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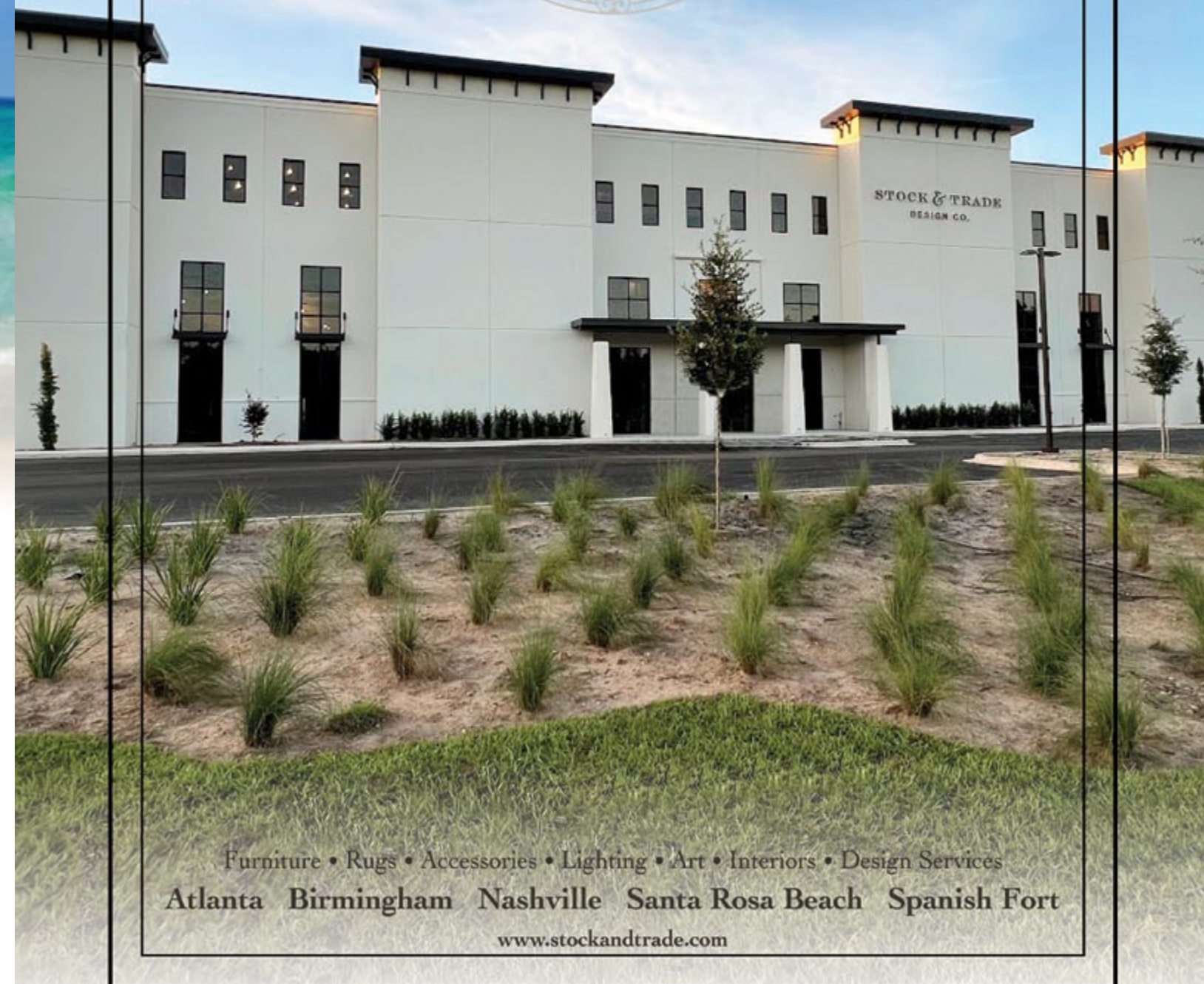
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Beach-Up Your Burger

Beachy Twists From Top Chefs

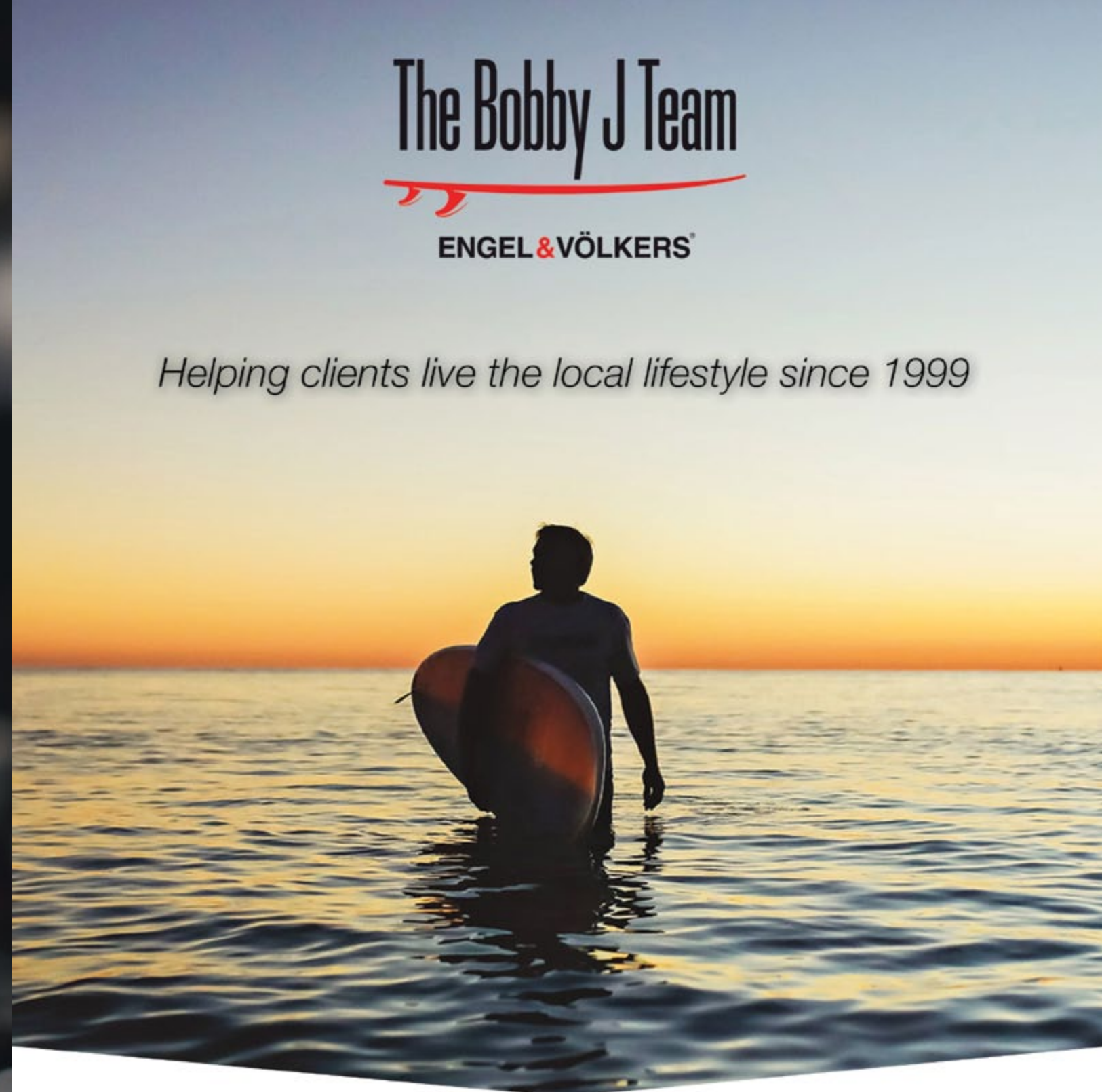
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FOOD FOR THOUGHT FROM THE 30A GUY

When Angela and I first started dating, one of her ex-boyfriends owned a small condo in Seagrove, Florida, right on the Gulf of Mexico. She must have been one heckuva great ex-girlfriend (and he must've been one heckuva nice guy) because he continued to let Angela use the condo for a while, even after she and I started dating.

There was nothing here at the time. No restaurants, really, and even if there were, we certainly couldn't afford them. So, we did what pretty much everyone else did – before we left our home in Alabama, we loaded up several Styrofoam coolers full of ice and sandwich meat and Kraft cheese and cheap light beer, and that's what we lived off of all vacation long. The beach was our primary mission – food was of secondary importance.



Back then, when visiting new places, we would always hit the ground running, equipped with a thoroughly well-researched list of “must-dos” and “must-sees.” We would wake up the kids at dawn and dash precisely on schedule from attraction to attraction, ride to ride, museum to museum. Every day was as cram-packed as the luggage we lugged along behind us.

After all, when you only have a few precious days of vacation to enjoy, maximizing every single one of those days (and dollars) becomes essential.

But something changed in us over the years. I don't know whether living at the beach slowed down our tempo, or becoming empty-nesters, or whether we've just become outright lazy, but our tourism priorities have certainly changed.

For us, these days, it's all about the food.

“What do you want to do today?” has been replaced with “Where do you want to eat?”

Museums, ruins, rides, parks, and palaces have been replaced with cafes, food trucks, bakeries, breweries, street food stalls, and speakeasies. We figure out where we want to eat first. While we're eating, we research where we want to eat next. It's a pretty simple but enjoyable routine. If something culturally notable happens to be located between Consumption Place #1 and Consumption Place #2, perhaps we'll check it out. Otherwise, you can usually find us relaxing at an al fresco table, sampling delicious local cuisine, nursing a cup of coffee, or a cold draft beer as we watch assorted local lives stroll and scurry by.

[Pro Tip: If you love to travel and you love food, be sure to download the free “Michelin Guide” app to find award-winning restaurants near you. And if you love 30A and food, be sure to download our free “30A” app, which features every restaurant along and around Florida's Scenic Highway 30A.]

Anyway, if you love the beach and you love food as much as we do, this issue of *Beach Happy* magazine is for you. So kick back, turn up 30A Radio in the background, pour a beverage of your choice, and let's get this editorial feast underway.

Bon Appétit and Beach Happy!

Mike Ragdale
Founder, The 30A Company



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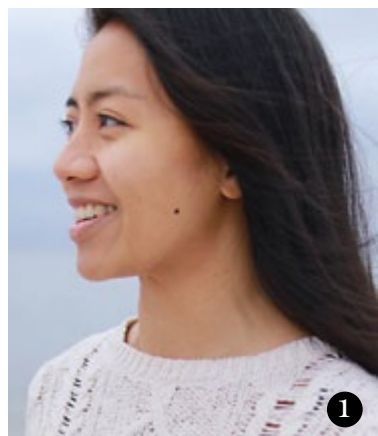


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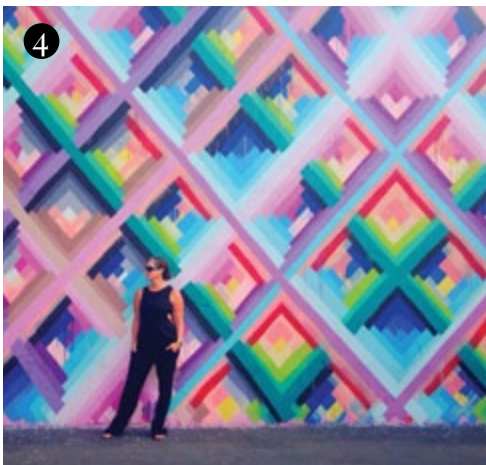
2. LAUREN SAGE REINLIE
is an award-winning freelance journalist currently living in Freeport, Florida. Her work has taken her across the South, where she has covered topics ranging from the wily ways of politicians at the Texas state capitol to the storied land of sunshine and swamp sharks (a.k.a. gators) in Florida.



3. SEAN MURPHY
has returned to the panhandle after 30 years shooting celebrities and advertising on the west coast. Together with his wife, he has built an inspiring studio in Fort Walton Beach, where they both continue to work on national campaigns. When Sean isn't shooting, he can be found fishing from his BOTE Board or spending time with family.



5. MARTIN LIPTROT
is British but has lived along Scenic Highway 30A since 2004. After a global career in advertising, he made NorthWest Florida his home and runs local PR and Marketing Agency (98RepublicPR.com). Martin's passions include soccer, cricket, rugby, Formula One and horse racing. He is a fan of craft beers and fine wines and enjoys good company and long, lazy lunches in any of the spectacular restaurants along 30A.



