



**The
Antique
Advantage**
Your guide to the
virtues of vintage
jewelry **D3**

OFF DUTY

**A Premium
Debate**
To paraphrase
Gertrude Stein,
gas is gas is gas...
or is it? **D11**



FASHION | FOOD | DESIGN | TRAVEL | GEAR

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Saturday/Sunday, November 4 - 5, 2023 | **D1**

SLAY THE FEAST

How to host Thanksgiving without losing your cool?
With pro tips and foolproof recipes from top caterers, you
can de-stress the prep and actually enjoy the holiday.

You got
this!

F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. FOOD AND PROP STYLING BY MIEKO TAKAHASHI. ISTOCK (SAGE)

By KATHLEEN SQUIRES

BLAME NORMAN Rockwell. For eight decades now, his 1943 painting “Freedom From Want” has set an impossible aspirational standard for the Thanksgiving meal. This canvas has imprinted generations of Americans with the image of a proud matriarch setting a perfectly burnished turkey before her intensely appreciative and apparently conflict-free family. Let’s be honest: Actual Thanksgiving tables tend to be commandeered by those two perennial guests, Stress and Anxiety. This year, let’s disinvite them.

To that end, we’ve assembled a team of top caterers from around the country to share their secrets. Years of experience have left them unintimidated and utterly efficient when it comes to feeding a crowd. Read on to find their pro tips for preserving sanity, grace and gratitude as you stage the holiday feast.



Chris Valdes | *Chris Valdes
Catering, Miami*

Make a plan and write it down.

“Take an old-school pen and piece of paper and make a list of all your dishes. Note how long they take to make, what needs to be in the oven when, what you can make ahead of time and what you can make the day of. Make a good plan on timing and follow it. Don’t forget to leave plenty of room for surprises in the schedule. I find that if I write everything down, I won’t forget anything.”

Stick to what you know. “Don’t make it for the first time on Thanksgiving Day. If there is a new recipe you want to try, make sure you test it out and are completely comfortable making it before the holiday. The most successful dishes are always the tried and true.”

It’s OK to cut some corners. “Not everything needs to

be made from scratch! Premade pie crusts, packaged bread or precut vegetables can make cooking a lot easier. There’s nothing wrong with buying a premade turkey and warming it up, if you wish.”

Use chafing dishes. “Chafing dishes keep things warm without taking up space in the oven. Invest in them or rent them. They are great for mac and cheese, mashed potatoes, vegetables or even turkey.”

Allow for some DIY. “I put things like cheese, dressings, nuts and croutons on the side so people can assemble a dish according to their dietary needs.”

Be kind to you. “It’s important to not put too much pressure on yourself and make sure you enjoy the day and the meal, too. You don’t want to be the guy sitting at the table at the end of the night, picking at pecans from the top of the pie, too exhausted to eat anything else. Smile, spread good vibes, enjoy being with your friends and family.”

Please turn to page D10

▲ COUNTDOWN TO CARVING

Cooking for Thanksgiving doesn’t have to equal anxiety. Our team of catering pros have mastered the art of feeding a crowd efficiently, with no last-minute meltdowns.

Inside

FLOCKS AROUND THE CLOCK

In Colombia, one
birder finds,
species seem to
seek *you* out **D6**



THE LONG, GOOD BUY

To their credit, this season’s very lengthy coats don’t know where to stop **D4**



IN DEFENSE OF SWEET

Some view dry wines as sophisticated and shun the more sugary. Some are wrong. **D9**



MOVES YOU CAN USE

Not all décor upgrades cost an armchair and a cabriole leg. These are sub-\$150. **D7**

STYLE & FASHION



GETTY IMAGES (2)

HELLO, MOTO / PRE-BEAT-UP LEATHER JACKETS TO ADD INSTANT EDGE TO YOUR OUTFIT



Distress Yourself
Worn Design Leather Jacket,
\$590, [ModaOperandi.com](#)



Crop 'Till You Drop
Leather Biker Jacket, \$1,195,
[HelmutLang.com](#)



Aged Gracefully
Cropped Leather Jacket,
\$1,950, [AcneStudios.com](#)



It's a Big Deal
Oversize Leather Biker Jacket,
\$568, [Madewell.com](#)

luxury label Balmain and mass retailer River Island. “It’s a little bit like jeans,” said Los Angeles stylist and fashion consultant Joe Zee of the artful distressing applied to such coats.

Both new and vintage iterations have their pros. Easily procured, a fresh-off-the-rack jacket gets points for convenience. But vintage motos can be “more durable and warmer [because] a lot of them were built for riding motorcycles,” argued Maria Eisen, the owner of Reckless Daughter, a vintage shop in Woodstock, N.Y., that supplies designers and collectors with archival leather jackets. She recommends knowing your measurements, “especially shoulder and bust,” before buying a vintage piece online.

How to keep your distressed leather jacket on the glam side of gritty—whether you bought it new or unearthed it from the Fonz’s heyday? The first rule: Size matters. “The volume of a leather jacket dictates what you should pair it with,” said Gaëlle Drevet, the New York-based Parisian founder of the brand Frankie Shop, whose personal moto collection includes both her own designs and flea-market finds. For a going-out look, she likes to style a shrunken topper with

slinky dresses or miniskirts. With a roomy jacket like Hadid’s, she relies on two formulas: She’ll wear it over wide, straight-leg trousers for the office, or “jazz it up with a pencil skirt for a more sophisticated look” at night.

Other styling strategies: Zee recommends trying an oversize ‘90s-ish hide with a miniskirt and T-shirt, or with a tight tank and baggy jeans. Meanwhile, Mellis thinks bigger. She likes to combine

‘At this point, it’s a classic. And it’s also quite badass.’

BY FARAN KRENTCIL

ON AN OCTOBER afternoon during Paris fashion week, model Gigi Hadid was spotted in a beat-up leather jacket. Did she pull it from the mother lode of vintage clothes in her famous-model mom’s closet? *Mais non!* The pre-distressed bomber (above) came from reliable chain store Mango and can be yours for \$600, according to the brand’s website.

“It’s funny. When that happened, people said the leather moto jacket is ‘back,’” mused Elaine Mellis, a San Francisco art advisor and a fan of well-worn hide. Indeed, the jackets never went anywhere—they’ve

just re-entered the spotlight thanks to brands such as Saint Laurent and Prada, which showed faded versions on their fall and spring runways, respectively. “People love to make them look ‘vintage.’ But good ones *are* vintage,” argued Mellis. “Some of mine have been around for decades.”

Women’s fashion notably embraced bomber jackets in the 1940s, when pinup model Bettie Page wore them to cheer on the troops. (Marilyn Monroe later did the same on a Korean USO tour.) Musicians such as Janis Joplin and Cher wore battered biker jackets on stage in the ‘70s and ‘80s. In a pre-2000 resurgence, upstart stars like Winona Ryder (pictured, right) and Juliette Lewis sported them on

red carpets with jeans and graphic T-shirts, amid older actresses in cocktail dresses and heels. Mellis recalls artist Jean-Michel Basquiat wearing his own version of the jacket, which soon migrated to then-girlfriend Madonna. And the late Karl Lagerfeld reimagined the style for Chanel in 1991.

Today, according to fashion retail database Lyst, you can contemplate hundreds of beat-up leather-jacket models from brands such as French



FAIR-LEATHER FRIENDS Winona Ryder in then-beau Johnny Depp’s jacket in 1990.

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STYLE & FASHION



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The Palms by Edward Borgo
18k Recycled-gold Ring
With 2.35-carat Antique
Diamond, \$115,310, *Bergdorf
Goodman, 212-753-7300*



▲
Early 2000s Acrylic, Crystal
and 14k-gold-plated-brass
Bracelet, \$425,
RoxanneAssoulin.com



▲
Modernist Silver Adjustable Necklace,
\$725, *OldJewelry.net*



▲
Victorian Diamond, Enamel
and 18k-gold Ring, \$2,700,
TheOneLoveNyc.com



▲
Chrysoprase and
Diamond Earrings,
Made from a c. 1880
Brooch, \$2,995,
ErieBasin.com

The Old And the Beautiful

Vintage jewelry is in high demand for its craftsmanship, its comforting ties to the past and—let’s be honest—the bragging rights of owning something no one else has

By FIORELLA VALDESOLO

IN 2006, when antique jewelry dealer Erie Basin first opened in Red Hook, Brooklyn, customers were coveting Georgian and Victorian pieces, said founder Russell Whitmore. Their thirst shifted to art deco in the 2010s. “Now I don’t see interest in any particular era as much as a desire for rareness,” said Whitmore. “Buyers are seeking out things they haven’t seen before.” Among the items he says have recently garnered feverish admiration on the dealer’s Instagram page: a surrealist 1970s ring shaped like a hand; a 19th-century wedding band engraved with stars; and a sculptural gold band by the Mexican modernist jeweler Antonio Pineda.

