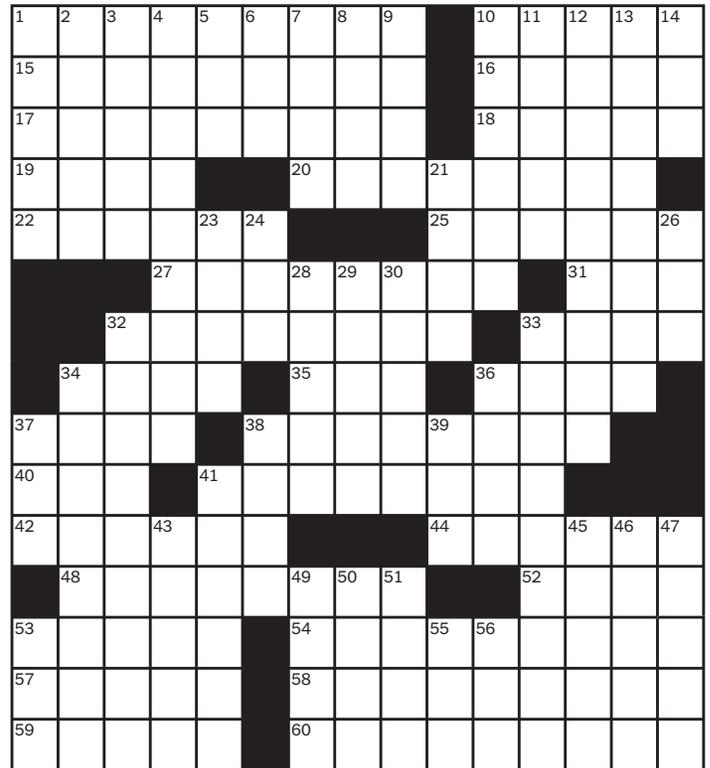
ACROSS

- 1 Noted work in which many different positions are discussed
- 10 Teen spirit, perhaps
- 15 Up to one's old tricks
- 16 You might sleep on it
- 17 Coffee order similar to a latte
- 18 Title lyric before "ba-doop" in a 1993 Salt-N-Pepa hit
- 19 Comic McKinnon
- 20 Get ready to battle in court
- 22 Cat pose and crane pose, e.g.
- 25 Loses one's temper
- 27 Hit after hit for a rock band?
- 31 Spiritual force
- 32 Parodies
- 33 Other ___
- 34 Choices for Negroni cocktails
- 35 Thelma and Louise, e.g.
- 36 Fancy serving platter at a sushi restaurant
- 37 Mad
- 38 "Wheel of Fortune" spin on either side of "ONE MILLION"
- 40 Something to raise a glass for
- 41 Continues doggedly, with "on"
- 42 Dominated
- 44 Having one on the way, slangily
- 48 Final act
- 52 French term of endearment that literally means "cabbage"
- 53 Agenda for a vet visit, maybe
- 54 Student financial aid option
- 57 Chilling
- 58 Bombshell
- 59 "Who ___ you?"
- 60 "Be polite!," in a way

DOWN

- 1 "A Hunger Artist" writer
- 2 One for the road?
- 3 Chicago Auto Show debut of 1989
- 4 Emilia vis-à-vis Desdemona, in "Othello"
- 5 Caught
- 6 "Eww!"

- 7 Be just behind
- 8 Former U.S. poet laureate Dove
- 9 From scratch
- 10 Not just suggest
- 11 His sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, was the first female president of the U.N. General Assembly
- 12 Words with friends on one's phone, say
- 13 "Enough already!"
- 14 Opposite of bottled
- 21 Green lights in D.C.
- 23 Sets, as a security system
- 24 "Heyo"
- 26 Do something wrong
- 28 Kind of verb in grammar
- 29 Headed
- 30 Mushroom eaten in ramen
- 32 It takes years and years to complete
- 33 Upper-level security clearance status
- 34 Some wet weather attire
- 36 One singer of "Dear Theodosia" in "Hamilton"
- 37 Cream quantity
- 38 Some might be sculpted, informally
- 39 Serve as an agent (for)
- 41 Picked up
- 43 "Gymnopédies" composer
- 45 Modern-day home of the Ashanti empire



- 46 Toast, with "a"
- 47 Bizarre
- 49 ___ page
- 50 "So Sick" hitmaker of 2006
- 51 ___ Oaks, neighborhood in eastern Queens
- 53 Word before god or devil
- 55 Fate
- 56 Alternative to a 2-Down, today

