

Overly oaky wines: Some drinkers have a quarrel with barrels **D7**



OFF DUTY



The favorite tools of the Baltimore Orioles' head groundskeeper **D9**

EATING | DRINKING | STYLE | FASHION | DESIGN | DECORATING | TRAVEL | GEAR | GADGETS

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Thursday/Sunday, July 22 - 23, 2017 | **D1**

Older, Wiser, Trendier?

As men age, dressing stylishly gets increasingly treacherous—especially with fashion veering ever more casual. But giving up entirely is never a good look. Here's help

BY TERRANCE FLYNN

CALL IT GUTSY or foolish, but as a younger man I was prone to taking the occasional fashion risk. When I was 30, for example, a pair of black leather pants spoke to me. I mean they actually made a sound when I pulled them on in the dressing room, that satisfying twisting noise of leather in motion. They also smelled like a catcher's mitt and bulked up my thighs so that walking in them was a minor undertaking. But dressing outside my comfort zone had the pleasant effect of estranging me slightly from myself, of magnifying my boldness. (Then again, I bought the pants at Gap, the daring purveyor of the Pocket-T. So not all *that* risky.)

Ten years later, I was still at it. At 40, I fell prey to that illusion, perpetuated briefly in the aughts, that urban western wear was not as embarrassing as previously thought, and got myself a blue straw cowboy hat. I promptly took the hat on a weekend to Montauk—a trip whose sole purpose was to introduce me to the best friends of my new significant other. The relationship lasted a long time but so did the story of my appearing poolside, mounting a lounge chair like a saddle and donning that stupid hat as if to say: *No big deal, I'm just wearing a blue cowboy hat at the pool—why wouldn't I?*

I recently entered my 50s. As a newly single father with a school-age daughter, I'm warier now about dressing outside the lines. Giving up, however, is never a stylish look. In California, where I live, sartorial surrender among older men often manifests as a field vest with its outer pockets drooping sadly like a basset hound's eyes, or head-to-toe Margaritaville wear, a look I like to call Forever 71. There has to be a middle state, neither embarrassed nor embalmed in which over-40 men can live and look sharp. And don't believe that old chestnut about men becoming distinguished as they age no matter what they wear, as if by default rather than effort. It's total crap. Not everyone grows older like the Trivago guy or Flea.

So you do actually have to try, but I've learned through trial and glaring error that it's best to proceed with stealth, precision and caution. I'm suspicious of most trends, especially as men's fashion skews increasingly more casual (sneakers posited as appropriate wedding-guest attire) or florid (chinoiserie embroidery; anything from Gucci). Colors other than manly army greens and universally condoned blues work best in small doses, though not as cowboy hats. And if you don't submit daily to the form of group torture called CrossFit, I'd avoid anything clingy or flimsy; softer bodies need the flattering armor of weightier fabrics. (See "Getting It Right" on page D2 for more advice.) I avoid the new array of ethereal shirts made of ever more gauzy, practically mist-like materials. Similarly lacking in structure are sweatpants attempting to stand in for jeans. Worst of all: drop-crotch "harem" sweatpants. I can't be the only guy my age looking for clothes with substance and few, if any, concubine connotations.

Turns out I am not. Take Michael Engleman, the mid-40s executive vice president of entertainment marketing and brand innovation at TBS and TNT in Los Angeles. He's

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JUST DO IT...OR MAYBE NOT
Wearing sneakers with a suit has become socially acceptable in some quarters, but mature guys might want a pair that skews more understated than these Tom Sachs X Nike Mars Yard 2.0.