Interest has been growing both for vintage jewelry and new pieces fashioned from repurposed stones. See the chrysoprase-and-diamond earrings (above, far right), a makeover of a 19th-century brooch. One catalyst: “Buying vintage aligns with conscious consumerism,” said Mia Moross, founder of jewelry retailer the One I Love NYC. The market for old adornments over new, she pointed out, offers “sustainable and ethically responsible options.”

That thinking informed Los Angeles designer Eddie Borgo’s newly launched the Palms collec-

tion, which nestles rare, vintage diamonds in ornate filigrees of 18k recycled gold. “Plenty of wonderful, unique diamonds exist on the planet and can be upcycled,” said Borgo, who works with an antique-diamond dealer to find one-of-a-kind stones in striking cuts, many of which today’s stone-shaping technology can’t achieve. “Why would we not use them if we’re able to?” Borgo asked.

“People like scarcity,” said New York jewelry designer Roxanne Assoulin, underscoring Whitmore’s



ELDERLY ACCESSORIES Sarah Burns with vintage wares in her New York store, Old Jewelry.

observation that shoppers crave one-of-a-kind pieces—whether attending a gala or posting on Instagram. Assoulin found a way to sate her clients’ hunger for singularity and celebrate her brand’s 40th anniversary. Her Out of Hibernation collection comprises 13 one-off pieces from her personal archive that she created in the 1990s and early 2000s. Among them: a pyramid bracelet (above) inspired by a long-ago find from the Brimfield Antique Flea Market in Brimfield, Mass. Cast in acrylic that resembles emeralds, the 14k-gold-plated bracelet is hand-soldered and, thus, incredibly lightweight.

Naturally, vintage adornments’ prices vary drastically depending on the material, designer, age and rarity. An unattributed crystal design from the ‘60s, for instance, would cost far less than a certified Cartier diamond ring from 1920. New York store Old Jewelry, opened last year by Sarah Burns and Adam Caillier, predominantly sells vintage silver styles (like the modernist necklace above). Their prices range from about \$95 to \$1,200. “Because the coolest things tend to sell fast, we offer layaway,” said Burns. “That allows you to call ‘dibs’ on a piece for a deposit.”

If you’re new to shopping for jewelry that’s either antique or vintage (the former, said New York jewelry historian Marion Fasel, is at least 100 years old, the

latter at least 20), start with reputable stores and dealers. Savvy buyers, though, can find dynamite designs, and bargains, at auctions and estate sales.

Pieces aren’t always the legitimate examples of a style or era a dealer claims them to be. To avoid getting scammed, New York gemologist and historian Anna Rasche suggests researching jewelry styles and periods you admire by digging into a book like “7,000 Years of Jewelry” by Hugh Tate, or scanning the online Antique

‘I don’t see interest in a particular era as much as a desire for rareness. Buyers seek out things they haven’t seen before.’

Jewelry University, run by San Francisco’s Lang Antiques.

Instagram, however, has transformed the vintage jewelry business and a buyer’s reach, said Fasel. The awareness and visibility social media provides are at least partially fueling vintage’s present popularity. “You can scroll through your phone and find any number of cool pieces,” said Rasche.

Ask Tania Dunlop, 52, a contracts manager in Calgary, Canada,

who keeps her eyes peeled for Victorian-era snake rings and feminine art nouveau confections. Dunlop has bought a bevy of pieces off Instagram from sellers such as Estate Jewelry Mama, Fortune Baby, and the Fab Nab. “It’s like-minded people right at my fingertips,” she said.

Look for established accounts (many are attached to retail stores), ask questions and request to see videos to gauge an item’s condition before buying. “It’s very important to trust the person you are buying from,” said Angela Sheldon, 58, a senior educator at the New-York Historical Society who has been ardently collecting everything from Victorian mourning jewelry to art deco rings since the early ‘90s.

“The handmade craftsmanship of antique jewelry is amazing,” said Sheldon, adding that she loves buying items that other people have used. Old baubles might also appeal to shoppers’ notions of a more stable world, said Whitmore. “With uncertain times comes nostalgia for the past, and there’s a comfort in old things.” But even with all the respectable rationales for buying vintage, from sustainability to thoughtful connections to the past, it’s the “mine, all mine!” factor that truly drives the trend. As Rasche put it, “How fun is it to have a piece that nobody else can ever have?”

MONTBLANC

1858 Iced Sea

Playing the Long Game

Elegant, ankle-length coats swept magisterially down runways—but can a regular guy avoid getting lost in them?

By CHARLIE TEASDALE

THE STYLE powers that be have decided it's time for menswear to go long. Really long. Excessive volume has been on-trend for a while, but the expansion has generally been outward, not down. Now, designers are elongating everything from knits to shirts, but the main event is sidewalk-skimming coats. Extra-long styles dominated the fall shows in January, casting heavy shadows on runways from Saint Laurent to Loewe. Covering those collections, this newspaper enthused over such "stately" outerwear. With fall here, I wanted to see if this elongated ele-

In the supermarket I struggled to reach for a jar of mayo, but no matter: I was a Hanoverian prince.

gance translated to the real world. Would the coats' hems gather grime on a subway platform or catch in a taxi's door? More important: Would I—a 5-foot-11 man in his mid-30s, not a lanky, boyish model—just look ridiculous in designs that stretched to my ankles? To find out, I borrowed six

very long coats from a range of brands and wore them around London, where I live. I started with a supermarket run in a **double-breasted wool coat by French brand Ami (\$2,510)**. This navy coat resembles one any guy might already own, only *more*. Broad shoulders, capacious sleeves, interminable hem. Its volume granted me old-world glamour. I felt regal and cocooned drifting through the aisles—albeit a bit cumbersome, aware my coattails were at risk of clearing the lowest shelves of their stock. Unable to move completely freely under its heft, I struggled to reach for a mayo jar. But no matter: I was a Hanoverian prince. According to Olie Arnold, style director of e-retailer Mr Porter, this new augmented outerwear could be a backlash to the trend for hyped, logo-fueled clothing that came before. Coats have become "more muted and tasteful," he said, but to ensure the designs remain "directional" (that's fashion speak for "fashionably unusual"), "proportion comes into play." The proportions of my next test-robe, an **off-white, padded Gucci coat (\$4,900, see bottom right)**, rivaled those of a bride figurine's gown on a wedding cake. Light and puffy, it poured (almost) to the ground like whipping cream. When I took it for a stroll I turned up its collar and cinched in the waist, only slightly wor-



HOW LOW YOU SHOULD GO? Above: Four views of our writer's pick of the lengthy coats he tried. \$538, California-Arts.com

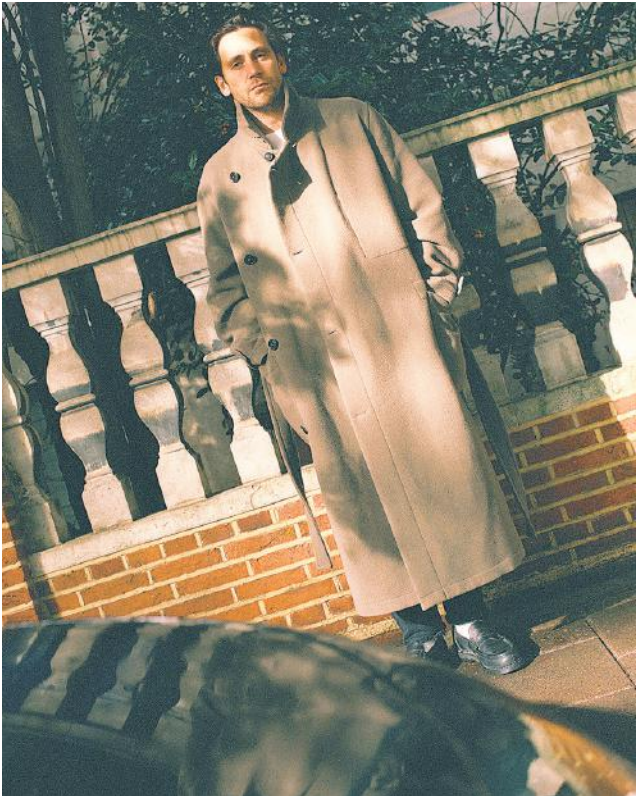


VICKI KING OF JONES MGMT FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

ried I might take flight should a stiff breeze catch me. While I found this wind-resistant coat gloriously warm, the builders outside my local pub found it hilarious, guffawing as I passed. A **brushed-wool coat from Sweden's Acne Studios (\$1,550)** gave my girlfriend "Dracula vibes." She called

the shaggy, hooded design "gothic and sexy," which I'll claim as a win, though I'm not sure that's the mood I want to channel long-term. A **"technical" trench by Zara (\$169)** beat the rest for no-nonsense function. Lightweight despite its length, and water-resistant, it excelled on a rainy day of meetings around town. Unstructured coats with broad lapels like this look great over tailoring. When I topped a suit with it for a dinner, the *maitre d'* praised my outfit, inquiring if the coat was Burberry. I felt like some coats were wearing me—but not so with the **wool wrap coat from France's Lemaire (\$1,590, see right)**. Streamlined and bathrobe-like, it oozed Parisian elegance. Teaming it with black jeans and loafers, I felt like I was wandering the Rive Gauche in the wee hours of the morning, brooding, wistful, *soignée*.