For answers to the crossword puzzle, turn to page 114

Answers to the Sudoku puzzles from page 114

ANSWER TO SUDOKU 1

3	4	7	1	5	6	8	9	2
2	5	6	7	8	9	1	4	3
8	1	9	4	3	2	6	7	5
7	9	5	6	1	3	2	8	4
4	6	2	9	7	8	5	3	1
1	3	8	5	2	4	9	6	7
6	2	3	8	4	1	7	5	9
5	8	4	2	9	7	3	1	6
9	7	1	3	6	5	4	2	8

ANSWER TO SUDOKU 2

7	4	1	2	6	3	9	8	5
6	2	9	7	5	8	4	1	3
8	5	3	1	9	4	6	7	2
2	9	4	8	7	5	1	3	6
1	7	5	3	4	6	2	9	8
3	6	8	9	1	2	5	4	7
5	3	6	4	8	1	7	2	9
4	8	7	6	2	9	3	5	1
9	1	2	5	3	7	8	6	4

ANSWER TO SUDOKU 3

1	7	9	4	6	8	5	2	3
4	5	6	9	3	2	1	7	8
3	8	2	5	7	1	6	9	4
9	4	8	1	5	7	3	6	2
7	2	5	3	4	6	8	1	9
6	1	3	2	8	9	7	4	5
2	9	7	8	1	5	4	3	6
5	6	4	7	2	3	9	8	1
8	3	1	6	9	4	2	5	7

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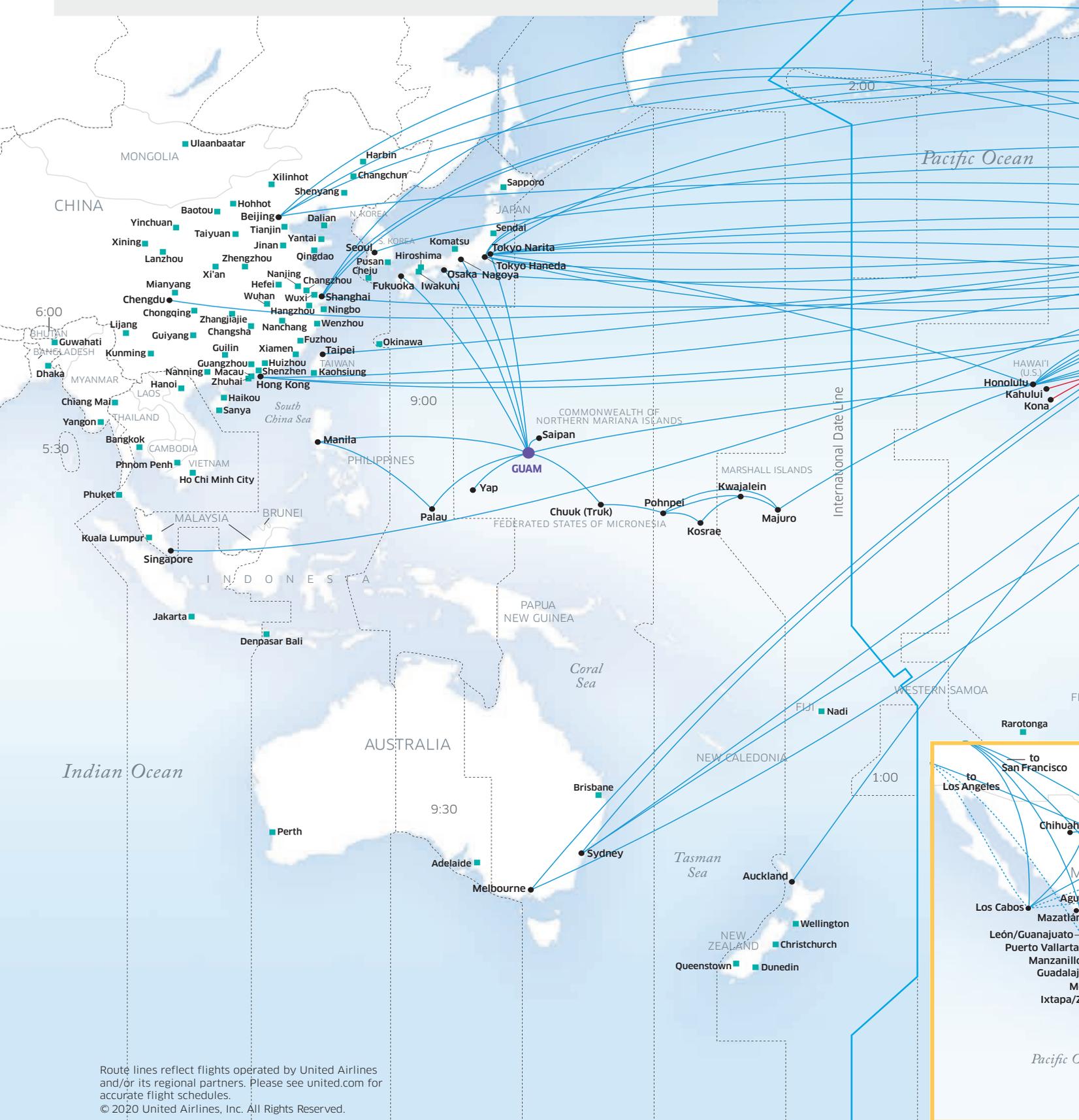
7:00 pm 8:00 pm 9:00 pm 10:00 pm 11:00 pm 12:00 MON. 12:00 SUN. 1:00 am

