

Compliments of Jodee Harris

essential living

405

Sizzling Sweets to Get You Fired Up



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May has arrived, making it the perfect time to shed winter's slumber and breathe life into your surroundings. This month, we're helping you cultivate a vibrant oasis inside and out. Step into your garden and embrace your inner artist with our DIY garden art guide — from fairy gardens to upcycled bicycle planters, create a space that mirrors your unique personality.

Speaking of changing up looks, uncover savvy tips and tricks for a new wardrobe. We're diving into the world of savvy thrifting, sharing all the insider tips and tricks you need to treat yourself with amazing new finds.

With all that extra cash saved from your thrifty finds, why not invest in a restful night's sleep? Discover simple yet effective ways to create a sleep sanctuary that promotes relaxation, leaving you feeling energized and ready to embrace the new season.

So, breathe in the fresh air, get your hands dirty and let May take you on a journey of creativity and exciting new beginnings!

— From the Publisher



What's your favorite go-to for a weeknight dinner?

Scan the QR code to cast your vote!



Jodee Harris

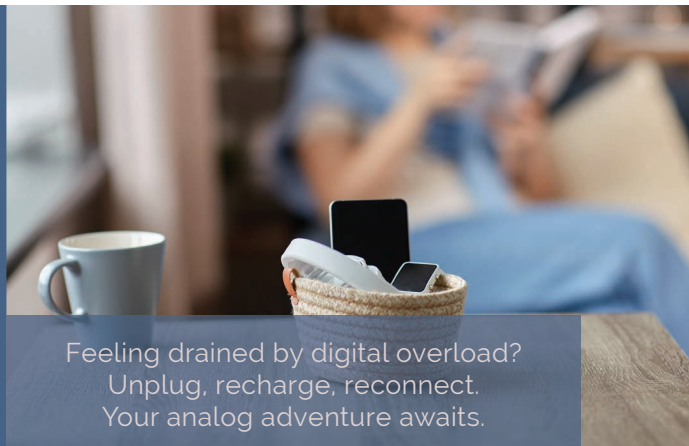
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7 Day DIGITAL DETOX CHALLENGE

- DAY 1:** Delete or deactivate unnecessary time-consuming apps.
- DAY 2:** Silence non-essential notifications to minimize distractions.
- DAY 3:** Designate tech-free zones in your home.
- DAY 4:** Declutter your social feed of time-draining or negative accounts.
- DAY 5:** Go phone-free during the first and last hour of your day.
- DAY 6:** Disconnect to reconnect with friends and family face-to-face.
- DAY 7:** Savor a meal without staring at a screen.



Feeling drained by digital overload?
Unplug, recharge, reconnect.
Your analog adventure awaits.

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Cultivate Creativity

8

PLAYFUL DIY GARDEN ACCENTS
TO MAKE THIS WEEKEND



Gardens are not just about growing plants; they are also **canvases for creativity**. Sure, you can buy garden accents, but **making your own** offers the opportunity to **infuse your outdoor space** with a fun touch of personal flair.



▲ Stenciled Garden Art

Elevate the visual appeal of your garden by adding a touch of artistic flair to your raised beds. Using **stencils**, transform plain wood into works of art. Create intricate **patterns**, **floral motifs** or **inspirational quotes** to infuse your garden with personality and style. Whether you opt for a cohesive theme or mix and match designs, stenciled garden art adds a touch of your own personal style.



► Whimsical Watering Can Rain Chain

Transform old watering cans into a **unique rain chain**. Drill small holes in the bottom of each can and attach them in a cascading fashion, creating both a **functional** and **decorative** way to manage rainwater runoff. Hang the chain from your gutter to guide rainwater into a container or garden bed.



▼ Bicycle Planter & Art Piece

Spray paint an old bicycle to transform it into a charming garden planter. Get artsy with it by painting the different parts in all different colors or give it a **modern look** by using **one color** for the whole bike. Next, attach **planter baskets** to the back and front. Hang the bike from a fence or side of a shed to add **more dimension** to your garden.



Delightful Fairy Garden

Create a whimsical miniature world by choosing a container or garden corner, filling it with potting soil and **planting tiny flowers** or **succulents**. Add charming **fairy figurines** and **miniature accessories**, like fairy-sized furniture and decorative items, to bring the enchanting scene to life. Regular maintenance keeps this magical garden a **captivating** and **imaginative space** for all.





Garden Hose Wreath

Repurpose an old garden hose by coiling it into a circular shape and securing the ends. Attach **colorful faux flowers, ribbon and decorative elements** using hot glue. Hang this unique garden hose wreath on your garden shed or fence.

Birdbath Plate

Repurpose a decorative plate or shallow bowl into a **birdbath** for your garden. Attach the plate to a stable base like a wooden fence spindle, **stacked bricks** or a **plant stand**. Just be sure the plate is secure and level before filling it with water.



Decorative Stepping Stones

Elevate your garden's visual appeal by crafting custom **decorative stepping stones**. Experiment with **mosaic tiles, hand-painted designs** or **pressed leaves** to infuse artistic flair into your garden path. If making them from scratch, get creative with the shapes or use the stones to create a **fun pattern**. Position these eye-catching stepping stones along your pathway, turning your garden into an **artful and enchanting outdoor retreat**.



Rubber Boot Herb Planter Wall

Give discarded rubber boots new life by repurposing them into a **vertical herb garden**. Mix and match colors and patterns for a playful touch. After giving them a good cleaning, **drill a few drainage holes through the bottoms**. Add a layer of lining to keep the soil from being in direct contact with the boot. Next, fill them with **potting soil** and **plant aromatic herbs** like basil, thyme or parsley. Once they're planted, attach them to fence posts or create a wooden wall for them to hang.

If boots aren't your style, turn an **old pair of heels** into planters and use a plant stand to put them on display.





—THREE DELICIOUS— **18-MINUTE DINNERS**

There are few things worse than finally deciding what to cook for dinner, only to look at the recipe and realize you have four hours of preparation and cooking time ahead of you. When you're starving after a long work day, a complicated recipe is the last thing you need. And a 10 o'clock dinner time just won't cut it.

There's no need for takeout, though. These easy and simple yet refreshingly delicious recipes are just what you've been looking for. Each dish is curated with seasonal ingredients in mind to provide you with a unique dinner. We guarantee you'll be just as impressed by the flavors as you are with the limited time it takes to make these recipes.

So, push those boring sheet pan dinners to the side and start the timer for 18 minutes!





PASTA SALAD

Pasta salad is the perfect quick dinner recipe that allows you to incorporate your favorite ingredients. Plus, this may be the one salad that even the kiddos like!