Edging it out as my top pick? The **navy Manhattan coat by fledgling Los Angeles brand California Arts (\$538, see above)**. Inspired by '80s and '90s power dressing, this broad-shouldered design hits mid-shin. The kind of thing Michael Douglas might have worn in "Wall Street," it delivers serious uptown steez yet stops short of screaming "Fashion Coat!" Dressy and well-priced, the double-breasted number boasts welt pockets on the front and hidden side pockets, so you can carry things in the former and warm your hands in the latter. "Practicality is super important," said the brand's founder Gary Tam. "When I'm designing, I'm thinking about where, and how often, someone will be wearing the piece." Crucially, in this coat, I felt swaddled, not swamped. Noting the risks of being swallowed by your style statement, Catherine Hayward, a London fashion editor and stylist, sounds a warning for shorter guys. "I do think you need some height to carry off a long coat, otherwise you end up looking like Cousin Itt," she said, referencing the character from "The Addams Family" whose floor-length wall of hair obscures his form. Men of average or below-average height will find more success with a coat that ends around the knees, says Hayward. "Those few inches make a difference." A footnote: All the coats I tried pooled on the floor when hung off the backs of chairs at pubs and restau-



Above: A winning coat that oozed Parisian nonchalance. \$1,590, *us.Lemaire.fr*. Below: In this padded coat, the writer worried that he might take off if the wind caught its kite-like expanse. \$4,900, *Gucci.com*



rants. Though not necessarily a deal breaker, be aware that the surfeit of fabric can just get in the way. "It takes a bit of getting used to, right?" said Arnold. He will wear a long coat, provided it's the only over-size component in an outfit. "Playing with scale is a great way to dress," he said, but "I wouldn't necessarily wear a massive coat, massive trou-

sers and a huge shirt." Coats like these are anathema to most men, suggested Arnold, since we've always been told how things should fit. "It feels like we're rubbing that now by going, 'Buy a coat that's [seemingly] two sizes too big.'" In theory I agree. But then I put on the shin-brushing, Gordon Gekko-like Manhattan coat, and everything just made sense.

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ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Early Departures

Toddlers and travel? Even if the benefits aren’t clear immediately, there’s value in taking kids along.

By JORDI LIPPE-McGraw

MY SON Wilder’s passport rivals that of even the most seasoned travelers, with stamps from 23 countries on five continents—and he’s only five. Rather than leaving him at home, I often take him with me on the adventures my work as a travel writer requires. We’ve gone on safari in Zambia and swum with sea lions in the Galápagos. While a joy in the moment, our travels often provoke people to ask: “Why take him on these extravagant trips if he won’t remember them when he’s older?”

Why take your kids on global adventures if they won’t remember them?

The question reminds me of my own childhood travels. I have little recollection of some of the places I see in family photos, even if fragmented images of beach days and snippets of a song from a hotel kids’ club in Hawaii do occasionally surface. What is the value of travel for a young mind, when so much disappears with time? Los Angeles couple Al and Katie Provinziano have grappled with the same question when taking trips to places like Croatia and Mexico with their children, aged five and six. “I always encounter skeptics claiming that taking my

kids on elaborate trips is a waste of time and energy when they won’t remember,” said Katie, who’s traveled with her sons since they were six months old. “And it’s challenging sometimes.” Adventuring with a pint-size partner takes a certain level of fortitude. Meltdowns at 30,000 feet. Battles over bedtime as jet lag takes its toll. Packing alone feels like preparing for a lunar landing. It can make it easy to throw up your hands and stay at home. According to experts, travel unlocks many advantages for children, though not always immediately visible. Dr. Hedy Keiderling, a child psychologist, says the steady stream of teachable moments that arise during travel lay a foundation for empathy and patience.

“Between birth and five is when you have the biggest cognitive development in a child’s brain,” said Keiderling. “So exposure to different cultures, foods, languages and scenarios, like a toddler learning to be aware of others on a plane, helps their cognitive skills grow.”

Wilder adapts easily, befriending kids who don’t speak English and taking malaria pills like a champ. And Jo Piazza, an author and mom of three from Philadelphia who traveled to Italy and Spain with her kids ranging from nine months to six years old, also noticed an openness to the new and unfamiliar. “They have a curiosity about the world that I didn’t have at their age,” she said.

A big part of why I’m so keen on



BEN KIRCHNER (ILLUSTRATION); JORDI LIPPE-McGraw



Left: The author and her son, Wilder, in Mexico City during a trip in February 2020.

traveling with Wilder: I can’t bear to lose the excitement of exploring new places, something I cherished long before I became a parent. He helps keep it alive. Family psychologist Dr. Kathryn Smerling says traveling with children can reactivate a passion for discovery that might otherwise get diluted with age. “When you look at the world through your child’s eyes, everything’s fresh and new again,” Smerling said. “It’s like

reigniting that natural curiosity and sense of wonder we all have inside.” I loved watching my son get excited about a stick while a giraffe was just a few feet away, which encouraged me to appreciate the little things. And I’ve seen his fascination with architecture come to life when visiting Dubai’s Burj Khalifa and London’s Big Ben, sparking new interests for me. Recently, I asked Wilder what he remembered about a recent trip to

Zambia. His answer: the “hilarious” tail-whipping bowel movement of a hippo we saw. This didn’t exactly inspire confidence that travel, as some claim, can cultivate empathy. But as we struggle to find seats on a crowded train or take a street-food tour in Mexico City, I take solace in knowing that these experiences and exposure to novel scenarios are broadening his mind, even if neither he nor I can pinpoint exactly how.

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ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Colombia Is for The Birders

On the northern coast, the challenge isn't finding birds—it's keeping up with the sheer volume of different species

FLIGHT PATH The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains attract hard-to-find bird species.

By Adam H. Graham

WHOEVER SAID a bird in the hand is better than two in the bush hasn't been to the cloud forests of Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains. As the 7 a.m. light breaks through the canopy near the town of Minca, I spy a keel-billed toucan croaking from a mossy pine tree. A flowerpecker darts around a giant fern, and a pair of military macaws fly in formation overhead. About a dozen species of amethyst, emerald and sapphire hummingbirds hover like bejeweled drones over a marmalade bush. The Caribbean Sea glitters far below us.

My local guide Cristian and I are standing in the driveway of Mountain House, one of many new bird-focused lodges that have popped up in the country in recent years. In just 30 minutes, we've already seen more than 20 species, most of them "lifers" to me—i.e., birds spotted for the first time.

I came to Colombia's northern Caribbean coast for a 50th birthday party celebration, where we danced at clubs in Cartagena, drank rum cocktails amid youthful crowds at beach bars and, between the revelry, explored historic sites. But after the party, I stayed on to birdwatch, a pastime that's seen a spike globally since the pandemic

supercharged people's appetite for the outdoors.

Colombia is birding heaven: Not only does it have more bird species than any other nation (1,958 and counting) but of those, 80 are endemic, found only in the country.

This was my third visit to Colombia, so I'd heard all the concerns from well-meaning friends and family. But few countries have undergone as drastic a transformation as Colombia. Over the past 25 years, it has shed its reputation for drug-related crime and cultivated a thriving environmentally focused and indigenous-led tourism industry in parts of the country that were once

In remote corners of Colombia, birders and biologists have replaced narcotraffickers and rebels.



largely off limits. In remote corners, birders and biologists have replaced guerrillas and narcotraffickers. Lodges have opened from the Amazon to the Andes promising encounters with nature still unspoiled by major development.

But you don't have to bush-whack to find birds along the coast. From Cartagena, I set out on a 25-minute speedboat ride to



Barú, a mangrove-fringed peninsula just 30 miles south of the city. Raucoous beach clubs blared salsa music as the smell of arepas, fried fish and diesel generators floated over the bay. Beyond the bars, nature lovers can find more tranquil corners, including the splashy new Sofitel Barú Calablanca Beach Resort, where each building is named after a local bird. I checked in and started exploring.

Serious birders might scoff at the idea of looking for birds in a contained environment, but my first stop was Barú's National Aviary of Colombia, an 18.5-acre refuge for birds caught up in South America's illegal animal trade. "Bird trafficking in Colombia is extreme, so we built a place to protect the birds that were captured and confiscated by the government," said Martín Pescador Vieira, the aviary's architect. "Narcos used to keep exotic animals like lions and hippos, but also parrots, macaws and toucans. Nowadays they are more discreet, so we get their abandoned pets."