Maps

International destinations
 Route lines do not reflect actual flight path

- United/United Express
- - - United seasonal service
- United future service

- United hub
- Destinations served
- Destinations served by select airline partners
- Future destinations
- - - Time zone boundary



Route lines reflect flights operated by United Airlines and/or its regional partners. Please see united.com for accurate flight schedules.
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6:00 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm 9:00 pm 10:00 pm 11:00 pm 12:00 MIDNIGHT 1:00 am

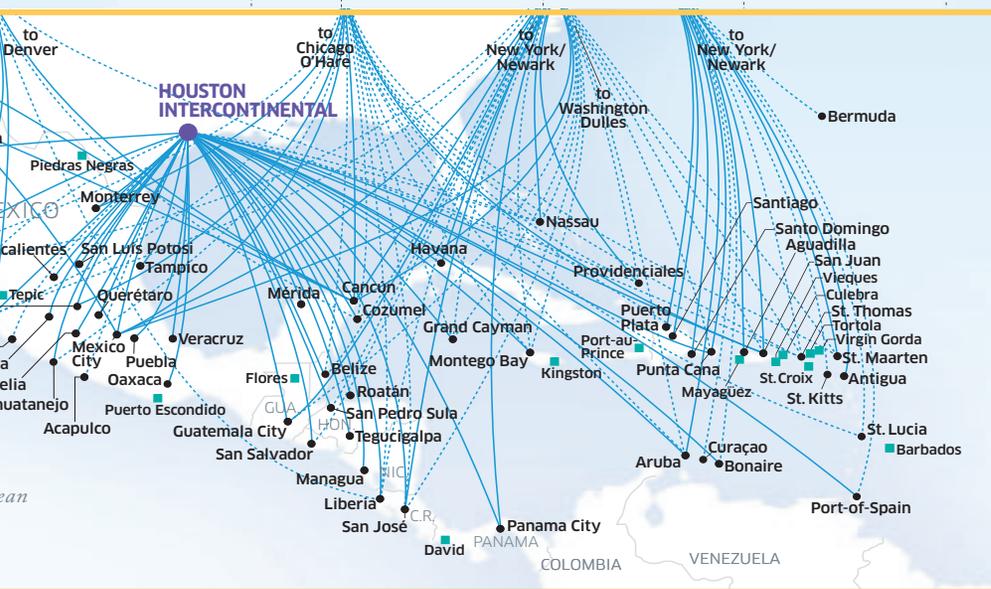


2:00 am 3:00 am 4:00 am 5:00 am 6:00 am 7:00 am 8:00 am 9:00 am 10:00 am

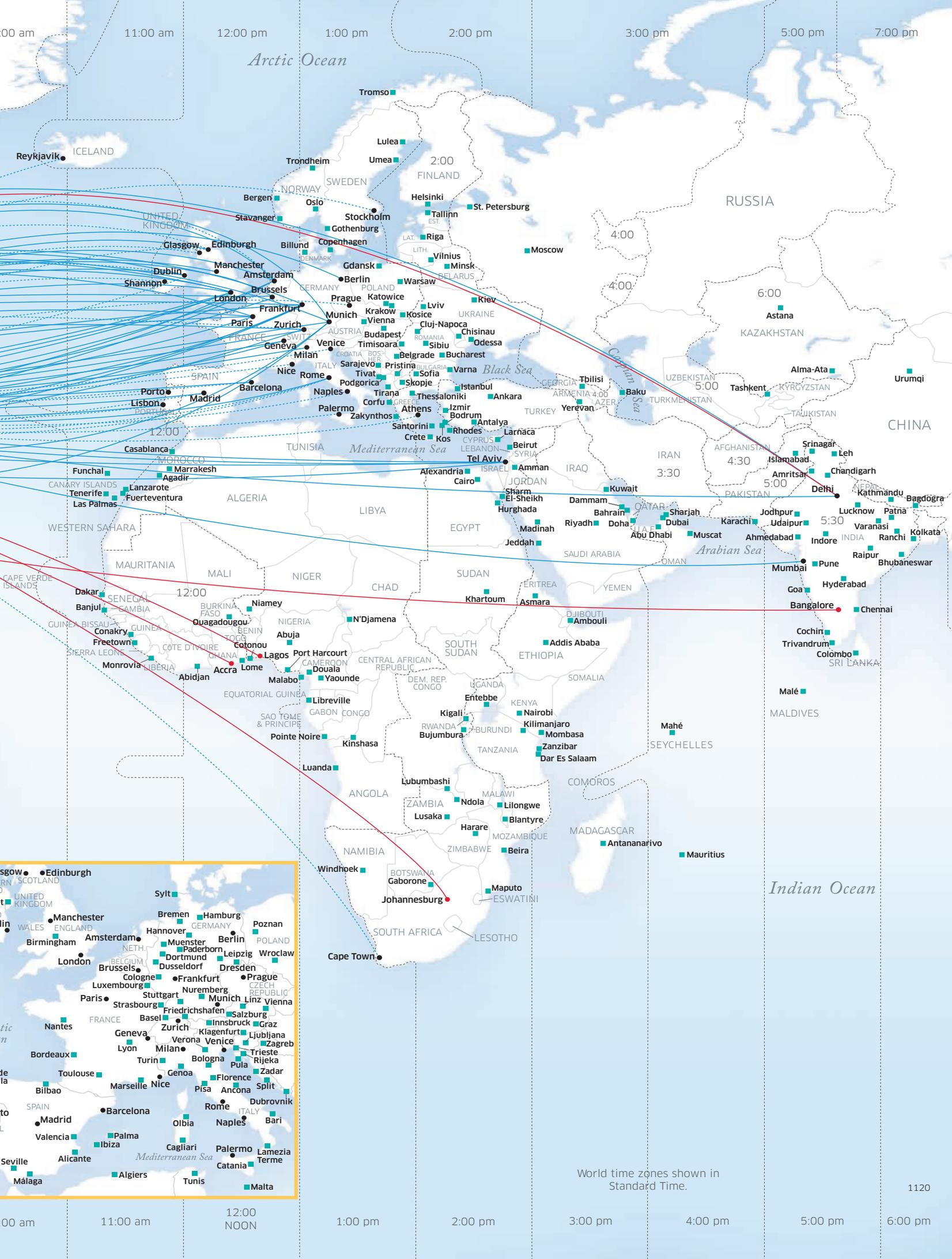
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2:00 am 3:00 am 4:00 am 5:00 am 6:00 am 7:00 am 8:00 am 9:00 am 10:00 am



00:00 am 11:00 am 12:00 pm 1:00 pm 2:00 pm 3:00 pm 4:00 pm 5:00 pm 6:00 pm 7:00 pm

Arctic Ocean

RUSSIA

CHINA

Black Sea

Mediterranean Sea

Arabian Sea

Indian Ocean



World time zones shown in Standard Time.