4. JACQUELINE WARD
was born and raised along the Gulf Coast and has called the 30A area home for the past 15 years. Her work has been showcased in numerous local, regional, and national publications.



6. CARRIE HONAKER
is a Florida-based freelance writer who is not sure where she will land next, but it will involve messy eating, a spicy Tempranillo and finding the local dive bar. Her work has been featured in Wine Enthusiast, Bon Appetit, and others. You can find her on Twitter and Instagram (@writeonhonaker).



7. HELEN MITSIOS
is a poet and writer who lives in New York. Her most recent poetry collection is *The Grand Tour*.

Painting by Tony Winters

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RAW FISH ADVENTURES

On Oahu

By Carrie Honaker

Some families have board game nights. Others have Sunday suppers. Some families run 5Ks together. My family bonds over the search for spectacular raw fish.

Photo: Hawaii Tourism Authority
(HTA)/Vincent Lim



Photo: Hawaii Tourism Authority
(HTA)/AJ Feducia

It started at a pre-K graduation party at the local hibachi. We ordered sashimi while others enjoyed the spectacle of chef's smoke and flashing knives. Our daughter asked to try a piece of yellowtail. She proceeded to walk it across the hibachi bar chanting, "Don't eat me," until her chubby fingers reached her waiting mouth. The toothy smile with bits of fish peeking through proclaimed her love.

An innocent tasting birthed a tradition of seeking out the best raw fish wherever we went. Weddings, funerals, college orientation, moves to new cities—every occasion rotates around raw fish. When our son brought his first long-term girlfriend home, we didn't ask what she studied or where she was from; we asked if she liked sushi.

We navigate complicated relationships between mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, sisters and brothers over a plate of the finest raw fish in the vicinity.

Sending your children off to college is always a gut-wrenching mix of joy and sadness. Sending them to an island on the exact opposite side of the country, only accessible by boat or plane, terrified yet excited me.

We checked in at the college, got our orientation pack, and didn't join the other families milling around campus waiting for tours to start. Was this irresponsible? Maybe, but it didn't matter because raw fish awaited. We piled in our car and headed to our first poke stop.

Poke can be found everywhere—from restaurants to grocery stores on Oahu. The word poke translates to "slice or cut" in Hawaiian, and it's been part of the fabric of Hawaiian culture long before it showed up on top of rice, served cafeteria-style on the mainland.

Oahu offers some unique poke experiences. Bring an appetite and an open mind.



Tamura's Fine Wine

In the gauntlet of colorful addresses, this one ranks high. A poke counter tucked in the back of a liquor store with no sign or indication outside that there is anything inside but booze. The poke is really good, almost like fish candy in your mouth, if that could be a thing.

They make it with whatever fresh fish is available at the Honolulu Fish Auction. The heft of the chunks, thick cubes of fish with little adornment, shows it's really about the fish. And, maybe, a little about the bits of jalapeno it swims with.

25 Kaneohe Bay Drive #106
Kailua, HI
www.tamurasfinewine.com



Maguro Bros

Shane, our adopted "cousin," friend at the bar, and guide to local hot spots (like Heavenly for breakfast...miss it at your own peril), insisted we try their poke. He also made it clear we must go to the secret walk-up in Waikiki, not the original Chinatown location.

The brothers procure their seafood daily from the Honolulu Fish Auction. You would be remiss if you did not order their signature poke, deep ruby chunks of maguro (bluefin tuna). The brothers, Junichiro and Ryojiro Tsuchiya, are on hand, cutting, serving, and preparing the dishes for you. Do yourself a favor and order the Hawaiian, a blend of limu/seaweed, Hawaiian sea salt, chili pepper, and sesame oil. The fatty beauty of the maguro sings in this classic Hawaiian preparation.

415 Nāhūa Street Pearl
Honolulu, HI
www.facebook.com/magurobrothershawaii



Fresh Catch

You may recognize this spot from an episode of *Diners, Drive-ins & Dives*. Guy Fieri even referred to chef and owner Reno Henriques as an "octopus wrangler." And in my opinion, his tako (octopus) poke rules the sea. Locals love it; so did I. The slices of tako flecked with bits of chili, slivers of onion, and rings of scallions made fresh daily melt in your mouth with tenderness. This hole-in-the-wall deli offers up to 20 varieties of poke daily for island-style, one-stop meals.

1113 Kapahulu Ave
Honolulu, HI
www.freshcatch808.com

Redfish Poke Bar

It's hard to not be enthralled with the gorgeous murals on the buildings of SALT at Our Kaka'ako. Beyond the public art, it's a gathering place with multiple dining options, an artist collective, and darn good poke. Redfish Poke Bar, tucked into the center of the complex, offers traditional local-style poke bowls with a cornucopia of toppings to satisfy mainland desires.

Oahu native Chef Reid Matsumura wanted to "respect the food, dishes, and flavors that people in Hawaii are always onto for, using the freshest ingredients we can get, and mindfully putting together every plate." The spicy ahi stood out with a fiery sauce, and layered with avocado, masago, green onion, and seaweed salad all atop a mound of white rice, it made an elevated last stop on our poke tour. Be sure to save room for dessert — the malasada bites with horchata ice cream is the stuff of dreams.

685 Auahi St
Honolulu, HI
www.redfishpoke.com



Foodland

I question when people tell me they buy their poke at a grocery store. Foodland gets a lot of play with locals. Our bartender at Lucky Belly (go, run and get the Belly of the Beast Ramen) emphatically endorsed Foodland. She wasn't the only one. We had to make a stop.

The line at the counter was the first indication of greatness. The fact that everyone was native Hawaiian was the second. The third was the explosion of flavor as toasted sesame oil, tangy soy sauce, and salty ahi hit my mouth. The Shoyu Ahi Poke was—well, words fail me. But definitely try it. I have a new appreciation for grocery store fare.

Multiple locations
www.foodland.com/our-stores-poke



Ono Seafood

Be careful—you might miss this one if you are not paying close attention. Ono Seafood sits next door to a Shell station in a low-rise, bottom floor apartment complex. Parking is a struggle, and they may close early if they start to run out of their fresh fish. But it's worth the labor.

Their poke is always made-to-order, an almost unheard of move in an area stocked with poke places. The small storefront has a refrigerator packed with takeout seafood specialties, and they are good, but hang on. Next to the order counter is a display case housing the fresh catch of the day: slabs of deep red ahi, whole tako (octopus to a mainlander), and whatever other seafood was caught that morning. Locally owned and family operated, they pride themselves on serving "poke that is traditionally local, island style, and ridiculously ono!"

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BEACH UP YOUR BURGER



Burgers: Why America was invented

By Martin Liptrot

Every nation has a national dish. Some reflect a centuries-old culinary history, others are a staple of the population's diet or are based around produce raised or grown locally. America's choice does more than that. It portrays the character of the country. Utilitarian, convenient, ubiquitous, and egalitarian.

America's national dish is the hamburger. Its popularity is undeniable. It is estimated that Americans consume more than 50 billion hamburgers each year; that's enough when laid end-to-end to stretch to the moon and back.

Of course, when a food is so popular, new versions, improvements, and adaptations are ever in the works. And while arguments rage about the best meat-to-fat ratio, the benefits of grass-fed or organic meat, or which store-bought burger can compete with Momma's home-made – we know what really makes a burger special.

Toppings.

Here are five creative ways you can "BEACH UP" your next burger.



1 Get the Basics Right

Of course, what you put your toppings on counts. It is no surprise the quality of the meat and the freshness of your ingredients are vital, but so too is the way you cook your burger.

“To completely transform your beach burger, you have to use a charcoal grill,” said Vancouver-based chef, butcher, and grilling expert Sebastian Cortez. Cortez is the founder of Sebastian and Co. Fine Meats.

“Most U.S. and Canadian homes use gas BBQs, largely because it is easier and faster, but in South America, where I am from, the act of grilling meat is an experience and often becomes a day-long social event,” said Cortez. “Everyone—family and friends—gather together, taking turns on the grill, sipping drinks, or helping set up the fire and mingling with one another.”

2 West Coast Vibes

“If you really want to kick your burger up to the next level, try a Baja Aji Burger,” recommended Chef Andrew Wilkinson, culinary specialist at North Coast Seafoods and former executive chef at the Rainbow Room in New York City’s Rockefeller Plaza.

“Combine fresh garlic, cilantro, jalapeno, and scallions,” said Wilkinson. “Put them in a blender, gradually adding avocado oil, until it forms a ‘vortex’ and hits a purée consistency. In a bowl, mix equal parts of mayonnaise, full fat yogurt, and buttermilk. Add your purée and some freshly squeezed lime juice. Season with salt and pepper and add heat to your liking with your hot sauce of choice.

Now grill your burger and toast your buns.”

Wilkinson said the fresh, bright sauce is a cross between the regional cuisines of Baja, California – home of the fish taco – and Peru. “These are two of the finest Pacific Coast communities and, naturally, the finest beach food destinations.”

Finally, Wilkinson said to add the Baja Aji sauce to the bottom bun and on top of your burger.

“This adds a salty, savory, umami ocean flavor experience.”

3 Peachy Beachy

While spicy, piquant, and savory flavors may be what we associate most with burger toppings, there are plenty of innovators out there catering to those who enjoy a sugary, caramel sweet topping.

In recent years, sliced fresh fruit has been making its presence felt at the nation’s barbeques, so perhaps it was only a matter of time before it made the leap to slide between the buns of your favorite burger.

Pineapple has always been in the vanguard of the sweet, beachy invasion, first taking its contentious place on salads and pizzas, and now on burgers. But the sweet treat du jour this year is undoubtedly the juicy peach.

The peach, and sometimes its cousin the nectarine, have already started to replace sliced tomato in Caprese salads on some of the nation’s more adventurous dining tables and with its new-found friend, mozzarella, it is cropping up atop America’s favorite food.

“I know that putting a piece of fruit on a burger sounds a little odd,” said Tieghan Gerard in her super successful blog *Half Baked Harvest*. “Maybe it is, but I promise this is so good. Think of it as kind of like a fruit salsa smeared on a grilled steak.”

To achieve the sweet effect, place the sliced peach directly on the grill, let it caramelize a little, warming through, but it must remain firm to play its full part on your burger. Thick



Baja Aji Shrimp Burger from North Coast Seafoods

The Romesco Burger



The Naptime, Ocean View Brewing Co.
Photo: VisitDelaware.com

“The combo of lobster and ‘sunny’ egg give it a great beach vibe,” said Ruth. “And the Delaware beaches are also known for hand-crafted doughnuts, so it seems to fit the bill.”

In these times when we are warned about the dietary and ecological impact of consuming so much red meat, perhaps the lobster, egg, doughnut burger is the answer? Maybe?

Next time you’re on the Delaware coast, try one, pair it with one of their Beach Shack Hazy IPAs, and let us know.

Romesco Burger

Ronda Brittain has cast her net worldwide for flavor inspirations for the ultimate beachy burger.

The Petaluma, California, based chef and entrepreneur believes she has found the perfect mix of sultry style. She brings the taste of Spain to the fore with her Mediterranean-inspired Romesco Burger.

Romesco is a tomato-based sauce that originated from Tarragona, in the Spanish region of Catalonia. It is typically made from a mixture of roasted tomatoes and garlic, toasted almonds, pine nuts, olive oil, and sun-dried peppers.

Ronda suggests smothering a juicy beef patty with a zesty Romesco, adding strips of salty jamón serrano, a Spanish dry-cured ham from a breed of specially selected white pigs, topped with a generous crown of buttery Manchego cheese and dressed with a tower of peppery arugula to experience a taste, texture, and aromatic experience like no other.

Of course, a Mediterranean-inspired burger needs a good tippie to accompany it, and what pairs better than a crisp, fruity sangria.

Grab your burger, raise a glass, and let the soft sounds of Spanish guitar music transport you and your guests to the Mediterranean Coast. Salud! 🍷

slices of fresh mozzarella can then be flash grilled until they start to crisp on the outside and the gooey-inside is ready to burst out.

“Stack the mozzarella and peach slices on your burger, add a touch of basil – and eat,” advises Tieghan.