In some of the birding YouTube videos I'd watched in preparation for the trip, local experts talked about how Colombia has become a destination for "comfortable birding," where guided tours start at plush lodges. During my time in Barú, I took it a step further with "lazy birding." Slightly buzzed from a cocktail made with lulo, an aromatic tropical fruit, at Sofitel's beach bar, I walked a coastal mangrove trail in my flip-flops, where ripples from the lagoon lapped over white sand. In a 30-minute beach walk, I spied a roll call of delightfully named birds: streaked flycatchers, brown-throated para-



Clockwise from top left: a bananaquit; one of the 165 species of hummingbird found in Colombia; a keel-billed toucan; Barú, near the tourist hub of Cartagena, is equal parts beach party and nature escape.

keets, bananaquits, tropical kingbirds and a black-chested jay with violet brows and a yellow-eyed stare that seemed to be judging me for having checked it off my list without even really trying.

While the beach provided a warm-up, I was looking forward to cooler temperatures and more colorful birds up in the country's mountainous cloud forests. I traveled north up the Caribbean coast toward the Venezuelan border, bringing me to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta range, the world's tallest coastal mountains, where my guide Cristian and I would experience that morning flurry of sightings.

Three hours into the 4-hour drive from Barú, the road turned into a causeway gliding over a deep blue Caribbean lagoon. On its

banks, pink flamingos stood amid 10-foot-tall cactuses. I clocked six new species from the car.

Colombia's second highest peak, Pico Simón Bolívar, soars almost 19,000 feet into the sky with snowy peaks that seem impossible so close to the sweltering Caribbean. The region was among the last refuges of the FARC guerrillas before the group officially disarmed in 2017. With this area off-limits for so long, it's no coincidence that it is where the most birds have been discovered—and rediscovered—in recent years.

Hard-core birders looking to explore the mountains will want to stay at the eco-lodges near Minca, a mountain village 30 minutes from the city of Santa Marta. But if, like me, you want your nature paired with reliable Wi-Fi and hot water, you are better off basing yourself in Santa Marta and making day trips up the mountains. Just north of the city in a palm grove on the beach sits the Hilton Santa Marta, which opened in 2023. I returned to its huge rooftop pool each evening and its 24-hour room service suited my early wake-up calls.

I stayed in Santa Marta for three nights, spending my days trekking through the nearby Tayrona National Park and up into the mountains. On my last day exploring the area around Minca I saw a staggering 58 species, including hard-to-find whooping motmots with their turquoise-dipped racket tails and a blue-naped chlorophonia, a tiny riot of greens and yellows with a flashy iridescent blue wing bar. When I tried to log the small, scruffy Santa Marta antbird, I was frustrated by my inability to find it in the bird identification app I was using. Then I learned that it's so newly classified, it hadn't even made it into the database yet.



Birders in Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains.

Birding Without Borders

Colombia is just one of many global birding hot spots. Here, five other places to train your binoculars on.

Taiwan | With 674 bird species, dense cloud forests and a touch of the tropics, Taiwan lures many a traveling twitcher. Stay deep in a hot spring valley at Hoshinoya Guguan, from a storied Japanese luxury hospitality brand, which offers guided bird walks and hot onsen baths to soak your binocs-strained necks after excursions.

Southern Arizona | Saddle up in the cacti-studded canyons and parks of this sprawling one-time cowboy hub for sightings of roadrunners, Anna's hummingbirds, verdin and Gila woodpeckers, which only

exist west of the Mississippi. The Tucson Audubon Society hosts the family-friendly Southeast Arizona Birding Festival every August, one of the country's largest, with field trips, photography workshops and guest lectures.

Papua New Guinea Highlands | It can seem like another world on David Attenborough-narrated documentaries, but Papua New Guinea is actually surprisingly accessible—and home to the world's highest concentration of birds-of-paradise, known for their flamboyant mating rituals. Visitors to Rondon Ridge



Desert birding in Arizona's Saguaro National Park.

lodge, overlooking a lush rainforest on the outskirts of the Kubor Range, have checked off 180 bird species, including 10 birds-of-paradise, not to mention

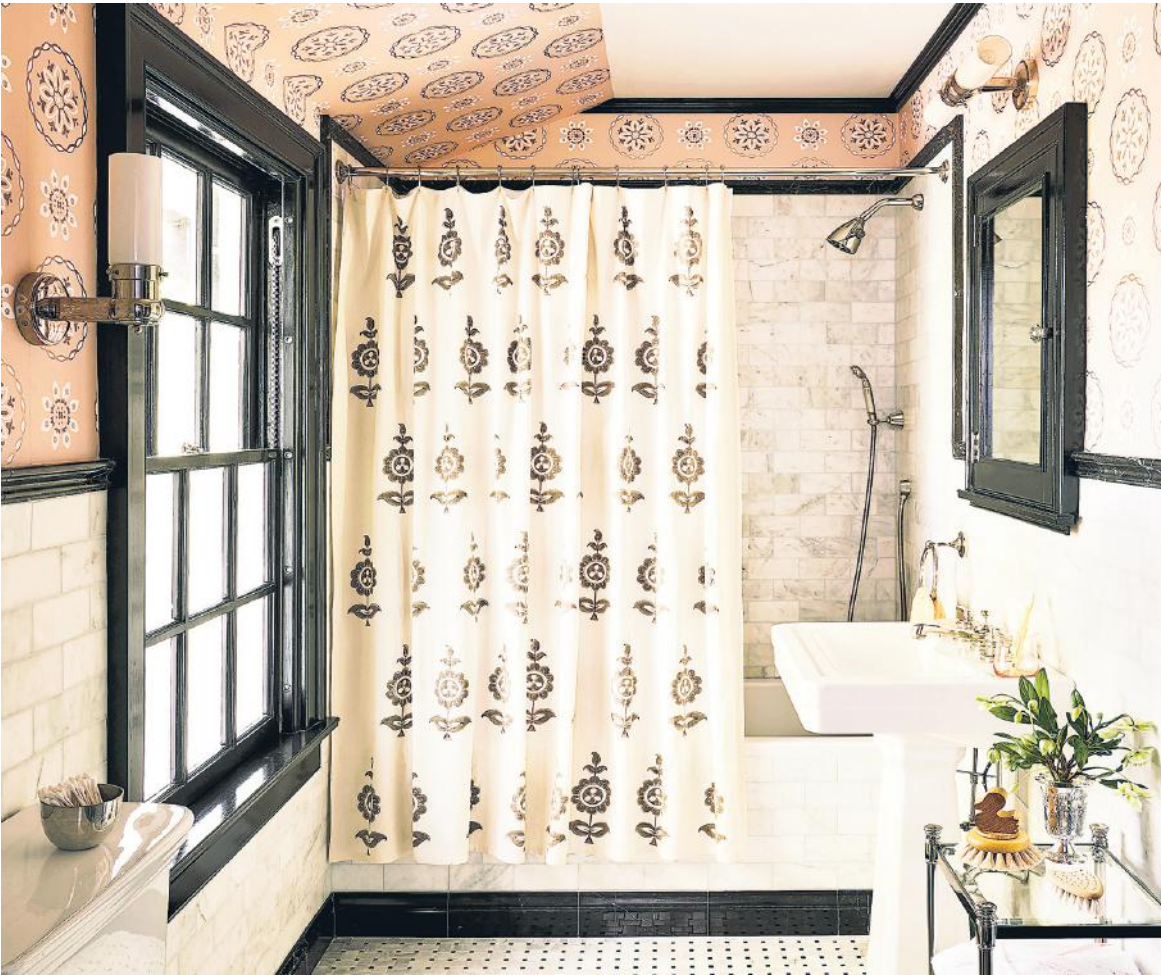
tree frogs, marsupials and nearly 100 types of orchids.

Queensland, Australia | The bridled honeyeater and the lovely fairywren are just

a few of the 684 bird species who call this northern patch of Down Under home. K'gari island's Kingfisher Bay Resort occupies a beach in the heart of dingo country, where you can see the iconic wild canines, but also numerous bird species like the endangered ground parrot and nocturnal birds like nightjars and frogmouths.

Andalusia, Spain | While Spain's nine endemics are mostly found in the Balearics and Canaries, magical Andalusia is a hotbed of biodiversity. The six stone cottages at Molino Río Alájar, 1.5 hours from Seville, are a favorite of birders who book months in advance for the ornithologist-guided walks through the Parque Natural Sierra de Aracena.

DESIGN & DECORATING



TIM WILLIAMS (BATHROOM)

Cheapskate Chic

Not all home makeovers require a contractor and a pile of cash. Here, designers share little upgrades with big impact—all for \$150 or less.