[INSIDE]



FLOWERS TO FLEE FROM

We asked 14 design pros to name the blooms they loathe (and love) **D8**

SUNDAES THE ITALIAN WAY
More complexly flavored than DQ's, these gelato concoctions are truly cool **D6**



PLENTY OF DRIVE

A Montana road trip between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks **D4**



BAGUETTES WITHOUT CHEESE

The sophisticated diamond-cut known as the 'baguette' is back **D3**

STYLE & FASHION

NEITHER EMBARRASSED NOR EMBALMED

Continued from page D1
also husband of comedy writer Jessi Klein and a busy new dad. His time crunch led him to try *Seize sur Vingt*, a clothier specializing in custom tailoring that started as a small shop in New York's Nolita neighborhood, and has since expanded to sell within its own multi-brand menswear shop in Manhattan called *Groupe* and L.A. men's boutique *Avedon*. "Now they have my measurements," he said. "I picked the fabrics. They sent me a couple of shirts and a suit. Done." This route is a bit beyond my means, but I envy him the opportunity to specify materials that aren't onionskin thin and to get the fit right every time, neither too voluminous nor too vacuum-sealed—both of which defeat an older guy's bid for style.

'Never mistake someone's telling you how young you look for a compliment.'

Michael Souter, 64, founder of *Souter/Partners*, a luxury branding firm in New York with clients such as *Givenchy* and *Issey Miyake*, still has a functioning relationship with fashion but knows the value of restraint. His livelihood, after all, relies on the subtlety of his taste. "One of the few rules I have," he said, "is to avoid anything with a youth message on it." I think guiltily of my *Marquette University* sweatshirts and, more embarrassingly, of the fact that I only recently edited from my wardrobe a "Vote for Pedro" ringer T-shirt. "Also, avoid hair dye," added Mr. Souter. It should be mentioned that he has a full head of thick, naturally non-gray hair. He is less strict about other practices, such as "wearing a young jean or too fun a sock," stating only that they should be "minimized." Fashion insiders, I've noticed, favor the collective singular ("jean," "sock"), dropping that final "s" like it's completely out of style. "Or a pleated short," I offered gamely.

"Any shorts," he said, reinstating the last "s" in shorts, perhaps as a slight admonition about who gets to use the lingo and when. "The important thing to remember is: Never mistake someone's telling you how young you look for a compliment. It is not."

"No?"
"No. Only old people are told they look young, and it is usually when their strategy is showing. Shoot for looking good, not young." In my childhood, my father used a hair tonic called *Vitalis*, which supposedly made hair shiny minus the greasiness of *Brylcreem*. Though it failed completely to tame my dense curls when I gave it a try, its name hinted at a quality that still defines many of the well-dressed men I admire. When I'm 60 and beyond, I'd like to emulate those older guys who have a healthy respect for the open question. Men who know that the real fountain of youth lies in maintaining a lively curiosity about what life might yet bring. Who, when they're getting dressed, leave room for unpredictability.

I hope that, even if I'm just getting dressed to take the garbage out, I'll still be open to the possibility that I could bump into that attractive neighbor who right at that moment might be walking down an adjacent driveway. God help me if I'm wearing harem sweatpants when I do.



GOOD OLD BOYS From left: Both Brad Pitt, 53, and Steve Carell, 54, know how to nod to fashion without looking conspicuously "fashionable."



GETTING IT RIGHT // THREE COMBOS TO HELP OLDER MEN LOOK CURRENT IN RELATIVELY QUIET WAYS

INFORMAL UPGRADE
A denim overshirt is a casual classic (just ask Steve McQueen), but this one by *Tod's* elevates the cut with a stolen-from-a-dress-shirt spread collar and sharp, straight hem. A stylish twist: Wearing it over a Breton-stripe T-shirt.

NAP OF LUXURY
Suede loafers from *Crockett & Jones*, not athletic sneakers, complete the ensemble. Pair them with cotton twill patch-pocket pants that dial up the default look of chinos a couple notches.

Tod's Shirt, \$445, [mrporter.com](#); Tee, \$75, [officinegenerale.com](#); Pants, \$220, [maisonkitsune.fr](#); Belt, \$99, [paulstuart.com](#); Loafers \$550, [crockettandjones.com](#)



BRIGHT IDEA
While it's safe to stick to navy, brown, gray and black clothes when you're of a certain age, a palate punch-up like this burnt orange *Brunello Cucinelli* sweater—mostly hidden under a restrained suit—adds vitality.