1120

00:00 am 11:00 am 12:00 NOON 1:00 pm 2:00 pm 3:00 pm 4:00 pm 5:00 pm 6:00 pm

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- United hub
- Destinations served

- Destinations served by select airline partners
- Future destinations
- Time zone boundary



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SUDOKU

By PennyDell Puzzles

SUDOKU 1 (EASY)

3		7	1					
			7			1	4	
	1			3		6	7	5
	9	5		1			8	4
			9		8			
1	3			2		9	6	
6	2	3		4			5	
	8	4			7			
					5	4		8

SUDOKU 2 (MEDIUM)

	4	1			3		8	
				5				3
		3	1			6		
2		4		7				6
	7		3		6		9	
3				1		5		7
		6			1	7		
4				2				
	1		5			8	6	

SUDOKU 3 (HARD)

	7	9	4				2	
			9					8
3					1	6		
		8			7	3		2
7			4					9
6		3	2			7		
		7	8					6
5					3			
	3				4	2	5	

For answers to the Sudoku puzzles, turn to page 110; below: the answers to the crossword from page 110

K	A	M	A	S	U	T	R	A		A	N	G	S	T
A	T	I	T	A	G	A	I	N		S	E	R	T	A
F	L	A	T	W	H	I	T	E		S	H	O	O	P
K	A	T	E			L	A	W	Y	E	R	U	P	
A	S	A	N	A	S					E	R	U	P	T
						D	R	U	M	B	E	A	T	
						L	A	M	P	O	O	N	S	
						G	I	N	S		D	U	O	
D	A	F	T			B	A	N	K	R	U	P	T	
A	L	E				S	O	L	D	I	E	R	S	
B	O	S	S	E	D					P	R	E	G	G
						S	W	A	N	S		S	O	N
S	H	O	T	S						P	E	L	L	G
E	E	R	I	E						E	Y	E	O	P
A	S	K	E	D						D	O	N	T	S

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Last winter, my wife, Rachel, and I had a very long, intricate trip to Japan planned as a babymoon. We were going with our best friends, Elizabeth and Bruce, who we travel with every year. But then Japan was one of the first countries to really be affected by coronavirus, and so at the last minute we shifted our plans and decided to go to Iceland and Switzerland.

Now, this group doesn't really vacation to relax. We want adventure; we want to explore and be in a different place every day. And though we all really enjoy a plan, we can change it at the drop of a hat. So even though I had been planning this Japan trip for a decade, I was pretty excited about Iceland. (I do really well in the cold weather.) And it was, unsurprisingly, incredible.

We had a great private guide, Sio with Superjeep tours, who drove us around in one of those monster-truck Jeeps with the big tires to all the sights: Gullfoss waterfall, Geysir hot springs, and all these little secret spots. But the best moment was doing a northern lights hunt on our last night. At one point, Sio pulled off the main highway, and we were driving through three feet of snow. He lowered the tire pressure to help the Jeep float on top of the snow. It was very slow going, and sometimes he'd have to back up and go forward—back and forth, back and forth. But then, all of a sudden, he broke the ridge of this hill, and we were on a black-sand beach in the middle of the night, with a full moon. He pulled the truck over and whipped out hot chocolate, and we all went for a walk. It was beautiful. We did see the northern lights, but only very faintly. Honestly, though, it was more fun just driving around in the middle

“We were on a black-sand beach, in the middle of the night, with a full moon.”



Even for a babymoon, Chris Sullivan chooses adventure over relaxation

of the night in a monster truck with our best friends.

From there, we went on to Switzerland. Why Switzerland? Our friend Bruce used to play professional basketball there, and about eight years ago he found out that he had a large amount of money in a Swiss bank account that was left over from his pro basketball days, but the only way that he could get this money was to go to Switzerland and withdraw it. He couldn't transfer it, he couldn't

Clockwise from top left: Sullivan and his wife, Rachel, at the Matterhorn; cold yoga; under the northern lights in Iceland

close the account. There's some weird rule. And so every year our friends stop in Switzerland to withdraw some cash, because when you're traveling internationally you can only carry a certain amount. Rachel and I had never been to

Switzerland, and we figured we could join them and help carry out the rest of the money so they could finally close the account. It was like being cut in on the end of a very slow Swiss bank heist! Plus, we could see Switzerland while we were at it.

So after stuffing our wallets and suitcases with cash, as if we were in our own *Oceans 11* movie, we went to Zermatt to see the Matterhorn. The town is magical—it has maintained this Old World feel. One of the highlights was eating at a place called Chez Heini that's owned by this man, Dan Daniell, who's also a Swiss pop singer. At the end of every night in this restaurant, a video screen comes down, and he sings his famous song. This was one of the most joyful and incredible moments of the trip: being stuffed with lamb, watching this guy sing.

