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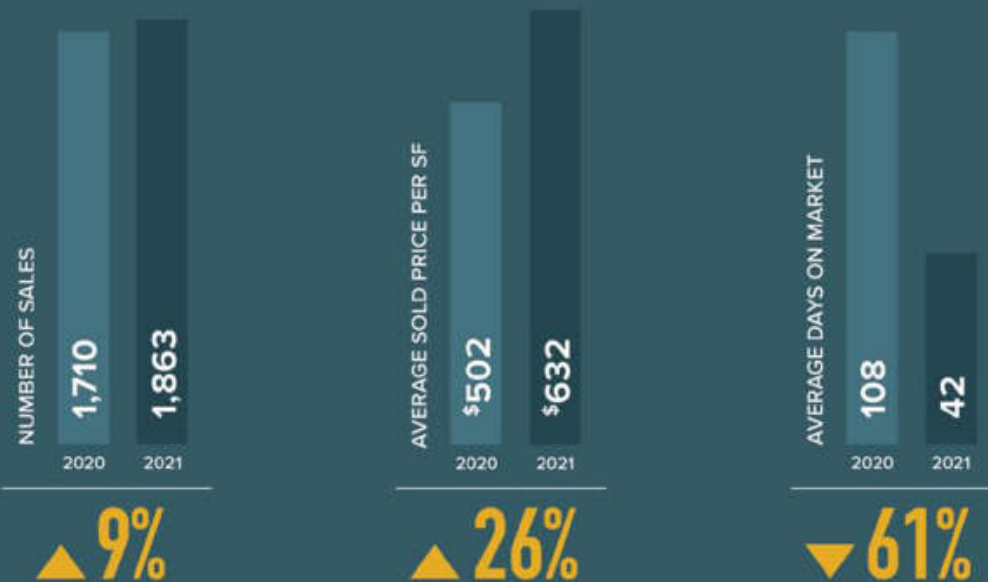
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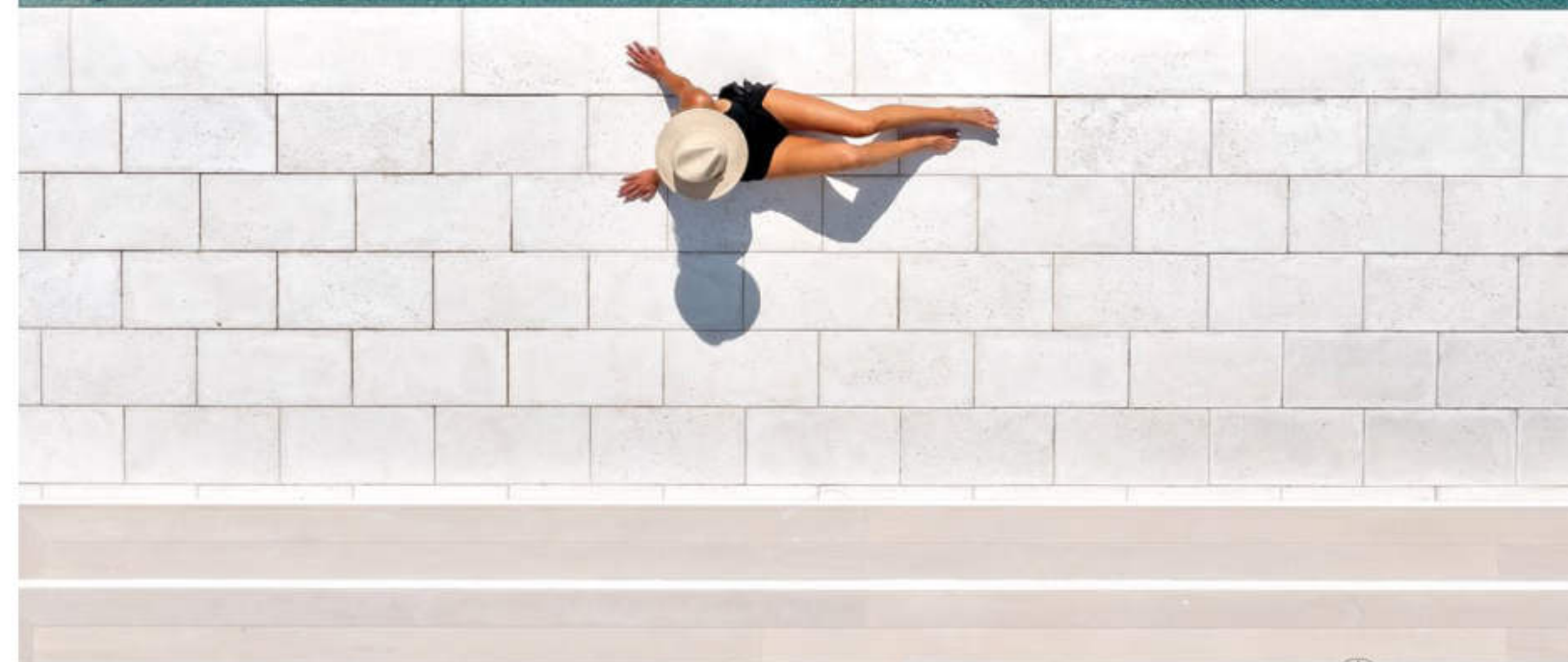
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Greetings FROM THE 30A GUY

Well, I took my own advice. Remember in the last issue when I suggested that we shouldn't let the pandemic (or even a global meltdown) define our days ahead, and then I outlined a few immediate actions that you can take to inspire bold, happy, positive changes in your own life?

Well, at least one lunatic was listening, because soon after I penned that letter, my wife and I booked one-way tickets to Thailand. After all, I can do my job from anywhere with decent WiFi (I work from home), and all four of our children have officially flown the coop. It's been two painfully long and socially-distanced years since Angela and I have traveled abroad, so we decided a new, open-ended chapter is the right antidote for what's been ailing us.

We're not gone for good, of course. Angela and I both feel that Scenic Highway 30A in Walton County, Florida, is our "forever home." Quite simply, life here is as good as it gets. But, just like we did when we pulled our kids out of school to travel the globe in 2011-2012, we decided it's time to go on another long, meandering walkabout. It's time for a new adventure.

So, expect some fun "beach happy" stories from distant and exotic shores coming your way soon. Where can you find it? Well, for starters, check out our new website (www.beachhappymag.com), and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/beachhappy). In addition to featuring articles from this and every single past issue of *Beach Happy*, we'll also be sharing videos and other coastal content that doesn't easily translate to the printed page.

Fortunately, as you'll see, the stories in these pages translate extremely well. In this issue, we explore all sorts of beach homes and coastal living options, from tiny homes to sprawling estates; from the Gulf of Mexico to Goa. We share island home tips from British royalty and happiness tips from singer-songwriter Jewel. We learn about a 'Wander Woman' who has made a career out of helping others find their perfect beach (or an entire island, if your bank balance boasts that many digits), and about a world-class architect who sushi-rolled his way to the coast. After all, your home – and indeed your entire existence – can be whatever and wherever you want it to be. You just have to be willing to take that first step.

Beach Happy, my friends!

Mike Ragsdale

Mike Ragsdale
Founder, The 30A Company

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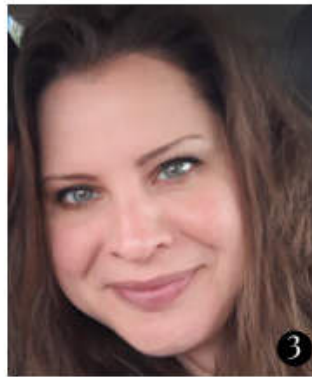
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is an Atlanta native and retired paramedic who made Florida her permanent home in 2014. She is a nationally published freelance writer and photographer specializing in night sky, storm, and lightning photography. In her spare time she can be found in the Gulf or exploring the natural world around her. You can follow her photography and writing on Instagram (@susangunnphotography) or visit her online gallery at susangunnphotography.com.



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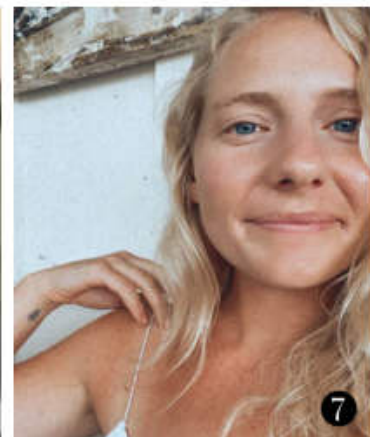
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6



7

6. CARRIE HONAKER

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By Martin Liptrot
Photos: Joseph Montezinos
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Designing Woman

India Hicks on life, work (and love) in the time of the pandemic.

India Hicks is a woman of many talents. She's a mother of five, a philanthropist, a designer, and owner of The Sugar Mill boutique on Harbour Island where she lives in The Bahamas.

The daughter of Lady Pamela Hicks and a second cousin to Prince Charles, the (presumably) next British monarch, she has an aristocratic pedigree when it comes to interior design. Her father was David Hicks, the famous interior designer and

decorator noted for his bold '60s chic use of color and contemporary art and furniture. Her grandfather was the British diplomat that turned India (the nation) over to Mahatma Gandhi and independence.

I asked India what the recent lockdown and work-from-home trends had meant to her and her business.

"We have spent a lot more time in our homes over the last couple of years.



“**One of the most precious memories from this time was being back around the table, without our phones, talking and not being distracted by the pace of normal, modern life.**”

“During the pandemic I found myself spending periods of quarantine in my father’s bedroom in Oxfordshire, England,” India explained. “This room is rather magical and looks out over the garden he planted. Behind glass on a series of shelves down one wall is a patchwork of memories that he collected during his life and from his travels. Letters written to him from his mother, seating plans from dinners, keys to secret places, and black and white photographs of early childhood moments. The room also houses a library of books, boasting small motifs on their spines. I would gaze at these and draw inspiration for future prints and designs. All my designs have themes that anchor back to my life in England or the Bahamas.”

India says the pandemic made us re-evaluate how we live our lives.

“I think eating at home together with your family became important. Prior to the pandemic, too many of us were in the office late, snatching food on-the-go. But then, working from home, we were brought back to the kitchen or dining room tables. There were fun challenges, I can remember having to plan four different lockdown birthdays and trying to make each one feel special and individual but, actually, one of the most precious memories from this time was being back around the table, without our phones, talking and not being distracted by the pace of normal, modern life. Frankly, I’m a shit cook but I always want to make the table look pretty, and it takes so little to really transform it and make it warm and inviting.”

She observes how the way we entertain has changed: “We are lucky to have the space to do dramatic long tables on our terraces but, since COVID, we have found we enjoy smaller, more intimate gatherings. We’ve even started to reintroduce round tables rather than the great long ones we were used to.”

India experienced change in her business too.

“For six years I ran a reasonably big, small business—or maybe a small, big business—

Perhaps more than we ever had before,” she said. “We have looked at our homes differently as a consequence. While I was in lockdown, I was thinking: ‘What is an easy way to make a home feel more inviting or refreshed without having to tear down walls or employ an interior designer?’ and I came to think about linens—just buying a new tablecloth, napkins, place mats and table runners, you find your environment is ‘zhuzhed’ very quickly and very inexpensively.”

India partnered with Pomegranate Inc., a woman-owned small business based in Lexington, Kentucky, which has expertise in traditional artisan fabrics and linens hand block-printed in... India.

“We develop limited collections, so you feel you are buying something beautiful and irresistible,” she said. “Our range of cream and gold linens, which we had carefully designed with the new year in mind, sold like hot cakes. There is nothing more rewarding as a designer than seeing a collection selling well. We now have a new line called ‘Love and Linens’ which launched in time for Valentine’s Day.”

Did the pandemic help or hinder the creative process?



headquartered in Los Angeles, shuttling back and forth, with thousands of ambassadors selling our collections. The circumstances changed and we had to make the decision to shut the business, which was heart-breaking because I was learning so much and adored all the women who had empowered me and the company.

“What I’m doing now is really the reverse of that. I’m now lucky to be designing and creating again but this time with small independent businesses, always making sure the messaging is thoughtful and meaningful. Perhaps it’s a reflection of the times we are living through. My partners at Pomegranate are always thinking conscientiously. The little label inside my napkins and tablecloths reads ‘India Hicks happily for Pomegranate’ and it is just that, a very happy partnership.”

India thinks the pandemic has made people more thoughtful about sustainability and community.

“Living on Harbour Island, there is a real sense of community. We are very dependent on tourism. It provides most of the income for the islanders. With the pandemic, tourism was shut off overnight and local families became concerned, wondering how they were going to support themselves.”

Local businesses, churches, and the police all helped set up a food bank to help locals struggling during the lockdown.

“I was honored to be involved as we fed 3,000 people each weekend,” she said. “It was a real reminder that you can make a difference in your community and that sense of belonging is so valuable.”

“I think it’s been especially tough for the younger generation. In fact, one of the reasons I decided the time was finally right to get married after being with David unmarried for 26 years was to bring some normalcy to the kids’ lives, to do something that felt grounding, secure, and traditional after so many topsy-turvy months of lockdowns.”

India has also become an Ambassador for Women Supporting Women, a foundation organized by The Prince’s Trust, founded by Prince Charles in 1976.

“This is a passionate group of successful women entrepreneurs and others who are committed to changing the lives of young women marginalized by society,” she said. “The mission is simple: to provide the right help to nurture, empower, and inspire young women to build brighter futures.”

She’s enthusiastic about the work.

“The Prince’s Trust is an amazing organization. When Prince Charles launched it back in the early seventies—talking and thinking about sustainability and green issues for the first time—he was a visionary, so far ahead of his time, he doesn’t get enough acknowledgement for that. I am honored to be an ambassador for the Trust and doing my small part to help young women get into the workplace.”

“The world is in a very strange place,” adds India. “We need to be a lot more patient and a lot more caring and giving with each other. We need to take a deep breath and think about what is truly meaningful.” 🌿

Beach Happy made a donation to The Prince’s Trust as part of this article to support the important work they are doing. To learn more about India Hicks, visit indiahicks.com.

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TINY^(Beach) HOMES

Living Large in Small, Sandy Spaces



By Martin Liptrot



While many vacation communities are seeing a trend toward more and more 'monster homes' being built as rental and investment properties, many people are left longing for the days when a beach house was nothing more than a little slice of paradise.

Frustrated by this growing problem, and the gargantuan budgets needed to enjoy them, many second-home hunters, or those looking to seriously downsize, are being attracted to the phenomenon of tiny homes, generally under 500 square feet.

That said, while small may be beautiful, it isn't without its own costs and challenges. Permissions and permitting can be difficult in areas where the property you are planning to build is smaller than the master bedrooms that most builders are erecting.

It seems there are three solutions for those looking to join the tiny house revolution.

Mobile Homes and RVs: If your tiny house is on wheels, it is usually covered

by a whole different set of building codes. This appeals to those who may want to live in the mountains to enjoy a cooler summer before migrating to warmer climes when winter rolls in.

Tiny House Communities: As the trend for tiny homes takes root, more and more permanent tiny home communities are springing up. Dedicated space for 500 square feet or less homes, with power, plumbing, and sanitation are being provided for those who want to construct their tiny home in a favorite-forever location.

Custom House Builders: As the tiny home market grows, more builders are offering their services to help dwellers build their perfectly compact residence. There is even a TV show, *Tiny Home Nation*, where designers bring much-needed imagination to help people create their liveable Lilliputian properties.

Thinking of adapting the "less is more" lifestyle?

Here are just a few tiny homes you can rent or buy on or near the water. →

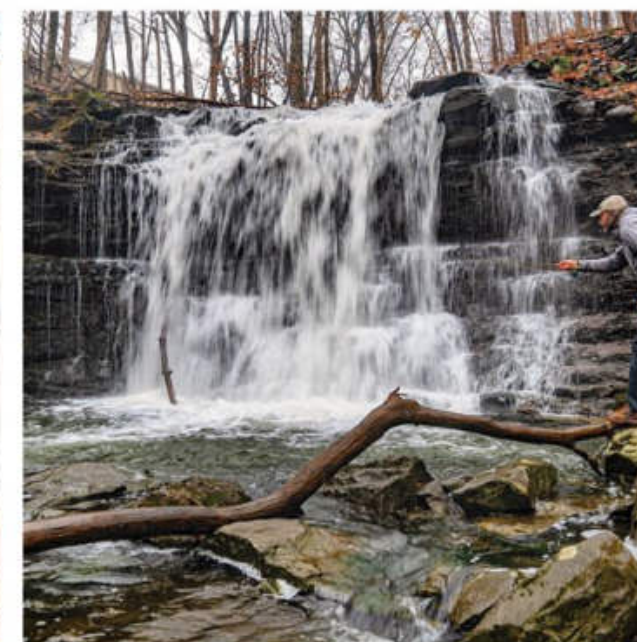
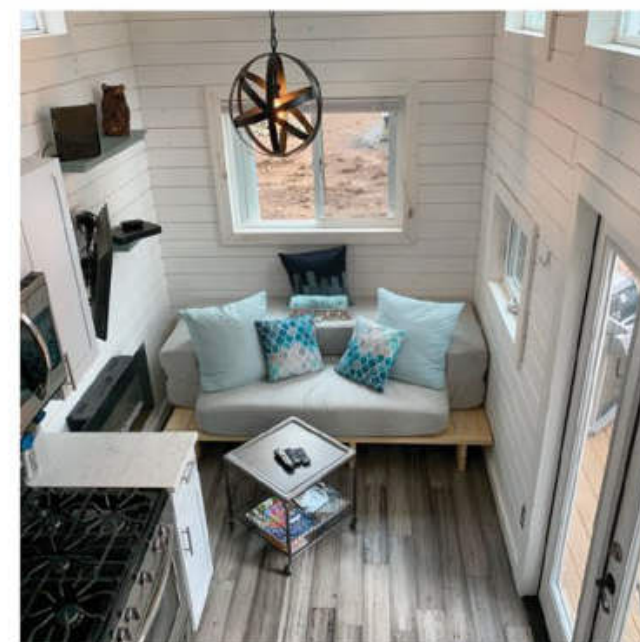


Cloud 9, Angels Rest, Seaward, Alaska

Situated on Resurrection Bay, 125 miles from Anchorage, not only is this tiny cabin in as remote a location as you could wish for, but it also is as close to the water as possible. Step out onto the little porch, and you can almost dip your toes in the bay, fed by the North Atlantic Ocean.