SOLID FOUNDATION
This sweater would be too loud worn with an electric-blue suit. Manage the risk of color by grounding it with staid shades like no-nonsense navy and sophisticated, black cap-toe shoes.

Suit, \$4,250, *Berluti*, 212-439-6400; Sweater, \$2,075, *Brunello Cucinelli*, 212-334-1010; Socks, \$24, [falke.com](#); Shoes, \$1,340, *John Lobb*, 212-888-9797



THE ZIP CODE
Between a mid-life-crisis biker jacket and an overly collegiate fleece, lies the distinguished suede bomber. Wear it over a polo with enough heft to its fabric that it won't cling.

BEST DENIM
Dark-washed, straight-legged (read: not *Al-Bundy* baggy) and free of distressing or intentional holes: These are the jeans every dad should aspire to. Wear them with under-the-radar, solid leather sneakers to finish off a dignified downtime look.

Officine Générale Jacket, \$1,325, [bygeorgeaustin.com](#); Polo Shirt, \$125, [sunspel.com](#); Jeans, \$125, [sidmashburn.com](#); Sneakers, \$845, *Brunello Cucinelli*, 212-334-1010

TOO ERR IS HUMAN, BUT... SERIOUSLY?

There are so many ways older men can go wrong when it comes to style. Here, a few examples of trying too hard, not trying hard enough and just plain checking out

THE TRENDY TRAGEDY

This man loved to have the latest from early on. He may still have a pair of *Vivienne Westwood* bondage pants, circa-1977, in his closet. Nowadays he's all about *Gucci's* noisily cutting-edge clothes and droopy-necked T-shirts that expose his salt-and-pepper chest hair.



THE EIGHTIES LEFTOVER



Finding a great-fitting suit is a foolproof style solution for the professional. This gentleman, however, is still wearing his suit one-and-a-half sizes too big, accessorized by slicked-back hair and a fulsome pocket square, like an extra from the 1987 film, "Wall Street."

THE DAD-JEAN DON'T

They're safe. They're easy. They're comfortable. Dad jeans certainly have their allure. But wearing them can also telegraph the message that you've given up. This paterfamilias has lazily added a too-big polo shirt, a freebie baseball cap and drugstore sunglasses.



THE 'I WAS WITH THE BAND'



When it comes to more mature guys with spare tires, we don't recommend wearing a "The Strokes" T-shirt in 2017. And you might want to leave the man-buns to the promising 20-something subway buskers. This fellow, however, marches to his own drummer.

STYLE & FASHION



Clockwise from left: Necklace, Price upon Request, Bulgari, 800-285-4274; Magicien Earrings, Price upon Request, Cartier, 800-227-8437; Vintage Starburst Earrings, \$188,000, Verdura, 212-758-3388; Ring, \$60,000, Tiffany & Co, 800-843-3269

plained Lori Gross, author of “Brooches: Timeless Adornment.” With their straight edges, the stones were suited to being creatively stacked and tiled. “Some of the Cartier and Van Cleef pieces from that period have the most fantastical shapes,” said Ms. Gross. Baguettes are fueling a similar creative zeal today. Austin, Texas designer Nak Armstrong transforms untraditionally trapezoid-shaped, tapered baguettes, into a “pleated, ruffled, ruched look, like you would see in fabric.” He views the cut as a challenge of sorts. “Some people let the stone tell them how they should design the piece,” he said. “I want to whip them into shape and turn them into something else.” Designer Suzanne Kalandjian, founder of Suzanne Kalan, started using baguettes six years ago, but her designs initially met with resistance. “Baguettes are [sharp-cornered] and not as shiny as round diamonds,” said Ms. Kalandjian. Customers looking for edgier jewelry cottoned to her pieces immediately, but more conventional stores, she said, “took a bit longer.” Today, her collection, which merges the romance of diamonds with spiky, geometric forms, is almost fully baguette-focused. It’s carried in places such as Neiman Marcus and Dover Street Market.