We ended up having to cut our trip short because of travel from Europe being suspended. We made it back to the U.S. just a few hours before the border officially closed. It was a lot. But as I said, we don't go on vacation to relax.

And now we're *really* not relaxing. Our son, Bear Maxwell, was born on July 28. There's a lot of joy and fulfillment—and also a lot of sleepless nights. But we've been talking about trips we can take with him, and how long he can last on a car ride. Eventually we'll make it to Japan. Eventually...

Chris Sullivan stars as Toby on *This Is Us*, the fifth season of which is currently airing on Tuesday nights on NBC.



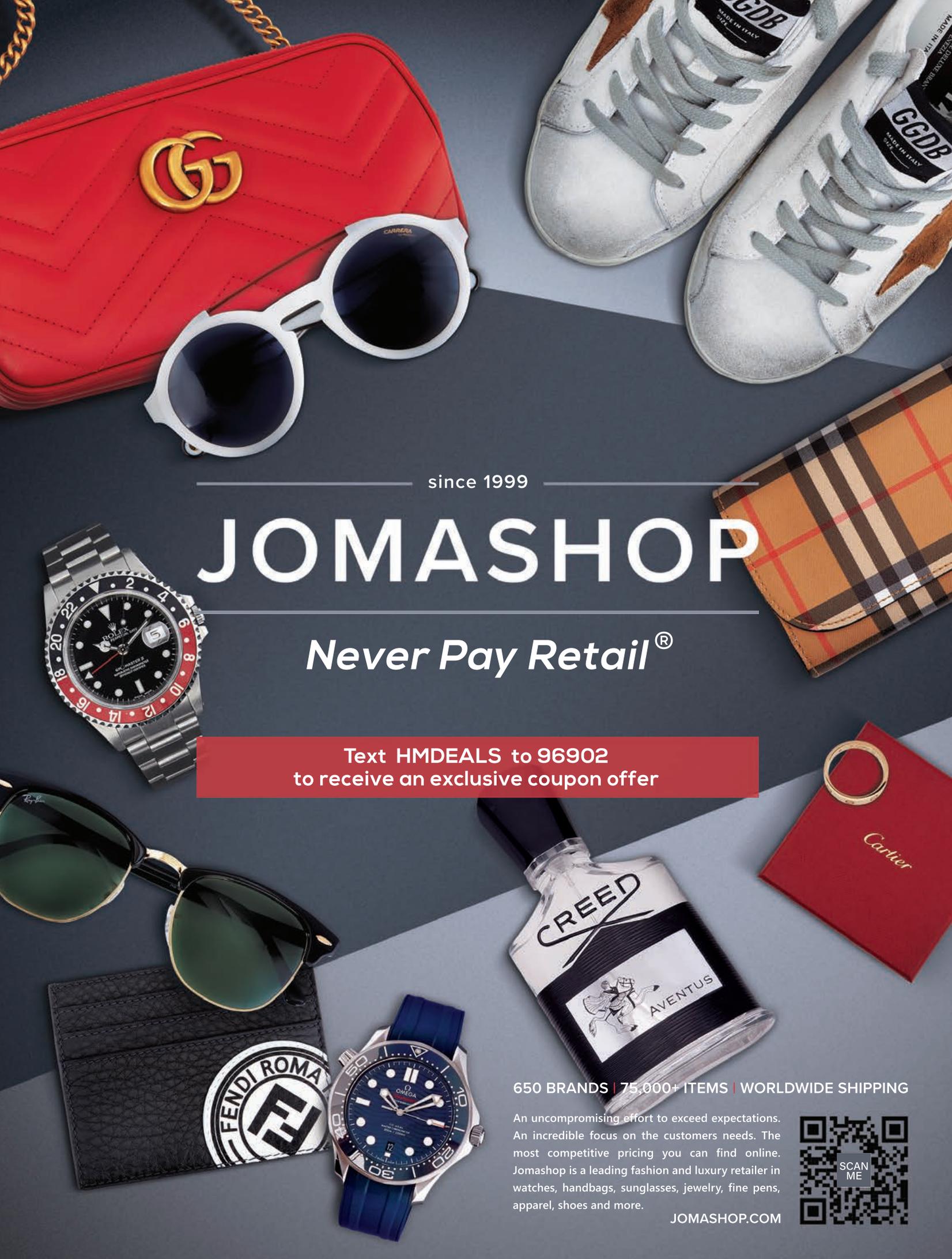
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