Naptime

Around the world, arguments rage about what is, and isn’t, officially a burger.

Does it have to be meat? Can it be bread but not a bun? What’s the difference between a chicken sandwich and a chicken burger? Who knows the answers, but for me, any grilled protein in a bun that is eaten by hand qualifies.

The same seems to be true in Bethany Beach, Delaware, where a new beachfront restaurant at Ocean View Brewing Co. is offering a “burger” that has people talking.

“It’s called the Naptime, and it’s something to behold,” said Eric Ruth at Delaware Tourism Office. “They take a 4-ounce butterflied and buttermilk fried lobster tail, put it on a toasted house-made glazed doughnut, then top it with a sunny-side-up egg and a chili crisp sauce.”

What? A lobster with a runny egg and chili sauce? In a doughnut? Is that a burger?

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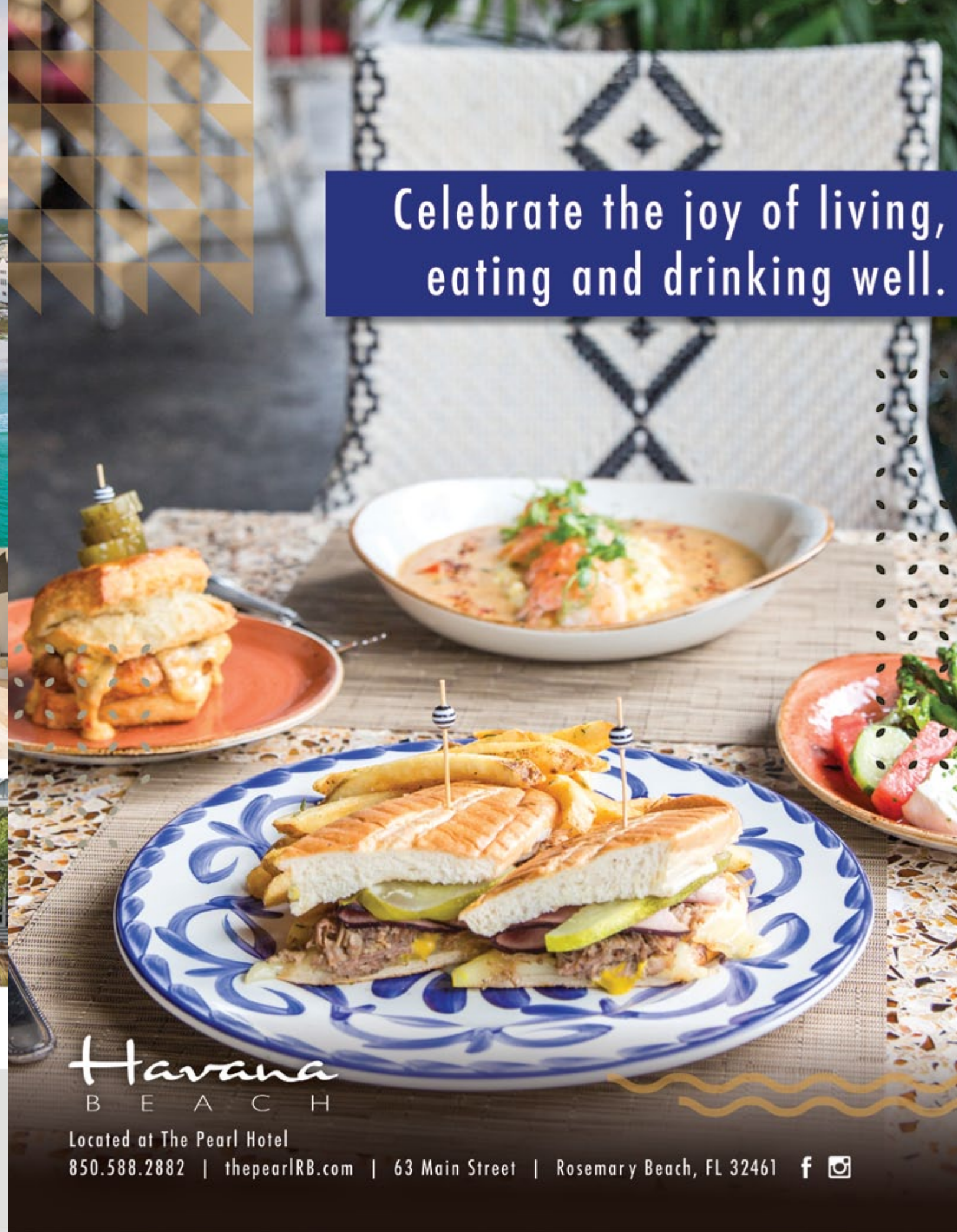
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Shuck, Yeah!

By Carrie Honaker
Photos: Alissa Aryn
Steven Gray

Gulf Coast Oyster Farmers Change With The Tides

I slurped my first bivalve at Posey's Oyster Bar, a shanty-style building floating over St. Mark's River in Wakulla County, Florida. It came on an orange cafeteria tray with a sleeve of saltines and a squeeze bottle of cocktail—straight from water to shucker to me.

Posey's shuttered after devastating storm surge damage, and beds where wild oysters once thrived closed for overfishing.

A new industry emerged to fill the need: oyster farming.

I drove to Garcon Boat Ramp as the sun came up over Pensacola Bay to meet Brandon Smith, owner of Grayson Bay Oyster Company. We boated out to his leases, which had been devastated by Hurricane Sally in 2020.

His oysters, called Tidal Guides, capture the influence of nearby rivers like the Yellow, Blackwater, and Indian on Pensacola Bay. The flavor profiles of the oysters change depending on the harvest, how much rain they get, and the tides. His company name, Grayson Bay, takes inspiration from his sons (Grayson and Baylen) who sometimes accompany Smith on the farm and deliver oysters to local restaurants.

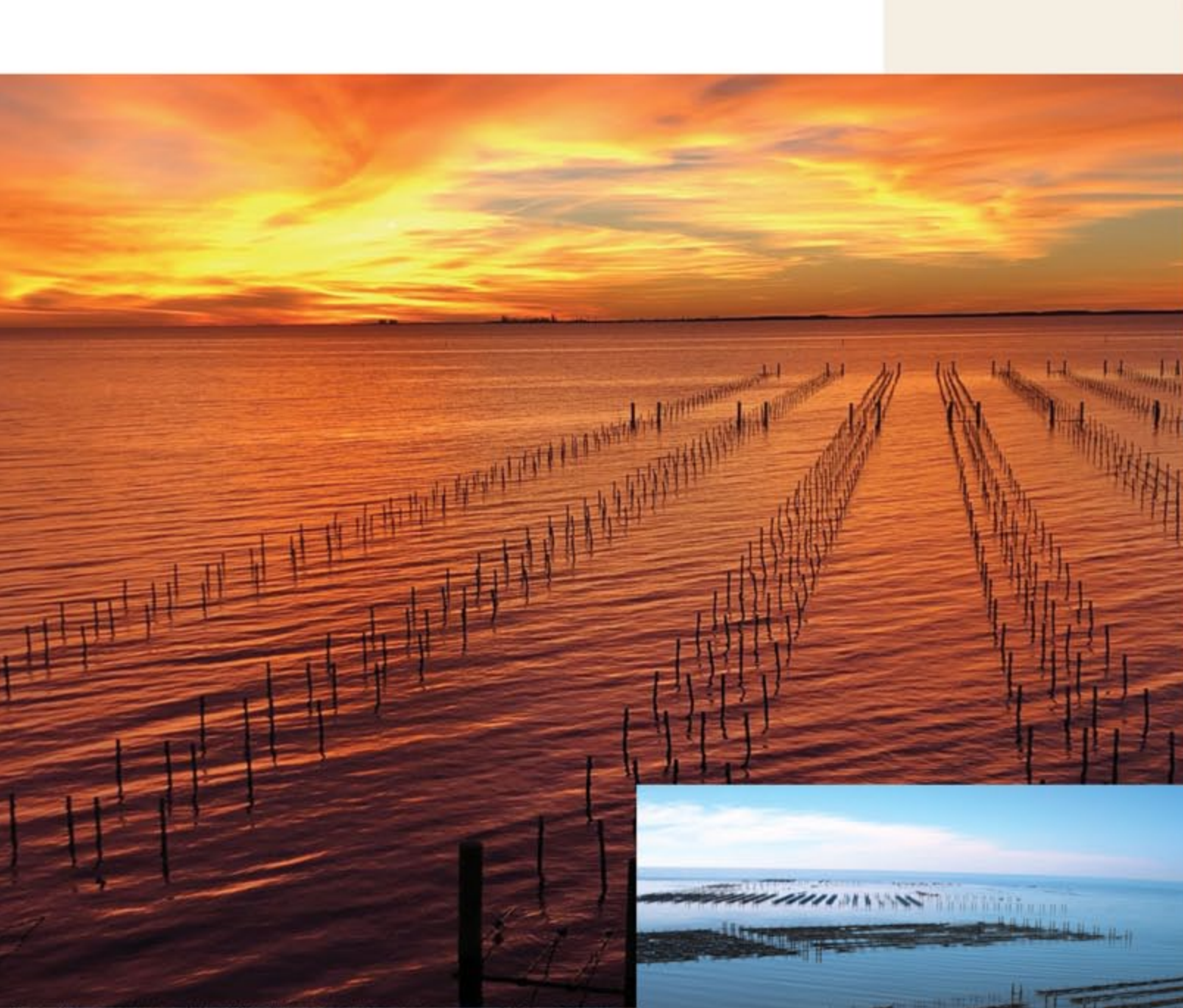


Photo: Pearl & Horn, Pensacola



Photos: Murder Point Oyster Co



Smith hauls a cage from the water, pulling an oyster out to shuck. Right there on the boat, I slurp it unadorned. The crisp, clean, minerally taste has sweetness on the back end, like a blue crab lingering flavor with a bit of celery.

Producing high-quality oysters takes hard work: flipping cages, tumbling, setting gear, and harvesting. For Smith, a career biologist working with water quality, compliance, and chemistry, oyster farming offered a release from his increasingly deskbound life.

“I wake up early, see the sunrise over the water, work in the water,” said Smith. “It’s exciting to go all the way from putting the seed in, to witnessing a customer discover farmed oysters for the first time on a plate at Pearl & Horn.”

Despite the increased call for oysters, some reticence still remains when customers see farm-raised oysters on the menu. Expectations of a Gulf Coast oyster lean towards large, inexpensive, and served on crackers with a bottle of cocktail sauce. But farmed oysters not only provide a more consistent, cleaner eating experience, they lessen the pressure on wild reefs and help the environment.

“Farmed oysters live and grow in their natural environments on the lease, hanging in baskets above the sediment, feeding off the algae,” said Chef Coleman Jernigan at The Citizen in Alys Beach, Florida. “But the coolest thing is the science behind farming. A marine biologist grows your spat and develops this lineage of almost heirloom oysters. They’ve figured out a way to harness Mother Nature’s ability to grow these delicious, beautiful oysters but make them cleaner, more efficient. They should be very proud.”

Roadside boiled peanuts, smoked mullet, and tupelo honey stands dot the landscape as I pull onto the stretch of Forgotten Coast where Dewey and Jody Houck farm their Cypress Point Oysters. Life’s quieter in Spring Creek, but the Houck’s passion for their cultivated oysters palpates.

“Somebody told me I couldn’t raise an oyster that would compete with fine cocktail oysters like Kumamotos,” said Jody. “Nobody believed you could grow and sell a cocktail oyster from the Gulf of Mexico. As soon as somebody tells me I can’t do something, I can’t help myself.”



Photos: Alissa Aryn

“
*There's something really cool
about seeing your work
come full circle.*
”

Often when asked about oyster consumption, people mention the “R” rule to only eat oysters in certain months, avoiding bivalves that might not taste good or be unsafe. That rule doesn’t apply to farm-raised oysters.



“Farmed oysters are highly regulated: rapid refrigeration by 11 o’clock, can’t be out of the water more than four hours or have to return for 14 days,” said Jody. “We are very conscious about handling all oysters with the highest level of food safety. It’s not like you’re going to get an oyster that sat on somebody’s boat for four hours, or all day or in the back of a truck with a tarp over it.”