‘It has a clean look that makes a statement without all the chatter.’

Baguettes can, of course, be used in elaborate traditional pieces, like the Bulgari necklace pictured here, but they also appeal to jewelry minimalists who might not usually consider diamonds. “The cut has a clean, architectural look that makes a statement without all the chatter,” said Greek designer Ileana Makri, whose current collection features her signature “evil eye” pieces rendered in baguette diamonds as well as a necklace featuring an inverse pyramid of baguettes. The simplicity of the cut, however, belies its technical challenges. The cut shows all flaws, “like clear water” said Ms. Makri, so high-quality stones are a must. Setting can also be a challenge, due to the crisp corners. Yet that’s clearly not keeping jewelers from enthusiastically using the stones, particularly designers like Ms. Kalandjian who are banking on the cut’s popularity. She, however, is confidently unbothered. “In the beginning people thought they were trendy,” said jeweler Ms. Kalandjian. “But they’re here to stay. It’s done—it’s part of life now.”



Earrings, \$63,800, Sidney Garber, 312-944-5225

Ileana Makri Necklace, \$5,720, barneys.com

Ring, \$11,825, anitako.com

Nak Armstrong Earrings, \$38,500, Barneys New York, 212-826-8900

Suzanne Kalan Cuff, \$58,000, Neiman Marcus, 310-550-5900

The Baguette Rises

Once a supporting player for big blingier stones, the rectangular diamond shape is now starring in unexpected modern jewelry designs

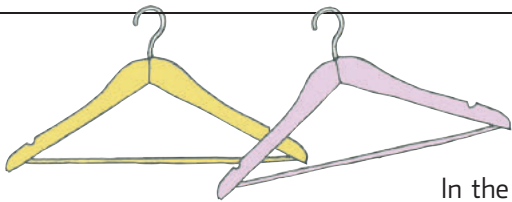
BY RIMA SUQI

FIRST LET’S GET it out of the way. The baguette—the long, lean, rectangular cut of diamond—has little in common with the long, lean, crisp-crusted French loaf of the same name. The word is derived from an Italian noun meaning “stick” or “wand.”

The glittering baguette has most often played backup singer to the proverbial rock star, most often flanking a large round or emerald-cut stone in a ring. It was particularly visible in the 1980s when big showy gems were de rigueur. Ah, but how times have changed. The baguette is currently at the center of jewelry design—literally and otherwise. “Baguettes were late to the party but now are having a moment,” said Paul Schneider, co-

owner of Twist, a jeweler with shops in Seattle and Portland, Ore., that carries modern pieces from brands like Ileana Makri and Suzanne Kalan. The cut evolved from the unfortunately named hogback cut (whose uppermost surfaces form a peak, while the baguette’s top is flat). Though its history dates to the 1600s, the baguette cut “became more prominent in the 1920s during the art deco period,” ex-

HANG TIME CLOSET STRATEGIES FROM WOMEN WITH LOTS OF CLOTHES



CATEGORICALLY CLEVER

In the debut of Off Duty’s new recurring feature on wardrobe organization, three fashion-loving women share their tips on orderly hanging, happiness-inducing shoe storage and the one thing every clotheshorse should do



MANDANA DAYANI



AMANDA ROSS



BRETT HEYMAN

Mandana Dayani, the Los Angeles-based chief brand officer of on-line estate-sale website Everything But the House (EBTH), recently reorganized her walk-in with a professional: “It was the most therapeutic thing I’ve ever done,” she said.

On hanging order Ms. Dayani goes for the classic combination of hanging clothes by color and category. “Blazers together and organized by color; coats by color and so on,” said Ms. Dayani. The one exception is her dresses. “We organized them by length,” she said. Anything embellished for evening is in a garment bag—with a clear window—to avoid snagging its neighbor.

On shoe storage Ms. Dayani is lucky enough to have a wall of shoe shelves in her walk-in. But a recent tweak in how she arranges them has made a big difference. “I used to do one heel forward, one toe forward to save space,” she said. This time I did both toes forward; it just feels happier.” All boots get stuffers to keep them upright. “You see them so much better,” she said.