By Allison Duncan

SOMETIMES a room simply falls flat. Many villainous elements can leave a space feeling snoozy, from blah builder-grade “boob lights” on a rental’s ceiling to a dull blank wall in your forever home. “Not having a clear design direction, lacking color or texture or personal touches”—it can all be a factor, explains Toronto-based interior designer Ashley Montgomery.

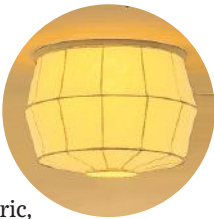
What to do if you lack the energy, or budget, to jump into a

complete design overhaul? “You don’t need to start from scratch,” assures Los Angeles-based interior designer Amber Lewis. Instead, find strategic ways to freshen up discreet parts of your home that have potential.

To get you going, we asked a panel of interior pros to share the small, meaningful moves they return to repeatedly—plus, a few budget-friendly décor pieces that can de-blah your home.

SWAP SHADES
If you’re contending with harsh overhead bulbs or dowdy recessed

lighting, a new look can transform a lackluster room fast. It was the need to disguise bare bulbs and generic, big-box-store fixtures that drove Austin, Texas-based interior designer Lori Smyth to launch Tulip, her line of stylish, low-cost, 100% cotton shades designed to conceal lame lighting and mount easily to any ceiling. Designer Leanne Ford of Pittsburgh points out that such styles can give a space a visual cen-



INSTANT SPLASH A whimsical block-printed shower curtain adds charm to a Bronxville, N.Y., bathroom by Story Street Studio.

ter. “And you don’t even need to wire anything,” she added Just as easy: Endow ho-hum table lamps with charm by swapping sad white shades for textured rattan or fabric toppers, says New York interior designer Emma Beryl. Chicago designer Leslie Martin of M+M Interior Design sings the praises of the pleated shades from British brand OKA, which start at \$60 and come in patterns like ikat and polka dots.

CREATE ROUGH EDGES
If your room has a personality deficiency, here’s another prescription: Pile on texture, suggests New York-based interior designer Katie McPherson of the firm Meyer Davis. Her tools include lime wash paints from Portola, which dry with a patina, and ring up at a wallet-friendly \$79 a gallon. “Even just painting the ceiling or one accent wall can have an immediate effect and is so cost effective,” she said. For something even less permanent, Martin recommends textured peel-and-stick wallpaper, such as Society Social’s faux grasscloth, which faithfully mimics the look and feel of the real deal. At \$50 per roll, “it’s totally affordable,” she said. Line a wan powder room, dingy cabinet fronts or the interior of a plain bookshelf for less than the price of dinner and a movie.

LOOK IN THE MIRROR
Whether oversize or petite, “mirrors can completely transform a room...by reflecting light and showcasing unexpected angles,” says New York-based designer Jacqueline Young. “Don’t be afraid to add a mirror to the bedroom,” she said. “Just try to avoid the ceiling.” Her bargain tip: The \$150 Azalea mirror from Sam’s Club dupes Anthropologie’s Gleaming Primrose mirror, a viral sensation, at roughly one third of its price.

The arched design meshes with many décor schemes and, at six-feet tall, strikes a particularly dramatic silhouette in nooks, hallways or any other dim corner that would benefit from brightening.

Just painting the ceiling or an accent wall can have an immediate effect

MAKE ART WORK
You don’t need a bag of money to build a personal art collection—just a willingness to look beyond conventional sources. “A friend of mine framed the sugar packet on which her now-husband first gave her his phone number over 20 years ago,” said Nashville-based interior designer Mary Kathryn Wells. To corral your own personal assemblages, Wells recommends IKEA’s simple Sannahed shadow box frames, which come in two sizes and start at a mere \$10. Mine stationery stores to find photo postcards for a gallery wall, or frame a striking sheet of wrapping paper, such as the high-quality reproductions of antique botanical prints or maps that San Francisco’s Cavallini & Co. sells for less than \$6 a sheet.

HANG IT UP
If a bathroom feels sterile, “we’re a fan of adding...a patterned shower curtain,” said Montgomery. Ariel Kaye, a Los Angeles-based interior expert and the founder of lifestyle brand Parachute, concurred: “The right one can really showcase your design sensibility.” Reach for Dusen Dusen’s \$56 transparent ruby tulip-dotted version for instant pop or a scalloped-edged, begonia-bedecked option from Rhode + West Elm for “vintage charm.” When it comes to sprucing up a so-so bathroom that has never yielded joy, there are few easier ways to get your feet wet.



UNDER HIS HANDLER’S GUIDANCE, HE WILL SCOUR THE DEBRIS IN SEARCH OF SURVIVORS. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE TENACITY OF A STRAY DOG



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EATING & DRINKING

ON WINE/LETTIE TEAGUE



Afraid of Sweet Wines? I’m Not.



SWEET WINES ARE NOT popular, retailers have told me over and over again. A few weeks ago, one even pantomimed a customer running away.

I like sweet wines, even if I don’t drink them as often as I do dry ones, and I usually need a reason or special occasion to try them. Two years ago, for instance, I wrote about pairing sweet wines with Thanksgiving pie. This time I decided to focus on sweet wines that are simply so good I would recommend them even to dry-wine diehards.

The definition of “sweet wine” is hardly exact. And the U.S.

doesn’t strictly define or regulate the term “dry,” either. In the EU a wine labeled dry (or sec or trocken) can have up to 9 grams per liter of residual sugar (RS) at the end of the fermentation process, during which sugar is converted to alcohol. Still, some drinkers might find a wine with 9 grams RS a bit sweet. Therein lies the challenge of parsing sweet and dry: It’s as much about perception as science.

One of the most popular methods of producing sweet wine involves interrupting the fermentation process, resulting in lower alcohol and higher residual sugar.

Adding a distilled spirit to effect this interruption results in a higher-alcohol “fortified” sweet wine such as Port or Madeira.

Sweet wine can also be made by concentrating the grape sugars before fermentation. The grapes might be left on the vine long past full ripeness, resulting in what’s known as a late-harvest wine. Botrytis cinerea, a fungus otherwise known as noble rot, draws moisture out of the grapes left on the vine, concentrating their sugars. Among wines made with botrytized grapes, Sauternes has earned the most renown. A winemaker could also leave grapes on the vine so long they

freeze, further concentrating the sugars and producing what’s known as ice wine. A third sweet-wine production method—often used in the production of cheap, supermarket-quality sweet wines, especially red blends—involves blending a sweet component such as unfermented grape juice with a dry wine, yielding a higher sugar level and lower perceived acidity.

I kept an eye on the budget for my tasting, spending no more than \$50 for my top picks, and considerably less for several. They ranged from lightly sweet to very sweet, but in every instance I looked for a bright balancing acidity to keep the wine from being cloying. I sought the sort of sweet wines that might have satisfied the late, great Bordeaux oenologist and professor Émile Peynaud, who, in his seminal book “The Taste of Wine,” wrote: “The impression left by a sweet wine should be similar to that left by eating fresh, firm grapes.”

I excluded fortified wines from my tasting, not because I don’t like them—I consider tawny Port a particular favorite—but because I’ve written separate columns about them in recent years. Including them in this column would have made my tasting and my budget too large.

Instead I focused on sweet wines such as Moscato d’Asti, one of my favorites. This semi-sparkling wine from Piedmont, Italy, should not be confused with the fully sparkling, more-commercial Italian wine Asti Spumante. I love Moscato d’Asti’s light, fizzy, effortless charm, and the fact that some serious Piedmont winemakers make it only adds to the wine’s appeal.

Winemakers traditionally produce Moscato d’Asti by stopping the fermentation partway through. Some drinkers call the results—pretty sweet (often well above 100 grams residual sugar) and low-alcohol (5-7%)—“breakfast wines.” Of the three I purchased, I particularly loved the 2022 Paolo Saracco Moscato d’Asti (\$17), a light, frothy, floaty sort of wine with wonderful aromas of spice and apricot.

My next two favorites were considerably more serious and more unctuously rich, though both were balanced by a firm mineral note: the voluptuous 2022 Domaine Huet Vouvray Le Mont Moelleux (\$47) and the beautifully focused 2020 Dr. Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese (\$45). Domaine Huet is one of the great producers of sweet Vouvray in the Loire Valley of France. The Huet was one of my favorites in the sweet-wine-and-pie-

pairing column as well.

Mosel-based Ernst Loosen, one of Germany’s top producers of Riesling, both dry and sweet, noted that wine drinkers generally misunderstand the wide range of sweetness that one can find in German Riesling. But he added that drinkers have reacted positively to the fact that Rieslings with a bit of sweetness are lower in alcohol.