A little further west in Alabama, Murder Point Oyster Company grows them from microscopic larvae to seed to oysters ready to be harvested. I talked to M.C. Eastburn, hatchery manager, on a recent Sunday while she fed and monitored her 30 million oyster babies.

“It’s 80 hours a week of bugs and sweat, but if you love what you do, you don’t really think about it being hard,” said Eastburn. “I’m there the day they’re made. I watch them grow and see them eventually harvested. There’s something really cool about seeing your work come full circle.”

Prized for the creamy, buttery, but not too salty flavor, Murder Point oysters are fan favorites at restaurants along the Gulf Coast. Eastburn asserts the smooth flavor comes from nutrient-rich water and diversity of algae to feed on in Sandy Bay, where they're grown.

Chef Amy Potseil at The Well in Pensacola agrees. Murder Point oysters often have a spot on her rotating raw bar program, but she also includes farm-raised oysters from different areas of the country. "We want people to come in for an oyster experience, try local ones that might taste a certain way alongside ones from Alaska or Virginia to see the contrast."

Other dining spots give even more menu real estate. Chef Phil McDonald of Black Bear Bread Company in Grayton Beach, Florida, leans heavily on local farm-raised oysters. "I always try to order oysters from the Gulf Coast—I want to show off what we're doing here."

Provenance has become more important in recent years as consumers grow increasingly interested in where their food comes from and how it's grown or produced. For Chef Thomas Derbes of Emerald Coast Oyster Company, having relationships with farmers gives insight into the provenance of the oysters he serves. "You can get wild oysters from Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, but you don't know where those oysters come from. The oysters I serve come with the story of the farmer, where they grew, and the environmental benefits they provide."

Even though supply isn't always consistent, chefs like Jernigan continue to prioritize and support Gulf Coast farmers. "Last time we got Salty Birds from Pelican Oyster Company in Spring Creek, we got three bags and they were gone in three hours. I don't care if you can sell me two bags or a hundred—we'll buy them, we'll sell them, and we'll support the farmers."

It's a symbiotic relationship according to Cainnon Gregg, who grows those Salty Birds. "When a restaurant puts Salty Birds on the menu, it shows the chef trusts the farmer and knows where the oysters came from, and then people dine at those restaurants because they trust the chef."

We tell the story of the Gulf Coast every time an oyster from this area is shucked and slurped.

"When you go to Nashville and see oysters from Mobile, that's a taste of home, of summers swimming in the bay," said Eastburn. "If I see Gulf Coast oysters on a menu anywhere around the country, I'm gonna order them because it connects me to home." 🍷

To learn more about the Gulf Coast oyster farms, follow them on Instagram (@cypresspointoysterco, @pelicanoysterco, @graysonbayoysterco, murderpointoysterco).

The Well Cocktail Bar, Pensacola
Photo: Steven Gray





Photo: Steven Gray



How to Eat Oysters

Advice From Chefs

Most chefs agree a mignonette should accompany raw oysters, but that's where the agreement ends. Some like crackers, some like bread, some like fresh herbs. The possibilities are endless.

"I try to tie in as much fermentation as possible into our raw bar program. I made a sour beer mignonette and a kimchi cocktail sauce. Our hot sauce ferments for at least two weeks to give it deeper complexity and to make it a little bit hotter, a little bit funkier. The final touch: very tart lemon, jello-ish pearls that give you a way to apply your lemon to the oyster that isn't just a wedge."

Chef Amy Potmesil
The Well
Pensacola, Florida

"We serve them with a red wine mignonette, lemons, fresh shaved horseradish, cocktail sauce, and a side of sliced sourdough with cultured butter. I'm taking more of a French approach with the oyster."

Chef Phil McDonald
Black Bear Bread Co.
Grayton Beach, Florida

"Right now I'm serving them with a blueberry black garlic mignonette. Blueberries are in season, the black garlic comes from The Farm in Pensacola, so local oysters, local ingredients. Wherever I'm shucking on the Gulf Coast, I serve oysters from that area and keep my ingredients seasonal for the mignonettes."

Chef Thomas Derbes
Emerald Coast Oyster Company
Pensacola, Florida

"We serve oysters with house-made curry cocktail sauce and red wine mignonette. We garnish with some herbs like rosemary, which some customers sprinkle on top of the oysters. Slurping oysters takes you to places you love by the beach, by the water. It's bringing back childhood memories with that briny smell, that freshness."

Chef George Lazi
Pearl & Horn
Pensacola, Florida

"We have three permanent sauces: a spicy cocktail sauce, a classic red wine mignonette, and a house-made hot sauce. We rotate a seasonal mignonette that gives our cooks a little bit of creative freedom, like our current Yuzu Kosho. It's got spice, it's got salinity, it's got a little sugar and it definitely has acid—it's the perfect storm for an oyster. We serve all that with hot buttered saltines. There's nothing better in this world than a hot buttered saltine."

Chef Coleman Jernigan
The Citizen
Alys Beach, Florida



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The Captain's BBQ Ribs
Photo: Elliott Howell

Eating Our Way Through Sint Maarten

By Carrie Honaker

Forty-eight feet down, looking up from the sandy ocean floor where the JabJabs — a once floating bar, now artificial reef, lists starboard — I'm surrounded by life. Moray eels, lobsters, rays, and two juvenile reef sharks swim in the cerulean waters around me. The sharks are close enough to touch with my camera mount and more curious than adults that haven't learned fear.

Life has been on repeat since landing, waking early for some mango and johnnycake, watching the sun come up over the ocean, assembling dive gear, boating out to one of the many wrecks or reefs off the waters of Sint Maarten, (also known as Saint Martin) making my way down the line from the mooring ball to the vibrant world under the sea.

The 37-square-mile island, home to two countries, is friendly, above and below the water. Smiles are abundant, words of welcome fill the air, life is peaceful. The only marking of a division between French and Dutch territories is a monument on the roadside.

To the north, travelers will find some of the tastiest eats and lively beaches. To the south, cosmopolitan bars, clubs, and casinos dot the landscape. High-energy outings ziplining across the pinnacle of the island and leisurely days soaking up rays on the beach, staring at those almost-too-beautiful waters, mingle for the perfect getaway amongst the friendliest people I've ever met.

Because strangers are just friends you haven't met yet on Sint Maarten.



SINT MAARTEN



Soak Up Some Island Life

Plane spotting from Maho Beach must occupy some space on your itinerary. On this island, you can sit on the beach with an umbrella-adorned drink as airplanes come in for a landing directly above you. The beaches are all open to the public, and there’s a lot of them. For a quieter day, head over to Mullet Bay on the Dutch side where the locals like to go on Sundays, or for clothing-optional sand, hit up Orient Bay Beach. All beaches on the French side are topless, but this is the only fully nude beach.

Just off the sand, adventure awaits. Parott Ville provides sanctuary for 27 types of birds from all over the world. Within the screened enclosure, children and adults equipped with a cup of food meet the birds as they land on shoulders and hands for a bit of apple and seed. George Parotte, owner and bird advocate, can be seen walking around helping identify the birds, sharing their names, and relating the history of the island where his family has lived for generations.

Tours abound by sea or land. Outfits like Aquamania Adventures in Simpson Bay on the Dutch side offer excursions to nearby islands, sunset cruises, water sport rentals, scuba diving trips, and private sailing charters.

Be The Change Foundation partnered with 12 local artists to paint the ColorMeSXM murals around town. Now referred to as the Philipsburg Art Walk, it features large-scale paintings between the bustling shops, restaurants, and historical sites. Each mural has a scannable QR code that links to the artist’s biography and inspiration for the mural.

Immerse in the culture of the island by taking a steel pan class with Mighty Dow, called “Dow” by everybody. Dow’s Musical Foundation in Philipsburg preserves the legacy art of steel pan drumming through summer camps and workshops. Or try your hand at some Caribbean cooking with classes at The Flavor Academy where Culinary Institute of America-trained chef Kristin Joseph and her award-winning mixologist husband Paul offer personalized workshops in cocktails and cookery.

The Marigot Markets draw residents and tourists with their bounty of local produce, fish, handcrafted jewelry, island clothing, and abundant spices. Just across the street, a French boulangerie awaits with cases of buttery croissants, crispy palmiers, and baguettes ready for sandwich fillings.

You can also find the island’s signature spirit, Guavaberry Liqueur, at a little creole hut in Marigot



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The 37-square-mile island,
home to two countries,
is friendly, above and
below the water.
”

SM



called Colombier Tradition. Or you can venture deep into Colombier to their production house, and learn how the spirit is grown and crafted, as well as its history from generational distiller Louis Maccow, who produces it with his wife Luz Maria using a top-secret family recipe passed down through the generations.

Or skip it all, grab some snacks and a homemade fruit punch at one of the lolos or roadside food shacks, head to the sand and enjoy some decompression time under the Caribbean sun, far away from the bustle of life.

Dinner Is Served

Between the two sides of the island a cornucopia of international fare awaits. Over 140 nationalities registered among island residents contribute to its reputation as the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean.

On the French side, visit the lolos, open-air shacks serving up variations of Creole barbecue and stews. The most well-known collection sits on Marigot Bay along the waterfront. Rosemary's Creole Seafood, serving since 1978, is a must for its curried goat, plantains, conch creole, and a picture with a smiling Rosemary.

More traditional (according to my taxi driver) are the lolos in Grand Case. Specifically, Ribs Shack (lolo #6 on the right). Park in the lot at the top of Grand Case and follow the scent of intoxicating barbecue. Between the grilled lobster, fried snapper, barbecue chicken, and creole lambi, it will be a difficult decision but a tasty one. The magic is in the freshness of everything from the fish caught that morning to the fragrant sauces redolent with local spices.

The Dutch side has its roadside fare as well. Standouts (IMO) are Sexy Beef, a green and yellow outpost serving items like Hurricane Conch or skewers of grilled meats with peanut satay sauce. The Captain's Rib Shack, an open-air food stall situated on Simpson Bay, serves local specialties like barbecued pig tails and fried whole snapper—the brown stew sauce with the snapper is earthy, a little spicy, and full of chunky carrots and potatoes.

In addition to the homey lolos, the island has a number of more elevated dining experiences. The best have tables overlooking the gorgeous water, like L'oursin at La Samanna where you can book a multi-course tasting in the oldest wine cellar on the island or engage in an impressionist dining

series where the dishes are inspired by French artists.

Indigo Beach Bar and Restaurant overlooks tranquil waters and a mostly unpopulated beach. The accras (saltfish fritters) come to the table golden brown with a pickled pepper sauce that lights up the flavor of the fritters. And the exotic tiramisu is layered with traditional lady fingers with local passionfruit and the lightest cream you'll ever put in your mouth.

Options abound on both sides of the island for anything from jerked chicken to oxtail stew to seafood pappardelle to panko-crusted lamb chops, from fine French cuisine to humble pizza, and more.





Getting There

From larger hubs like NYC, travelers can score rates as low as \$279 round trip, but visitors in smaller markets like the Gulf Coast can expect to pay closer to \$600. Rental cars are widely available on the island and run about \$20 per day for an economy model. The good news is you don't need an international driver's license.

Rest Your Head Here

On the Dutch side sits the Sonesta resorts, a great choice

for those looking for something all-inclusive where you have 10 restaurants, 3 pools (including the zero-entry Edge Pool sitting atop a cliff overlooking Maho Bay), and activities. Ocean Point (starting at \$451) offers an adults-only experience with three exclusive restaurants, while its sister property Sonesta Maho Beach Resort, Casino & Spa (starting at \$243) caters to the families with live entertainment and water attractions. They sit on the same property and Ocean Point guests can enjoy access to all the dining options and experiences offered at each. For a



Satay platters at Sexy Beef
Photo: Bronwyn Knight

truly luxury stay, book a swimout butler suite where every need from a stocked wine fridge to laundry to arranging taxis is taken care of personally by the staff of highly-trained butlers.

On the French side sits Grand Case Beach Club (rates starting at \$200), with its tranquil ocean breezes, and gentle waves lapping the secluded beaches. Breathtaking views of Anguilla greet you daily, and the small fishing village of Grand Case surrounding the resort offers a sanctuary of relaxation, along with some top-notch dining. The apartment-style accommodations offer intimate rooms for singles or couples looking to get away, as well as capacious options for families with two private beaches and a pool overlooking the waters of Grand Case Bay.