The cabin can sleep two in a cozy queen bed, with a separate bathroom with shower, but you'll probably be most awestruck by the bears, otters, seals, and birds playing and foraging right outside your windows.

angelsrest.com



The Lux, Tiny House Resort, Catskills, New York

If getting away from it all feels like a step too far, there are tiny house solutions that still provide all the creature comforts you could ever wish for. The Lux, a tiny home resort only two hours' drive from downtown Manhattan, offers a digitally-controlled fireplace for instant flames, a full gourmet kitchen with a five-burner stove and dishwasher, and a high-end Weber grill on the patio. While not on an oceanic beach, these homes are perched on the shores of Catskill Creek, so you can lie back on Egyptian cotton linens and throws, and listen to the waterfall nearby.

atinyhouseressort.com



Painted Bunting Cottage, Sapelo Island, Georgia

This 400 square foot tiny beach house is situated on a sparsely populated barrier island off the coast of southern Georgia. It is named after the colorful bunting bird, famous for its red, blue, orange, and yellow plumage, and the interior design adopts these warm, vibrant colors.

There are only 30 residents on the island, many of whom are descendants of the Geechee and Gullah people, whose ancestors were the formerly enslaved plantation workers from the island's dark past, but they still celebrate their many cultural traditions and festivals.

The cottage sits on a saltwater marsh overlooking the Atlantic and welcomes the rising sun every morning. As the Gullah people say, "It's day clean!"

sapeloislandbirdhouses.com



Hemingway, Sunshine Key Tiny House Village, Big Pine Key, Florida

This village sits on its own 75-acre island near Big Pine Key, one of the string of islands stretching from the Florida mainland to the southernmost point of the USA, Key West.

The Hemingway comes in at under 350 square feet and is perfect for warm-weather living. With a balcony overlooking the clear Floridian waters, like its namesake, Hemingway is for those who value the simple pleasures in life: a good book, a cocktail in hand, and plenty of time. The great American writer once said, "Courage is grace under pressure." But you're not likely to feel much pressure here.

sunshinekeytinyhouse.com





Sol Duc Cabin, Olympic Peninsula, Washington

At only 350 square feet, this tiny riverside cottage is both a perfect place to while away the hours and an engineering marvel. The cabin seals up entirely when not in use and is virtually indestructible, made of unfinished mild steel and structural insulated panels.

Located in the Pacific Northwest, this permanent ultra-modern tiny house is built on stilts to protect it from flooding by the nearby river. It also comes with steel shutters that can be closed to secure the home while its inhabitants are away.

When guests arrive, simply slide open the huge shutters on hardware originally designed for barn doors and let the light flood in through this stunning two-story structure.

olsonkundig.com/projects/sol-duc-cabin



Mid-Century Cottage, Seagrove Beach, Florida

While beach homes along the exclusive 30A area in Walton County normally measure square feet in the thousands and boast of being able to sleep armies of people, this one-bed, one-bath tiny home offers all the convenience of its considerably larger neighbors in a more personable space.

Nestled in a private lot with plenty of lush vegetation, you are still only 200 yards from dipping your toes in the crystal-clear waters the Gulf Coast is renowned for. This newly-built cottage offers a quaint yet sophisticated interior, a kitchen with high-end appliances, a queen-sized bed and, outside, a private patio and fire pit just perfect to kick back with cocktails around the bonfire and watch the orange glow of an Emerald Coast sunset fade from the sky.

evolve.com/vacation-rentals/430279





Q & A with Jewel

By Abigail Abesamis Demarest
Photos: Dana Trippe

The four-time Grammy Award-nominated singer-songwriter and mental health advocate talks about her new album and her secrets to happiness.

After seven years, Jewel is back with a new studio album and going on tour. *Freewheelin' Woman* is Jewel's boldest, most unbridled album to date, and it showcases just how powerful and breathtaking her voice is. This time, she's writing for her voice and not just the story she's telling, with themes of independence, womanhood, hope, and heartbreak, making the album involved a "spiritual rewilding" in which she reawakened the raw creative energy that first sparked her path as a singer-songwriter.

Beyond working on a new album, Jewel has been raising her son and continuing her work with the Inspiring Children Foundation, which provides mentorship and mental health resources for at-risk youth. She was crowned winner of *The Masked Singer* (the Fox singing competition) in December as the Queen of Hearts and continues to evolve and push her craft forward in incredible ways.

We had the chance to chat with Jewel about her new album, her nonprofit work, and her favorite beach destination.

Tell us about your new album *Freewheelin' Woman*. Why now? What was the inspiration behind it? What can fans expect?

It may surprise some people that I almost didn't sign my record deal when I was 18, even though I was a homeless kid! As much as I wanted to make music, I was very aware that my mental health and happiness could be compromised if someone like me ever became famous. I had an abusive background and moved out on my own at 15. So I made a promise to myself that if I did sign the deal, my number one job would always be to learn to be what I called "a happy whole human, not a human full of holes." I vowed to always put my mental health and human development before my career and to put art before fame. I am very proud to say that at 47, I have never let that promise down. The reason I have always taken years between records—starting with a two-year break at the height of my success between *Spirit* and *This Way*—was to make sure I was adjusting to the massive changes in my life in a healthy way and to invest in my non-career life. I am proud that I took the time to have my son and to have dedicated myself to building a foundation for him. Women in my business rarely talk about what it is like to be a woman in our job and child-rearing.

I have always been a better singer than the songs I wrote for myself, so on this new album, I tasked myself to write for my voice in a new way I never had before. I also tasked myself to push into a fresh style that offered something new. I have always pushed myself into new genres because my mentors, Neil Young and Bob Dylan, really pressed that upon me: make art you want to make, not what you feel will be popular. While the "musical clothing" this album wears is definitely bluesier than ones in the past, my heart remains the same as on any album: that of a singer-songwriter. I take on a wide variety of topics, and many are love letters to society and not just songs about literal relationships. I am very proud of the lyrics and of this album. It was fun to capture the confidence and empowerment of my age and where I am now.

Tell us about your nonprofit work with the Inspiring Children Foundation. Why did you start the Jewel Never Broken program?

When I moved out at 15, I knew the odds of me becoming a statistic were very high. I knew my nurture was really bad and wondered if the trauma I had experienced would keep me from ever knowing my true nature. So I set off on a mission to re-nurture myself and to learn a new emotional language. It's been my life's work, and the tools and practices I have developed have been the source of my greatest pride. Our foundation is geared toward at-risk youth, and giving them the tools that helped me become happy and high-performing, and our statistics are beyond



Jewel, with her son, Kase.

our wildest dreams. 99 percent of our kids earn their own college scholarships (75 percent of them are for Ivy League schools), and we are the number two tennis academy in the country. But most importantly, our kids go from suicidal ideation to happiness.

What's your philosophy when it comes to creating a happy space in your own home?

Just like with music, it's the silence between notes that makes it work. Create space in your life and home so that it is not an onslaught of overwhelm, but a sanctuary of peace.

I know you love the beach. What's your favorite beach destination?

My son and I spend a lot of time in the British Virgin Islands at our friend's island because our youth foundation runs the Sir Richard Branson's Annual Necker Tennis Cup every year. It's paradise, and we feel so lucky to get to hang with the amazing wildlife he has fostered there.

What is your secret to happiness?

First, we are responsible for our own happiness. Make it your job to be happy. Second, when we quit participating and consuming the things that make us anxious (negative feelings and experiences), we stop being anxious. Third, fear takes the past and projects it into a future that has not happened yet, all in a misguided effort to make yourself feel safe. That's like leaving your house to

protect your house from robbers. Being present is the only genuine route to safety. Show up and trust your instincts. 

To learn more about Jewel, her charity work, and her new album, visit jeweljk.com or follow her on Instagram (@jewel).



BOTS

on the Beach

By Martin Liptrot
Photos: 4Ocean
Savanna Christy

Florida is famous for its sparkling blue waters and sugar-white sands. It has become a magnet for tourists, second homeowners, and retirees. But all those visitors, and a growing resident population, have sadly left more than footprints – there's trash, and lots of it.

Much of the trash recovered from our beaches and waterways is plastic. Research suggests that each year, more than 14 million tons of plastic end up in the world's oceans. And with global plastic production and consumption likely to increase by 400% over the next 30 years, a solution is desperately needed.

While bulky plastic trash – bottles, broken toys, straws, bags, food wrappers, and containers – leave our beaches looking dirty and polluted, it is the very smallest pieces, almost invisible to the human eye, that are the most dangerous. These toxic micro-plastic and nano-plastic beads and fragments are being ingested by marine mammals, birds, and fish and, potentially, through the food chain, by us humans too.

While Florida's counties and tourist development boards are busy trying to keep our beaches clean by hauling away bags of trash every day, there is still much more that needs to be done.

Local community groups, environmental campaigners, and 501(c)(3) organizations such as Keep America Beautiful are helping. Whether it is arranging charity clean-ups, protesting illegal dumping, or simply filling bags with rubbish during sunset strolls, we all have a part to play.

But with a coastline stretching for more than 1,350 miles, we need all the help we can get.

Step forward, BeBot. Or rather, roll forward.

BeBot is a tank-track-wearing R2-D2 lookalike, solar-powered, remote-controlled, trash-eating robot.

According to its manufacturer, Poralu Marine, the BeBot can silently and discreetly clean up to 32,000 square feet of beach every hour depending on the topography. That's the equivalent of seven basketball courts.

BeBot will sift the top layer of dry sand to capture small items – cigarette butts, bottle tops, food wrappers – often missed by volunteers and other beach cleaning efforts though it does not dig too deep, avoiding disruption of natural habitat and wildlife.

And now, a new BeBot is on its way to Florida's coast.

Keep Florida Beautiful, an umbrella organization of 40 local city and county affiliates, is set to receive a BeBot courtesy of Surfing's Evolution and Preservation Foundation, a charitable organization founded by Ron and Lynne DiMenna, the duo behind the Ron Jon Surf Shop brand. Last year, Florida's legislature provided \$800,000 in funds to Keep Florida Beautiful. As a result, with the assistance of more than 90,000 volunteers state-wide, the organization's local affiliates collectively removed more than three million pounds of litter from Florida's natural environment in 2021.

"Our mission to keep Florida beautiful is simple, but multi-faceted," said Savanna Christy, executive director of Keep Florida Beautiful. "We hope BeBot will draw a lot of awareness and concern about the plight of our beaches and waterways, but we know it can't replace the effectiveness of the armies of volunteers who keep our beaches clean."

So next time you are on one of Florida's wonderful beaches, keep an eye out for a BeBot near you. As it silently and methodically sifts through the sand, picking up trash and leaving our beaches in better shape than it found them, perhaps it can serve as an inspiration to you and your guests.

If BeBot could speak, I imagine it would say: "Don't leave your litter on the beach, don't chuck your empty bottles and containers off the side of your boat, and take the toys, deckchairs, and umbrellas back home with you when your vacation is over."

BeBot may only just be starting its mission to help clean our oceans and beaches, but if residents and visitors changed their behavior now, I'm sure he would be happy to retire early. 🐼

To learn more, visit keepfloridabeautiful.org/blog/meet-bebot.



“
BeBot is a
tank-track-
wearing
R2-D2
lookalike,
solar-powered,
remote-
controlled,
trash-eating
robot.”



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Wander oman

Shanna Dickerson gave up a successful career to go to a rock in the middle of the sea, where she carved out the life of her dreams.

By Lauren Sage Reinlie
Photos: Romona Robbins



Saint John, U.S. Virgin Islands

“
She knew then
that she would
leave her
old life
behind and start
anew.
”

In November of 2009, Shanna Dickerson, a highly successful concert producer from Nashville, cruised across the Caribbean on a small boat with her parents. It was the 30-year-old's third trip that year to St. John, an almost 20-square-mile piece of land, a dot in the string of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The sun was warm on her skin. The sky was blue. On one side of the boat, the clear blue ocean stretched wide. On the other, she could see the shores of Peter Bay, a development of the most exclusive, highest-end villas in the Caribbean.

As she gazed at the villas, something inside her shifted. She felt a shiver of excitement, the wide-open sense of



possibility. She knew then that she would leave her old life behind and start anew. She wanted to find a way to live in one of those villas, start her own company, be her own boss. She didn't know exactly what that would look like, but when Shanna Dickerson gets interested in something, she tends to go all the way.

Five months later, she landed in St. John. With only a few personal possessions — she had sold her furniture and her car and had spent almost all her savings — she stepped into her new life.

She had walked away from a career many only dream of, producing major concerts and music festivals in Nashville and around the country with Jay-Z, Kenny Chesney, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Green Day, Metallica, Fleetwood Mac, Snoop Dog, and Widespread Panic. She spent a year as tour manager for Steve Winwood, the only woman on a bus full

of musicians and roadies crisscrossing the country. She was a concert-producing machine, once doing 23 shows in 30 days.

“I swear I lived nine lives in those ten years,” Shanna, now 42, recalled.

She thrived in the business. She was great at logistics and details. But she was tired. “I was working very long days, very long nights. It was exhausting.”

Regardless, most of the people she knew thought she was crazy to walk away from a life like that.



“They said things like, how could I leave the best job in the music business? How could I leave this backstage life with all these musicians? People were really giving me the third degree.”

Fast-forward 12 years, Shanna is living the life of her dreams. From almost nothing, she has built Blue Sky Luxury Travels, a multi-million-dollar, global travel agency. The company books leisure and corporate travel for the highest-end clients, the rich and famous, across St. John, where her company started, and worldwide.

The only people who didn't think Shanna was crazy were her parents. And that may be because, throughout Shanna's life, they have watched her throw herself into things that interest her, master them, then not be afraid to scrap it all and start again

when her mind, her body, or both need a change.

Shanna started gymnastics at four years old. She excelled, practiced five hours a day, and rose to the top of the field. When that wore on her, she turned to another interest: tennis. She trained tirelessly and became one of the top high school girls in North Carolina. “My parents didn't push me to do anything like that. I always pushed myself.”

She was recruited to play tennis at North Carolina State University. But before school started, facing more years of grueling training, she knew she needed a break. She turned it down.



While figuring out what to do next, she started attending big jam-band concerts in amphitheaters, and loved it. From backstage, she became interested in how it all worked, how the parts came

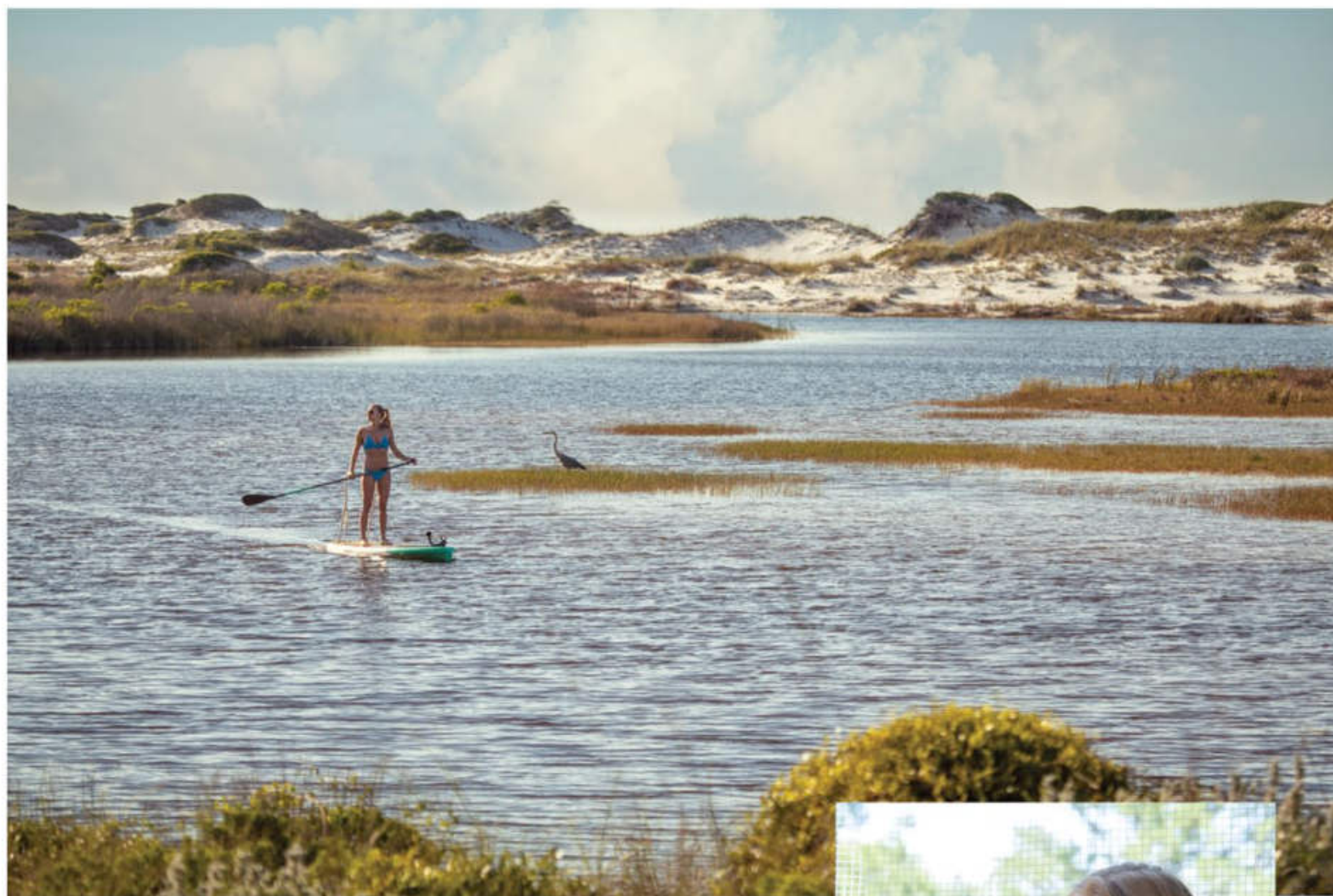
together. As soon as she graduated, she was off.