PREP TIME: **18 MINUTES** | YIELD: **6 SERVINGS**

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE PASTA SALAD

- 8 oz. cooked pasta
- 1 c. cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 c. cucumber, cut into quarters
- ½ c. mozzarella pearls
- ½ c. salami pieces, cut into long slices
- ½ c. pitted Kalamata olives, halved
- ¼ red onion, diced
- 2 tbsp. capers

FOR THE DRESSING

- ⅓ c. olive oil
- ¼ c. red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ¼ tsp. dried dill weed

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook the pasta according to box directions and allow to cool while you prepare the other ingredients. Once cooled, add to a large bowl.
2. Slice the tomatoes, cucumbers, salami, olives and red onions. Add to a bowl and mix with the mozzarella pearls and capers.
3. Pour the olive oil into a small bowl and whisk in the red wine vinegar. Add the seasonings and whisk to combine.
4. Pour the dressing over the pasta salad and toss.
5. Chill until ready to serve, then enjoy!



GAZPACHO

If your least favorite aspect of summer is the lack of soup, allow us to introduce you to gazpacho. This chilled soup is a classic Spanish recipe that uses seasonal vegetables to create a refreshing, flavor-forward recipe.

PREP TIME: **18 MINUTES** | YIELD: **6 SERVINGS**

INGREDIENTS

- 8 Roma tomatoes, chopped
- 3 tsp. salt
- 3 tsp. pepper
- 1 large cucumber, peeled and sliced (plus more for topping if desired)
- 1 Anaheim pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 large garlic cloves, grated
- 3 tbsp. olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 2 tbsp. sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- Cherry tomatoes, halved for topping
- Microgreens, for garnish
- Basil leaves, for garnish
- Flakey sea salt, for garnish
- Toasted bread, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Chop the tomatoes and season with a teaspoon and a half of both salt and pepper. Allow to rest while you chop the rest of the vegetables.
2. Add the seasoned tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, shallots and grated garlic cloves to a blender. Blend on high for two minutes.
3. While blending, pour in the sherry vinegar and olive oil. Then, add the rest of the salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Once smooth, stop blending.
4. Strain through a colander into a large bowl. Chill until ready to serve.
5. Top with diced cucumber, halved cherry tomatoes, microgreens and basil.



GRILLED, FOIL-WRAPPED CITRUS SALMON

Take advantage of the grill to cut down on cook time! This citrus salmon with capers and red onion is packed with flavor and perfect for summer.

PREP TIME: **5 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **10-13 MINUTES**

YIELD: **8 SERVINGS**



INGREDIENTS

- 1 large salmon fillet, roughly 2.5 lbs.
- 1 large lemon, sliced
- 1 large orange, sliced
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1 navel orange, sliced
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 red onion
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 2 tbsp. capers
- 1 tsp. salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the grill on high heat. While it's warming up, lay a large piece of foil across a baking sheet.
2. Slice the lemon, orange and a fourth of the red onion. Lay half on the foil and reserve the others to place on top of the salmon.
3. Place the salmon fillet on top of the citrus and season with olive oil, paprika, garlic powder, salt and pepper.
4. Lay the rest of the sliced lemon, oranges and onion on top. Place another piece of foil on top and wrap tightly.
5. Transfer the foil-wrapped salmon to the center of the grill and close. Grill for 10-13 minutes on 450° F.
6. Dice the other fourth of the red onion. Sprinkle over the grilled salmon with the fresh capers and enjoy!

DREAMLAND DESIGN

Crafting the Perfect Bedroom for Sweet Dreams

If you often find yourself waking up more exhausted than rested, your bedroom could be at fault. Although it's easy for your bedroom to become an overlooked room in your house, it's actually the one you should give the most attention to. As the place where you start and end your day, it's important that your bedroom is a calming place that feels like a sanctuary where you can relax and recharge.

So, if you're tired of feeling tired, it's time for a bedroom makeover that'll have you waking up on the right side of the bed every morning.



Clear the Clutter

A cluttered space equals a cluttered mind, which is the last thing you want when you're trying to fall asleep. Make it easy to tidy up your bedroom before bed with baskets to quickly sort odds and ends and a hamper to toss your clothes in.

Taking a few minutes to make your bed in the morning will also help your room look and feel more welcoming when you're ready to lay down.





Comfort Is Key

Your bedding, including sheets, pillows and your mattress, can make the difference between counting sheep all night or quickly drifting off to dreamland. Investing in high-quality bedding, especially a mattress and pillow that give you proper support, can improve your quality of sleep literally overnight.

Banish Daytime Worries

While monsters might not lurk under your bed, reminders of unfinished projects, looming bills and the upcoming meeting with your boss are enough to give you nightmares. Turn your bedroom into a sleep oasis zone by removing anything that leads to more stress than ZZZs.

Keep It Cool

Cooler temperatures are the gateway to a deep slumber. When you fall asleep, your body's temperature naturally drops. Experts suggest keeping your room between 60-67° F to help your body maintain a lower temperature for a restful night's sleep.





Block Out Disruptions

Streetlights, early morning sunbeams or your neighbor's overenthusiastic motion sensor spotlight can wreak havoc on your beauty rest. Try using blackout curtains to make sure your sleep isn't interrupted. If you can't find a set of curtains that go with your décor, a face mask is an easy alternative — plus, it will also block out light from inside your room.

It is also important to avoid blue light about an hour before heading to bed. Yes, that means no more binge-watching or endless TikTok scrolling. However, you can use the time to unwind with activities like yoga, journaling or reading.



Smells Like Sweet Dreams

Calming scents like lavender, vanilla or chamomile can relax your mind and body. Use essential oils, candles or room spray to scent your space before you sleep.

Soundproof Your Sleep

It's hard to sleep soundly through the night when slamming car doors, barking dogs and other loud noises are disturbing your peace. White noise machines help to mask disruptive noises, so the only thing you'll hear is the gentle whisper of tranquility.



Colorful Dreamscape

Colors aren't just for aesthetics; they set the mood of a room. Avoid using warm, energizing tones like yellows and reds. Instead, give your space a refresh with soft or muted tones of blue or green for a peaceful slumber.

By making just a few bedroom improvements, you'll pave the path to better sleep and brighter mornings. Turn your bedroom into a tranquil sanctuary, and you'll wake up feeling revitalized and eager to tackle each day.

REV UP YOUR



WANDERLUST

EPIC ADVENTURES ON AMERICA'S HIGHWAYS

The call of the open road has an undeniable allure. The freedom of the highway, the wind in your hair and the promise of adventure around every curve — there's nothing quite like a road trip to satiate the wanderlust in your soul. Buckle up, because we're about to embark on a journey through the best road trips in America that offer breathtaking landscapes, unique cultural experiences and unforgettable memories.

Pacific Coast Highway

PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY



SAN FRANCISCO TO LOS ANGELES

450 MILES

BEST TIME TO GO: SPRING AND FALL

Take a ride along California's Highway 1, also known as the Pacific Coast Highway. The iconic coastal route offers heart-pounding moments with winding turns and breathtaking drops, all rewarded with world-class vistas. From the iconic Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to the rugged cliffs of Big Sur and the vibrant streets of Los Angeles, this journey is a fusion of natural beauty and urban excitement.