For a more low-key experience with the option of a full kitchen to cook up some of the local seafood and produce, Airbnb has luxury

studios starting at under \$100 per night on both sides of the island and some even take furry friends.

It's All About the Dollar

With abundant sunshine year-round, there isn't a bad time to visit the Friendly Isle. If you're looking for budget prices though, be sure to look at booking between May and the end of November. Hurricane season does span some of this time period, but often hotel rates are deeply discounted. Places like Sonesta Ocean Point offer packages and summer discounts of up to 30% off. The weather is hotter and wetter, but showers tend to be fleeting.

Winter and early Spring tend to be busy and budget rates are scarce. Keep in mind Wi-Fi can be spotty so credit cards are not always reliable. Both sides of the island take U.S. dollars, but the French side will give you the exchange rate for your dollars. ☞



The sun sets over cerulean waters as Bar Supervisor for Sonesta Ocean Point Resort Paul Davis mixes up the SXM Sunset Groove with the island's signature spirit **Guavaberry Liqueur**. We toast the fading light. "I meet so many interesting people with stories you can't even believe. I love introducing them to Guavaberry because it's part of the island's culture and history, but it also has such a unique flavor. The first time I sampled it, I knew it would be a permanent part of my cabinet," said Paul.

Recipe: SXM Sunset Groove

1 oz. pineapple juice
1 oz. coconut cream
1 oz. mango puree
1 oz. Guavaberry Rum Liqueur
Lots of ice cubes
Blend well, pour, garnish, and enjoy!



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Steven Gray



By Carrie Honaker
Photos: Steven Gray Photography

He shot his first wedding at 17 years old. His mom drove because he didn't have a license.

What started for Steven Gray as a childhood hobby wandering the atrium of the Gaylord Palms Hotel in Orlando, Florida, snapping photos with his mom's pocket camera, became a full-time career in 2017. In between college and full-time work, he followed his passion, arranging objects in a frame every spare moment, photographing weddings on weekends, capturing winter sunsets on the beach, and building real estate listings through his eye for architecture.

But his love affair with the hospitality industry and its fountain of stories sparked in 2015 at a roving supper club event in Apalachicola, Florida. Outstanding in the Field set up a 200-person table at 13 Mile Oyster Farm where Gray witnessed local chefs shucking and cooking the bivalves, farmers sharing their stories with guests—he learned why his friend Terry Strickland (his intro to the niche and founder of Southern Supper Club Peat & Pearls) championed the farmed oyster so passionately. “People who make things, whether it's chefs making dishes, or bartenders making drinks, or people who make the raw materials—the oyster farmers, the distillers—they put themselves into everything they make.”

“When someone creates a dish, or a drink, or an oyster, they're sharing a little piece of themselves with you. That's a beautiful story I want to tell,” said Gray.

He ghostwrites those narratives in images, each photo a conduit between himself, the camera, and the essence of the story.

“There's a few settings that really matter. Any accessories for lighting are just icing on the cake. [Taking pictures] is a skill that can be taught. I go deeper to capture who someone is...the soul needs to be there. Everything we do is a story, and nobody knows how it will end. Heroes never know that they're the hero. They're just doing their best day in and day out. I try to chronicle people doing the best with what they have, using photography to tell their story,” said Gray.

“Deep down most people are kind of the same. We all want the same things out of life—to be seen, to be heard, to be loved.”

Gray listens.



Above:
Jeff Knot making a cocktail,
The Bar at Willett,
Bardstown, Kentucky



Top:
Chef
Nathan Holler,
Dog House Deli,
Pensacola, Florida

Bottom:
Seafood brunch
menu by Chef Amy
Potemsil at The Well
Florida Lounge,
Pensacola, Florida





Left:
Guests at the out-
standing in the field
oyster dinner at 13
Mile Brand head-
quarters,
Apalachicola, Florida

Top:
Oyster sorting at
Pensacola Bay
Oyster field,
Pensacola, Florida

Bottom:
Plated oysters by
Kelsey Barnard Clark
at the Bluegrass
and Sunshine
Beer Dinner event,
Pensacola, Florida

Chef Jon Sleaseman and
Chef de Cuisine Trey Tench
at The Bar at Willet,
Bardstown, Kentucky





Beer release, “Pure Vida” Blonde Ale, a collaborative beer from brewers Phil Zayas (Emerald Republic Brewing Co, Pensacola) and Adrián Valdelomar (Santarasta Brewing Company, San Jose, Costa Rica)



Top:
Chef Brian Baxter and team at a collaborative dinner with Chef Jon Sleasman, Willett Distillery, and KOW Steaks at The Catbird Seat, Nashville

Bottom:
Chef Alex McPhail finishing a steak with flamed foie gras, Restaurant Iron, Pensacola



See more of Gray's work on Instagram (@cameraandflask), or on his website (cameraandflask.com).



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Fried Chicken Tales

By Sean Dietrich



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

I got a letter from Mona, who writes: “Sean, will you write more about food? It makes me feel better during these scary times.”

Mona, as it happens, I am looking at a cookbook right now. The cookbook I am holding is old. It is every hometown recipe book you’ve ever seen. Spiral bound, thick, stained, and there is a sketch on the cover featuring stately oaks draping over a shaded street.

Inside are the four gospels: church food, wedding food, funeral food, and congealed salads.

You won’t find many things holier than these recipes. They are American history, described in standard measurement form.

I once knew an old Sunday school teacher who made buttermilk pie that made grown men loosen their neckties. Once, at a Fourth of July supper, she gave me a slice and told me:

“God wants all his children to be a little soft in the middle.”

And I’ve always believed that.

This particular cookbook I am holding, however, comes from the Brewton Civic League. The recipes within are everything you need to find a happy life.

“God wants all his children to be a little soft in the middle.”

Cheese grits, Squirrel D’ete, Congealed Cantaloupe Salad, mint juleps, Miss Paula’s pickled shrimp, and Coca-Cola salad—whatever that is.

None of them use the word “margarine,” but “Oleo.” And in this book, you will also find the secret to perfect fried chicken—peanut oil and Jesus.

You will discover that measurements are open to loose interpretation. A “handful” here, a “passel” there. A “dash,” a “pinch,” a “dusting,” or a “touch.”

Also, there are a dozen variations of chicken-broccoli casserole. Though, the only discernible differences are the varying amounts of cheese.

In this book, you will find the exact deviled eggs approved by the Methodist church.

But anyway, I have a long history with homemade cookbooks. In fact, the article you’re reading was typed on a manual typewriter that once typed a similar cookbook.

Many moons ago, I typed 418 recipes using only my index fingers. The recipes were then fed through a Xerox machine that resided in the church office.

After that, the finished recipes were placed into position based on pure favoritism by Mrs. Bellmaker. And a cookbook was born.

The women’s Baptist Bible study group reimbursed me 4 dollars

for the sleepless hours of work I put into it. And it was a pleasure.

Some younger people might not remember this, but long ago, recipes were not handed down to us by former celebrities with TV cooking shows. Our recipes came from white-haired oracles who knew how to pronounce “ambrosia,” and could make white barbecue sauce with a blindfold on.

These women could transform cholesterol and bleached flour into miracles. Women like my mother, who could use simple ingredients to cure everything from malaria to a broken heart.

They showed their affection in calories. With this fare they could give you the courage to ask Laney Tyler to the dance, or instill within you the confidence to try out for the baseball team.

In my life, I cannot recall an afternoon that my mother didn’t dirty a kitchen counter. And if I had room in this column, I could replay for you my whole life, one dish at a time.

Mama’s ham-hock-and-navy-bean soup, the drop biscuits she prepared when she was in a hurry and didn’t have time to roll any, her homemade bread.

I will forever recall the sweetness of the chocolate cakes she made for my birthdays, and how every year she would decorate

them with Superman insignias until I was 35 years old.

These are holy women. They will mash potatoes if they see you wearing a frown. Before they leave town to visit their dying aunt, they will place foil-wrapped casseroles in the freezer.

Freely, they leave us their wisdom in nondescript cookbooks, similar to the one I am holding.

The book belongs to my wife, but it sits above our oven for quick reference. Time has faded the cover. Inside are the secrets to the universe, the key to happiness, to love, to life, and the pathway to Type-2 diabetes.

I flipped through the pages just before writing this. I found Triple Orange Ambrosia, Red Beans and Rabbit, Miss Genie’s Crack-a-Lackin’ Cheese Biscuits, Miss Ruby Hagood’s Old-Fashioned Tea Cakes.

I will never be able to taste them all, but I can hold them in my hand, and I can think of the matriarchs who have gone to the other side.

Also, I can remember a boy who believed in food so much that he once typed 418 recipes for a bunch of beautiful white-haired cheapskates who only paid him 4 lousy bucks.

But that boy is not complaining. No. It was worth it. For books like these are not just old recipes, you see.

They are proof that God wants all his children to be a little soft in the middle. 🍗



Camilo Giraldo

Bringing Polo to the Emerald Coast

By Abigail Abesamis Demarest
Photos: Sean Murphy

If you think that polo, a horseback sport where players use mallets to hit a wooden ball across a field, is a game that only royalty can play, Camilo Giraldo is proof that this isn't true. At the age of 15, Giraldo and his family immigrated to the United States from Colombia seeking political asylum after losing everything they had. Starting from scratch in the U.S., he didn't have any money and would spend the weekends cleaning houses and picking up garbage with his brother. Now, at just 31 years old, the civil engineer graduate is the president of a family of companies leading the way in real estate development, construction, and technology; a business that he started almost

10 years ago while in college. His latest passion project is bringing polo to 30A, in South Walton, Florida.

He's competing in the 2022 polo season at the Point Clear Polo Club in Fairhope, Alabama, and developing a private polo ranch and training facility in Walton County.

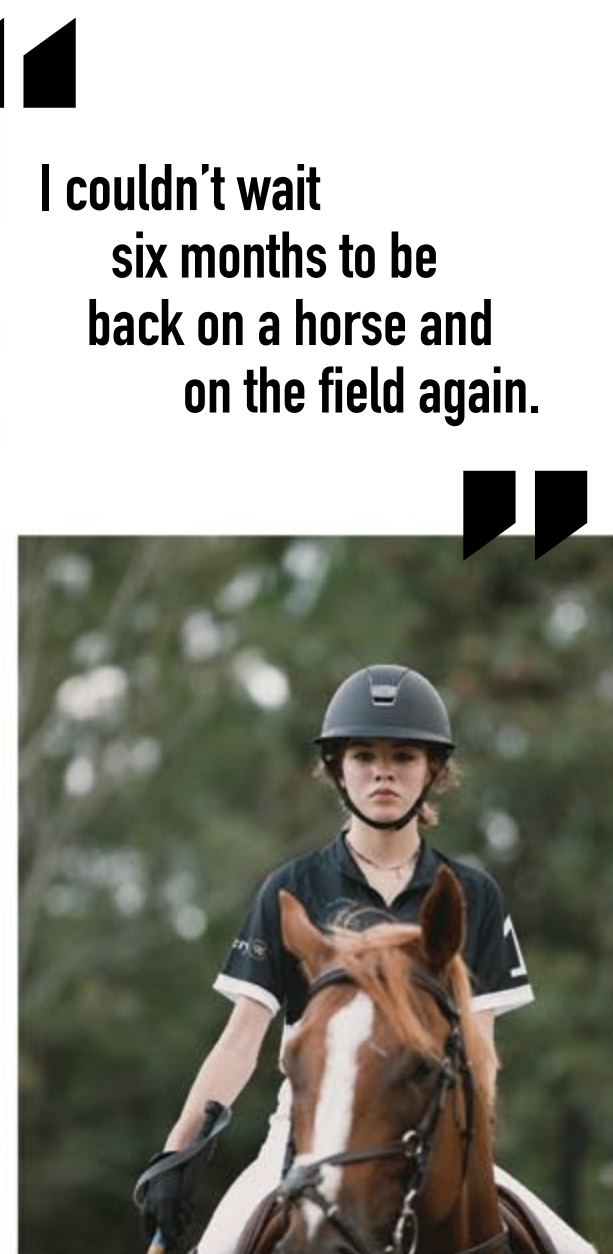
30A is the media partner for the event, along with Distillery 98, Seven Seas Capital, and Esther Rel, a swimwear company founded by Giraldo's fiancée Kayla Rel Rooks.