His compulsively drinkable Dr. Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese was low-alcohol (8%), as were a couple of fizzy Piedmontese reds made from the Brachetto grape. Brachetto d’Acqui is a red cousin to Moscato, with the same sprightly fruitiness, and the two examples I tasted with friends inspired raves. Though I liked both the 2021 Alasia Brachetto d’Acqui (\$13) and the 2022 Braida Brachetto d’Acqui (\$27), I gave a slight edge to the Braida for a richer, more complex taste. As with Moscato, Brachetto has 100-plus grams RS and an alcohol content in the 5-7% range.

I decided to focus on sweet wines that are simply so good I would recommend them even to dry-wine diehards.

I found another sweet red particularly intriguing: the 2021 Marani Kindzmarauli (\$14) from the Telavi Wine Cellars in the country of Georgia. Produced from the native Saperavi grape, it was made by stopping fermentation partway, leaving it with 35-45 grams of residual sugar and an alcohol content just over 11%. Possessed of a brisk acidity, it was the rare sweet red I could imagine pairing with a meal. I’d recommend drinking the rest of the bottles listed below with cheese or fruit, or in the case of Moscato, the “breakfast wine,” perhaps with brunch.

This tasting was an interesting and palate-expanding exercise. I tried wines I’d never thought to try, wines I knew I loved but hadn’t returned to in too long, and wines I’ve consistently bypassed in favor of their drier counterparts. Any of my top picks would make a great choice for the holiday season—though I, for one, won’t be waiting for a special occasion to drink sweet wines again.

► Email Lettie at wine@wsj.com



OENOFILE / 5 HIGHLY APPEALING SWEET WINES

2020 Dr. Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese \$45 This rich Riesling from one of Loosen’s hallmark vineyards was made from very ripe grapes, half of which were affected by botrytis. The mineral backbone provides a powerful counterpart to the lushness of the fruit.

2022 Domaine Huet Vouvray Le Mont Moelleux \$47 This sumptuous Chenin Blanc from a top Loire producer has intense minerality and dazzling acidity to balance its sweetness. Huet proprietor Sarah Hwang likes it as an aperitif or with a meal of roasted veal.

2022 Paolo Saracco Moscato d’Asti \$17 A frothy, fizzy, low-alcohol delight. The production notes from Saracco called out the richness of this vintage and even suggested putting aside a few bottles for “at least a decade”—hard to imagine with this compulsively drinkable wine.

2021 Marani Kindzmarauli \$14 This semi-sweet red produced from the country of Georgia’s flagship red grape, Saperavi, has pleasant aromas of black and red fruit, along with a decided savory note. It pairs remarkably well with soft cheese.

2022 Braida Brachetto d’Acqui \$27 The word “fun” doesn’t show up in many tasting notes, but it’s an apt descriptor for this berry-fresh, low-alcohol red from legendary Piedmontese winemaker Giacomo Bologna, whose family has been producing Brachetto for nearly 60 years.

SLOW FOOD FAST / SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES



Sheet-Pan Citrus Chicken With Roasted Onions and Sweet Potatoes

SMOKY, TENDER and subtly spiced, this appealing sheet-pan supper—chef Dominica Rice-Cisneros’s final Slow Food Fast contribution—is a love letter to the ingredients of her Mexican-American upbringing. Through the years, she’s returned again and again to this satisfying combo of achiote-rubbed chicken thighs, onions and sweet potatoes. “I’ve made it for staff meals, dinner service, at home, for weddings,” she said. “Everybody loves it.”

What makes the dish such a keeper? The achiote, explains Rice-Cisneros. Common at Mexican grocery stores, this brick-red paste, made from annatto seeds and a mix of

spices, “adds a lot of brightness.” In a pinch, you’ll find Spanish paprika or canned chiles in adobo an acceptable, but not exact, flavor substitute. Indeed, flexibility is baked into the recipe: In lieu of orange juice, Rice-Cisneros occasionally swaps in a mild vinegar or another citrus juice. Even the chicken can be dispensed with. “I’ve used cauliflower and fish,” she said. “It all works great.”

Once you’ve blended the achiote marinade, toss the other components in it until generously coated, spread it all on a sheet pan and roast until caramelized. Add a few lime wedges and fresh cilantro and that’s it: dinner, ready to go. —*Kitty Greenwald*

Time 35 minutes
Serves 4

8 skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs
2 large sweet potatoes or yams, peeled and sliced into 1-inch wedges
1½ yellow onions, sliced into 1½-inch wedges
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
6 tablespoons achiote paste or 3 chiles in adobo
½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice
3 cloves garlic
1½ teaspoon cumin, freshly ground

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for drizzling
Lime wedges and fresh cilantro, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. Season thighs, sweet potatoes and onion with salt and pepper and arrange on pan.

2. In a blender, combine achiote paste or chiles, orange juice, garlic, cumin and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Purée until smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste and blend again, adding splashes of water as needed, until pourable.

3. Pour marinade over chicken and vegetables to generously coat. Toss well. Arrange thighs skin side up and spread all ingredients out on the pan so as not to overcrowd. (Reserve any leftover marinade for future use.)

4. Cover pan with aluminum foil and slide onto top rack of oven. Roast 15 minutes, then remove and discard foil. Continue roasting until chicken cooks through, skin crisps and vegetables are tender, 10-15 minutes more. Drizzle with olive oil and garnish with lime wedges and cilantro, if desired.



THE SPICE IS RIGHT Brightly colored and boldly flavored, achiote paste lends this simple chicken supper a satisfying, earthy depth.

EATING & DRINKING



F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. FOOD AND PROP STYLING BY MIEKO TAKAHASHI; STOCK (CAULIFLOWER, COLLARD GREENS, APPLES)

DOUBLE DUTY This delicious cauliflower casserole is a real workhorse, satisfying carnivores as a side dish and vegetarians as a main.

Crowd-Pleasing Cauliflower Casserole

This pretty casserole of multicolored cauliflower can serve as a side or a hearty vegetarian main.

Total Time: 1½ hours
Serves: 4-6

- 2 cups yellow cauliflower florets
- 2 cups purple cauliflower florets
- 2 cups white cauliflower florets
- 2 cups green cauliflower florets
- ½ cup olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound spinach, chopped
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 2 cups sliced white onions
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. On a sheet pan,

toss cauliflower with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Roast in oven until lightly golden brown, 10-15 minutes.
2. Remove cauliflower from oven and mix in spinach. (Leave oven on.) Once vegetables cool slightly, after 5-7 minutes, mix in cheeses.
3. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over medium heat, cook butter, onions and garlic until tender, 6-8 minutes. Add flour and cook until slightly browned with a nutty aroma, about 4 minutes.
4. Add milk and whisk until thickened, 4-5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Transfer cauliflower mixture to an amply sized casserole dish. Pour milk sauce over to coat cauliflower. Bake until golden brown, 40-45 minutes.

—Adapted from Matthew Poley of Heirloom LA, Los Angeles



Turkey-Day Tips

Continued from page D1



Adjoa Courtney | Chef Joya Catering, Charlotte, N.C.
Make ahead.

“Dressings, greens, gravy and rice dishes can be made days in advance. Collard greens are particularly great to make ahead because they taste better and develop flavors the longer they sit. You can assemble casseroles the day before and pop them in the oven the next day, or fully cook them and just warm them up. Any type of pie is great to make ahead.”
Leave certain traditions in the past. “It’s OK to let some things go. For me, that’s store-bought cranberry sauce. Cranberry sauce is so easy to make. Just put fresh cranberries in a pot and boil them down with some juices. It’s a thousand times better than the canned stuff.”

Put sustainability on the menu. “Shopping locally is a great way to support your community. As a chef who specializes in plant-based cuisine, I find inspiration for meat alternatives at the farmers market. I like roasting jackfruit and serving it with a mushroom gravy. When designing the menu, think about what might freeze well if left over. Look into donating any unopened staples to food banks or community pantries.”

Test the untried. “If you’re new to plant-based cooking there are replacements for everything. Some of these replacements are expensive, so you don’t want to spend your money on quantity without knowing what it tastes like. Try everything beforehand, whether it’s an oat milk or a vegan cheese. Think of how you can enhance the flavor by adding other ingredients. I often add miso or a little bit of onion powder to give vegan cheese some umami, or I’ll add marsala wine to enhance sharpness and tang.”
Check your intentions, energy and gratitude. “You don’t want to cook a feast under pressure and stress. Come together with your loved ones and appreciate the time you have together. Maintaining that good energy while you are cooking translates to the food.”



Matt Poley | Heirloom LA, Los Angeles
Go against the grain.