CAN'T MISS PITSTOP: BIXBY CREEK BRIDGE

This iconic bridge is one of the most photographed spots along the Pacific Coast Highway. Stop here to admire the stunning coastal views and snap some envy-inducing photos.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

SHENANDOAH TO GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

469 MILES

BEST TIME TO GO: FALL

A trip along the Blue Ridge Parkway is like cruising through a living postcard. Winding through the Appalachian Mountains, the route connects the Shenandoah National Park and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, offering panoramic views of rolling hills and lush forests. For even more incredible views, plan a drive during the fall to see vibrant autumn foliage.

CAN'T MISS PITSTOP: MOUNT MITCHELL (MILEPOST 355.4)

At a towering 6,684 feet, this mountain stands as the highest peak in the Appalachian range. On clear days, hikers are treated to breathtaking vistas stretching up to 85 miles in the distance. Due to the high elevation, temperatures can plummet by 15 to 20 degrees at the summit, so you'll want to pack an extra sweatshirt. Visitors are able to drive almost all the way to the top, making it easy to enjoy the magnificent views without the rugged trek.

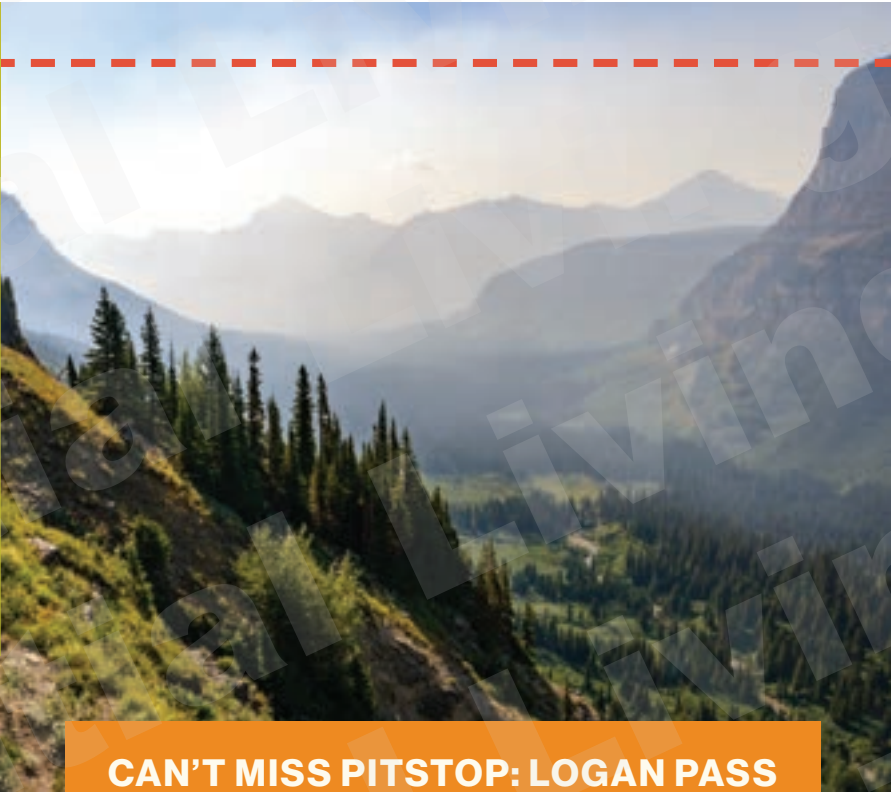


GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD

WEST ENTRANCE TO ST. MARY ENTRANCE OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

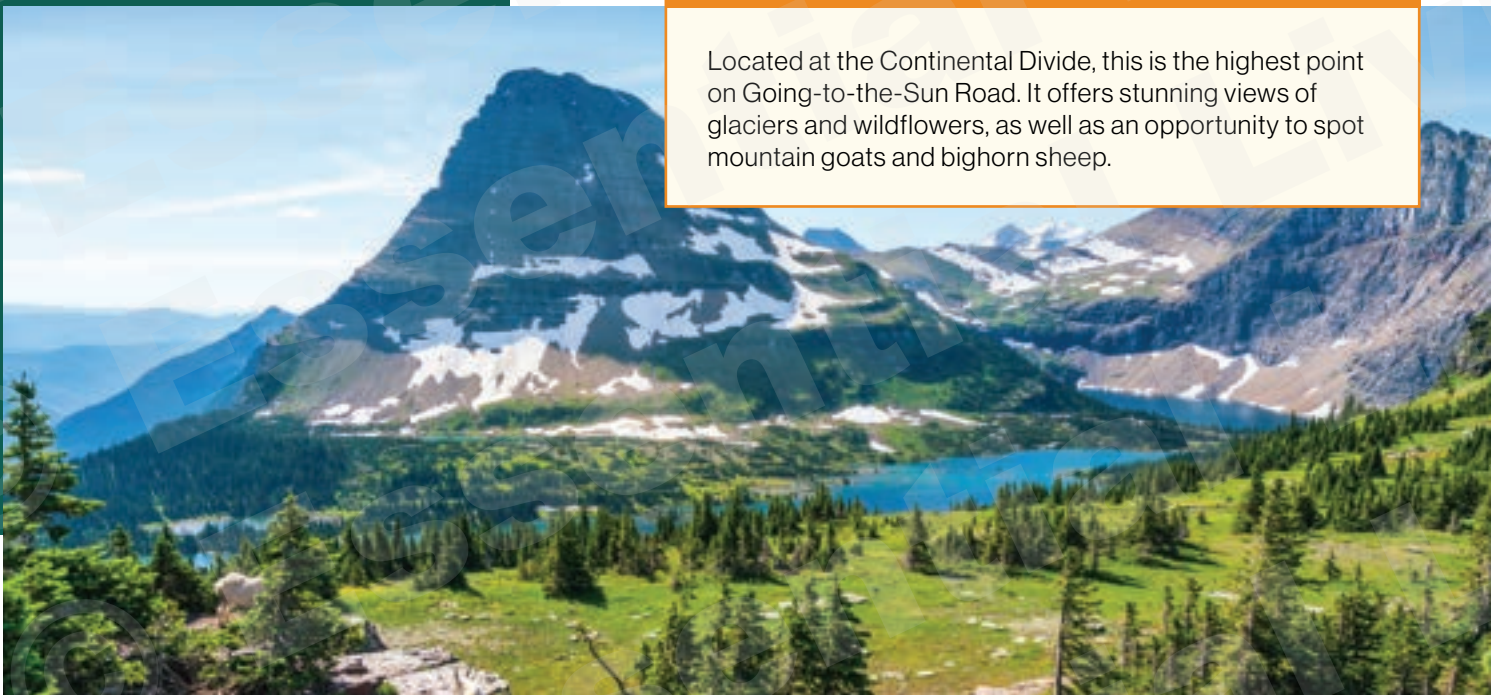
50 MILES BEST TIME TO GO: SUMMER

Originally built to boost tourism of national parks, this extraordinary road has been doing just that since it was completed in 1932. Spanning 50 miles, it cuts through Montana's Glacier National Park, weaving through the Rocky Mountains and crossing the Continental Divide at Logan Pass. While the sites are stunning, watch out for blind curves and steep drop-offs. It's also best to avoid this one during the winter.