Towards the end of her 20s, though, Shanna started having a nagging feeling. She didn't want to climb the corporate ladder, retire when she was 65, and then live the life she dreamed of. She wanted it now.

“I said, screw it, it's better to do it while you are young and healthy, and you can bust your butt and figure something out.”

With her connections and exceptional resume, she landed the highly coveted gig of a villa manager in





Peter Bay, the development she had gazed out at four months earlier. In return for her work, she could live rent-free. She had a roof over her head — a gorgeous, luxurious roof steps from the sandy beach — but not much else.

Even so, there was a honeymoon phase. “You are amazed at how beautiful it is. You go to every beach. You do everything. And then, after 30 days, I was like, ‘What in the world did I just do? Oh my God!’ Reality set in. I didn’t have any money coming in. I had to build a business. This was all on me.”

She began learning the luxury travel industry. It took about two years of scrimping and hustling before she knew she was going to make it.

She started booking villas for clients, then moved on to mega-yachts. Then private islands, private jets, private events. (She once booked a \$3 million 40th birthday trip that included The Lumineers playing on a mega-yacht sailing to a private island in the Bahamas.)

Building a global business from a rock in the middle of the sea proved challenging. She couldn’t get reliable wireless service. Her landline went down when it rained, and power outages were regular. In 2014, she decided it was time to relocate back to the States. Now she alternates months between the U.S. and the Caribbean.

Last December, Shanna moved to Santa Rosa Beach, an area in the Florida panhandle. She is excited to expand her business and live a stateside beach life. (The area’s beaches are compared to the Caribbean, and rightly so.) She has also started a non-profit, Blue Sky Relief Foundation, an organization working to eradicate animal abuse, neglect, and homelessness.

“There’s a lot of growth to happen here with the company,” she said. “I’m very excited for this new chapter.”

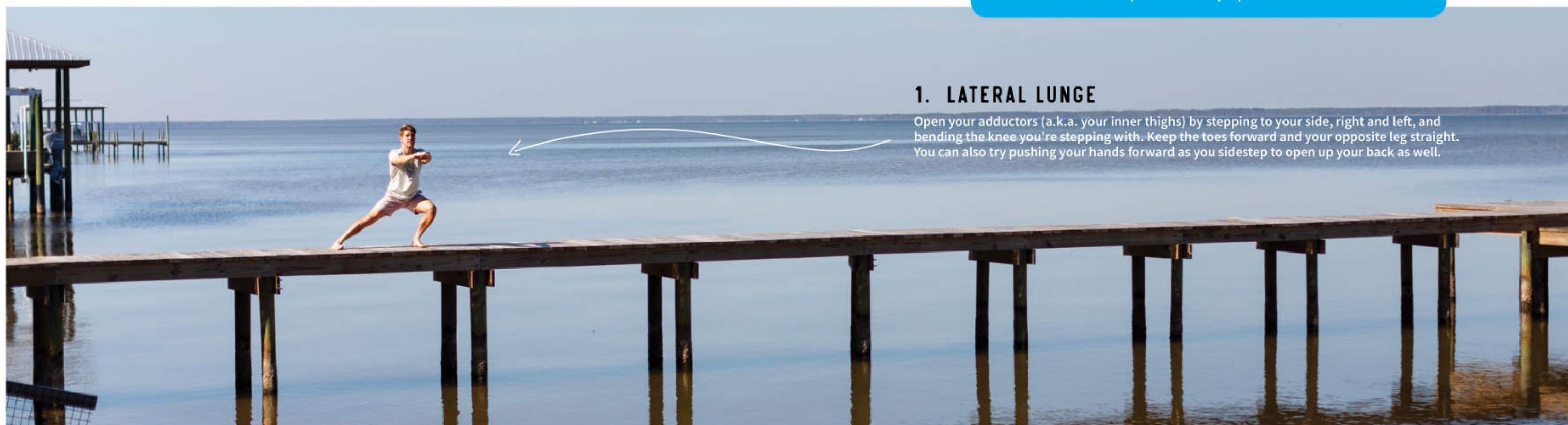
To learn more, visit [Blue Sky Luxury Travels](http://blueskyluxurytravels.com) (blueskyluxurytravels.com) or follow Shanna on Instagram ([@dickerson_shanna](https://www.instagram.com/dickerson_shanna)).



“
She didn’t want to climb the corporate ladder,
retire when she was 65, and then live
the life she dreamed of.
She wanted it now.
”

NO GYM?

HERE ARE
5 SIMPLE EXERCISES
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1. LATERAL LUNGE

Open your adductors (a.k.a. your inner thighs) by stepping to your side, right and left, and bending the knee you're stepping with. Keep the toes forward and your opposite leg straight. You can also try pushing your hands forward as you sidestep to open up your back as well.

NO PROBLEM.

Fitness expert **Sean Miller** shares 5 simple but effective exercises one can do anytime, anywhere.

Ah, spring. Hibernation ends, the world emerges, and life is in full bloom. Even the golden promise of summer is rearing its head around the corner, and perhaps with it, that itchy-bitsy, teeny, weeny swimsuit you hung up last fall.

Now may be the time that most people are on the hunt for "fast tips and tricks to a bikini-ready bod," but what if you already let that gym membership lapse?

That's okay, says fitness expert Sean Miller, otherwise known as the "Travel Trainer on 30A." Miller's holistic approach to performance coaching began with both a collegiate and professional soccer career that eventually had his players and friends asking him for advice on staying in shape. What's evolved since is a mobile personal training business that combines healthy movement with nutrition, mindset, and support. He encourages his clients to ask themselves, "How can I become the most versatile, resilient person that I can be?"

Of course, reaching a goal like that certainly doesn't happen overnight. But you've got to start with the basics.



2. PUSH-UP

Yes, the push-up. The dreaded push-up. Maintaining wide hands and wide feet will reduce strain to your lower back. Be sure to open your chest as a lot of us have what Sean calls "tech neck," where our anterior shoulders and chest can become rounded, leading to poor posture.

By Kristy Gustafson
Photos: Alissa Aryn Photography



3. SQUAT

Though it sounds fairly easy, squats are often done incorrectly with speed and poor technique. Sean's advice? Don't overthink it. Slow it down and use proper form. The simplest way to do it right is a box squat. Act as if you're sitting in a chair or on top of a box. Activate your glutes and hamstrings and remember to engage your core.



4. SHOULDER MOBILITY STRETCH

With daily lives overrun by sitting, texting, and computer-ing, here's the Travel Trainer's fix. Begin by placing your hands behind your head and pulling laterally on the fingers to stretch the posterior neck and back muscles. From here, extend the arms and circle them forward and backward. Bring them to a 90-degree angle to activate the rotator cuff muscles, then move one hand down by your pocket and the other towards the sky. Then alternate. Next, crisscross the arms with your hands facing each other, facing the sky, and facing the ground. Finish by bringing the arms down by your side and then as if you're throwing something over your head to get a full reach. Repeat as needed.



5. PLANKS

Engage it all! Core, elbows, and toes especially. Keep your elbows at 90 degrees with your palms down on the floor and feet about hip-width apart.

MORE TIPS FROM SEAN:

- Look to cover all planes of the body for functional movement that will generate more mobility, flexibility, and improved range of motion.
- Change your tempo for additional benefits.
- There are many variations to all these exercises. The important thing is to keep it simple and have fun with it.
- Breathe! As Sean says, it's the foundation to everything. Breathe through the exercise or stretch, and for an added bonus, count out loud. (It lets you know you're breathing.)
- The most important thing, he says? Just show up.

Learn more about Sean's work at www.seanmillerfit.com



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Bob Guccione, Jr.'s

New Spin on Beach Happy Magazine



By Susan Gunn

A positive new year is underway and flying by. In its wake, life may not be perfect, but things seem lighter. After the recent challenging years, happier times are in the air, and couldn't we all use them?

Beach Happy magazine is in sync with these good vibes! It's no great surprise that the beach life, or the dream of one, can be catching, and folks all over are enjoying the magazine. And you may have heard by now that an exciting addition has blown in on the warm beach breeze. Media mogul and icon Bob Guccione, Jr. is partnering with *Beach Happy* to create a national network of regional editions of the magazine, starting in the northeast, in June 2022.

Guccione is the founder of *SPIN* and *GEAR* magazines and was also once the owner and editor of *DISCOVER* magazine. These are just a few highlights of Guccione's storied career. Recently, it was my honor to have a conversation with him to discuss his illustrious past, his vision for the future of *Beach Happy* magazine, and his love for the coastal lifestyle.

Susan: You began your career at an unusually early age. What's your background and how did you start working so young?

Bob: I was born in Manhattan in the West Village, a lot of which was then part of "Little Italy." In 1955, ours was an all-Italian street, and we lived in a small tenement apartment. My mother was English, and because she didn't speak Italian, the food shops wouldn't serve her. My father had to go tell them they had to, or we couldn't eat! We moved to England when I was two, then returned to the U.S. in 1971, but I grew up British. In 1973, a friend and I published a magazine about Kung Fu, which was very big at the time. It was hard work, and I was just eighteen years old. At nineteen, I put out a second, very small rock and roll magazine, in the US, with a fold-out poster, and from then I was hooked. I worked periodically for my father, and in 1984, I came up with the idea for *SPIN*.

SPIN magazine was wildly successful. Can you share a little more about how your idea came to fruition?

Surprisingly, the idea for *SPIN* came to me in a flash. It still amazes me that the entire magazine came to me in a second—every page, the fonts, the layout, the white space—it was a completely new look I had in mind. Initially, I thought, "Well, I can't do that!" But then I woke very early one morning, sat bolt upright in bed, and thought, "It's not even a question of whether I should do it. It's a vocation—I have to do it." That same day, I began to lay it out. In the beginning, in 1985, it was a massive struggle, but then after a short time, it hit. *SPIN* went beyond music to surprise its readers. I believe the greatest success of all magazines is that they surprise their readers. If they don't, what's the point?

In speaking to that surprise factor, SPIN was often controversial. Can you elaborate on how the publication affected that time in our culture?

I was a very determined journalist and editor seeking to get to the bottom of a story, even when that was incredibly unpopular. We broke the story that Live Aid was a bust and that the money raised didn't go to those who were suffering, but to buying weapons used against the people who were suffering.

SPIN was around at the beginning of AIDS. We published pieces that exploded the myth that there was a heterosexual epidemic. We undermined the orthodox position that AZT would save you, or that if you had the virus it was a death sentence. The magazine proved that the drug was more harmful than the syndrome of diseases and killed quicker, and soon it was off the market. To this day I have people who come up to me and say, "I'm alive today because of you." To hear that your work has produced that kind of sentiment is the most rewarding thing.

We are saturated with digital media and culture. What can you say to those who fear the times of printed books, newspapers, magazines, and other hard-copy media is coming to an end?

I don't think hard-copy will disappear. Print is an enjoyable thing, very tactile. Maybe digital because of



Bob in Bosnia,
reporting on the siege
of Sarajevo for SPIN



Photo by Loren Haynes

“
What we desperately need
and aspire to is that moment of
weightlessness
when those pressures
dissolve off of us—they come off us
like mist in the morning.”
”



Bob and Liza at
La Samanna, St. Martin



its ubiquity will be the greater distribution form, but we all love books. I used to say about magazines that if you walk down the street and hand them out, no one will say no. The problem with print is there are only a few hundred good publications left. The deterioration of the infrastructure for selling magazines has hurt the business. Digital and print media are a natural hybrid; they can blend together. Instead of seeing them as competing forces, we should see them as blending forces, but we haven't yet got that composition right.

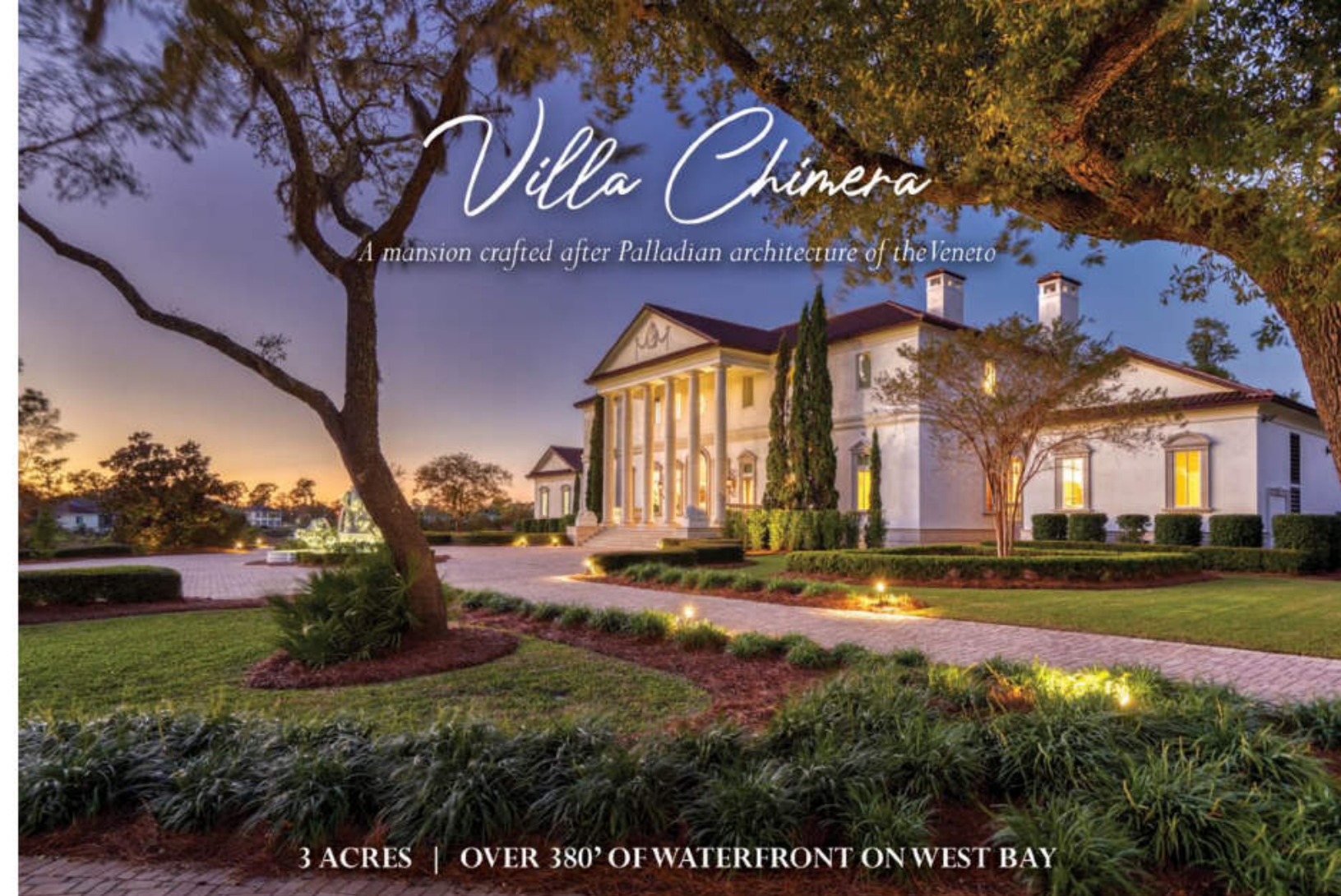
We are thrilled that you are bringing your talent to Beach Happy magazine. How do you feel about the beach, and what do you envision for the future of the publication?

What we have with *Beach Happy* is a wonderful combination of common interest and a common aesthetic of joy because we let go on the beach. Very few people go to the beach and feel worse. There's also a regionality that's common only to those people. There's this great blend of interests. We'll do a national network of regional titles, each to have its own personality and to contribute its own quirkiness and whims to the community. Eventually, we'll cover the nation.