“Fifty percent of the reason a turkey dries out is because people carve with the grain instead of against it. You should first cut off the breasts, then cut against the grain as if you were cutting a chicken breast.”
Use a cooler for resting “Instead of covering your turkey with foil, take it out of the oven, set that

bad boy in a clean cooler and close the lid. Resting in the cooler, the turkey is maintaining its temperature while keeping the moisture and redirecting the juices inside. You’re freeing up oven space as it rests, and you can hold it hot up to two hours.”
Bigger vessels are not always better. “Don’t try to get everything into one pan when reheating. Many times it’s better to use multiple smaller pans so they will heat more quickly. If the pan is twice the size, it’s going to take up more time and more real estate in the oven.”
Rethink the classics. “Green beans are a Thanksgiving staple, but this year, instead of making a casserole, I’m going to make a green-bean salad—simply blanched green beans, blanched yellow wax beans, lemon, olive oil, Parmesan cheese.

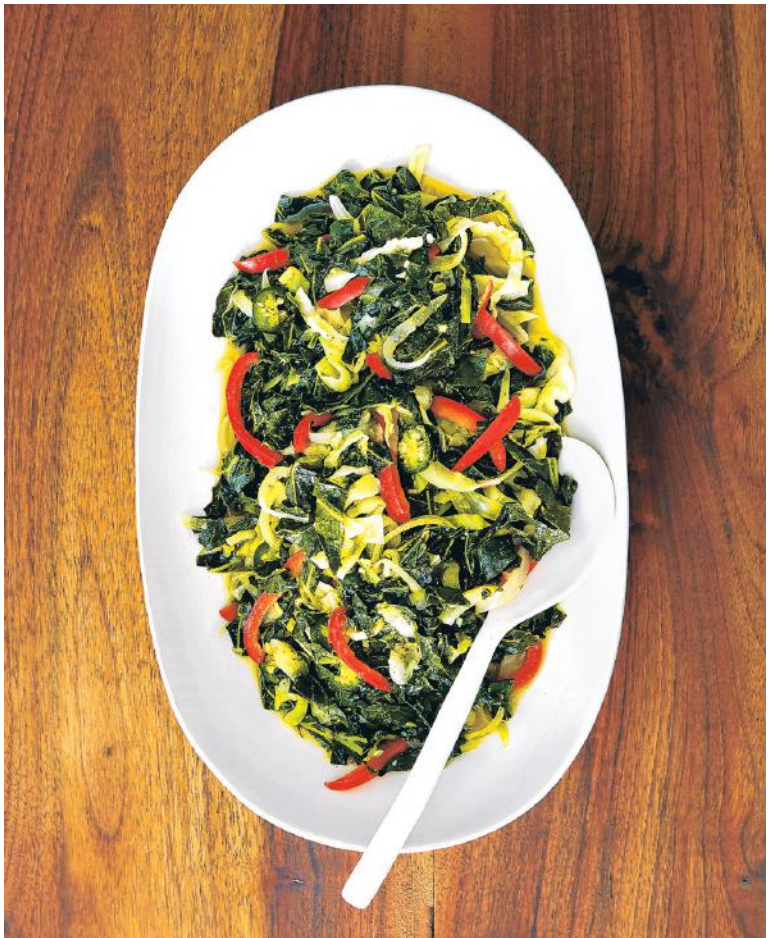
‘What about a roasted sweet-potato salad with caramelized onions instead of those heavy mashed sweet potatoes?’

It ticks the box for green beans but it’s fresher and lighter and adds variety. Plus, you can make it the day before and easily assemble on the day of. Or what about a roasted sweet-potato salad with caramelized onions instead of those heavy mashed sweet potatoes? You are offering the same flavors but adding a different take and texture.”
Put more vegetables on the table. “Whether or not you have vegetarians or vegans in the family, offering a substantial vegetarian dish is a great idea. Even meat-eaters may want to supplement their mains. I make a roasted butternut squash, cut in half, scooped out and layered with zucchini, carrots and bell peppers. It’s like a vegan turkey. You can slice it and arrange it on a tray the same way you would a turkey. Instead of eating four slices of turkey, I might have two plus some roasted squash. I’m not cutting out meat but I’m eating less. It’s healthier and I don’t end up in a food coma.”



Sarah Simmons and Aaron Hoskins | City Grit Catering, Columbia, S.C.

Balance your menu. “Aim for a menu that balances room-temperature dishes, cold dishes and hot dishes. That way you won’t have to rely on the oven for the whole day. Roasted carrots, a cranberry casserole, sweet potatoes, even stuffing or Southern-style dressing can be served at room temperature. A nice, cold, crisp, leafy green salad with candied nuts, pickled red onions and a simple lemon vinaigrette will add lightness and freshness when you are eating a bunch of fatty, rich dishes. We go for no more than two hot items in addition to the turkey.”
Cook the turkey in two parts. “It’s almost impossible to get the dark meat fully cooked without overcooking the breast. If you cook the legs separately from the breast, you’ll end up with a moist breast and



Mama’s Black And White Greens

Smoky, spicy, slightly sweet and nutritious, this recipe was inspired by Adjoa Courtney’s mother. “She was making a collard-green dish and fell short on greens. Her auntie suggested putting some cabbage in it, and it worked,” Courtney said. “Collards and cabbage are delicious together.”

Total Time: 1¼ hours
Serves: 6

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small white onion, sliced

- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- ½ jalapeño, sliced
- 2 pounds collard greens, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt, preferably smoked
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1 small cabbage head, sliced thin
- 2 tablespoons agave nectar
- ½ teaspoon liquid smoke

1. Heat olive oil in a 6-quart pot over medium heat. Add onions, garlic, red peppers and jalapeños, and sauté until tender, 4-5 minutes.
2. Add collard greens and sauté 2 minutes. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, thyme and apple cider vinegar, and cook 2 minutes more.
3. Stir in vegetable stock. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer 35 minutes.
4. Add sliced cabbage, agave and liquid smoke. Cook over low heat 15 minutes more.
—Adapted from Adjoa Courtney of Chef Joya, Charlotte, N.C.



Easy Apple Crumble

This simple, delicious make-ahead dessert tastes great at room temperature.
Total Time: 1 hour
Serves: 4-6

- For the apple mix:
- 1 cup unsalted butter
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 1 vanilla bean, or 1 tablespoon vanilla extract/paste
 - 1 tablespoon cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon sea salt
 - 1 teaspoon allspice
 - 8 cups apples, halved, seeded and sliced
 - 1 cup raisins
- For the crumble:
- 1 cup light brown sugar

- ¾ cup old-fashioned oats
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- Pinch kosher salt
- ½ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes

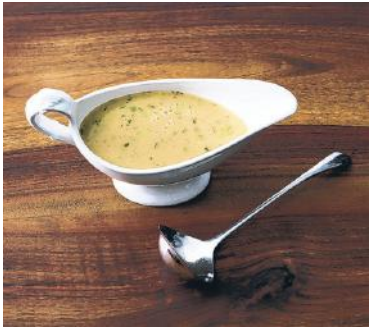
1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Make the apple mix: In a saucepan over medium-high heat, cook butter until lightly browned, 2-3 minutes. Add brown sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, salt and allspice, and cook, stirring, until fully

combined. Add apples and raisins, and cook 3 minutes. Set aside.
3. Make the crumble In a separate mixing bowl, combine brown sugar, oats, cinnamon, flour, salt and diced cold butter. Use your hands to massage in butter until mixture resembles crumbs.
4. Add apple mix to a baking dish. Spread topping over apples and gently pat to even out.
5. Bake until golden brown and bubbly, 40-50 minutes.

—Adapted from Matthew Poley of Heirloom LA, Los Angeles



safely cooked legs. I like to cook the legs the day before. You can heat them along with the sides as the breast rests, and finishing them this way makes for a nice, crispy skin.”
Be mindful of waste. “Use every part of everything you can. We use a lot of kale so we started integrating kale stems into all sorts of different dishes. You can chop them and sauté them and put them in a side or a salad—super delicious. Use the leftover turkey carcass to make stock, use the giblets for gravy. Farming is among the most challenging and backbreaking jobs. If we use everything and waste as little as possible, we are honoring these farmers.”
Keep a large bucket of ice on hand. “It’s likely you’ll run out of room in the fridge, so a large bucket of ice with a little kosher salt is a great way to quick-chill wine.”
Be inclusive. “In our house, we have made it a tradition to include any folks who can’t get home to their families or maybe aren’t comfortable around their own families. It makes the day a whole lot more meaningful and fun.”



► Find recipes for turkey two ways, make-ahead gravy and more at [WSJ.com/Food](https://www.wsj.com/food).



GEAR & GADGETS

TOP DOG Also available as a sedan, the Mazda3 Hatchback tops out with the Turbo Premium Plus.



MAZDA

RUMBLE SEAT / DAN NEIL



A Stylish Compact That Fuels a High-Octane Debate

THE NEXT TIME you put gas in your car, if you still do, take note of the filler flap, where some manufacturers specify the use of premium fuel. Considering the price difference between regular and premium—in my home state of North Carolina last week, 78 cents per gallon—that’s a pretty big ask.