On the best practice everyone can follow Don’t jam a closet to the brim. Said Ms. Dayani, “I think having actual air circulation is really important for preserving the fabrics.” And your sanity.

When she was a fashion editor living in a one-bedroom Manhattan apartment, Amanda Ross, founder of lifestyle and e-commerce website ARossGirl, sharpened her wardrobe wizardry. “It’s amazing how much you can fit into a closet if you’re organized,” she said.

On hanging order This self-professed hater of clutter arranges clothes by category, color and season in the closets she now shares with her husband. Being able to see and access your clothes, said Ms. Ross, is a crucial step in being stylish. “[Getting dressed] is like baking a cake,” she added. “You have to have the right ingredients on hand—and know when to mix them.”

On shoe storage Again, visibility is important. “Nothing is in a box,” said Ms. Ross of the floor-to-ceiling shoe shelves in her main closet.

On the best practice everyone can follow Take stock every season. Twice a year, she purges pieces she’s not wearing and knows she won’t wear again. She also sifts through various secondary closets to find things she’ll want to access quickly and moves them to her main closet. “It’s like shopping in your own wardrobe,” she said. “I pull out things from 10 years ago that are relevant today.”

Though she’s streamlined her wardrobe since having kids (ages 7, 6 and 1), Brett Heyman, founder of handbag line Edie Parker, still requires serious closet space for a vintage collection which, she said charmingly, equips her to dress for impromptu costume parties.

On hanging order Ms. Heyman also hangs by type—trousers, skirts, dresses, et cetera—which is probably so common because it’s simply logical. The designer is dedicated to one sort of hanger—the razor-thin SlimLine brand. “It’s out of necessity,” she said. “I can’t fit anything else.”

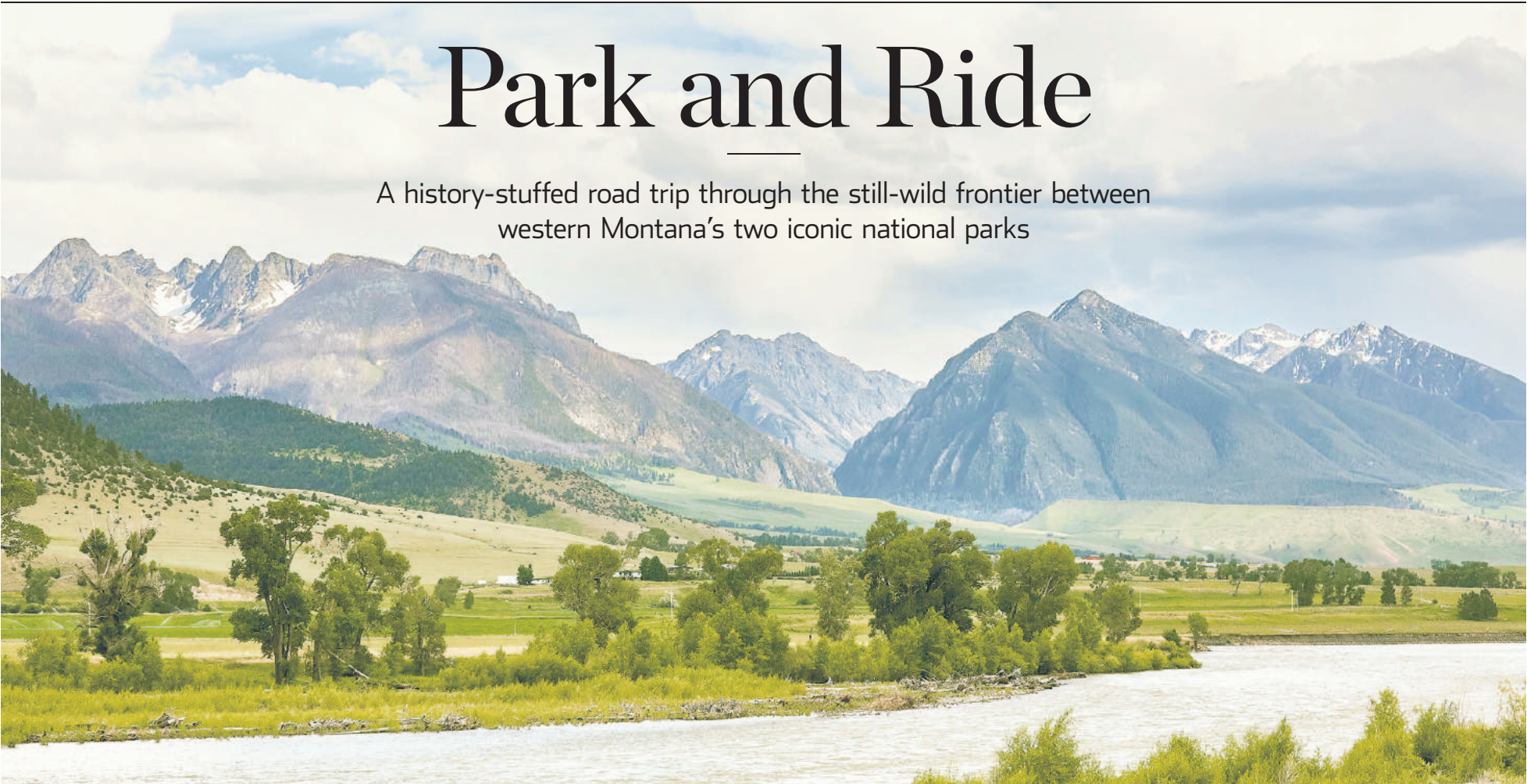
On shoe storage Ms. Heyman made her closets a priority when she renovated an apartment with her husband eight years ago. Footwear got its own special place. “I used faux Venetian glass to make a beautiful wall in our bedroom that you open [to reveal] a shallow shoe closet.” One drawback: it doesn’t fit boots. “I just put them in my main closet and close my eyes,” she said.