The beach is more than a physical place; it's a metaphysical place too. I love the beach. I've been with my partner Liza now for almost nineteen years, and some of my best memories are sitting with her at a favorite little beach bar in St. Martin. I'm a very active person, but I love lying on the beach getting lost in my thoughts. We need weightlessness in life. We walk around with so much weight superimposed on us by outside forces like a pandemic, a tough economy, and a need to work. This weight is imposed on ourselves by our own expectations of what we should be doing.

What we desperately need and aspire to is that moment of weightlessness when those pressures dissolve off of us—they come off us like mist in the morning. We are lulled by the wonderful rhythm of the ocean, lulled by that percussive heat of the sun. These things take us out of ourselves, and I see that as a metaphor for what this magazine can do. In every magazine, there is a great opportunity to find new things. I don't know exactly what we'll find, but I know we'll have fun doing it. 🍹

Alongside this Gulf Coast edition, the new Northeast edition of *Beach Happy* will be out in Summer 2022. To learn more, visit beachhappymag.com.



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Swimming in Two Seas

By Carrie Honaker
Photos by Jack Gardner



“
**Some people make
barbecue chicken
or the best steaks.
I made sushi.
It fed this
other side of me.**
”



Architect Jeff Margaretten has made a successful career designing iconic homes and gorgeous commercial spaces all over the world. But as the sun dips into the Gulf of Mexico, Margaretten now puts away his T-square and design software and dons a crisp black chef coat and charcoal skull cap, transforming into the precision knife-wielding raw fish master behind “Sushi by Jeff.”

Back in the 1990s, Margaretten designed spaces for commercial brands such as BMW and Ford, traveling globally from his home base in Atlanta, Georgia. Amidst jet-setting, he attended a make-your-own-sushi party that sparked his dual business paths. Rice and vegetables furnished by the host complemented whatever fish guests brought, and then everybody got rolling. That evening turned Margaretten into an ardent sushi crafter.

“Everybody has their thing,” said Margaretten. “Some people make barbecue chicken or the best steaks. I made sushi. It fed this other side of me.”

As a break from his busy metropolitan life, Margaretten vacationed with his family on Scenic Highway 30A in Walton County, Florida. But what started as a part-time retreat became a full-time home.

“We built our house on 30A in 2001, but we still had a house in Atlanta,” he said. “I realized I would be happy if my kids grew up here in this small beach town community.” But maintaining his corporate clients required extensive work travel, and his kids were growing up without him there full-time.

An open T-ball coaching position changed his trajectory. Leaving the traveling lifestyle behind in 2003, Margaretten Architectural opened in Santa Rosa Beach, and he concentrated on building his local design business, while coaching his identical sons’ team and throwing sushi parties for friends and family on the side.

Margaretten soon fully embraced the concept of live, work, and play, which is now an iconic lifestyle recipe found along Scenic Highway 30A. “Each structure I design involves thought about how it integrates into the broader community, and it’s all built around a beach road incubator,” said Margaretten. “Each new creation makes the others more successful.”

In 2009, sushi became more than a hobby. A real estate buddy approached him to cater sushi for an upcoming open house. The offer floored

Margaretten. "I couldn't believe he was going to pay me to roll sushi." He bought some sharp knives, and just like that, "Sushi by Jeff" was born.

But as a self-taught chef, Margaretten realized talent does not equal skill, so he soon sought out some formal training. "You can have talent, but if you don't work on the skills to make the most of your talent, you're just setting yourself up for failure," he said. A few sushi parties a year didn't afford the practice needed to truly hone his skills.

So, Margaretten started moonlighting at the now-defunct Crush Wine Bar in Seaside, Florida. At 3:30 p.m. Margaretten would change clothes and head over to Crush for his second shift. Still an architect by day, sushi served as a nightly respite.

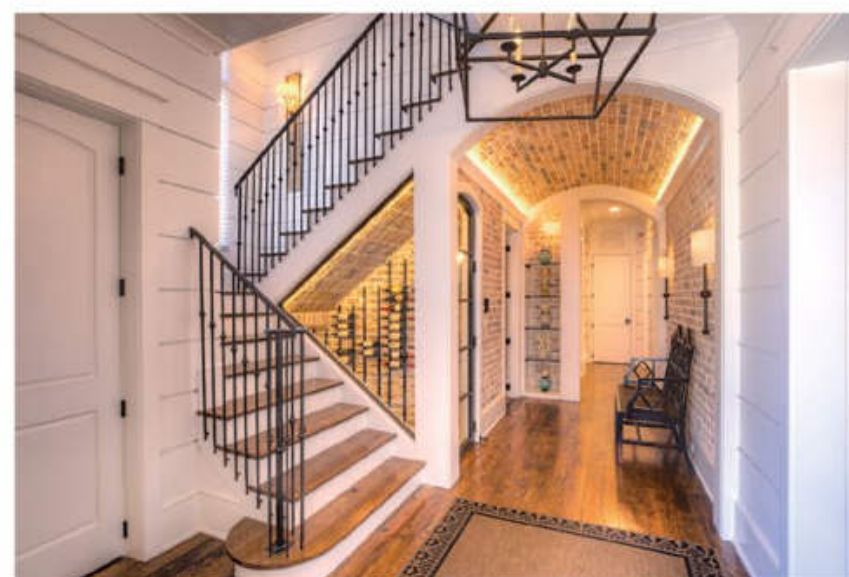
"I basically walked in right around the time they opened, and asked if I could work at night as a sushi chef," he recalled. "I had never worked in a restaurant before." He worked three nights a week for two-and-a-half years. "And I learned. I learned knife skills. I learned how to mop up. I learned the fryer. I learned speed, I learned mise en place. I learned ingredients, food cost, and the business side of restaurants."

His experience at Crush sharpened his skills as a private sushi chef, and though it is still his secondary business to architecture, his reputation for sleekly designed rolls that capture the essence of the 30A lifestyle has grown since that first open house back in 2009.

Margaretten said that Mike Ragsdale, founder of The 30A Company, actually inspired one of his most popular menu items. "The 'Life Shines' roll has tuna and mango wrapped with salmon with a few dots of sriracha on top. I always say Mike is the ambassador of this area, and that roll showcases the little bit of sweet and the little bit of heat found here on 30A."

Once a fan of big city life, Margaretten now finds peace and inspiration in his more casual coastal lifestyle. "I love living five minutes from the office. I love having the beaches here at sunset. Everywhere you go, you see people you know. That's important to me. And I love being part of the fabric of this community as both an architect and a chef." 🍣

To learn more, visit Margaretten's website (sushibyjeff.com) or follow his adventures on Instagram (@sushibyjeff).





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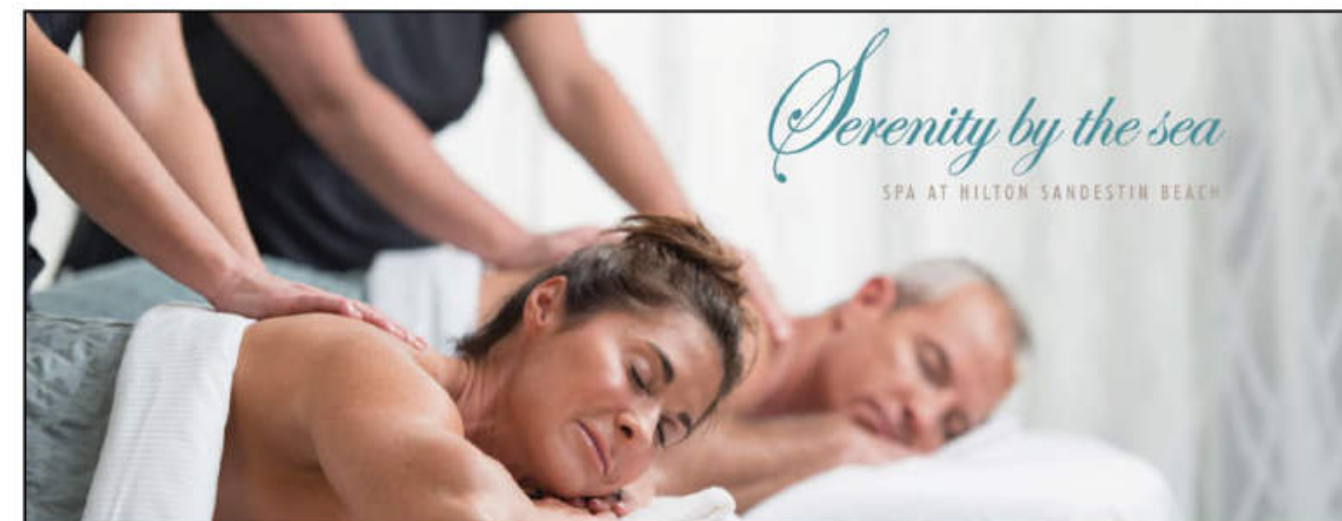
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BEACHES ABROAD

GOA, INDIA

By Amandeep Mangat

SEEKING 'SUSEGADO' IN GOA

You're sitting on a quiet beach, under a canopy of coconut trees swaying gently in the breeze. You've watched the sun rise over the horizon, painting the sky in vibrant hues. You woke up early and cycled through quiet villages, past green fields, and with just timid cows for company, so that you could find that empty spot on the beach. You head for a swim, enjoying the cool, still waters. In an hour, you will be ravenous and will cycle to one of the beach shacks or to any of the cute little cafés nearby for breakfast.

You've done this the day before, and you can do it the next day. This is Goa, and living on the beach is part of the proverbial susegad life—an unapologetic, unhurried pursuit of peace and quiet—and you're here for it.

One of India's smallest states, Goa occupies a small part of its expansive western coast. The country's favorite beach destination is the epitome of the good life: great food, cheap alcohol, stunning beaches, friendly people, and an appealing mix of the traditional and the modern.

Time, in Goa, is precious.



Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church in Panjim, the state capital of Goa.

WHY GO?

You can be the beach bum and spend your day eating fresh seafood, working on that perfect golden tan, enjoying foot massages, and even doing some shopping, all from a sunbed. The beaches up north — the popular Anjuna-Baga-Calangute belt or the Mandrem-Ashwem-Morjim stretch further north — are more vibrant, touristy, and with exciting food options. Meander down south to Agonda-Cola-Palolem to enjoy clean beaches, minus the crowd and tourists. Discover your own pocket of quiet on the rocky cliffs at Vagator, or at a lagoon in Cola beach. All these beaches have shacks, with chairs or lounge beds in the sand, where you can spend the day sipping on local craft cocktails and eating fresh, made-to-order seafood, fried in rava (semolina) or simmered in a coconut curry.

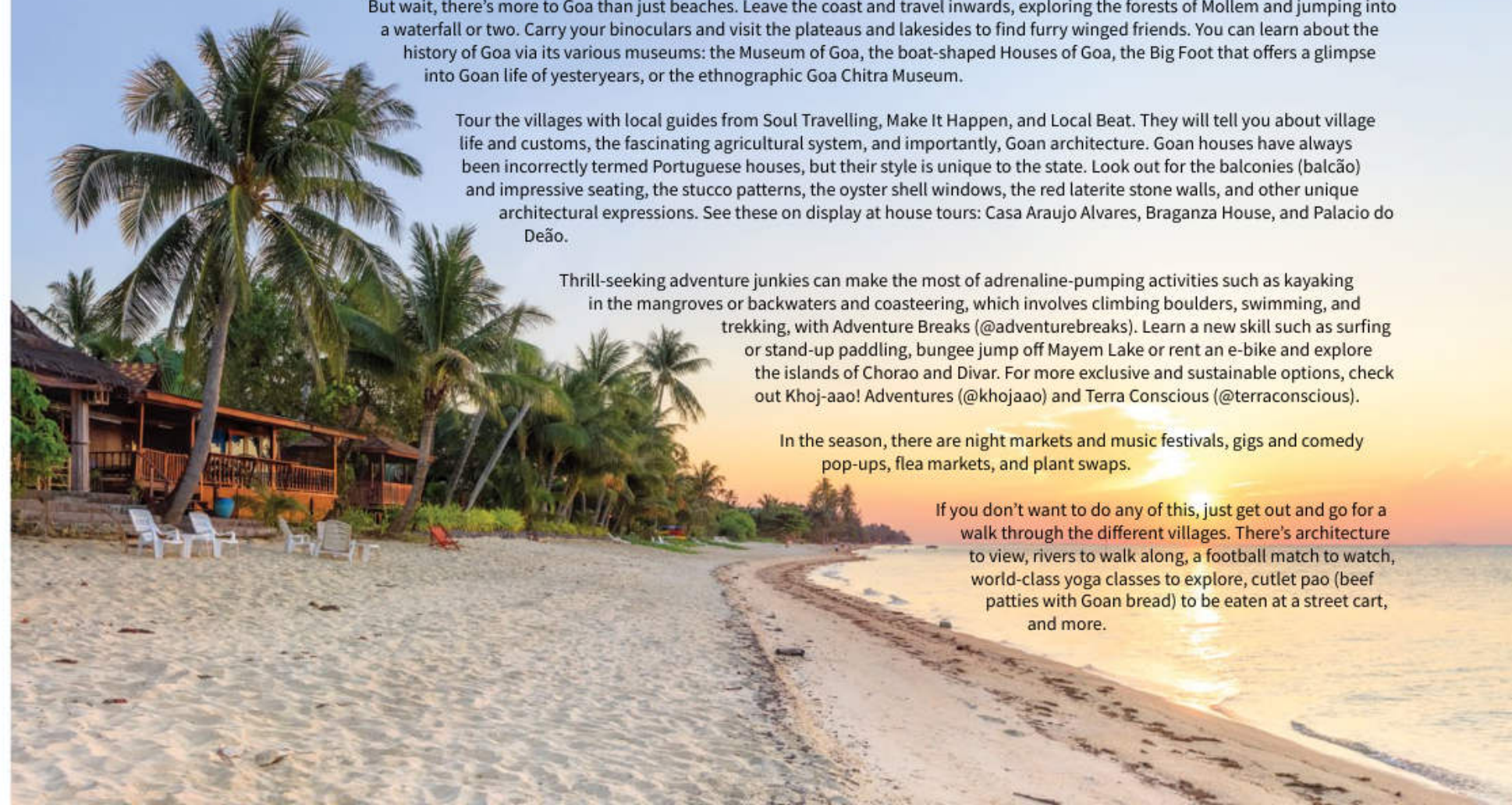
But wait, there's more to Goa than just beaches. Leave the coast and travel inwards, exploring the forests of Mollem and jumping into a waterfall or two. Carry your binoculars and visit the plateaus and lakesides to find furry winged friends. You can learn about the history of Goa via its various museums: the Museum of Goa, the boat-shaped Houses of Goa, the Big Foot that offers a glimpse into Goan life of yesteryears, or the ethnographic Goa Chitra Museum.

Tour the villages with local guides from Soul Travelling, Make It Happen, and Local Beat. They will tell you about village life and customs, the fascinating agricultural system, and importantly, Goan architecture. Goan houses have always been incorrectly termed Portuguese houses, but their style is unique to the state. Look out for the balconies (balcão) and impressive seating, the stucco patterns, the oyster shell windows, the red laterite stone walls, and other unique architectural expressions. See these on display at house tours: Casa Araujo Alvares, Braganza House, and Palacio do Deão.

Thrill-seeking adventure junkies can make the most of adrenaline-pumping activities such as kayaking in the mangroves or backwaters and coasteering, which involves climbing boulders, swimming, and trekking, with Adventure Breaks (@adventurebreaks). Learn a new skill such as surfing or stand-up paddling, bungee jump off Mayem Lake or rent an e-bike and explore the islands of Chorao and Divar. For more exclusive and sustainable options, check out Khoj-aao! Adventures (@khojaaoo) and Terra Conscious (@terraconscious).

In the season, there are night markets and music festivals, gigs and comedy pop-ups, flea markets, and plant swaps.

If you don't want to do any of this, just get out and go for a walk through the different villages. There's architecture to view, rivers to walk along, a football match to watch, world-class yoga classes to explore, cutlet pao (beef patties with Goan bread) to be eaten at a street cart, and more.





WHAT TO EAT/DRINK

The beauty of Goan food is how it marries local ingredients with colonial influences to create a cuisine that's delicious, wholesome, and unusual. For a taste of some Portuguese treats, go to Figueiredo House, a 400-year-old aristocratic mansion where you can explore the museum, indulge in a multi-course meal of Portuguese fare, or even stay over. Lately, Goa has seen a marked increase in restaurants offering world cuisine, from Japanese yakitori to cigar lounges. Discover premium cocktails at the award-winning Tesouro or at For the Record Vinyl Bar. For the health conscious, there are vegan and Keto menus. An authentic taste of Goa can be found at any of the fish thali (large assorted sea-food platter) joints across the state. Down south, the Floating Feni Experience (@fazendacazulo) offers an introduction to the Goan liquor, feni, distilled from the fermented juice of cashew fruit.

Befitting its status as the preferred pandemic destination of the country, there are many cute cafés and restaurants that double up as co-working spaces. Work during the day, and wind down—just the spaces do—at night catching some live music, or quiz nights at the many new bars and refurbished tavernas.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Goa has one international airport, Dabolim. Use GoaMiles, the local taxi app, or bargain with the drivers already at the airport (rates start at \$15). Later, you can rent a scooter (\$5 a day) or a car (\$15 a day) for the rest of your stay. Your hotel or Airbnb will help you with contacts.

WHERE SHOULD I STAY?