The 2024 Mazda3 Hatchback Turbo Premium Plus doesn’t insist that you buy premium. Its marvelous motorworks—a silky 2.5-liter DOHC inline-four incorporating variable turbo-boost, direct fuel injection and variable valve timing—will burn either grade, to the satisfaction of the California Air Resources Board. That said, horsepower is also variable. If you put regular gas in the Mazda, you will feel a maximum of 227 hp under your haunches; if premium, the figure jumps to 250 hp.

In North Carolina, the difference would sum to \$450 a year (assuming 15,000 miles at 26 mpg, consuming 576.9 gallons).

Would premium be worth the premium? No. Not when there are Taylor Swift tickets available on the upper level with an obstructed view. And yet I’m sure many owners will upgrade themselves to premium, anyway. You can trust your car to the man who wears the star, if that man is Thorstein Veblen.

Prepare to be spellbound by tales of octane ratings, compression ratios and “authority over the combustion event.” But first, the car.

Fresh from a light makeover, the 2024 Mazda3 continues largely as before, which is gorgeous. Go ahead

2024 MAZDA3 HATCHBACK TURBO PREMIUM PLUS



MSRP, as tested \$36,650
Powertrain turbocharged 2.5-liter inline four cylinder with dynamic turbo boost, variable valve timing and high-pressure direct injection; six-speed automatic transmission; all-wheel drive
Horsepower 227/250 hp (regular/premium fuel)
Torque 310/320 lb-ft (regular/premium fuel)
Length/wheelbase/width/height 175.6/107.3/70.7/56.7 inches
Curb weight 3,393 pounds
0-60 mph 7 seconds
EPA fuel economy 23/31/26 mpg, city/highway/combined
Cargo capacity 20 cubic feet

and Google “2024 compact cars.” Right? For a little people-mover the Hatch is *hawt*; the low hood, the narrowed gaze, the swept proportions, the creaseless body panels flaring a metallic red. The top-shelf test car showed especially well, with gloss-black aero accents (front air dam and rear spoiler) and black-painted 18-inch alloy wheels. If it comes to a pose-down it’s between the Mazda and the unreasonably lovely Toyota Prius.

The Mazda’s cabin remains pretty much the same calm, softly bolstered space, with a double-banked, leather-wrapped dash, a wide center console and piano-black trim. A horizontal band incorporates a conspicuously analog set of hard buttons and knobs in

the center stack for first-order climate and entertainment functions. At the driver’s right hand is the hockey-puck sized rotary controller, which lets users sweep through the standard menus in the usual way. To some extent Mazda’s in-cabin tech is only catching up with the times: options include Qi charging, in-car Wi-Fi, and the 12-speaker Bose sound system.

The 2024 edition does get one big new thing, optionally: a proper center touchscreen (10.25 inches) with “touchscreen functionality” for Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, as well as GPS navigation with off-road mode.

Also available in lithesome sedan form, the Hatchback starts at

\$25,690 (front-wheel drive) and climbs through five trim levels, topping out with the Turbo Premium Plus, at \$36,650, with AWD, before options. Buyers can opt for the standard-issue turbo four (191 hp/181 lb-ft); or step up to the grandly named “Skyactiv-G Dynamic Pressure Turbo,” rated at either 227 hp/310 lb-ft or 250 hp/320 lb-ft., depending on whether you use 87 or 93 octane, respectively.

Can of worms, meet can-opener. First, consumers are trained to think, to compare categorical figures of merit, such as 0-60 mph acceleration, 1/4-mile elapsed time, top speed, towing capacity, etc. If I’m reading this machine correctly, all of the Mazda’s num-

bers are actually two numbers. The fuel-dependent output might not be a big deal to consumers but it’s going to be a pain in my neck.

Second, the output asterisk draws attention to the fact that gasoline itself is a black box. Octane-*schmoctane*. As far as most consumers can tell, it all comes from the same tank in the ground.

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The difference in fuel grades has to do with their combustibility under pressure. All compressible fluids heat under pressure; hydrocarbon fuels will at some point auto ignite. Fifty years ago, gasoline engines would often “knock,” which was the sound of fuel-air mixes detonating in the cylinders milliseconds ahead of the spark’s arrival from the distributor cap.

Performance engines running high compression ratios required fuels with high octane ratings, lest they go kablooeey. Even today, airports and race tracks sell 100 octane out of the pump. For the most exotic applications, such as top-fuel drag racing, you can buy cans of 120 octane. Light fuse, get away.

Electronic fuel injection, sensors and engine-control modules have all but eliminated auto ignition and knock. In the case of the smooth-running, high-revving Skyactiv-G engine, its variable turbo boost, variable valve timing, direct injection and logic-based control give it decisive authority over the combustion event.

In fact, all modern engines adjust to the fuel’s combustibility, in order to reduce emissions of unburned hydrocarbons. Consequently, if you happen to put plain-old pump gas in your McLaren, it’ll be just fine. It will just feel a few ponies down on power.

Why not just one standard of fuel? The American Fuel and Petroleum Manufacturers have lobbied for a high-octane blend (95 RON, equivalent to 91 on the more familiar “antiknock index”) to become a national standard, arguing that smaller, high-compression engines can do the same job with higher net efficiency. But they need high-test gas to realize those gains.

Maybe. The Mazda3 presents conflicting evidence. The base 2.5-liter engine, with the same six-speed automatic transmission, gets 10% better fuel economy (29 mpg, combined) than the Skyactiv-G. Whatever comparative efficiency might have been gained went toward horsepower.

I don’t give the AFPM’s proposal much of a chance. Raising the octane rating of regular gas would oblige mass-market automakers to put more money into small-engine development and tooling, at a time when they are drawing down legacy powertrain R&D in favor of electric vehicle development.

Another big ask.

Porch Pirates Hate Them

A guide to the Wi-Fi-enabled lockboxes you can deploy to safeguard your deliveries

NEARLY ONE in seven Americans had a package snatched from their house in the first 10 months of 2022, according to a C+R Research report. Even working at home or installing a video doorbell, which records the movements of anyone who approaches your front door, can’t prevent thieves from covering their faces, slinking up the steps and nabbing your latest Prime delivery. Now, some homeowners are turning to a new spin on an old classic: adding Wi-Fi smarts to a beefy lockbox.

These package receptacles, such as the **Eufy SmartDrop S300** and **Yale Smart Delivery Box (with keypad)**, are powered by batteries that last between three and six months depending on how often you get deliveries. Just connect the device to your home network, then choose an access code and, every

time you buy online, enter that code as the second line of your address and/or in the “preferred delivery instructions” section. That equips delivery drivers to key the code into your box, pop its lid and leave your package inside, assuming you haven’t bought a 12-foot ladder or a hippopotamus.

Neither of these devices will win any design awards—the Yale option’s gray-beige plastic is particularly offensive—but fans like Cannon Tekstar Hodge, 41, find their functionality outweighs their lack of style. The Brooklyn, N. Y.-based head of content and social strategy for Neura Health, a virtual neurology clinic, is disabled. She started using the Eufy SmartDrop this summer after moving from an apartment building where thieves routinely snatched up to \$500 worth of medical supplies each month.



HINDER THE HEISTERS Devices like the Eufy SmartDrop S300 secure your stuff from prying hands. \$400, [US.Eufy.com](#)

The just-over-two-foot-tall cube solved the problem, and its cavernous internal chamber exceeded her expectations. “It’s not big enough for extra-large packages like out-door furniture or rugs,” she said “but it can hold 95% of

what would be delivered on any given week.” She also likes that it protects her stuff from rain, snow and other inclement weather.

Dave Morales, a supply-chain manager for an aerospace firm, bought the Yale Smart Delivery Box in 2021, after noticing an uptick in emails from his neighbors inquiring about lost packages. Morales, 40, positioned the box between the street-facing garage doors of his South Glastonbury, Conn., home. Unfortunately, he said, delivery drivers don’t always see it. “It’s probably 50/50 that packages end up there.”

But even if he’d positioned the box more conspicuously, that wouldn’t guarantee all would use it. Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Nidah Barber, 50, says the ultimate success of the box depends on your delivery people. The founder of skin-care provider The Peel Connection has found pack-



Yale Smart Delivery Box, From \$280, [ShopYaleHome.com](#)

ages from Amazon and UPS left on top of or near her Eufy, but says this rarely happens with deliveries handled by her USPS postman.

Hodge says her delivery people don’t seem to mind the effort.

Some have told her the box actually eliminates headaches, since they needn’t struggle to hide packages behind trees or bushes.

One other negative: If your child believes in Santa Claus, these thief-deterrents could lead to tears, disillusionment or worse. “My daughter and son, ages nine and five, call it the secret gift box and try to peek in after beating one another to it in race,” Barber said. In such cases, continue to use the box for all other purchases and make sure to have “Santa’s” elf-fabricated gifts delivered to your office so you can sneak them in through the back door.

—Sal Vaglica

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