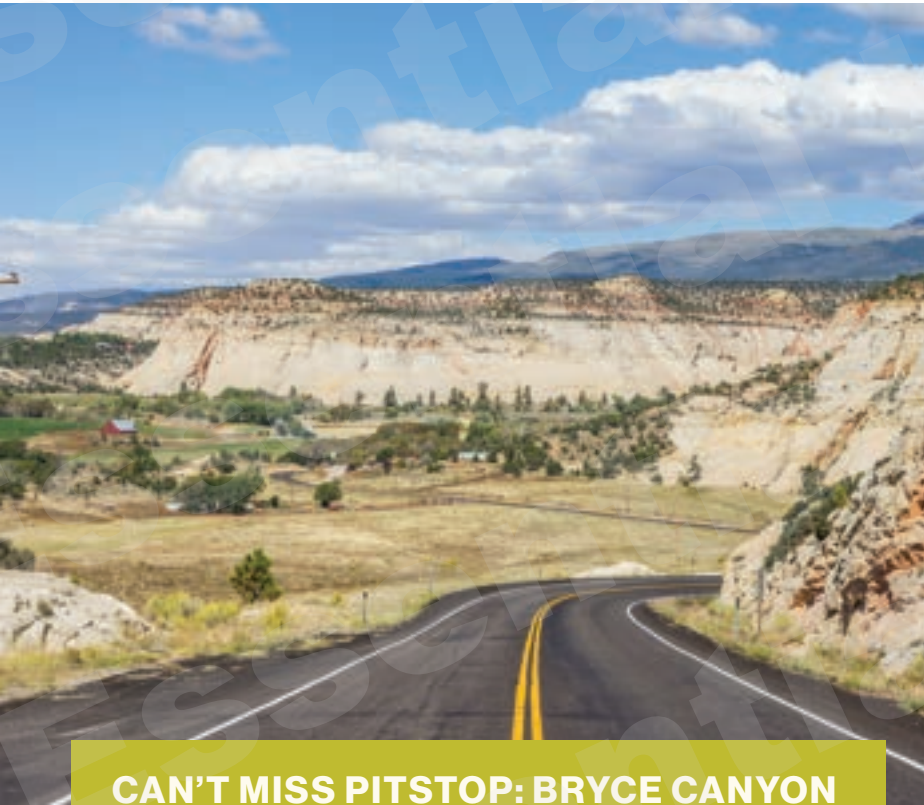


CAN'T MISS PITSTOP: LOGAN PASS

Located at the Continental Divide, this is the highest point on Going-to-the-Sun Road. It offers stunning views of glaciers and wildflowers, as well as an opportunity to spot mountain goats and bighorn sheep.



SCENIC BYWAY 12



PANGUITCH TO TORREY

122 MILES
BEST TIME TO GO:
SPRING AND FALL

Utah's Scenic Byway 12 is a road less traveled, but it leads to some of the most extraordinary natural wonders in the country. It has the rare designation of an All-American Road, due to its unique features that can't be found anywhere else, turning the journey into a destination all its own. Throughout the drive you'll cut through Bryce Canyon, the Dixie National Forest, Grand-Staircase Escalante National Monument, the Boulder Mountains and Capitol Reef National Park, all with vastly different landscapes to admire.

CAN'T MISS PITSTOP: BRYCE CANYON

Bryce Canyon isn't a mere pitstop but the crown jewel of your itinerary. It's highly recommended to give yourself a few hours to explore or to even pitch a tent for the night. The natural amphitheater is adorned with striking hoodoos, which are even more of a sight to behold as the sun rises in the early morning hours.



THE GREAT LAKES SEAWAY TRAIL

THE OHIO STATE LINE TO THE SEAWAY INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

518 MILES
BEST TIME TO GO:
SUMMER TO EARLY FALL

Following the stunning shores of Lake Erie, Niagara River, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River in New York and Pennsylvania, this iconic National Scenic Byway is renowned for historical sites, cultural heritage and breathtaking vistas. The route links captivating destinations like Presque Isle, Niagara Falls, Thousand Islands, Erie, Buffalo, Rochester, Oswego and charming waterfront towns.

CAN'T MISS PITSTOP: SODUS POINT, NEW YORK

This charming lakeside village offers a delightful blend of history, recreation and relaxation. Explore the historic lighthouse, enjoy fresh seafood at local restaurants and relax on the sandy beach.

Each of these road trips offers a unique flavor of American beauty and culture.

So, pack your bags, fuel up the tank and hit the open road to discover what adventures await on America's highways.



Packing Lists for Any Destination

Some things are a good idea to have with you no matter the type of vacation you plan, like portable chargers, a comfortable pair of walking shoes and a light rain jacket in case of inclement weather. Light sleepers should consider ear plugs and eye masks for a more restful trip. However, each destination has must-haves that will make your trip that much more enjoyable.

What to pack for a beach vacation

It sounds like this one should be easy. Just grab a swimsuit or two and go, right? Bathing suits certainly top the list, but there are a few more items you should bring along for a more relaxing beach vacation:

- Beach coverups
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Reef-safe sunscreen*
- Aloe gel
- Wet bag
- Waterproof phone case/pouch
- Good book(s)
- Versatile sandals
- Hip pack

**Some tropical destinations like Hawaii already require that travelers use only mineral, reef-safe sunscreen. Protect yourself and underwater environments with sun lotions made of natural ingredients.*

What to pack for a national park trip

Your national park packing list will vary based on where you're going, the time of year you're planning your trip and how adventurous you wish to get once you're there. Generally, there are a few items you should bring along as you get to know Mother Nature in the national parks:

- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Hiking shoes/boots
- Trekking poles
- Moisture-wicking tops
- Hiking pants/leggings
- Wool socks
- Hiking backpack
- Water storage
- Maps*

**Don't assume you'll have service in national parks. Download maps onto your phone ahead of time or carry paper maps for scenic drives and hikes. The premium version of the popular hiking app AllTrails includes the option to download offline maps for off-the-beaten-path adventures.*

What to bring on a cruise

You don't have to do much planning on a luxury cruise, but you do need to pack a few things for a more enjoyable trip. Bring along these items and let your cruise operators do the rest:

- Leisure wear
- Swimsuit(s)
- Sunscreen
- Wet bag
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Deck shoes/sandals
- Formal night outfit
- Cash for tips
- Motion sickness medications
- Magnets*