There's a roof for every kind of traveler, from hostels catering to the on-budget backpacker crowd to those looking for a luxurious escape. For the best experience, ditch the hotels and look for a nice villa with the same amenities and more privacy. In the touristy belt up north, there's Summertime (villa rates start at \$530) or the more Goan Villa Turiya (\$33) in the south.

Accommodation by the beach is more expensive, with places like Palm Grove Beach Resort in Ashvem offering bungalows on the beach at \$150 per night. For a secluded beach stay merely steps away from the ocean, choose between villas and tents at Elsewhere (@elsewheregoa) with prices starting at \$134 and going up to \$400 per night in peak season.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Peak season happens in pockets: February for Carnival, April-May for summer rush, November-December for Christmas season, and New Year.

Eating out is very affordable in Goa; street food and thali rates start at \$2. The fancier places offer food starting from \$5 and up, and drinks in the range of \$6 to \$10.





Beach Home BINGE-WATCHING

By Shannon Serpette

Ever dream of buying a beach home? You can get a lot of inspiration from TV...

Or maybe you'd just like to see some renovations you could copy at home. There are plenty of TV programs to demonstrate how to fulfill your house-on-the-beach aspirations. Here are 7 such shows that might just have you re-evaluating the way you're living.

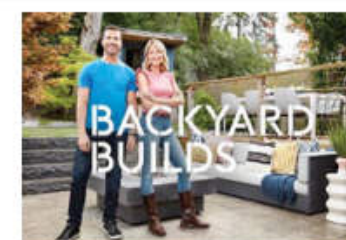


Dream Home Makeover

This Netflix program demonstrates that you don't need a million-dollar budget to turn your home into a dreamy place to live. Some of the home makeovers are done on a shoestring budget on this show, while other ones have a much bigger budget to work with. It just goes to show you, if you plan correctly and think creatively, anything is possible with your house.

Hawaii Life

Ok, show of hands: who hasn't thought about chucking their nine-to-five grind to the wind, selling all their possessions, and moving to Hawaii? Thanks to HGTV's *Hawaii Life*, we know we're not the only ones. Since 2013, this show has documented the journeys of people looking to own their little piece of paradise in the Aloha State. Whether you want to live on the big island or a smaller, less populous island, this show will help you come up with a workable budget to fuel your dreams.



Backyard Builds

If relocating to another part of the country isn't in the cards for you, you can bring paradise to your backyard. In *Backyard Builds*, available on Hulu, hosts Brian McCourt and Sarah Keenleyside transform ordinary and sometimes rundown backyards into a relaxing oasis. They've added pools, yoga studios, outdoor theaters, and even an ice-skating rink to tricked-out backyards across the country. While the backyard transformations are jaw-dropping, part of the appeal of this show comes from the can-do attitudes and friendly banter between the likable hosts.

Beachfront Bargain Hunt

If you've ever thought a beachfront home was out of your reach financially, this budget-friendly HGTV show might have you reconsidering. It scours the United States looking for places where home buyers can afford to live amongst the waves, sand, and sunshine on the cheap. While some TV shows feature houses you couldn't buy even if you liquidated every asset you own, this one is thrilling because with almost every house that's featured, you think, "I could actually afford that."

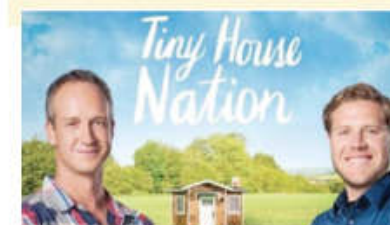


Beach Hunters

If you love the beach as much as we do but don't live near one, this is the eye candy you'll be relying on to get you through cold winter nights. The beach locations picked for this HGTV show are stunning, and you're likely to find a new spot that you never knew existed to add to your vacation bucket list.

House Hunters

If you want to binge-watch *House Hunters* and its spin-off, *House Hunters International*, you'll be at it for a while. HGTV's original *House Hunters* has been on TV since 1999, while the international version started in 2006. It's great fun to watch people as they search for the house of their dreams – and you won't be able to stop yourself from yelling at the TV when you think they've picked wrong.



Tiny House Nation

In an era where most people have so much stuff in their homes, the idea of letting most of it go and living a simpler life is tantalizing. This Netflix show highlights what tiny homes look like on the inside and all the clever storage hacks that make these homes so practical. Even if you're not planning on moving to a tiny home, this show will make you want to purge some of your stuff and live a less complex life.

Want To Be Happier?



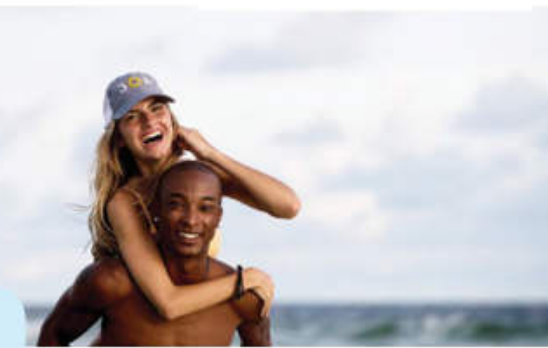
BOOK A TRIP, RESEARCH SAYS

We love the beach.

That should be pretty obvious by now. Why? Well, simply put, it makes us happy. And we know it brings happiness to many of you as well. But then we started to wonder: Does the beach make everyone happy, or just a few of us strange beach birds?

We decided to dig into the sand a little. We commissioned a major research study to examine the relationships, if any, between the beach lifestyle, travel, and happiness. Conducted by the University of Alabama's Public Opinion Lab, the study surveyed 1,040 random U.S. adults between the ages of 25 and 55 to determine people's level of happiness and how it is influenced by beaches and travel. (People over the age of 55 were excluded from the study, to limit the possible impact of retirement on one's happiness.)

We learned a lot. Here are six key findings from the study, including some specific actions you can take right now to increase your personal happiness.



1.

Planning a vacation makes you happy.

"People who are planning a vacation are significantly happier than those who aren't," said Dr. Jameson Hayes, associate professor and director of the Public Opinion Lab. "Reflecting back on your last vacation doesn't necessarily make you happier, but looking forward to your next trip certainly does."

34.2%

2.

It doesn't matter where you go.

Beaches are, by far, the preferred vacation destination among 34.2% of respondents, with mountain vacations second at just under 20%. But the data shows that one's happiness increases regardless of the type of destination. "Anticipating any upcoming vacation appears to significantly boost happiness, regardless of whether it's to the beach, the mountains, or a big city," said researcher Jay Waters of the University's College of Communications and Information Sciences.

3.

The more you travel, the happier you are – but only up to a point.

Respondents who traveled for pleasure 15-21 days per year reported the highest levels of happiness. Those traveling less than two weeks per year or more than three weeks per year reported being less happy. "It appears that happiness does have its limits as it relates to travel," said Waters. "Two to three weeks of annual vacation is the happiness sweet spot."

4.

Vacation souvenirs increase happiness.

GIFT SHOP

People who surround themselves with 2-3 physical reminders of their favorite vacation destination reported higher levels of happiness when compared to those who don't. "Surrounding yourself with mementos from past vacations such as apparel, photos, art, bumper stickers, and even phone ringtones can increase happiness levels," said Dr. Hayes.

5.

Travelers use technology to stay connected with their favorite destinations.



Every week, 50% of respondents viewed social media posts that reminded them of their favorite destination. Following a destination on social media, adding it to their weather app, and having a related wallpaper on their phone or computer were the most commonly used reminders.

6.

Post-pandemic travel is expected to increase.

Pre-pandemic, 58% of respondents said they normally spent less than five days per year on vacation. Medium travelers (6 to 14 vacation nights per year) comprised 29%, while heavy travelers (15 days or more) made up 13% of all respondents. Light travelers reported that they plan to travel significantly more as the pandemic wanes, with the group of medium travelers expected to increase by 15 percent.

Ultimately, researchers found that action is an essential key to unlocking happiness. "We found that anticipation trumps nostalgia," said Waters. "So if you want to be instantly happier, book a trip."

To learn more about 30A's inaugural Beach Happy research study, visit www.30A.com/beach-happy-study.



ADVENTURE

30A SAND ROVER



By Martin Liptrot
Photos: Fletcher Isacks
Sean Murphy



WHAT IS THE COLLECTIVE NOUN FOR BEACH BUGGIES, LAND ROVERS, JEEPS, AND OFF-ROADERS?

Collective nouns reflect the evolving nature of our language, and when given to groups of living or inanimate objects, it can often be surprising. They give things a little bit of mystery, character, a certain *je ne sais quoi*. For example, there is a circus of puffins, a murder of crows and a parade of elephants, which sounds more interesting than a flock or a herd.

So while there are fleets of cars and convoys of trucks, to the best of my knowledge, no name for a group of these most exciting and adventurous vehicles has yet been coined. Challenge accepted.

April 22-24, 2022, is the eighth annual 30A Sand Rover Rally, which will take place in Topsail Hill Preserve State Park in Walton County, Florida. Here, owners, drivers, and aficionados of these rugged four-wheelers will gather and swap stories about their on-road and off-road exploits.

Perhaps this could be the gathering to try and establish a collective noun for these impressive vehicles, but what should it be?

What is important to recognize when searching for a suitable collective noun is that it isn't going to be just about the vehicles—it's very much going to be about the lifestyle they promote and represent. The 30A Sand Rover Rally recognizes that although it is ostensibly a gathering of beach cruisers, it is so much more than simply a car show.

Sure, this event will welcome more than 100 Land Rovers, Broncos, Jeeps, classic dune buggies, vintage military vehicles, and assorted beach cruisers, but there will also be live music, food trucks, family and dog-friendly games and challenges for all, so, pure petrol-head names like a Rattle, a Rust or a Backfire can probably be dismissed.

And to prove the point, while the designated drivers will be at their campsites polishing their chrome, greasing their flanges, and inflating their super-sized tires ahead of the weekend's event, fans of the beach cruiser lifestyle will be attending a kick-off party the Friday evening, sponsored and hosted by Grayton Beer Company, a local craft brewery.

"People who love having the wind blow in their hair as they ride in an open top four-wheel-drive vehicle on the beach are our kind of people too," said Grayton Beer Company's Head Brewer and COO, Tyler White. "They want to have fun, live life to the fullest, and enjoy every moment. We brew a range of beers to complement those times and are looking forward to welcoming fellow beach lovers from across the country to the 30A Sand Rover Rally. Our brewery motto is "*Slow Down, You're Here*" – I think that rather fits this event perfectly!"

On Saturday, the beers are put away and the serious off-roading business starts.

"Santa Rosa Beach features over 25,000 acres of protected land to explore, including Topsail Hill Preserve, the venue for our

rally this year," said 30A Sand Rover Rally Event Director Daisson Hickel.

"It is a privilege to be partnering with the State Forest and Park Ranger teams to host this event and, of course, with that privilege comes responsibility too. All drivers are reminded to be courteous to other drivers and to respect state property," Daisson said. "All activities adhere to the *tread lightly* principles of off-roading, and vehicles are only allowed on numbered roads previously identified and agreed with State Park authorities.

"Our drivers have a lot of love for their vehicles and the backwoods environment, so we remind them, please take it slow and easy. Don't feel pressured to venture onto narrow trails. There are plenty of regular dirt roads to explore."

When the dirty business is over and the vehicles return to the rally site, there will be a chance to swap stories again and interact with heroes of the off-road, Land Rover, and extreme travel community.

Four-wheelers will be able to listen in awe about the two-wheel exploits of Azure O'Neil.

Since leaving Corporate America, Azure has traveled through 31 countries, including a multi-year journey on her 1989 Honda Transalp, which took her from coast to coast and top to bottom of both North and South America.

And those who dream of participating in mammoth off-road, pan-continental races can swap notes with Bill Burke, who was chosen from more than 2,000 applicants to be one of the two-person team to represent USA in the Camel Trophy, often called the "4x4 Olympics" — a grueling 1,200-mile rally through Burundi and Tanzania's Great East African Rift Valley.

And what would a rally be without prizes? There will be trophies for cabinets and decals to be applied to vehicle bumpers awarded for a range of achievements, including Muddiest Ride, Coolest Vintage Land Rover, and Long Distance Rover Award for the participant who traveled the furthest to attend this year's Rally.

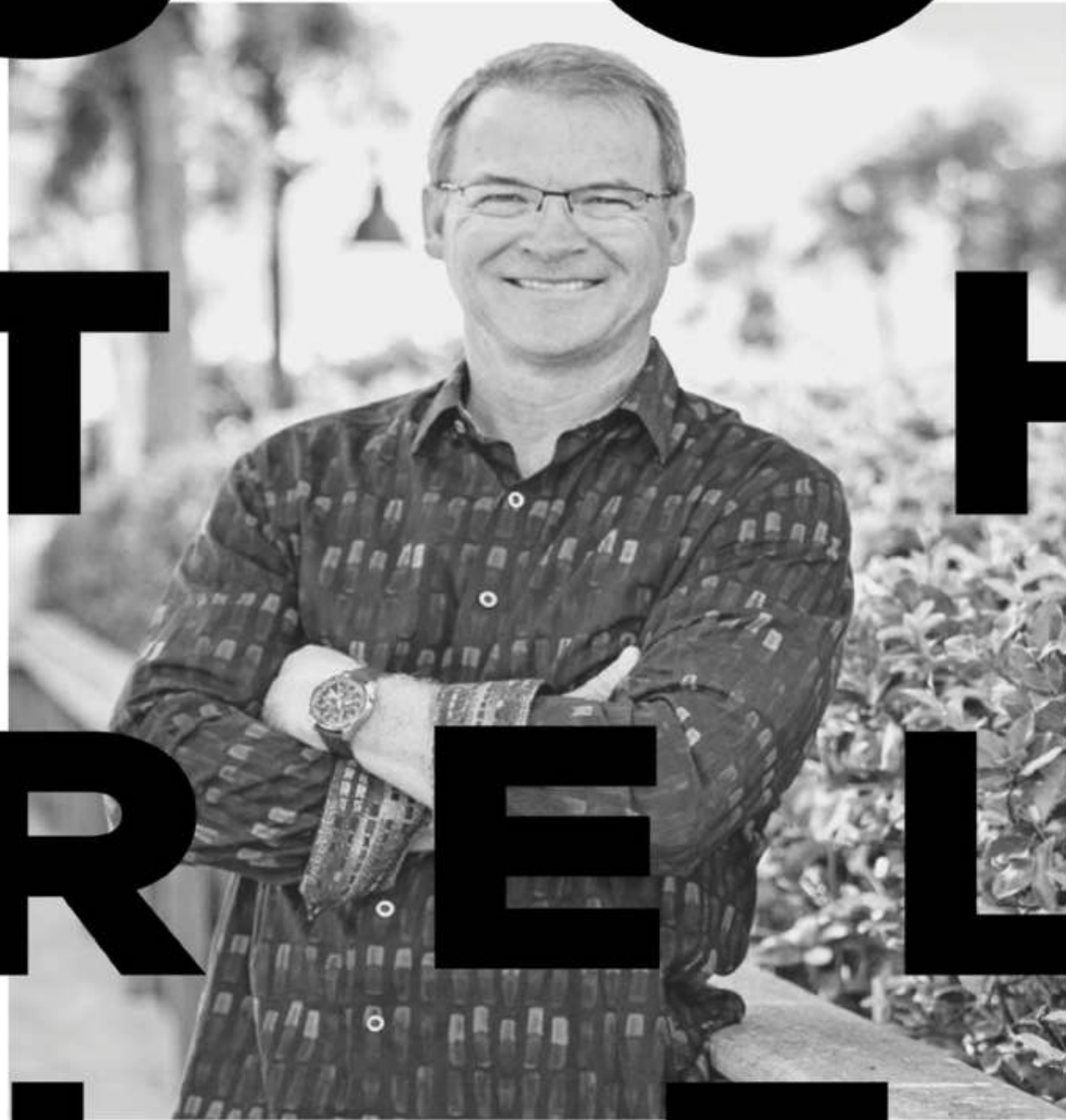
So what should that collective noun for all these amazing vehicles be?

It has to reflect the adventurous nature of the people who pour so much effort and resources into these off-roaders, it needs to capture the rugged determination to get over the next hill or to ford the next stream, and it has to reflect the good humor and never-say-die attitude of the participants for sure, so how about an "Exhilaration of Sand Rovers?"

If you have a better idea, share it now on the 30A Sand Rover Rally's official Facebook page (@30Asandroverrally).

To learn more about the 30A Sand Rover Rally, visit www.30Asandroverrally.com.

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Transforming Spaces

Designer Sarah Barnard on how our homes have changed during the pandemic

By Martin Liptrot
Photos: Ace Misiunas
Brad Nicol
Steven Dewall

While there have been numerous upsides to the enforced lockdown – more time with the family, shorter or eliminated commutes, and the freedom to wear your favorite jogging pants to a team Zoom meeting – there have been drawbacks too.

Our homes have morphed from being our little places to escape the outside world into becoming our offices, studios, and meeting rooms too. And as we spend more and more time inside staying safe from the virus, people are wondering what the impact has been on our wellbeing and emotional health.

California-based Sarah Barnard is a WELL and LEED accredited designer and creator of environments that support mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. She creates highly personalized, restorative spaces that are deeply connected to art and the preservation of the environment.

I spoke with Sarah to find out more about how the pandemic has changed our perspective of our homes, what we are doing to spruce them up, and what new and perhaps lasting trends we will see as a result.

Good Morning, Sarah. First, let me ask, how did the COVID pandemic affect your life and work habits?