Giraldo has been riding horses since he was seven years old (his grandfather was



a cattle rancher in Colombia), but it wasn't until 2020 that he was introduced to polo. Rooks also comes from a family of cattle ranchers, and during a Thanksgiving trip to her family's cattle ranch in Alabama, she introduced Giraldo to her next-door neighbors: the Bramletts. "Kenny Bramlett is a world-renowned, self-made orthopedic surgeon and an incredible polo player who paid his way through school by welding and working on horses," Giraldo said. "He had a horse breeding operation, stables, and a practice polo field for him and his sons." Bramlett let Giraldo ride with them, and he was instantly hooked.

"My equestrian abilities were a lot weaker than they are today, but I fell in love with the sport at that moment," Giraldo said. "Something about feeling the horse breathe at the same pace as mine and running side by side with seven other people chasing the ball was incredible." On the field, everything else going on in the world faded away. In the following months, Giraldo's work travel allowed him to connect with polo clubs in Alabama and Florida. A polo helmet and boots became part of his travel essentials. He started to get lessons once a month but it wasn't enough, then trained with a professional polo



I couldn't wait six months to be back on a horse and on the field again.

player at the Bramlett's farm every weekend. "I would leave my house at 4 a.m., drive four hours to Safford, Alabama, ride two horses, take a lunch/work break, then ride two horses in the afternoon," Giraldo said.

After a few weeks, lessons were over and Giraldo was told he'd have to wait six months for the polo season to start. "I remember driving back to Florida, talking to my girlfriend (now fiancée), and I started tearing up," Giraldo said.

"I couldn't wait six months to be back on a horse and on the field again."



It was at this point, in the fall of 2021, that he connected with a professional polo player at the Point Clear Polo Club and got back to training on weekends. In spring 2022, Giraldo trained with pros in Palm Beach and Wellington to prepare for his first season. “I still have a ways to go, but I’m excited to play,” he said. I chatted with Giraldo just a few days before the first tournament game of the season, which runs from April to June.

In less than two years polo has become a significant part of Giraldo’s life, and he wants to share that passion with others and show that they can do it too. “Polo was never on my radar, it seemed like something so far-fetched, a sport that only royalty and billionaires could play,” he said. “While it does require passion and time commitment, it’s not as expensive a sport as people think it is.

You just need a place to practice.” Of course, the deeper you get into the sport, the more expensive it gets, but Giraldo pointed out that you can play polo or get introductory lessons for less than a round of golf at your local club, and many clubs provide all of the equipment (and horses!). Giraldo hopes for his private polo ranch and training facility, El Cairo Polo Ranch (a tribute to his grandfather) at Walton Plantation, to be the bridge that connects people in 30A with polo.

If you’re in the 30A area and have a passion for horses, or you’re looking for an exciting new hobby, Giraldo would love to chat with you. It might just change your life.

Giraldo and others in the polo community know that the sport is more than just a one-hour match. “Polo has become more of a lifestyle for us,”

he said. “We’ve met some incredible people, it’s a very family-oriented sport.” Kayla added, “I’ve really enjoyed it, when we first started going to the matches I thought to myself, if I’m going to pick a sport, this is the one for me. It’s a family sport for sure.”

“The most beautiful thing about polo, whether you win or lose the game, is that it’s about being on the horse and spending time with people from all walks of life,” Giraldo said. In the field, he has seen children as young as five and adults in their late 80s riding polo ponies. “On the field, everybody’s the same; we all share a passion for horses and polo.” 🐾

To learn more, contact El Cairo Polo Ranch (ElCairoPoloRanch@gmail.com) or follow them on Instagram (@Cairo_Polo).

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Second Chances

A man finds happiness, and God, in his journey to overcome addiction

By Lauren Sage Reinlie
Photos: Jacqueline Ward

In a recent day, Brad Reese was at the helm of his boat, *Second Chance*, 50 miles offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. He and some friends had been fishing for hours. They were exhausted, physically spent. Now he was in awe of what surrounded him: water and sky as far as the eye could see, a cotton candy sunset lighting the way back home.

“All the things you are worried about from the day seem to dissolve when you are out on the water,” he said.

Brad is 36 years old and works as a successful real estate agent in Northwest Florida. He lives in Santa Rosa Beach and tries to take his boat out at least twice a week. He attends church on Sundays, meditates, plays sports, works out, and spends lots of time outside: at the beach, on the water, in the forest, whatever he can reach. “My life is pretty simple, but it’s beautiful.”

These are the things that bring him joy. Many are the same things that brought him joy as a kid. They are also the things he had disconnected completely from about ten years ago when his love for life had perished.

“At some point, I lost enthusiasm for anything that didn’t involve drinking or using drugs,” Brad recalled. Instead, his life was a chaotic swirl of heavy drinking, drug use, big mistakes, lost jobs, and an extensive web of lies he would tell himself and others to protect and continue his addiction.

Brad had already dipped his toe into drinking and mild drug use in his teens, but his addiction took flight when he moved to New Orleans. He got into harder drugs like cocaine and started drinking even heavier. “By my late 20s, I was a full-blown alcoholic and drug addict.” He worked in the restaurant industry until 2 a.m., then headed to the bars until they closed at 5 a.m., slept a little, and started it all over.

He would lose a job or have some other consequence, shape up just long enough to get things a little more stable, then go out and do it all over again. Chaos surrounded him. He got to a point where he had extremely low self-esteem. “My life revolved around partying. If it didn’t have to do with partying, I was miserable.”

In 2014, he finally reached rock bottom. He desperately wanted to find a way out. “I felt the walls closing in.”

Brad had grown up visiting Santa Rosa Beach and the 30A area as a kid. An aunt recommended a recovery program in the area called Haven House. Brad visited and thought it would be a good fit. He signed himself in.

Overnight, his day-to-day life completely changed. He lived onsite and followed a regimented schedule. Rise at 5:30 a.m., have breakfast at 6, meet for chores and an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting at 7:30, work onsite from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., get dinner, clean up and get dressed, and then attend a second AA meeting before heading straight to bed.

“I fought it at first,” Brad recalled. “It was extremely jarring from how I was used to living, but I was so desperate for a change, and that kept me a little curious about what they were doing and what they were saying.”

Over time, he stopped resisting so much. He started going through the AA steps and working the program, as people in recovery call it.

One part of that process is committing to radical honesty, to tell the truth in all things, big and small. “The mind is a



cunning device. It will get you to believe your own BS. When you tell the truth, even when you mess up, you own your mistake, and you can live in peace. You don't have to look over your shoulder all the time to see if someone is figuring out your lies.”

Through this, Brad had to look hard at himself, not only the issues caused by his addiction but the issues he had been trying to cover up by drinking and using drugs. “When we take away the drugs and alcohol, we are still sick, and we have to dive in and find out why. It could be control issues. It could be insecurities. It could be fear. Fear is a big one. All those things mix into this stew of nasty emotions, and if you don't work through it all, it will lead you to drink and drugs again.”

Brad worked the steps. But he was still pretty miserable.

“I saw some guys in there who were praying and meditating and fostering a relationship with their higher power, and they were really happy,” Brad recalled. Brad had never believed in God, instead thinking of God as something similar to Santa Claus.

“I resisted it for a long time. Still, intellectually, I couldn't grasp the idea of God,” he said. “At some point, I decided to take a leap of faith. I've got nothing to lose. I figured I might as well try.”

He started hitting his knees and praying in the morning and night, reading scripture, studying the Bible, and absorbing it at a level he had been closed off to previously. “That's when the magic started to happen for me.”

He describes himself now as a spiritual being more than anything, in touch with a higher power that he chooses to call God. He attends Christian churches and enjoys studying the Bible but has also picked up things from Buddhism and other spiritual practices.

Brad graduated from Haven House in 2015, got a corporate job, and had his own apartment. But he didn't love the work and wasn't happy with where he was. After a couple of years, he found interest in real estate and then quickly dedicated himself to it, becoming a market expert. He worked as an buyer's agent for a while but then soon set out on his own.

“It was a real sink-or-swim moment for me,” he said.

The fear of sinking kept him glued to his office chair, making calls until he could call no more. Then, something clicked. He started winning bids for multi-million-dollar listings against 30- or 40-year real estate veterans. People were drawn to him. They liked his hustle. They connected with him and trusted him. “That gave me confidence early on. I knew I could do this. Nobody was better than me.”

Today, Brad has his own real estate business with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida. He loves taking his clients out on his boat. He has made close friends through this work, including with a family he worked with to make a record-breaking sale in Destin, Florida, earlier this year. He has a tight-knit group of friends, some of whom graduated from Haven House with him. He still goes to AA meetings three or four times a week. He has three dogs that he loves. “I'm a dog dad, though I hope to be a dad dad, a real dad, someday.”

But Brad's most significant accomplishment, by far, has been sobriety.

“The mountain I climbed out of addiction stands 100-fold to any other mountain I have climbed. I hold that near and dear to my heart.” 🍷

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Med-Life

The Coastal Diet and Lifestyle
We Should All Adopt

By Martin Liptrot

The world is full of crank diets, miracle pills, and the latest fitness gadgets promising you the body and life you think you want. Magazines, the internet, and TV channels are filled with adverts for “get slim quick” or “shift that stubborn fat” snake-oil solutions, all making claims unverified by any reputable nutritional or medical authority.

But there is one lifestyle and diet that has been proven to add years of healthy living, lower the risk of disease, and enhance your general wellbeing. It is a diet not invented but discovered and is now recognized as one of the healthiest patterns of life anywhere in the world.

It was first revealed by an American professor more than 70 years ago, and it has stood the test of time. Back in 1951, Ancel Keys, a physiologist at University of Minnesota, wondered why poor men in a Southern Italian village by the sea were living longer and seemingly healthier lives than rich men in fancy Manhattan penthouses.

After a few months’ observation, he deduced that the combination of diet and lifestyle was the answer.

In fact, Keys was so taken by his findings that he moved to Pioppi, the small village just south of Naples, Italy, and set up home amongst the men and women who, even today, still have an average life expectancy of more than 90 years of age.



Simply stated, the diet proclaims that avoiding too much red meat and skipping processed food wherever possible is the way forward.



tend to drive everywhere in door-to-door air-conditioned luxury. Even here at the beach, when city folk do forgo their SUV or luxury sedan, it's only to clamber into a golf cart or other low-speed vehicle. Different mode of transport, same sedentary pose.

Instead, those dedicated to the Mediterranean lifestyle – Med-lifers as I'm calling them – might choose to walk or cycle.

Research suggests just 30 minutes a day of light exercise is all you need. So, rather than a punishing sunrise bootcamp or repeatedly lifting heavy objects high above your head in a dank gym, Med-lifers can opt for a coastal version of la passeggiata – the fabled evening stroll that sees Mediterranean families sauntering along the promenade or through their local community as the sun sets each evening, chatting with friends, greeting their neighbors, and enjoying the warm ambience life a coastal community creates.

Med-lifers are blessed with many other active lifestyle options too. Many coastal communities are now designed to get people moving. Bike paths, walkways, trails, and public beach access all make getting out and about easier.

These facilities offer Med-lifers the choice of a morning stroll along the beach, a cooling swim in the emerald-green waters, or a bike ride to that favorite little coffee shop that has been drip-filtering health-boosting organic Costa Rican beans since sun-up. Pura vida.

And you don't have to just take my word for it.

Med-life is acknowledged as having such a positive impact on people's wellbeing that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has become supporters and advocates. The United Nations body responsible for identifying and protecting all that is good on Earth has adopted Med-life as a significant cultural phenomenon and, in 2007, first registered their intention to include the Mediterranean diet and lifestyle on their "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" list alongside other favorites like Belgian beer-making, Mexican Mariachi music, and Indian yoga and meditation practices.

Furthermore, UNESCO's members didn't just acknowledge the Mediterranean diet and associated lifestyle as a public health and nutrition priority. They saw the connection with sustainable agriculture, protecting the environment, and promoting culture and traditions.

Keys' findings were picked up by others and formulated into what we now call "the Mediterranean diet."

Simply stated, the diet proclaims that avoiding too much red meat and skipping processed food wherever possible is the way forward.

It advocates eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, and getting our proteins from fish, seafood, and a little lean chicken. Olive oil, vinegars, citrus juices and herbs, and spices are also highly recommended, and while breads and pastas are not excluded, choosing higher fiber and whole grain varieties is encouraged.