**The walls and ceilings of cruise cabins are usually magnetized. Pack a few magnets or magnetic hooks to make use of unexpected space and keep yourself and any paperwork (e.g., excursion reservations) organized.*



What to pack for a winter escape

A winter ski trip requires quite a bit more gear than a cozy cabin escape to a wintry destination. If you're a winter sports enthusiast traveling light, you can always rent gear once you're there. Here are a few things to bring along on a more relaxing winter trip:

- Thermal layers
- Fleece-lined clothing
- Winter hat
- Warm gloves
- Oversized scarf
- Cozy sweaters
- Snow boots
- Hand warmers
- Lip balm
- Board game(s)



What to bring on a safari

An African safari is a bucket list item for many travelers, so it's important that you do the prep to make sure it goes off without a hitch. Before you start packing, check with all of your flight connections to ensure that your luggage is appropriately sized. Some of the smaller planes suggest soft-sided duffel bags to ensure a safe fit in the overhead compartments. Here are a few more key items to consider bringing along on a safari trip:

- Neutral colors*
- Utility vest
- Safari hat (with a wide brim and/or straps!)
- Comfortable slacks
- Lightweight scarf/buff
- Comfortable shoes/boots
- Insect repellent
- Extra camera batteries and memory cards
- Binoculars

**Bright whites could get dirty on a bumpy jeep ride, and clothing that's too bright could scare off the animals. Experts suggest avoiding very dark colors like blue and black and metallics, as they tend to attract tsetse flies. Wear neutral tones instead, like beige, olive and tan.*



Pack Like a Pro

No matter where you're heading, here are some tips to keep in mind to maximize suitcase space and make your life easier.

- Pick luggage that will make your trip easy. If you will be doing a lot of city travel, leave the bulky suitcase at home.
- Pack your clothes in the way that works for you. Rolling might be best for some clothes, while others take up less room when folded.
- Invest in compression packing cubes to save space and stay organized.
- Bring a mesh bag for dirty laundry.



summer Desserts

for your outdoor kitchen

It's hard to contain that child-like excitement when summer rolls around each year. The season brings the promise of warm weather, endless time spent outdoors and the opportunity to grill as much as possible. This summer we are taking full advantage of the grill and utilizing it for every meal — even desserts!

Of course, no summertime sweet would be complete without fresh fruit! These grilled desserts reimagine how to use seasonal produce and transform them into unique creations. And let's not forget the s'mores-inspired dessert that will take you right back to childhood! Time to fire up the grill and prepare your sweet tooth.

grilled Pizookie

Does it get any better than a giant, warm cookie with vanilla ice cream? This recipe makes four large cookies in six-inch cast-iron skillets — AKA the perfect individual serving!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 4 pizookies

INGREDIENTS

- 3½ c. all-purpose flour
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- 1½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. espresso powder
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1 c. unsalted butter, browned
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1½ c. dark chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the grill to 375° F and grease four 6" cast-iron skillets.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, espresso powder and salt.
3. Add the butter to a pan and melt over medium-high heat. Stir until melted, then reduce the heat to medium-low. When the butter begins to brown and smell slightly nutty, remove from heat and cool completely.
4. Add the softened butter, cane sugar and brown sugar to a large mixing bowl.
5. Mix on medium speed for roughly four minutes until light and fluffy.
6. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing between to thoroughly incorporate.
7. Then add the vanilla extract and sift in half of the dry ingredients at a time, mixing continuously.
8. Use a spatula to fold in the chocolate chips and divide the dough evenly between the four skillets. Press the dough into the individual skillets, filling each one halfway.
9. Grill at 375° F for 15 minutes. Carefully remove and cool for 10 minutes.
10. Then, add vanilla ice cream and enjoy!

cast-iron Berry Crisp

This classic summer dessert is so easy to make on the grill and is the perfect one-pot recipe!



Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Yield: 10 servings

INGREDIENTS

For the Filling

- 4½ c. mixed berries, frozen
- 2 tbsp. lemon zest
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- ½ c. brown sugar
- 2 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. salt

For the Batter

- 1 c. flour
- ¼ c. cane sugar
- ¼ c. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. lemon zest
- ¾ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 4 tbsp. butter, cubed and cold
- ¾ c. whole milk
- 1½ c. raw walnuts, crushed

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Filling

1. In a large bowl, toss the frozen berries with the lemon zest and lemon juice.
2. Combine the sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon and salt in a bowl. Sprinkle over the berries and stir. Allow to sit for five minutes.
3. Grease a 9" cast-iron skillet and transfer the berries to the prepared dish.
4. Preheat the grill to high heat.

For the Batter

1. Combine the cane sugar and lemon zest with your fingers or a spoon to incorporate, then pour into a food processor with the flour, brown sugar, baking soda and salt.
2. Pulse once to combine. Then add in the butter and pulse until pea-sized, coarse crumbs form, about one minute. Avoid over-pulsing by doing small, short pulses.
3. Transfer to a large bowl and slowly pour in the milk, stirring to combine.
4. Fold in the crushed walnuts and spread the batter over the top of the berries.
5. Allow the crisp to bake at 350° F for 30 minutes. At the halfway mark, cover with foil and cook for another 15 minutes.
6. After the allotted time, remove from the grill. Allow to cool for 10 minutes.
7. Serve with vanilla ice cream and enjoy!

INGREDIENTS

For the Pound Cake

- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. salt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. cane sugar
- 1 c. unsalted butter, softened
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. sour cream
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract

For Grilling

- 2 c. fresh plums, cubed
- 3 tsp. brown sugar
- 3 tbsp. butter, melted
- Whipped cream, for serving
- Fresh mint, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Pound Cake