Like many companies, we've been working remotely during the pandemic. More client and studio meetings are taking place through video conferences, and our team is using a work management app to communicate and share information for tasks. Because our process has become so streamlined, we're now taking on more remote clients. While I miss the in-person interactions, I appreciate all the technology that lets us connect while distanced. It's also become increasingly important to find calm, to look for opportunities for ourselves and our clients to be grounded in nature, and to continue to incorporate that into our design process.

Finding calm in these uncertain times is important. How has this changed what people are asking you for?

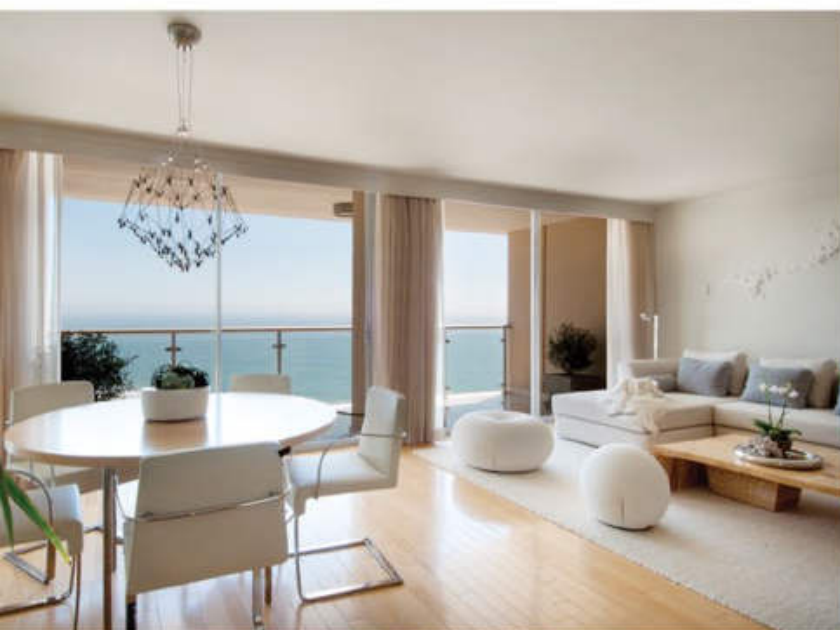
As a studio, we have always prioritized function, both for pragmatic reasons and because even minor inconveniences in our homes can contribute to fatigue, particularly during already stressful periods. As clients



spend more time at home, what were previously only minor issues become harder to overlook, and people want their spaces to serve and support them as wholly as possible.

Clients seek highly functional homes that offer beauty and mental respite when calm is needed, and for many homes, this means putting spare areas to use and visually diversifying our spaces. Guest rooms may be transformed into a home office or a wellness space designated for movement, meditation, or just somewhere for silence — away from technology and the demands of work — where clients can escape the challenges of the day.

There's also an increasing desire to feel surrounded by nature and to enjoy the calming beauty it inspires. Whether this is through natural views of beaches, dunes, lakes or oceans or



the incorporation of biophilic materials, many people are looking to foster a connection with nature and the outdoors.

Many Beach Happy readers have relocated from what was their main home in the city or suburbs to what was previously their vacation home or beach getaway. Are you seeing your clients following that pattern, and how is that changing their design requests?

Many people are experiencing a shift in priorities and with that, a desire to spend more time in the spaces that make them feel the happiest and most fulfilled. Here, in Los Angeles, as in many parts of the world, that often means being by the beach.

But vacation homes are frequently designed with short-term use in mind. Some clients may need these spaces to



be updated to support longer-term or full-time living and have them optimized with additional relaxation elements.

Natural prints can offer a transportive and soothing feature to a room, whether in textiles or wallpapers. Our Kale Tree design team, inspired by the flora and fauna of the mountains, oceans, and deserts that surround us in Southern California, creates custom patterns to connect with nature and bring a sense of calm.

I also love to give extra attention to bathroom spaces to ensure they are as restful and rejuvenating as possible. As most of us start and end our days there, having a spa-like retreat space to bookend our days can help foster mental calm.



One of the things people always treasure most about their beach homes are the outside spaces. How are you seeing them being transformed?

Outdoor spaces have always been important, but they have become a home's main social hub, functioning as second living rooms or entertainment areas, requiring more seating and creative layouts to accommodate guests. Outdoor food preparation, beverage storage, and cooking and grill spaces have also helped simplify outdoor entertaining.

We also have seen an increase in indoor-outdoor spaces, with large folding patio doors joining living rooms with patios, or big kitchen windows that welcome chatting with outside guests while preparing snacks and beverages. Sustainability has also become more important to many of our clients. We've seen an influx in interest for kitchen gardens, which can reduce dependency on commercial farming while offering an opportunity to spend time outside, enjoy nature, and invest in the environmental health benefits of outdoor spaces.

Final question: it's a bit of a philosophical one, but because of the pandemic, do you think people are now adapting to their surroundings or, alternatively, adapting their surroundings to suit them?

I think it's a bit of a symbiotic shift, where we are evolving in tandem with our homes. The increased time spent at home has inspired many people to re-evaluate their living situation and priorities, and it has reshaped the way they think about their lifestyle and how that relates to their interior spaces.

Our focus has always been on highly personalized, naturalistic, wellness-focused homes. More and more, people want home environments that can emotionally support and reflect them and their beliefs and ethics, whether through sustainable environmental choices, an interest in supporting local community artists and artisans, or following vegan interior design principles.

People recognize their home's effect and the importance of creating environments that boost health, wellbeing, and happiness. 🌿

Sarah's Top Five Tips for Living Well

- 1. CHOOSE RELAXING COLORS**
Greens and creams are soothing because of green's reference to nature and growth and cream's inspiration of clarity and balance.
- 2. INCORPORATE NATURE**
Biophilic design reconnects us to the natural world and can help to reduce stress and promote a sense of wellbeing.
- 3. BRING THE OUTSIDE IN**
Expansive exterior doors and patios designed for entertaining encourage more time spent with friends and family out doors.
- 4. LET THE SUN SHINE BRIGHT**
Maximize and manage the natural lighting available by utilizing motorized shades that align with the rhythms of the day.
- 5. EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE**
Organizing your home is one of the best ways to restore its luster and to refresh your mindset.



To learn more, visit Sarah's website (www.sarahbarnard.com).



BILOU SUNSET BEACH BAR

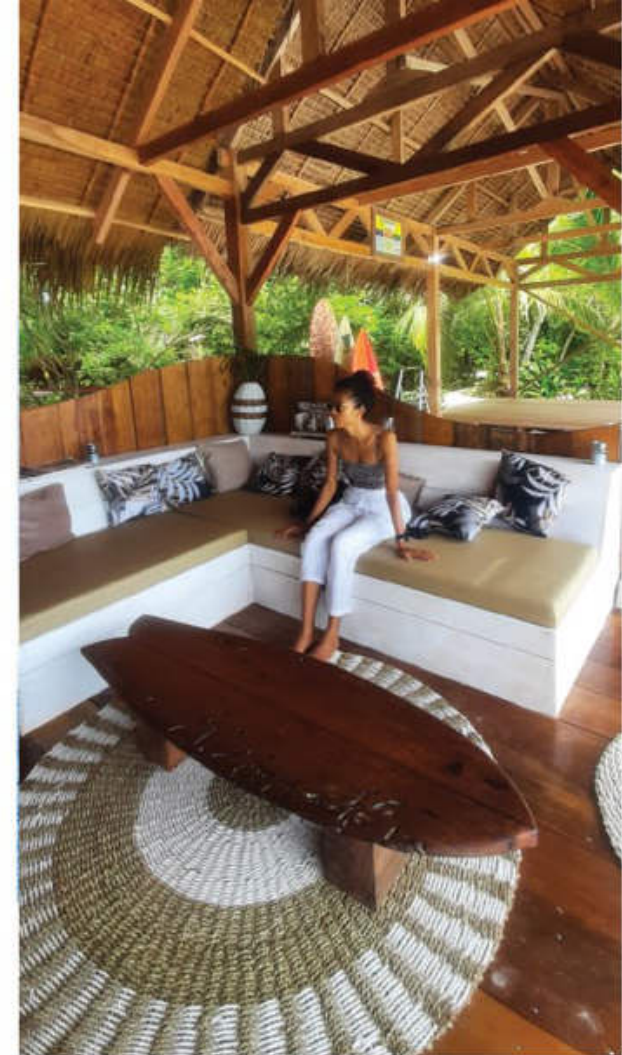
MENTAWAIS, INDONESIA

Imagine a chain of islands, 60 miles due west from the mainland of Sumatra. These islands are wild, often uninhabited, but crowded with malaria, monkeys, and orangutans.

Out of all these islands, one tiny island is home to a beautiful eco-resort, with enough luxury to put anyone at ease. It also has easy access to incredible waves to quell the heart of the most wave-addicted and anxious surfer.

Bilou Beach Villas is such a nirvana.

By Craig Jarvis
Photos: Chantal Malherbe
Sabrina Schmidt



BIG SCORE

When the Mentawai Islands were discovered to be holding some of the best surf spots in the world, no one could have foreseen what was to come.

Australian surfer and skipper Martin Daly, who was on a salvage job off Sumatra in 1983, can be credited with the initial discoveries. However, there are stories of people who surfed the waves before him but managed to keep it a secret.

Martin was poring over some nautical charts and figuring out the logistics of a salvage mission when he started musing over waves and decided to check out a few nooks and crannies. As a result, he was rewarded with probably the biggest score of a surf adventurer.

THE NEW MENTAWAIS

Fast forward 40 years, the Mentawai islands are crowded. Less now because of COVID, but at times up to 15 charter boats, each holding 10 paying guests and surfing crew, at one particular wave. A quick calculation will see that this makes surfing totally dysfunctional, as there are just too many people.

So surfers started looking for more quiet spots. A few land camps popped up near decent waves, usually with a home break in front and a few within easy access.

South African travelers Gideon and Chantal Malherbe had already run one of the most successful charter cruises in the Mentawais – the Indies Explorer. After that adventure, they decided to build Bilou Beach Resort and Villas.

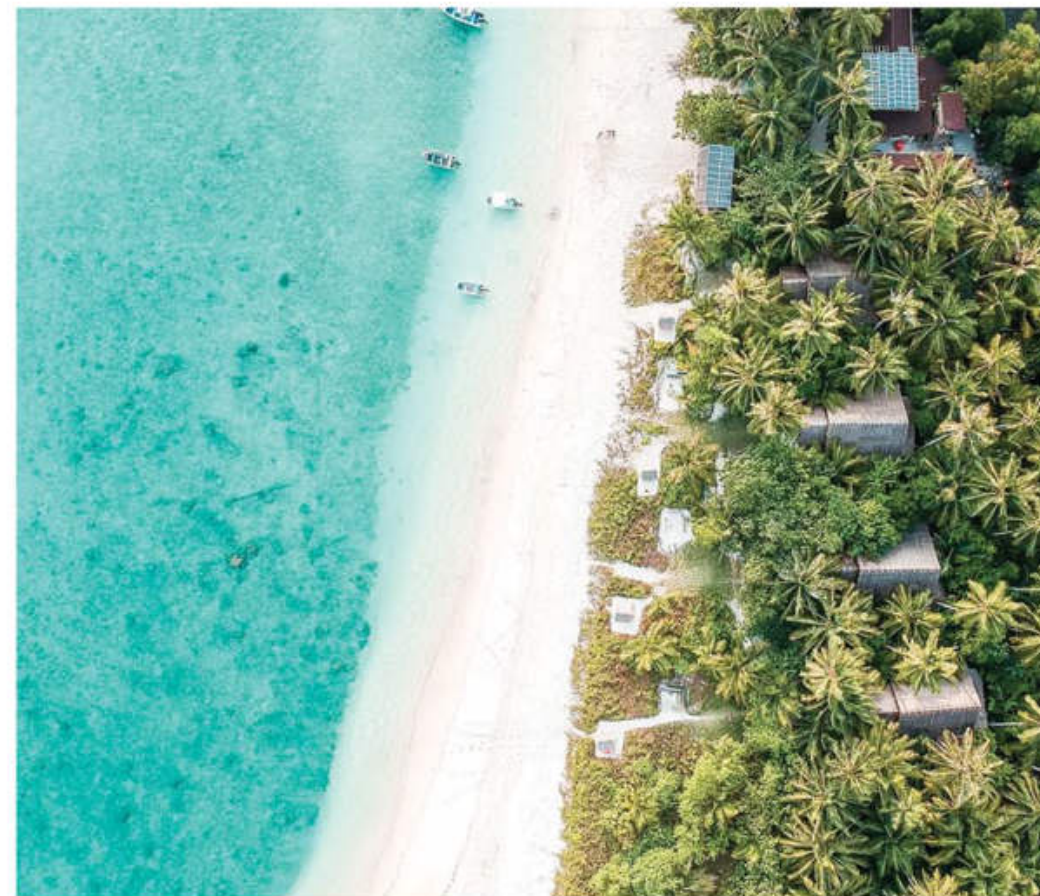
AWERA ISLAND

They chose Awera Island. They have three hectares of land on the southern tip of Awera Island, giving them 250 m of the west coast and 300 m of the east coast, which come together on a beautiful sandspit.

They were attuned to the ways and means of Indonesian culture, and managed to get the best value from the local builders and artisans to help set up their establishment. It was a case of, ‘If you build, they will come.’

As word got out, the surfers started arriving, some alone and some with families. The need for a drinking bar experience was soon very apparent.





BILOU SUNSET BEACH BAR

Catering to everyone's needs, the Malherbes and their two surfing sons, Josh and Indie, soon discovered a need for a bar. As a result, Bilou Sunset Beach Bar was built to become the most exquisite and unusual bar in the area.

A place where all guests could hang out after a day surfing or fishing, and neighboring surfers or charter boats could pop in and say hello to some mates and enjoy ice-cold beer, snacks, and more.

The Bilou Sunset Beach Bar has undergone a few renovations. It is part of the solar-powered rainwater-based off-the-grid system that the entire resort is based on. However, it took a long time and hard work for the Mentawais to have this option.

The bar offers the basics of a Bintang beer and some basic meals, but anything can be sourced, and most of your basic drinks and mixers are available.

COME FOR A BEER, STAY FOR THE VIBE

It has an incredible vibe. Some days, it might be quiet with just a few guests enjoying a sundowner as the sky goes on fire at sunset. At other times, it might be a boisterous crew of testosterone-fueled surfers who have just had the waves of their lives. They are screaming and whooping in excitement as they down beers and check the cameras for replays of their epic waves. It's the perfect place to wind down and enjoy a hearty meal after a day on the ocean or under the water, fishing.

ACCESS

Access is not easy, and Bilou Sunset Beach Bar does not advertise. However, if you were to find yourself in the Mentawai Islands, you would soon be able to find out where the location is and go and have a look. Then, you can enjoy a cold one with the owners and guests at one of the most beautiful and unusual locations for a bar worldwide. 🍹

For more info, visit Bilou Beach Villas (biloubeach.com) or follow them on Facebook (@Biloubeachvillas).

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BREWS

BEACH



New 30A Hard Seltzers Inspired by Gulf Coast Life

By Carrie Honaker

Coolers got some colorful new swag this spring. The 30A Company partnered with Vincent Davis of Beauty Hatchery and Tupps Brewery in Texas to craft a line of beach-inspired hard seltzers. Launched in January at the 30A Songwriters Festival, the refreshing flavors quenched attendees' dance-fueled thirst with crisp variations of Mojito, Strawberry Margarita, Rosé, and Watermelon Mint.

"If you love hard seltzers and you love the beach, 30A Hard Seltzers will instantly become your go-to beverage of choice," said Mike Ragsdale, 30A's founder and CEO. "They're tropical, refreshing, and they really capture the spirit of 30A."

Hard seltzers are not new, but they saw staggering growth during the pandemic as more brands entered the market in response to consumers' push for a healthier and more sustainably packaged beverage. According to Nielsen, the explosive pandemic growth of hard seltzer is leveling off as more people venture out of their homes, but they project "the industry's global market to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 14.4% from 2021 to 2026." And based on the reception Vincent Davis witnessed at the 30A Songwriters Festival, 30A Hard Seltzer is a welcome addition to the field.

"We tested two groups in Dallas: those familiar with 30A and those unfamiliar with the brand and area," Ragsdale said. "They chose the flavors. What sets them apart is that they're very crisp, not overly sweet, vegan, and most importantly, they're made of all-natural flavors that come in at 100 calories with 5% ABV, which is fantastic. You can drink them all day."

It's not just about a new seltzer though; it's about a product that taps into the magic of 30A. In the late 1990s, Davis started vacationing along Scenic Highway 30A during the summer while his kids were young. Nine years ago, he bought a house in Seagrove, and a 30A tire cover for his Jeep because he loved the community he found here. "It was just a great lifestyle—it's families riding bicycles, concerts at Seaside, and almost like stepping back in time when communities got together."

That communal spirit extends to the brewery Davis tapped to create

the seltzers. He approached Tupps, a small batch, family-owned brewery in McKinney, Texas. He knew they would put a lot of personal touch on the product, from the brewery process to canning to putting them in the cartons. And, in a happy twist of fate, Tupps had aggressively stockpiled containers pre-pandemic, so production rolled on quickly while other brewers were still waiting on cans.