According to followers of the diet, even having a glass or three of a good red wine is seen as a celebration of life rather than a moment of weakness. Hallelujah!

While it sounds simple to follow these smart eating tactics, the reality is when you live in a freezing Midwest suburb, commute miles each way in the dark and have 20 minutes for lunch at your desk, life can get in the way.

Mind you, that revelation shouldn't come as too much of a surprise. After all, our modern word diet is derived from the Greek word diatia, meaning lifestyle. So, while food and nutrition clearly play an important part in living healthier, what subsequent research and studies have also found is that lifestyle is a hugely beneficial factor too.

Tracing its roots back to the islands and warm shores of the Mediterranean Sea, these benefits can be embraced by many coastal communities elsewhere too – great news for those of us who live beach happy!

In short, it's about finding balance, harmony, and equilibrium. Like many things in life, it is about adding a little more of the good and having a little less of the bad.

Researchers and advocates of this healthier lifestyle talk about how in just a few weeks, the diet can make enormous improvements in heart health, help reverse diabetes 2, and tackle the nation's chronic obesity crisis (today, 1 in 3 American children are obese). These ailments, it appears, are largely the consequences of our modern lifestyles.

Researchers have deduced that as communities became wealthier, they started to consume more red meat, to choose more processed food options and, inevitably, to become more distant from the production of their food and agricultural practices.

We also become less physically active. We love our cars and

As beach lovers, we already know the emotional and near-spiritual uplift being near the sea can deliver. And you can add a price to that. According to real estate brokers, a leading reason people want to move to the coast is often cited as the calming and relaxing effect of being near the water.

We also know coastal communities have a close connection to the seasons and nature’s rhythms.

Beach folks know when certain fish and seafood are in season, and how local delicacies and recipes, events, and festivals reflect the changing availability of fresh ingredients. A stroll through any of the multiple farmers’ or fish markets or being dockside when the catch is being unloaded connects those fortunate enough to live along our shores with the food and produce that is destined for their plates.

Our restaurants celebrate this too. All along the coast, they offer a “fish of the day” or “menu prix fixe” that changes with the seasons to reflect the availability of the best and most abundant produce available. Many restaurants here along our Northwest Florida coast will even cook your catch for you, the ultimate in connecting you with your food.

But it isn’t just the food on the plate that UNESCO values. The Mediterranean diet and lifestyle are good for your broader wellbeing and the community at large it seems.

In the long list of benefits cited by UNESCO, conviviality, sustainability and locality are amongst the most striking. UNESCO argues that a Mediterranean lifestyle promotes being with friends and family, and that by celebrating, eating, and drinking together, we safeguard local culinary techniques, show respect for seasonal rhythms, and transmit these values to new generations.

Sharing recipes, preparing food together, and talking and telling stories sounds like a dream. With freshly caught fish or shrimp grilling on the barbeque, is there a better way to feed your friends and family?

Sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices are also increasingly being seen as a positive outcome of the Mediterranean diet and a coastal lifestyle. Connecting consumers with the knowledge of where their food comes from is important. Knowing what is in season and how things are produced is vital if we are to adapt our collective lifestyle to better respect the planet.

As climate change and ecological concerns grow, we are more worried about how our food is produced than ever before. Much of the food we buy today is grown on one side of the globe, packaged on another continent, before being shipped here to be stacked high on the shelves of our supermarkets.

The Mediterranean diet puts a premium on sourcing ingredients locally.

In Europe and the USA, the slow food movement has become more prominent. Our favorite restaurants now inform us about the provenance of their ingredients, name-checking local suppliers and providers, and celebrating the farm-to-table revolution they have ushered in.

So, as you pack your bags for a week at the beach or scan the real estate blogs for that new dream home, prepare to reset your lifestyle too.

Embrace Med-life and adopt the healthier living options only life on the coast can offer.



“

In short, it’s about finding balance, harmony, and equilibrium. Like many things in life, it is about adding a little more of the good and having a little less of the bad.

”



30A Thanksgiving Races Return to Rosemary Beach, Florida

Looking for an excuse to earn that second slice of pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving Day?

Register now for the 11th annual 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day Races, ranked one of the top 10 Turkey Trots in America by Southern Living magazine. The 30A 10K takes place in Rosemary Beach on November 24, 2022, and features a 10K, 5K, and 1-mile Fun Run.

The race is expected to sell out so don't wait to grab your spot in one of the best events in South Walton, Florida.



"With three distances, the 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day Races is an event everyone can enjoy," said Race Director and 30A local Karen Meadows. "This is a fantastic way to get the whole family moving and celebrate the spirit of Thanksgiving."

The Rosemary Beach event is known for its flat and fast courses, which are run right down the middle of Scenic Highway 30A, and over-the-top post-race party. The 10K kicks off at 7:30 a.m. with the 1-mile Fun Run starting immediately after at 7:35 a.m. The 5K starts at 9:30 a.m. After the race, participants are invited to join in the celebration at the free post-race breakfast featuring donuts, fresh fruit, food items from area restaurants, and the ever-popular beer tent and Bloody Mary and Mimosa bar. Awards for overall, master, and grandmaster as well as age groups will be announced after each event.

Lucky, the 30A 10K turkey mascot, will also be on hand with high-fives and hugs. "It wouldn't be the 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day Races without him," said Race Co-Director Amy Stoyles.

The 30A 10K is proudly supporting the following charity partners for the 2022

To date, the event has donated more than \$650,000 to area charities.

event: The Walton County Education Foundation, The Seaside School Foundation, Caring and Sharing of South Walton, and the Guardian ad Litem Foundation of Northwest Florida.

"This race is truly a labor of love," said Stoyles. "We appreciate the opportunity to work with amazing charity partners and are very thankful for the support of our local business sponsors, but what really makes this race a success is our participants. We can't wait to see you all at the start line."

For more information, and to register, visit www.30A10K.com.



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Lucy Buffett

Music may run in Lucy Buffett's familial blood, but the gumbo runs even deeper. Also known by her childhood nickname, LuLu, Lucy says two key ingredients helped her become the successful restaurateur that she is today.

"First, I am Southern—and not just Southern, but Coastal Southern," said Lucy. "And second is my love of food, cooking and entertaining."

The "Crazy Sista" of singer Jimmy Buffett, Lucy was born in Mobile, Alabama, where her parents worked tirelessly at the local shipyard to put the kids through school. Following a criss-crossing of her own careers and adventures in New York, New Orleans, the Caribbean, Key West and Los Angeles, Lucy returned to her Alabama roots in her 40s, opening a "bait shop and burger joint" called LuLu's Sunset Grill. There are now three famous LuLu's locations, including Gulf Shores, Alabama, Destin, Florida, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.



We recently sat down with Lucy – LuLu, if you will – to learn more about this Crazy Sista's outlook on food, family, and life.

Which one dish or recipe instantly brings you back to your childhood?

That is easy. It is the gumbo. I spent summers with my Pascagoula, Mississippi, grandmother. She made a seafood gumbo every Friday and we ate it all weekend long. The house would smell of roux for days and learning to make gumbo became a "rite of passage" for the grandkids.

What are the essential items you need for a no kiddin' Southern Coastal breakfast?

Crabmeat omelets, grits and grillades, fried green tomatoes, and ice-cold watermelon.

What's the best thing about owning a restaurant?

The greatest thing about owning a restaurant is seeing how happy people are when they have had a great experience. Also, when we are busy and it is humming, it is a delight to see the crew execute the LuLu's experience with so much grace and expertise.

What's the hardest thing?

Managing people is the hardest thing about owning a business. With a restaurant, there are also so many time-sensitive plates in the air. There is a lot of stress. But after a shift that has been a really busy but great one, there is such a sense of accomplishment! That is sweet.

You provide an escape for countless fans and customers. Where do you go when you need to escape?

My escape is to Key West. I lived there in the mid '70s and always dreamed of being able to retire there. I get there for several months during the winter but truthfully, I generally do take my work with me. The restaurants are pretty much all consuming.

Who are your heroes?

My mother, my father, and my siblings. They have all given me great gifts.

You will be alone on a deserted island for one full week. You get to take 3 things with you. What do you pack?

An ice chest with food and drink, a comfy tent, something to start a fire, a great book, and a journal with a pen. You did say 5 things, right?

To learn more about Lucy Buffett and LuLu's, visit www.lulusfunfoodmusic.com.





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One True Sentence:

WRITERS & READERS ON HEMINGWAY'S ART

Edited by Mark Cirino and Michael Von Cannon

By Helen Mitsios

Photos: Fletcher Isacks

Ernest Hemingway, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954, is one of those 20th century names, like Pablo Picasso or Albert Einstein, that nearly everyone has heard of – even if they have never read one of his short stories or novels. The author's complex life and body of work is an ongoing source of fascination for scholars – and of course, the general reader too – with Hemingway's writing notably admired for its realism, which indeed shook up the florid, adjective-heavy cobwebs of literature that came before. As English professors (of which I'm one) will attest, Hemingway's writing strongly influences how Americans are taught to write today with clarity and directness. Subject Verb. Object.

In *One True Sentence*, Hemingway aficionados and English professors Mark Cirino and Michael Vor Cannon decided to query a group of experts – most of them culled from their excellent, yes, you guessed it podcast on Hemingway called "One True Podcast" – and put together a medley of Hemingway's greatest

hit sentences. The book is a compilation of thirty-eight interviews in which each contributor relates the sentence that is most moving and true for them and the reason why. Who would have guessed that a few of the writers chose the same "true" sentence? (You'll have to read the book to find out which one it is. Hint: it's a beauty.)

In addition to the fascinating array of commentary and answers to all kinds of niggly questions you might have wondered about, there's a lot of erudition in this collection that reads like a fun and easy conversation – almost like a podcast! Along the way, the contributors often reveal heartfelt confessions of their own. Perhaps we still connect to the great author because we all have a bit of Hemingway inside us – something inviolable and true.

In the following interview, editors Mark Cirino and Michael Von Cannon tell us how Hemingway touched their lives:



What is your most true Hemingway sentence and why?

Mark Cirino: In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway describes the moment in 1922 when he rushed back to Paris from Switzerland to confirm that his wife Hadley had indeed lost all of his unpublished writing: “It was true all right and I remember what I did in the night after I let myself in the flat and found it was true.” Hemingway is describing a moment of extreme crisis in his life, but he uses his famous “iceberg principle” of writing, in which he only shows you the tip and forces you to collaborate with him to form the meaning. Why is he only telling us that he remembers what he did? Most writers don’t demand that level of participation from the reader. And to evoke that in twenty-six simple words and no punctuation... that is a true sentence, one of the most Hemingwayesque sentences I’ve ever read.

Michael Von Cannon: That’s a great one. My sentence comes from Hemingway’s short story “The Battler.” The sentence is: “He felt of his knee.” Okay, why that sentence? The main character, a young man Nick Adams, has just been kicked off a moving train by a brakeman. He’s all scraped up. At this point, most other writers would have said, “He felt his knee.” Not Hemingway. His body becomes a little bit distanced from him in this moment, more like an object to be examined, yet we know it really hurts because Hemingway will later refer to how Nick “squatted down and bathed his knee.” All these ideas start to introduce some of the bigger plot points of this initiation story, about boyhood and manhood and acting tough, especially in painful situations. I love how two letters—“of”—give us so much in a Hemingway story.

When did you first connect to Hemingway’s writing?

MC: I was 19 or 20 and I plucked *The Sun Also Rises* off my mother’s bookshelf out of curiosity. I couldn’t tell you exactly what the point of the novel was at the time, but I knew I loved to listen to the characters talk and that it was exhilarating to watch them get themselves in and out of skirmishes.

MVC: For me, it was a little later. I was in grad school in the U.K., taking a course on modern British and American war writers. I’m not sure if it was because, as an American abroad, I was feeling intensely aware of my national identity, but when we came to our first book by an American writer, Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, I was deeply moved by this novel about an American whose life becomes inextricably tied to a band of guerrilla fighters during the Spanish Civil War.

How did you choose the contributors for *One True Sentence*?

MC: We invite people on One True Podcast if we’re interested in their views on writing, reading, and Hemingway. It’s that simple. We’re curious

people and we love listening to smart, insightful people explaining Hemingway’s greatness and complexity.