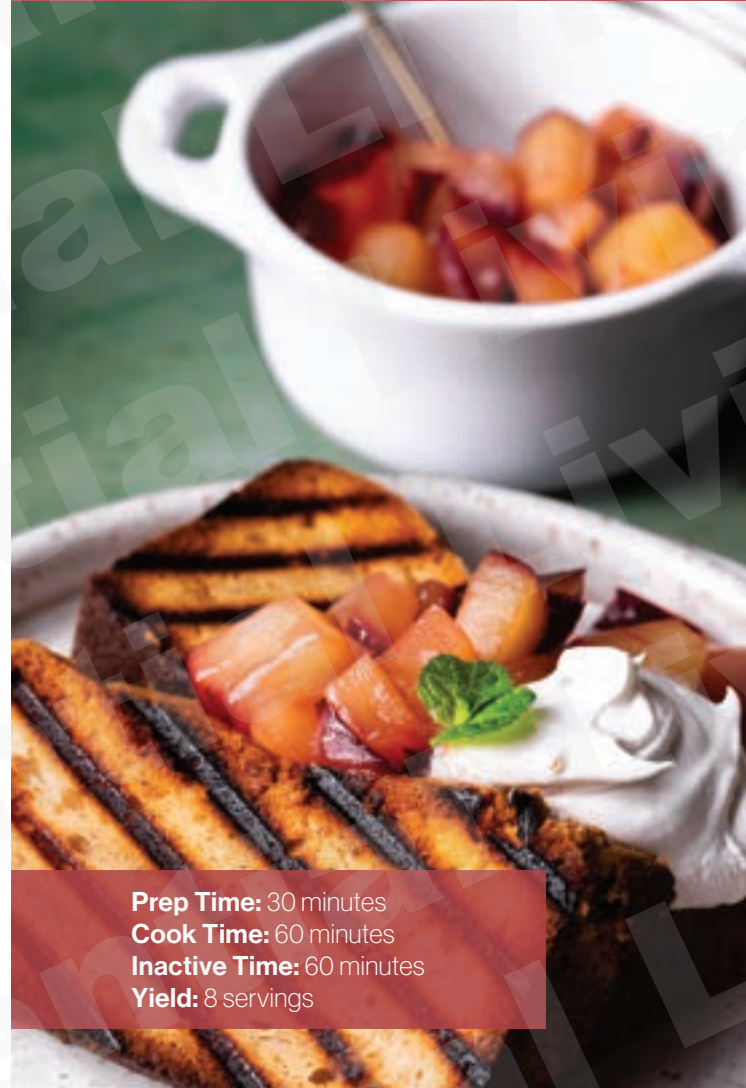
1. Grease a bread loaf pan and lightly dust with flour. Next, preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl.
3. In another bowl, combine the sugar and lemon zest. Use your fingers or a spoon to mix them together to best release and incorporate the flavor of the lemon zest.
4. Then, cream together the butter and sugar on medium speed for two minutes.
5. Add one egg at a time, mixing between to incorporate.
6. Once combined, add the sour cream and vanilla extract. Mix again before sifting in the dry ingredients and mixing for one more minute on medium-low speed.
7. Transfer into the prepared baking dish, then bake on the center rack for 60 minutes.
8. Allow to cool in the pan for 20 minutes before carefully removing. Cool on a wire rack for at least one hour (preferably three hours).

For the Grilling

1. Add the plums to a medium-sized bowl and toss in the sugar and one tablespoon of melted butter. Then, wrap the plums in aluminum foil and set to the side.
2. Slice the cooled pound cake into eight even pieces. Brush the other two tablespoons of melted butter over each side of the sliced pound cake pieces.
3. Preheat the grill on medium-high heat and lightly oil.
4. Reduce the heat of the grill to medium-low and place the pound cake on top. Grill each side for one minute. Then remove and allow to cool.
5. Oil the grate again and repeat with the rest of the pieces.
6. Place the foil-wrapped plums on the grill and cook for two minutes.
7. Spoon the cooked plums over the grilled pound cake and top with whipped cream and fresh mint.

grilled Pound Cake With Plums

Pound cake will never be the same after trying this unique recipe. The sweetness of the cake combined with the smokiness of the grill and soft plums makes for one irresistible bite.



Prep Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 60 minutes
Inactive Time: 60 minutes
Yield: 8 servings



bread pudding with Peaches

If you love fresh peaches and soft bread pudding, then this recipe is for you. This delectable recipe has sweet hints of cinnamon and a light smokey flavor from the grill that makes it the perfect dessert for summer!

Prep Time: 15 minutes | **Cook Time:** 30 minutes
Yield: 10 servings


INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 large peaches, pitted and sliced
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. nutmeg
- 1 c. whole milk
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 16 oz. brioche bread loaf, cut into 1" cubes
- Powdered sugar for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the grill on medium-high heat and grease a 9x13" ceramic baking dish.
2. Slice the peaches and remove the pits, then place them in a medium-sized bowl with the cornstarch, lemon juice, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg.
3. Stir to combine, then allow them to sit.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together the milk, eggs, cane sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract.
5. Add the bread cubes to the greased baking dish and pour the milk and egg mixture over the bread.
6. Carefully use a spatula to fold in the bread cubes to ensure each one is coated in the mixture. Allow to sit for five minutes for the bread to absorb.
7. After the allotted time, spoon the peaches over the bread.
8. Cover the dish with foil and place on the grill.
9. Cover and allow to cook for 30 minutes.
10. Cool for 10 minutes before dusting with powdered sugar and serving!





Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 25 minutes
Yield: 8 servings

s'mores Pizza

Are you ready to feel like a kid again? This s'mores pizza combines two of the best summer foods to make one delicious dessert!

INGREDIENTS

For the Pizza Dough

- 1 c. warm water (roughly 105° F)
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 2¼ tsp. active dry yeast
- 3 c. all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¼ c. olive oil, plus more for kneading
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 tsp. apple cider vinegar

For S'mores

- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- ¾ c. peanut butter
- 2 c. chocolate chips
- 1 c. white chocolate chips
- 1¾ c. mini marshmallows
- 4 honey graham crackers, crushed

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Pizza Dough

1. Preheat the grill to 450° F and grease a 12" cast-iron skillet pan.
2. Heat the water in a glass bowl, then stir in the sugar until dissolved.
3. Add the instant yeast. Gently stir then allow to sit for eight minutes. The yeast will begin to activate and look foamy and smell beer-like.
4. Combine the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl. Once the yeast has activated and sat for the allotted time, add to the large bowl.
5. Use an electric mixer or stand mixer with hook attachment to combine the two.
6. Add in the olive oil, egg and apple cider vinegar.
7. Then knead the mixture for six minutes. If you're using your hands, you will need more olive oil to prevent the dough from sticking to your hands.
8. Transfer the ball of dough to the greased pan that has lightly been dusted with flour. Use your fingers or an oiled spatula to work into a circle the size of the pan, roughly 10-12 inches.
9. Grill for three minutes, then remove from the grill.

For the S'mores

1. Brush one tablespoon of the melted butter over the pizza, then spread the peanut butter over the entirety of the crust.
2. Spread the dark and white chocolate chips, marshmallows and graham crackers across.
3. Place on the grill and bake for 10 minutes.
4. Allow to cool before cutting into slices and serving.



THRIFTOLOGY

Thriftling is a unique way to discover hidden gems, update your style and lessen your impact on the environment. However, navigating your first thrift store visit can be a bit overwhelming. To master the art of thrifting and fill your cart with valuable finds, follow these savvy tips.



Clear Your Closet

Sorting through the clothes you currently have and donating anything you haven't worn in a while will help give you a better idea of what you might need and make more space for your thrift haul.

Make a Plan

Entering a thrift store without a clear purpose can lead to aimless wandering and an empty wallet. While you don't want to get stuck searching for something extremely specific, having a general idea of what you are looking for will help keep you focused and prevent your cart from overflowing with unnecessary treasures. With a plan in hand, you can swiftly scan the aisles, skipping over anything that isn't what you have in mind.