Many hard seltzers come in "skinny" cans, but not 30A's. The 12-ounce hard seltzers live in a traditional beer can, and that choice goes back to those test groups. "We had a lot of discussion, and it turns out they hated the skinny cans because they don't fit in koozies," said Davis. "For a product taken to the beach, enjoyed in a pool, or packed in a backpack for a day of hiking, koozies are a necessity. The choice of can as the package vehicle also aligns with 30A's eco-conscious mission. They are infinitely recyclable and back on the shelf in as little as 60 days, lightweight and stackable for less carbon footprint during transport, and their portability for outdoor recreation is unmatched."



Each recipe was honed through multiple rounds of taste-testing to get the perfect profile to match the most popular drinks spotted around "the Hamptons of the South," Davis elaborated, "We wanted to focus on drinks we see at local restaurants such as Great Southern, Bud & Alley's, and all over 30A at happy hour. People come off the beach and grab a mojito or margarita, or they wander the farmers market drinking rosé, and we wanted to produce those beach-centric flavors."

Available at restaurants and markets in Northwest Florida, the goal moving forward is to grow into grocery stores like Publix and Winn Dixie, and eventually move into markets like Georgia and Tennessee. But back home in Dallas, Davis knows the pressure to distribute widely is coming. "Driving down the tollway or 75, or 635, or anywhere in the general Dallas area, it's full of blue stickers and license plates. People love 30A." 🍹



ASK FOR
30A HARD SELTZERS
in your favorite markets and restaurants,
and check out 30Aseltzers.com.

BEST BEACH GRILLS



By Abigail Abesamis Demarest

Portable grills are perfect for leveling up your beachside eats, and there are options at every price point. We've gathered some top-rated grills to get you started on your search.

1. NOMAD Grill & Smoker

NOMAD calls itself the "Holy Grail of grills," with impressive features to match. In addition to looking cool as hell (seriously, did James Bond design this?), this premium cast aluminum grill has vent sliders with high-temperature magnets for damper control and to mitigate potential mess, an integrated bimetal thermometer for accurate temperature readings, and up to 425 square inches of cooking space—that's enough for 15 burgers on each side.

NOMADGRILLS.COM
(\$599)



2. Weber Jumbo Joe Charcoal Grill

This 18-inch grill has a large enough cooking surface to cook eight burgers at a time, so feeding a crowd shouldn't be an issue. It's compact and lightweight, and the porcelain-enameled lid and bowl will keep the heat in and hold up to the salt air. The Tuck-N-Carry lid lock makes it easy to carry the grill from your car to the beach and functions as a lid holder, so you won't have to put it down on the sandy ground.

WEBER.COM
(\$81.99)



3. PKGO Grill & Smoker with Flipkit

This cast iron grill with a charcoal grate has a proprietary venting shape that allows you to have two different cooking zones: direct high heat and indirect low heat. It comes with a Flipkit that allows you to turn the grill lid into a second grill for double the cooking surface area. The PKGO Grill & Smoker also has a digital probe access door so you can keep an eye on whatever you're cooking without having to lift the lid.

PKGRILLS.COM
(\$399.99)



4. Cuisinart Venture Portable Gas Grill

It might look like a cooler, but this portable grilling system will bring the heat to your next beach day cookout. This gas grill is powered by a 9,000-BTU burner, and you'll need to pick up a 1-pound propane tank to fire it up. The wooden lid doubles as a cutting board for prepping food and serving, and the porcelain-enameled cast iron cooking grates get nice and hot.

WILLIAMS-SONOMA.COM
(\$229.95)



BEACH GRILLING TIPS From a Pro

Whether you're new to grilling on the beach or still perfecting your process, Matthew Eads, cookbook author, gourmet griller, and founder of the blog Grillseeker, shared the below tips with us.

1. MIND THE WIND.

"It's often breezy sitting on the beachfront, and that breeze can affect how you control your grill's temperature. Keep that in mind as you adjust the air vents. Further, the breeze has a tendency to blow ash, so be sure you set up away from other beachgoers. Finally, when positioning the grill, orient it so that when the grill's lid is open, it's facing the direction of the wind. Using the lid as a shield will cut down on the amount of ash that gets blown around to others or on your food."

2. KEEP YOUR MENU SIMPLE.

"Select foods that don't require a ton of ingredients or eating utensils. While I love grilling paella, the number of ingredients involved makes it impractical for a small beach gathering. I love steak, but who wants to bring plates, forks, and steak knives to the beach? Instead, stick to the traditional grilled foods: corn on the cob, burgers, hot dogs, and even grilled fruits like watermelon and bananas."

3. PACK MULTIPURPOSE TOOLS AND ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES.

"Cooking on the beach is all about maximizing the usage of minimal equipment. Bring only what you need and make it multipurpose. A set of tongs that incorporate a bottle opener and a spatula are particularly handy. Also, bring a set of heavy-duty heat-resistant gloves, and of course some aluminum foil."

4. PLAN FOR DEPARTURE TIME.

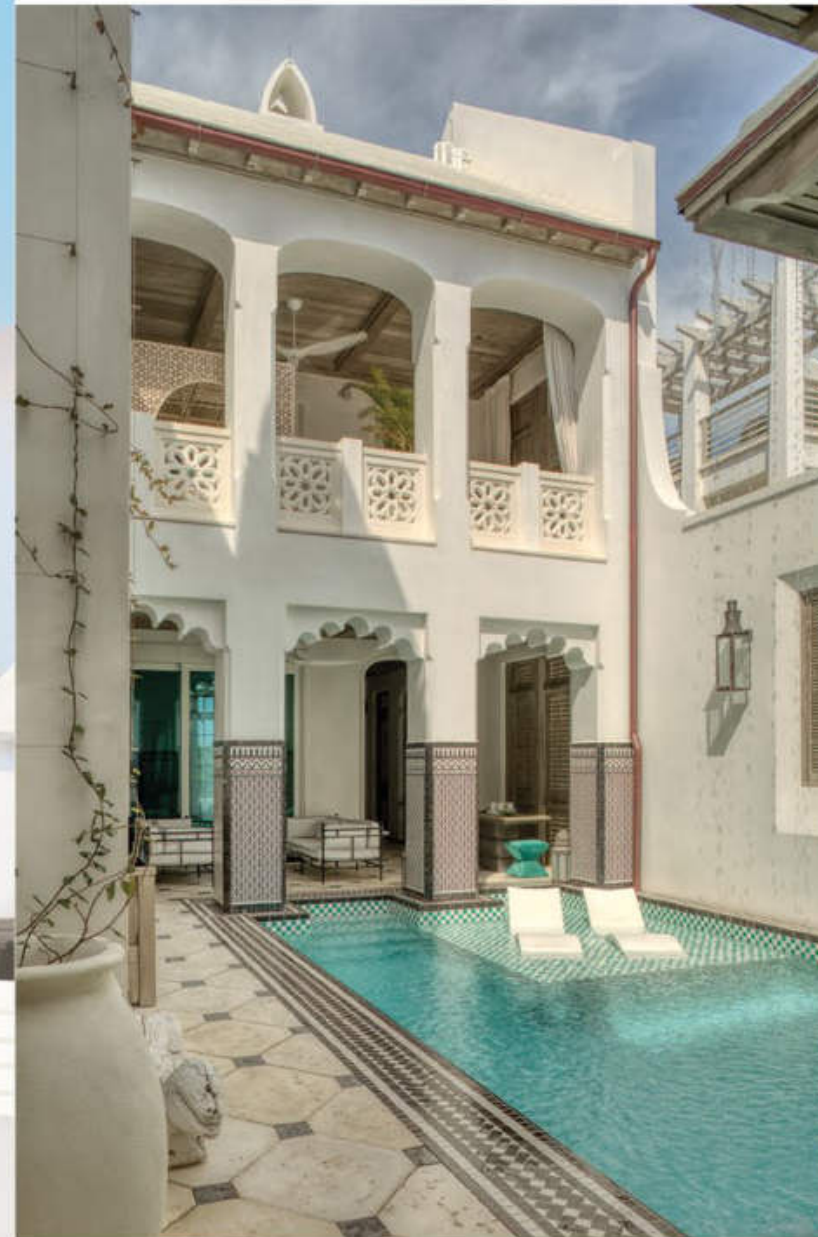
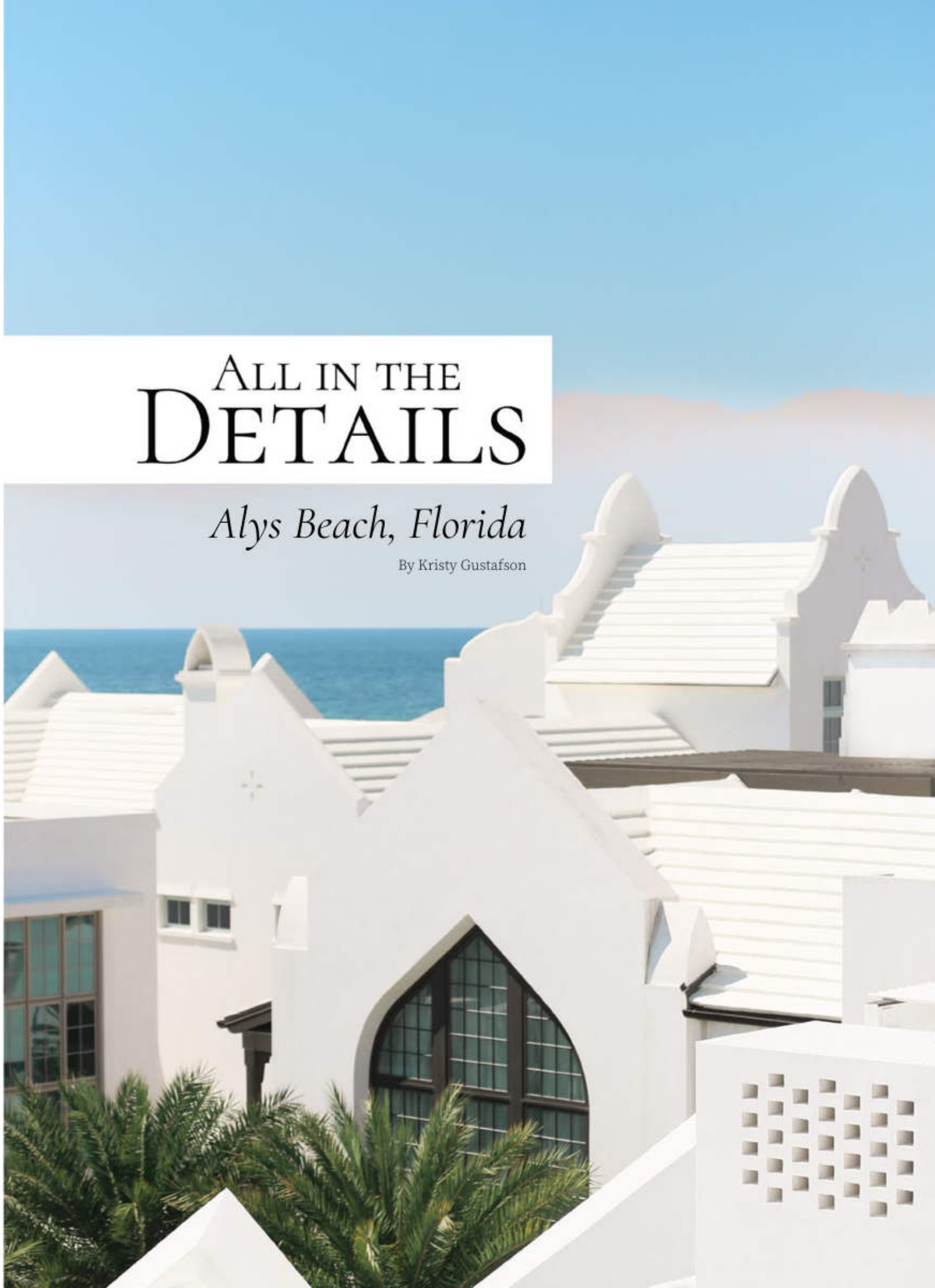
"The grill will stay hot for a long time after using it, so you'll want to consider that when planning your time to leave the beach."

For more grilling tips and recipes from Matthew, visit grillseeker.com or follow him on Instagram @grillseeker.

ALL IN THE DETAILS

Alys Beach, Florida

By Kristy Gustafson



There are moments in life that strike us in our place with the simplest touches of beauty – the dance of a late afternoon sun passing through low-hanging palms, the velvet trickle of a fountain over a bed of multicolored stones, or a technicolor sunset mirrored in a blank canvas of clouds, sand, and lapping waves.



Located in Northwest Florida along the crystal-clear waters of the Gulf of Mexico, Alys Beach was dreamt up with New Urbanism as its cornerstone, bringing in aesthetics that draw inspiration from Bermudan architecture and courtyard living inspired by Antigua, Guatemala.



As you drive its stretch of Scenic Highway 30A, the mirage that is Alys emerges in a sea of white framed between a pair of steepled butteries on either side. From the outside looking in, this 158-acre resort town may pass you by in a cloud of luxury, but take a closer look and you will see that every single detail, down to the shellstone sidewalks and even an elegantly curved lake shaped and named after Marilyn Monroe, is intentional.

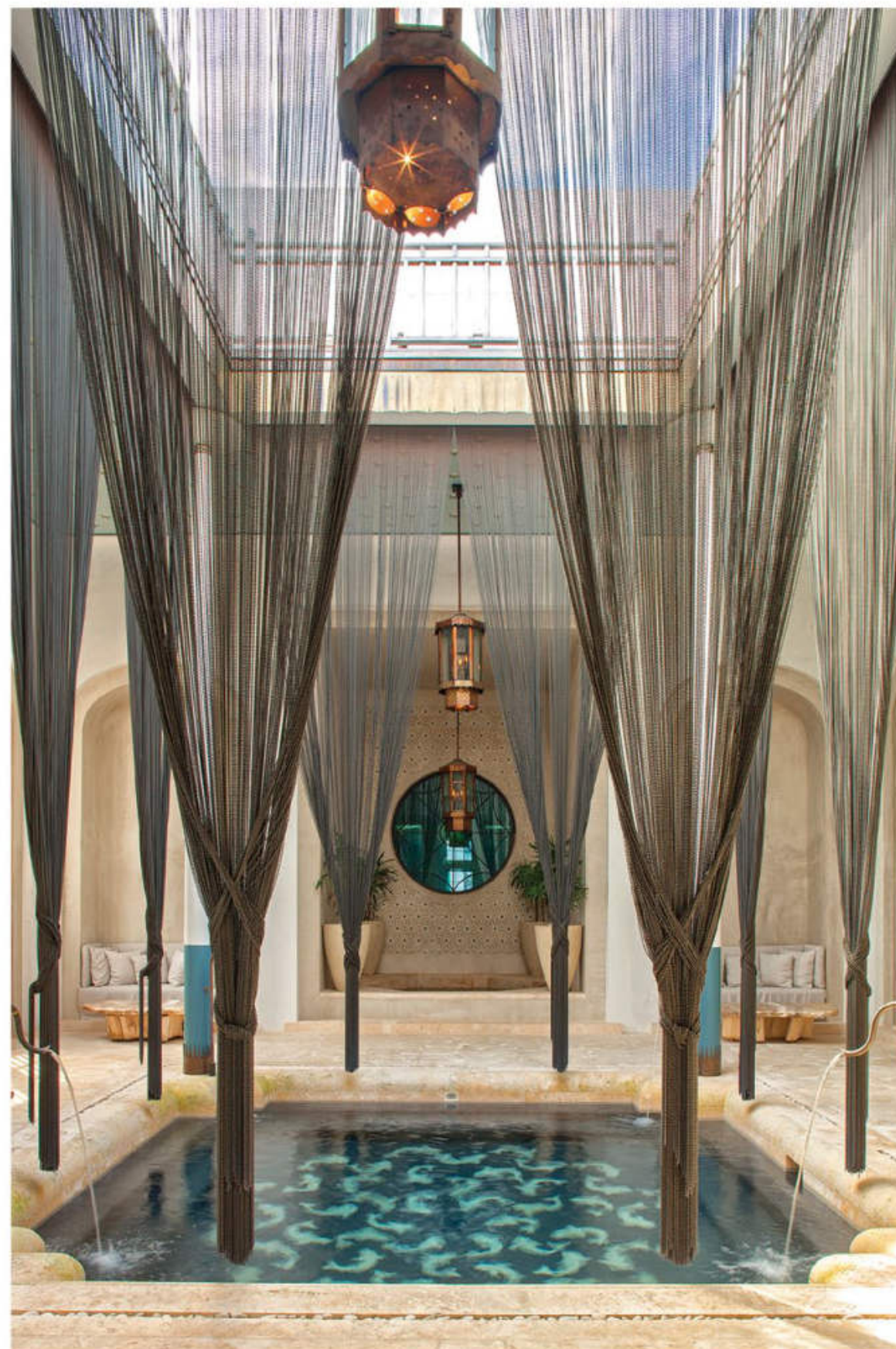


It's in these curated details that the spell is cast, and life's little moments become a little something more.

Entire collections of poetry could probably be written about the lines of Alys Beach, from the sweeping rooflines and curved terraces to the Gaudi-like chimneys and staircases that appear to ascend into the heavens.



Even the greenery has its own rhyme and reason creating a zen-like feel in its simplicity. A stroll through the grounds will give way to perfectly manicured lawns, hedges, and landscapes of the town's main amphitheater, its many community parks and seating areas, as well as its state-of-the-art wellness center and homeowner-exclusive Beach Club.