MVC: That’s right. As an outgrowth of the podcast, we wanted *One True Sentence* to be a book about good writing and perceptive reading through interviews with a wide range of contributors, including authors, scholars, actors, speechwriters, psychiatrists, and Hemingway’s own relatives.

Favorite Hemingway novel or short story?

MC: My favorite Hemingway novel tends to be the next one I’m about to teach, or write about, or talk about, which as of today is *The Sun Also Rises*. And of all Hemingway’s great stories, I’d go with “The Killers.”

MVC: *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is my favorite novel. “Cross-Country Snow” is probably my favorite short story. It’s a story about friendship, as two characters spend a final day together before their separate responsibilities pull them apart.

Did you ever travel in Hemingway’s footsteps?

MC: I’ve never been to Africa or Cuba, which is a shame. I’m about to see Wyoming and Montana later this week, actually! My favorite Hemingway pilgrimage is northern Italy, where I visited the site of his World War I wounding on the banks of the Piave River in Fossalta.

MVC: Absolutely! Although I haven’t yet been to his home in Cuba or where he went on safari in east Africa, I live near Sanibel, the Hemingway family’s favorite beach vacation destination.

Other favorite writers?

MC: Bob Dylan, Philip Roth, William Shakespeare, Henri Bergson, Willa Cather, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Baldwin, John Steinbeck, William Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Zora Neale Hurston, John Fante.

MVC: Ford Madox Ford is one of my favorite writers. I’ve read his four-novel masterpiece *Parade’s End* at least three times. By the way, Hemingway actually hated Ford, calling him an “upended hogshead” in *A Moveable Feast*.

Reading now?

MC: *Fontamara* by Ignazio Silone. For One True Podcast’s Patreon Book Club, I am reading Gertrude Stein’s *Three Lives* along with our members. And I am also re-reading *The Red Badge of Courage* by New Jersey’s own Stephen Crane, which I plan to teach this fall.

MVC: I have Gertrude Stein’s *Three Lives* on my desk and Stephen King’s *The Shining* on my nightstand. 📖

One True Sentence is available in bookstores and on Amazon.com.



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DESTIN

By Abigail Abesamis Demarest

Known as the “World’s Luckiest Fishing Village,” Destin began as a little sleepy fishing town and has grown into a bustling tourist destination with something for everyone—from high-rise, harbor-side condominiums to gated, amenity-rich neighborhoods. Destin is famous not only for its majestic sugar-sand coastline, but also for its award-winning golf courses, delicious and lively restaurants, and family-friendly activities. With an abundance of high-rise condominiums, beachside homes, premier shopping centers, and mouthwatering restaurants, there’s always something to do in Destin and the neighboring areas of Miramar beach and Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort.

\$5,600,000

55 Lands End Drive - Destin
5 Bed | 5.5 Bath | 4,726 sq. ft.

Designed by a local architect, “Footprints By The Sea” is an impeccably maintained home prominently positioned on the Gulf of Mexico in Destin Pointe. Enjoy 70 feet of Gulf frontage sitting directly East of the East Jetty in Destin, with sweeping Gulf views in either direction. Destin Pointe is a gated community with 24/7 security that offers quiet/private beach access. Notable features include an elevator, Golden Oak flooring throughout, double-car garage, beautifully designed “bump-out” sitting areas overlooking the Gulf, wood burning fireplace with mid 1800’s Savannah Grey bricks, a wet bar, and more.

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\$2,250,000

1516 E Island Green Drive - Sandestin
3 Bed | 4.5 Bath | 3,676 sq. ft.

This one-story, Mediterranean style pool home is situated on the second fairway of the Raven Golf Course of Sandestin and checks a lot of boxes for today's homebuyers! Enjoy this beautiful, well-maintained home with a pool, spa, firepit, and outdoor kitchen made for entertaining. Relish in the Sandestin lifestyle with easy access to the beach, Baytowne Marina, and a plethora of restaurants and shopping nearby.

Teresa Turner / (850) 933-7899

30A

Named for the scenic highway that runs parallel to the coast in South Walton County, the 30A Beaches have blossomed in both popularity and growth over the last two decades. Marquee beach towns such as Seaside, Alys Beach, Rosemary Beach, and WaterColor appeal to homeowners with their inviting New Urbanist designs that offer everything you could desire from first class dining to breathtaking beaches all within a short stroll. Adding to South Walton's unique charm, approximately 40% of the land has been preserved as state park or forest land.



\$5,995,000

155 Heritage Dunes Lane - Santa Rosa Beach
5 Bed | 5 Bath | 4,200 sq. ft.

This beautiful, custom designed 4,200 square foot home in Heritage Dunes is only located three blocks back from the beach. Heritage Dunes is a stunning gated community featuring private beach access and a large community pool. This immaculate home features a reverse living floor plan, 5 bedrooms, and 6 luxury spa bathrooms. Upon entry, you will immediately sense the meticulous attention that has been given to every detail.

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\$1,250,000

91 Miami Street - Miramar Beach
3 Bed | 3 Bath | 2,560 sq. ft.

Just a two minute walk to the beach, 'Barefoot Retreat' is located in the popular subdivision of Frangista Beach. Relax on a lounge in the private courtyard or take a dip in the pool in the backyard oasis of this excellent home. Stunning decks on all three levels add extra outdoor space to enjoy. Live like you're on vacation with plenty of space to entertain friends and family, comfortably sleeping 10-14 guests.

James Ruckel / (850) 240-7705



\$1,985,000

277 Barton's Way - Grayton Beach
5 bed | 4.5 bath | 3,236 sq. ft.

This beautiful custom home is located in the coveted, gated neighborhood of The Preserve at Grayton Beach. Built in 2018, it has been meticulously maintained and never rented. This home has an ideal layout which nicely balances functionality and style. The Preserve has deeded beach access to one of the best beaches on 30A, surrounded by two coastal dune lakes for swimming, paddle boarding or just a refreshing dip into the Gulf of Mexico. The north and east sides of the Preserve are flanked by the outer-bounds of Grayton Beach State Park, which provides privacy and eliminates future development.

Russell Protti / (850) 687-5643



PANAMA CITY BEACH

With 27 miles of beaches, a vast array of waterfront properties, and exciting new developments, Panama City Beach is fast becoming one of the Gulf Coast's most vibrant destinations. Proudly sharing its pristine beaches, a calendar full of renowned concerts and musical events, an international airport, and competitively priced beachfront accommodations with residents and guests alike, it's a Southern city with its own flavor. A vast array of housing opportunities from master planned communities to high rise condominiums make it easy to find your perfect place.



\$2,185,000

1201 Prospect Promenade - Wild Heron (Panama City Beach)
4 bed | 5 bath | 3,876 sq. ft.

Enjoy this marvelous Wild Heron home sitting on two lots, with views of the lily pond and Lake Powell from multiple rooms in the house, including several bedrooms, the kitchen, dining and living room. This custom-built home features hardwood floors, 10 foot ceilings, gas fireplace, and two master bedrooms. The backyard sanctuary offers multiple outdoor spaces and decks overlooking stunning views with ample space to add a pool and cabana.

Delawalla Group / (850) 225-9899

\$9,950,000

208 Paradise By The Sea Boulevard - Inlet Beach
6 Bed | 6.5 Bath | 5,697 sq. ft

This architectural masterpiece will transport you to a private sanctuary sheltered by the warm breeze and calming waves of the Gulf of Mexico. Majestically perched to offer incredible and unobstructed Gulf views as well as the audible experience of Gulf front living yet much less vulnerable to storms. A modern-style estate nestled within the gated neighborhood of Paradise by the Sea is this expansive residence featuring a 4-bedroom & 4.5-bathroom main property, 2-bedroom & 2-bathroom guest home, climate-controlled garage, infinity edge swimming pool, private courtyard and multiple terraces. Every element of this secluded retreat has been meticulously selected and sourced from vendors around the world to provide only the most luxurious finishes and features.

Anne Winicki / (850) 960-1179



3510 Fox Run Boulevard - Panama City Beach
5 bed | 4 bath | 5,500 sq. ft.

3510 Fox Run Boulevard is home to a floor plan optimized especially for entertaining the needs of today's modern family. In the gated community of Preserve on the Bay, this home features a fire-side media/recreation room, covered pool deck and pool house, and impressive interior spaces you simply cannot beat! The formal parlor and dining spaces are open, naturally lit, and adjacent to the foyer, with a private office/study on the main level. The updated chef's kitchen boasts on-demand, filtered, hot/cold water and a stunning marble backsplash. Find your piece of paradise in Panama City Beach today!

Mark Oberg / (404) 406-4887

\$949,900



\$1,995,000

240 Eagle Drive -
Panama City Beach
8 bed | 6 bath | 5,368 sq. ft.

240 Eagle Drive perfectly combines comfortable privacy with dynamic entertainment areas, suiting itself to any resident's needs. This 8 bed, 6 bath custom home checks all of the boxes and some! Enjoy a kitchen filled with state-of-the-art stainless steel appliances, capable of making any cook feel like a professional. From the kitchen into a stunning, open entertainment area, enjoy direct access to the back porch with discrete sliding doors that disappear entirely into the wall. This Panama City Beach home is a dream!

Duran Group / (850) 527-0221



THE
FORGOTTEN
COAST

While affectionately referred to as the Forgotten Coast, the pristine coastal towns of Gulf and Franklin Counties including Cape San Blas, Port St. Joe, Apalachicola, and St. George Island are anything but forgotten. Offering an Old Florida ambiance and a slower pace of life, the Forgotten Coast appeals to those seeking to connect with family and nature without distraction. Find your fill of raw oysters along the historic streets of Apalachicola or discover sea life of all kinds snorkeling in the pristine waters of the St. Joseph Bay on the shores of Cape San Blas. Tranquil and relaxed, the friendly faces and absolute beauty of the gulf, bays, and nearby state parks will keep you coming back year after year for an unforgettable respite from the rest of the world.

\$1,199,000

193 River Road - Carrabelle
5 Beds | 4 Baths | 3,300 sq. ft.

Take a look at this beautiful custom built home perfectly situated on the Carrabelle River. Enjoy unobstructed river views from most rooms in the house. 193 River Road features a gated entrance and well-designed landscaping to provide almost complete privacy. Your very own dock allows for the perfect fishing spot or a place to tie up your boat!

Shelley Shepard / (850) 653-6621



\$2,389,000

3617 Cape San Blas Road - Cape San Blas
6 Beds | 4.5 Baths | 3,842 sq. ft.

3617 Cape San Blas Road was made to entertain! Enjoy watching dolphins and gorgeous nightly sunsets with panoramic views from this marvelous Gulf front home. Located in the heart of the Cape, enjoy endless nearby activities including a pet friendly beach, a 9 mile paved bike trail, several shops & local eateries, and Salinas Park which is home to pickleball courts, a playground, beach horseback riding, bayfront walking paths and more!

The Peevy Team / (850) 227-3335



\$3,500,000

1428 Dogwood Drive - St.
George Island
6 Beds | 6.5 Baths | 4,232 sq. ft.

One of a kind custom beachfront home in the St. George Island Plantation! The beautiful entrance invites you into a cathedral ceiling great room with a spectacular, two-story wall of windows overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. Enjoy 6 spacious bedrooms with en-suite baths throughout three living levels. This home can host the whole family with space for everyone!

Shelley Shepard / (850) 653-6621



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Caption This! PHOTO CONTEST



We asked fans on our 30A Facebook, Instagram and TikTok pages to help us caption this photo. We received tons of entries, but here are a few especially creative ones that caught our Editor's eye.

Top 10 Best Captions

Let's flamin-GO
to the beach!
- Teri D.

When you're in the
water and something
touches your foot.
- Emily S.

When the dress
code says
"beach casual."
- Nolan O.

Whatever floats
your flamingo.
- Christine R.

POV: Your kids are
finally napping.
- Emily W.

30A is a flocking
good time!
- Taylor C.

HEADLINE: "Woman
plucked from 30A beach
by huge pink bird."
- Gloria B.

In a flock of
pigeons, be a
flamingo!
- Wen A.

Oh! It was just
sargassum.
- Angela P.

Congrats to "Reid J." for submitting the winning caption, bagging \$100 to spend on 30Agear.com.

**Looks like inflation AND inflatables
are on the rise.**
- Reid J.

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