Dress for Success

Since many thrift stores don't have fitting rooms and don't accept returns, consider wearing easy-to-remove layers and slip-on shoes to try clothes without fuss.

Go Often

Thrifting is a treasure hunt, and hidden gems are rarely found on the first try. Thrift shops put out new inventory regularly, so frequent visits will increase your chances of discovering your sought-after items. While it does take a little bit of persistence, just think of it as part of the experience. You can also ask employees when they restock to better plan your trips.

Each Store Is Unique

No two thrift stores are the same. Some may carry more trendy and modern items while others sell a wide variety of styles. Following shops on social media can give you a better sense of what they specialize in and even let you see a sneak peek at any good finds they might currently have.



Ditch the Credit Card

"But it's only \$2!" can quickly add up during a day of thrifting. Set a budget before leaving home and stick to it by only bringing cash with you. This limitation will help determine what you love and what you can do without.

Beware of Impulse Buys

It can be easy to get caught up in the thrill of a good find; however, you don't have to buy something just because it's cheap. Before you put it in your cart, ask yourself:

- When and where would you wear the item?
- Do you already have something similar in your closet?
- Do you have complementary pieces to wear with it?

Know Your Measurements

Don't turn down a rack just because it's not labeled your size. Items can end up in the wrong spot, or tags might be missing, making it challenging to determine the size. If you see something you like, give it a try.



Check the Go-Back Rack

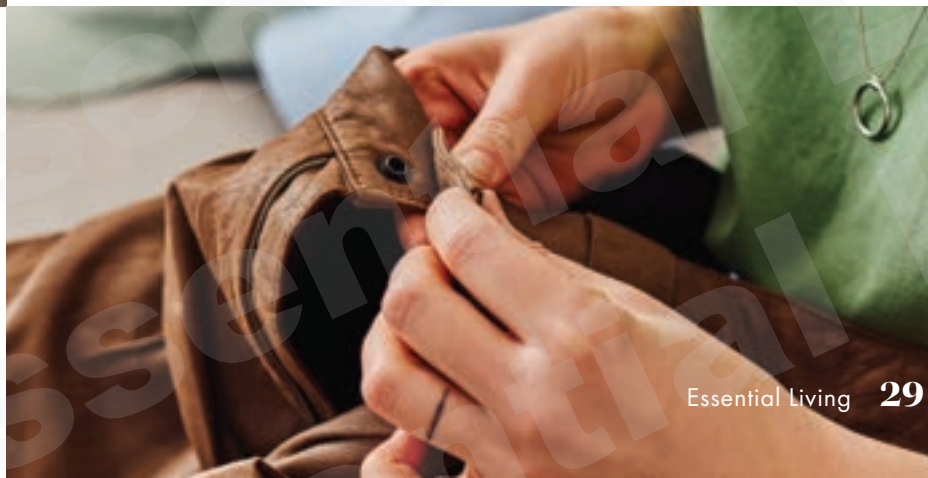
If the thrift store has a fitting room, there is probably a "go-back rack" nearby. Take advantage of the work fellow shoppers have already done by looking through the clothing they loved enough to try on.

Learn Quality

Highly sought-after designer brands and high-quality pieces are often hidden among fast-fashion labels and synthetic materials. Becoming familiar with natural fabrics and other top-quality materials will help make you look like a million bucks for a fraction of the cost.

Look Before You Buy

Before making a purchase, give all the items a thorough inspection. For clothing, make sure zippers work, buttons are intact and there are no stains or signs of heavy wear. Although some imperfections can be repaired, consider whether it's worth the effort.



Thrifting takes planning, patience and some self-control but with a few tips and tricks, you'll be thrifting like a pro in no time.



The Allure of Orchids

A BOTANICAL WONDERLAND

The Orchidaceae family is the largest in the plant kingdom, with estimates of nearly 30,000 species and counting, and that's without including the more than 100,000 artificial hybrids. From the brilliant and tropical *Cattleya* orchids to the delicate and alpine *Calypso* orchids, these plants are as diverse as they are fascinating.



The Most Expensive

Orchid in the World

The Rothschild's slipper orchid, also known as the Gold of Kinabalu, is a botanical jewel native only to the low slopes of Mount Kinabalu in North Borneo at an altitude of 500-1200 meters.

The Largest

Orchid in the World

The tiger orchid is the largest orchid species in the world, with their flower stalks growing up to six feet long!

The Smallest

Orchid in the World

Found in Brazil, the *Campylocentrum insulare* measures only .5 millimeters across and was originally believed to be a fungus until it was studied under a microscope.

Orchidelirium refers to a time in the Victorian era when the upper class was obsessed with collecting and discovering rare orchids.

A single orchid pod holds millions of seeds, with only a small fraction becoming mature plants.

Some orchids can bloom for months, while others only bloom for a few short hours.

It takes orchids at least 5-7 years before they have their first flower.

Orchid blossoms appear in almost every imaginable color except for true black.



Orchids Around the World

Orchids are found on all continents except Antarctica, from the Arctic Circle all the way down to Tierra del Fuego and Macquarie Island in the south.

Colombia is home to the greatest number of orchid species in the world.

Europe has the smallest number of orchid species of all the continents, with only around 180.

Native to the tropical rainforests of Mexico, Central America and northern South America, the Vanilla orchid is the only orchid that produces an edible fruit.



Orchids in America

North America has over 200 native species, many of which are threatened or endangered.

Orchids can be found in every state.

The moth orchid is one of the most commonly sold orchids in America.

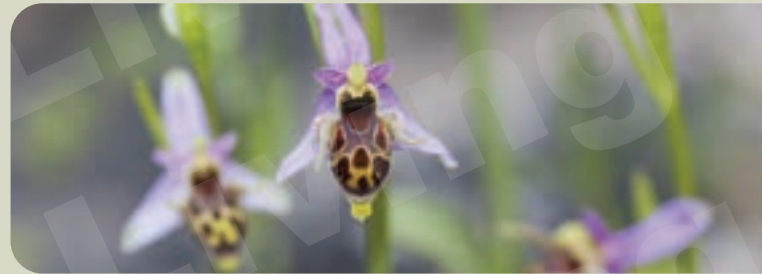
The showy lady slipper orchid is the state flower of Minnesota.

About 50% of North America's orchid species are found in Florida.