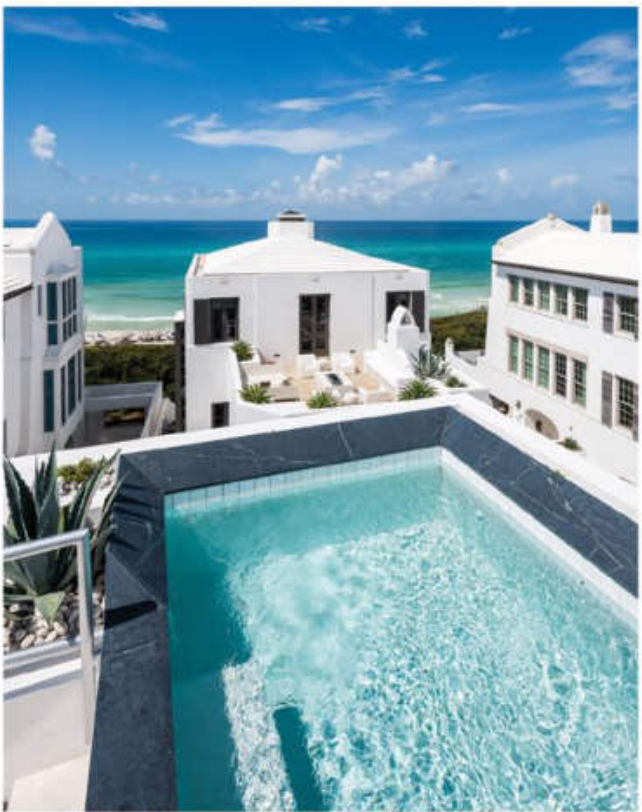
Like other New Urbanist developments, Alys Beach homeowners are required to follow certain guidelines in order to contribute to the overall compatibility of the town. One of these is that all homes must include a water feature. From fountains to pools, you may even find live trees emerging from the center of some.



Though Alys Beach is mostly known for its dazzling white masonry buildings, town architects (and Alys Beach's very first residents) Marieanne Khoury-Vogt and Erik Vogt love to throw a pop of color where possible. This can be seen in unique facets like tilework and brightly dressed shutters that vary from home to home.



The rooftops are something out of a fairytale and provide a bird's-eye view to the world below, where an ombré of emerald and blue meets coast and life seems to unfold at a slower pace. [@](#)



Home Gear

That Will Make Every Day Feel Like a *Beach* Day

The waves, salty spray, and sand aren't the only things that draw people to the beach. It's also the overall feeling of relaxation they get when they take a moment to step away from the things that are stressing them. That moment when they can exhale and realize there's more to life than putting in 40 hours a week in a windowless office. Beach living can be more than just a vacation—it can be a way of life.

With a few smart purchases, you can make your home feel like your own little beach shack so you can chill out in your downtime. We've rounded up a few of our favorite beach-inspired products to share with you.

By Shannon Serpette



1. Jonathan Y Seashell Chandelier

Anyone who grew up watching *The Little Mermaid* and dreaming of living under the sea will likely want this stunning chandelier in their home. The shimmering Capiz shells are the focal point of this gorgeous, adjustable-length light that uses eco-friendly LED bulbs. It is dimmable and emits a soft, dreamy glow that will remind you of an orange sunset on your favorite beach. Stunning as a solo light over a small table, it also looks elegant when two or three are used over a kitchen island.

JONATHANY.COM
(\$74.98)



2. American Signature Furniture Hampton Beach Chair

With its relaxed build, soothing gray color, and cushioned seat, the Hampton beach chair will make you feel as if you're sitting in a beachside cabana. Whether you set this seat up on a patio as you watch your burgers cook on the grill or by your own backyard pool, you'll feel like you're one step away from the ocean when you sit down in it.

AMERICANSIGNATUREFURNITURE.COM
(\$219.99)

3. SG Modern Home Water Wheel Décor

Sometimes it's the smallest décor touches that set the overall mood in a home. These nautical-based, wooden water wheels will create a point of interest in any room, evoking a feeling of relaxation and simpler times. They come in a set of two, and each sits 7 inches high and 8.5 inches long, making them an excellent choice for displaying on a shelf or small table.

SGMODERNHOME.COM
(\$35 FOR A SET OF TWO)



4. Chasing Paper Seaweed Wallpaper

In case you haven't heard, wallpaper is back, and this beautiful seaweed-inspired pattern can take you from stressed to calm almost immediately. Although it comes in three colors, our favorite is bay blue. If you have serious skills and are ready to make a major commitment, you can choose traditional wallpaper. If you're a wallpaper newbie or want something that is easier to take off when you tire of the look, you can opt for peel-and-stick. Not sure how it will look in your room? Sample sizes are offered so you can try it out before buying enough to do your entire room or an accent wall. And those who are worried about harmful off-gassing can breathe a sigh of relief—the wallpaper doesn't contain VOCs, PVC, or phthalates.

CHASINGPAPER.COM
(STARTING AT \$45)



5. Wilora Paloma Cortina Oyster Shell Cabinets

Are you looking to make a big commitment to having a more beach-inspired home? Installing these sun-bleached, taupe-tone Cortina Oyster Shell cabinets in your kitchen can give you a solid base for bringing a sun-drenched, sandy vibe into your home. A gorgeous neutral base with eye-catching saw marks that show over the woodgrain, these cabinets scream upscale beach shack. While they may look relaxed, they deliver a serious performance with their scratch-resistant surface and soft-close hinges.

VEVANO.COM
(STARTING AT \$1,684)

6. Gray Whale Gin

The food and drink you stock in your home can make a difference in how your home feels. Gray Whale Gin comes in a beautiful bottle that makes a lovely accent piece. The gin is partially made of botanical ingredients that are sourced from places along the gray whales' migratory path. Among other ingredients, the sea kelp is sourced from Mendocino, the juniper comes from Big Sur, and the limes are straight from Temecula. All are sustainably sourced, the bottle's cork is biodegradable, and the bottle is designed with organic paint. To make you feel even better about buying this brand, at least one percent of their sales is donated to environmental causes.

GRAYWHALEGIN.COM
(\$37.99)



7. Mignon Faget Oyster Platinum Glasses

A special drink like Gray Whale Gin should be sipped out of a beautiful glass. These gorgeous Oyster Platinum double old-fashioned glasses come in a set of four, so you'll have enough for a small get-together. With the metallic platinum pearl detail, each drink you have will feel special. The glasses provide a tasteful nautical flair that looks elegant and brings a sense of instant vacation to your home. Having a volume of 13 and one-fourth ounces, you'll be able to pour a generous-sized drink.

MIGNONFAGET.COM
(SET OF FOUR FOR \$45)





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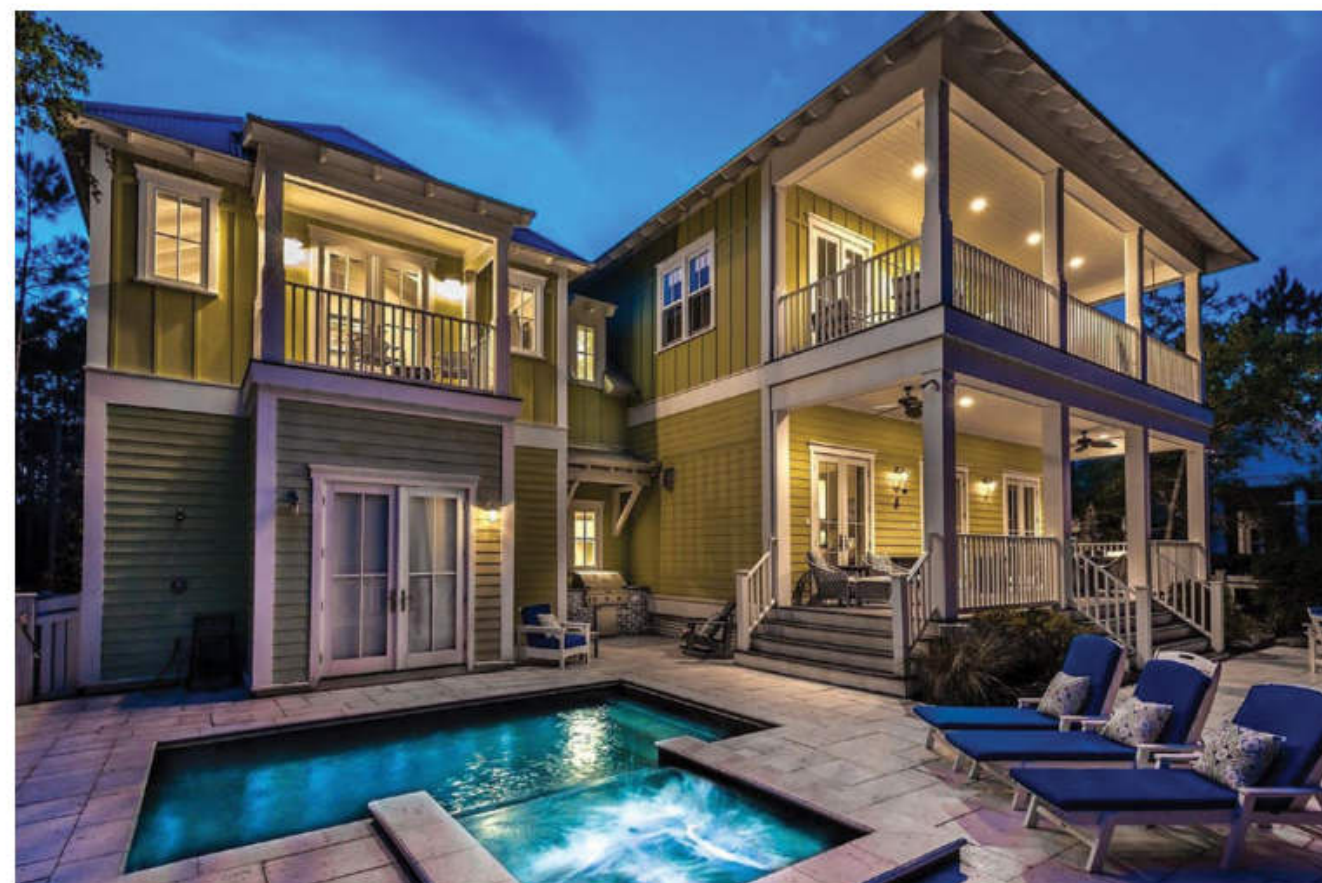
What You Get

FOR YOUR MONEY



If you've ever fantasized about dropping out of the metropolitan rat race and moving to the beach, you're certainly not alone. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people have reprioritized what's most important in their lives and are determined to finally start living the life they've imagined. For many, that life is along Florida's Gulf Coast. If you're entertaining thoughts of palm trees and a sea breeze, here's a little look at what your money can get you. To see all your options, check out www.30Arealestate.com.

Santa Rosa Beach, Florida



243 Pine Needle Way, 5 bed / 5.5 bath 5,184 sq. ft.

\$4,695,000

Ron Romano, Broker/Owner of The Beach Group

Santa Rosa Beach, Florida



Scott Cobine, Beach Properties of Florida, cobinesells@aol.com

405 Amelia Lane, 6 bed / 4 bath 4,120 sq. ft.

\$1,390,000

Santa Rosa Beach, Florida



Scott Cobine, Beach Properties of Florida, cobinesells@aol.com

26 Mistflower Lane, 5 bed / 6 bath 3,904 sq. ft.

\$4,200,000

Navarre, Florida



Jay Johnson, Beach Properties of Florida, 850-865-3036

3799 E County Highway 30A Unit F-5, 1 bed / 1 bath 640 sq. ft.

\$499,000



Listed by Delawalla Group, (850) 225-9899

1455 Bermuda Dr, 4 bed / 3.5 bath 2,162 sq. ft.

\$830,000

Navarre, Florida



Mary Skinner, Beach Properties of Florida, 850-803-5834

1400 Tina Dr, .22 Acres

\$650,000

Navarre, Florida



Mary Skinner, Beach Properties of Florida, mary@bpfla.com

7425 Grand Navarre Boulevard, 3 bed / 4 bath 4792 sq. ft.

\$1,395,000



Listed by Delawalla Group, (850) 225-9899

8577 Gulf Blvd APT 1001, 3 bed / 3 bath 1,397 sq. ft.

\$760,000



Mary Skinner, Beach Properties of Florida, mary@bpfla.com

1882 Bayou Drive, 4 bed / 2 bath 2,277 sq. ft.

\$445,000



NEAT

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*NEW LOCATION

A Bottle Shop and Tasting Room

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This Old House



Sean Dietrich, nicknamed Sean of the South, chronicles life in the American South. Find him online at seandietrich.com.

"Can you believe it's ours?" said my wife, as we stepped into the modest three-bedroom house.

Although, technically, I wouldn't call this house "ours" yet. The house is about to be ours. There's a difference. A few days ago, we put an offer on this home and were answered with a phone call later that night. The realtor informed us that our offer had been accepted.

It was an emotional call. Afterward, my wife hung up the phone and wept like a baby. So did our tax guy.

And now, here we stood. In our soon-to-be new house.

Well, actually, it's not "new." Far from it. The house itself is 100 years old, built slightly before Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic, back when Social Security numbers were still in the single digits.

The home's floors slope like tsunamis, the doors are ancient, the antique windows are made of warped plate glass, and the porch is roughly the size of the Jefferson Memorial.

My wife was pulsating with glee.

"It's perfect," she said.

Our realtor, Robin, was with us for the victory tour. My wife's friends and cousins were there, too. In fact, I was the only male in the group.

No sooner had we entered the front door than the home was filled with an impenetrable cloud of estrogen. In mere seconds, the ladies were deeply involved in heated conversations centralizing around crucial topics such as duvet covers. Frankly, I don't even think they knew I was there.

"You're just here for eye candy," said my wife.

Which only shows you how delusional all this excitement has made my wife. Because on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being Brad Pitt, I'm the late Gabby Hayes.

Soon, the women's design brigade was marching through the house dutifully. I headed up the rear, carrying approximately

29 handbags and pocketbooks.

Photos were taken. Notepads were consulted. Tape measures were brought out of purses. And these weren't the amateur tape measures with steel tape. These were Star Wars-style lasers, capable of cutting Bethlehem steel.

Members of my wife's posse were constantly throwing around terms that most guys I know could never use while maintaining a straight face. Words such as, "sconce," "monochromatic," "settee," "focal piece," and "Target."

I watched my wife thrum from room to room like a kid who had just snorted Mountain Dew. Her voice was loud, her smile was broad. She must have opened each cabinet door 60,203 times and remarked, "Would you LOOK at this storage?"

Then she'd turn to me and wait for my decidedly male reaction.

"Absolutely," I'd say.

Because this is the role of a husband, you see. To nod and say, "Absolutely," no matter what the question is. Over the years, I've become so skilled at uttering this husbandly response that sometimes I use this phrase to answer other people.

Traffic cop: You realize how fast you were going back there, buddy?

Me: Absolutely.

So that's what my wife and I did today. We walked around our soon-to-be house; she joyously slammed cupboards and I absolutelyed everything.

We toured the backyard. My wife used her hands to describe all the grandiose plans she has for me landscaping-wise:

"Over here you're going to build my brick fire pit, and we could do something fun right here with a birdbath. Tell me, how do you feel about hammered copper?"

"Absolutely."

Truthfully, I wasn't listening to her anyway. Because as she spoke, I was too busy remembering when her mother was

dying last year. My wife sat at her mother's bedside and held the old woman's hand as her mother struggled to breathe.

Before the old woman died, her family gathered around her pallet and explained their future plans to the queen dowager. It was both touching and rending at the same time, to hear adult children tell of how their lives would look without the old woman around.

My wife sat beside her mother and said, "You know how I've always wanted to live in Birmingham, but I couldn't leave because...?"

Her mother nodded and said, "Because you've never felt right about leaving me?"

Then my wife started to cry.

And in a moment that can only be called heavenly, the old woman touched her daughter's hand and said, "I'm sorry I've held you here."

My wife began to sob harder. So did everyone else in the room.

"You haven't held me here, mother," my wife said. "Taking care of you has been the greatest privilege of my life. But now, I'm thinking it's time for me to live."

Then her mother closed her eyes and spoke with a thick tongue. "Yes. Yes, it is."

Before we left the room, her mother mumbled with a smile. "I'm so excited for you, let's get our money up and go pick out a house right now."

She died shortly thereafter.

So watching my jubilant wife wander through this antique home brings it all back. I am experiencing a feeling I've never felt before. It's a merging of emotions. It's both sorrow and nostalgia. Somehow I feel older, but also a little younger inside. Like I'm 18, and my life is just about to start. Although right now, mostly I just feel grateful to see my wife so happy.

"What does your end of the tape measure say?" asks my wife.

"Absolutely," I say. **B**

What is 30A?

This is a map of our little beach community. Old Florida "State Road 30" once started at the Alabama state line and meandered 283 miles east across the panhandle. Several "alternate routes" (hence the "A" in 30A) offered drivers a slower scenic option, usually along the beach. But we don't think of 30A as disjointed miles of soulless asphalt. 30A® is a celebration of small town beach life – the kind that's been enjoyed by families for decades all along the Gulf Coast. 30A isn't just a line on the map. It's a lifestyle; an attitude. It's that happy place we all dream of when we need to unwind, unplug and celebrate life. – 30A.com



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