Masters of Mimicry

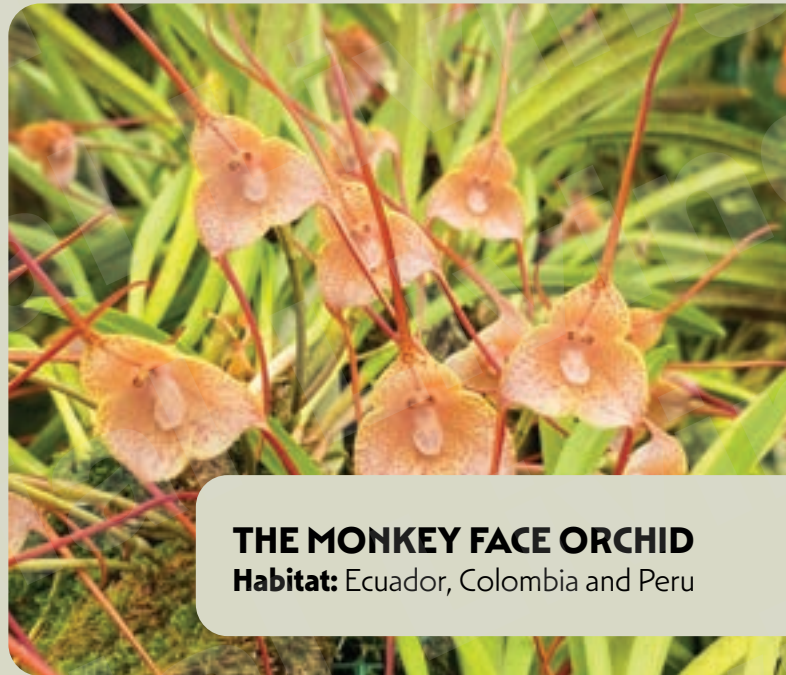
Orchids can be quite deceitful, making themselves smell or look like female bees from particular pollinator species in order to attract the males. While orchids may not intentionally trick humans, many species will make you do a double take!



THE WHITE EGRET ORCHID

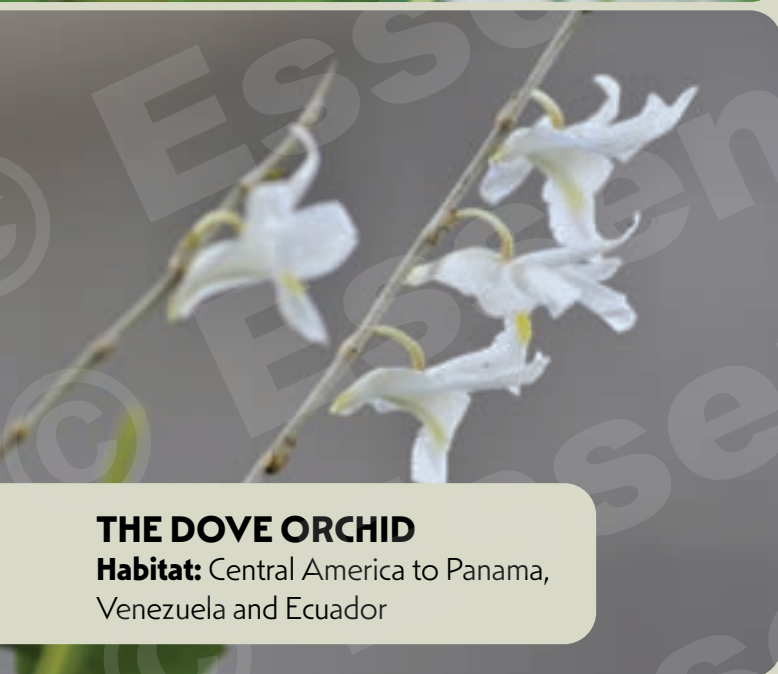
Habitat:

Japan, Korea and China



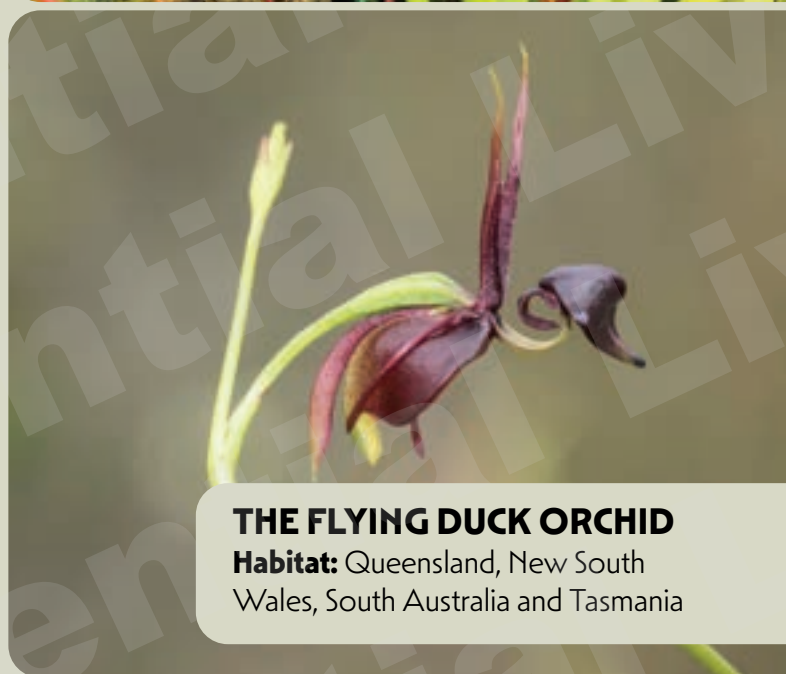
THE MONKEY FACE ORCHID

Habitat: Ecuador, Colombia and Peru



THE DOVE ORCHID

Habitat: Central America to Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador



THE FLYING DUCK ORCHID

Habitat: Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania



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COMMON KITCHEN CONVERSIONS REFERENCE CARD

1 Gallon =
4 quarts
8 pints
16 cups

1 Quart =
2 pints
4 cups
32 ounces

1 Pint =
2 cups
16 ounces

1 Cup =
8 ounces
16 tablespoons

½ Cup =
8 tablespoons
24 teaspoons

¼ Cup =
4 tablespoons
12 teaspoons
2 ounces

1 Tablespoon =
3 teaspoons
½ ounce

OVERLOADED S'MORES POPCORN



COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES

YIELD: 10 CUPS

TWO CLASSIC TREATS IN ONE!

INGREDIENTS

- 10 c. caramel popped popcorn, homemade or store-bought
- 2 c. Golden Grahams cereal
- 2 c. mini marshmallows
- 1 c. chocolate chips, melted + ½ cup for add-ins

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine the popcorn and Golden Grahams cereal.
2. On a large piece of parchment paper, drizzle the melted chocolate chips. Immediately spread the popcorn mixture over top, making a single layer. Let harden.
3. Break the mixture into pieces and add in mini marshmallows and chocolate chips.
4. Transfer to a bowl and serve!



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NO-BAKE PEANUT BUTTER OAT SQUARES



INGREDIENTS

- 2 c. creamy peanut butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. honey
- 3 c. rolled oats

Prep time: 10 minutes

Chill time: 1 hour

Servings: 16

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan, melt peanut butter and honey together over medium heat.
2. Remove from heat and stir in oats until fully combined.
3. Press into an 8x8 pan lined with parchment paper.
4. Place in refrigerator until firm, about an hour. Slice and serve!



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