On the best practice everyone can follow Don’t get too attached to stuff. “There are so many great consignment places,” said Ms. Heyman. If you’re not wearing it, let it go unless it has sentimental—or emergency costume-party—value. —Christine Whitney

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Park and Ride

A history-stuffed road trip through the still-wild frontier between western Montana’s two iconic national parks



JOSHUA TUG FERGUSON FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

BY JIM ROBBINS

OF AMERICA’S 59 national parks, two of the most celebrated lie some 400 miles apart in western Montana—Glacier and Yellowstone. Even though I’ve lived in the region for four decades, I’d never taken the time to fully explore the in-between territory outside the parks. So one spring day, after the snow had mostly melted off, I set out from Yellowstone with my compass pointed north toward Glacier. If you don’t stop, weaving a path through the wild heart of the northern Rockies, the drive takes about seven hours, but I was in no rush and spread the trip out over three days.

The first thing you realize leaving Yellowstone—by way of Highway 89—is that the abundant wildlife doesn’t stop at its boundary. Just north of Gardiner, a park gateway town, electric warning signs flash “animals on the road” and indeed they were: 20 or so elk milled about in the middle of the highway and mule deer too numerous to mention crowded the shoulder all along a 50-mile stretch of highway. Antelope grazed, unperturbed by traffic whipping along the road, bison wandered across the green hills and bald eagles wheeled overhead, scouting fish along the purling Yellowstone River. This is Montana’s Paradise valley,



which unfurls north from the park’s historic stone arch. The Yellowstone, the longest undammed river in the contiguous U.S., bisects the valley and many people come to raft it in these parts, especially on the churning rapids of Yankee Jim Canyon, the color of chocolate milk in the spring, giving way to a sea-green shade come summer. The steel-gray Absaroka Mountains tower mightily in the background.

For centuries, the Paradise Valley was a shared hunting ground for Native American tribes in the region. But much of the written history of this part of Montana features pick-wielding prospectors and their dogged search for precious metals. In the 1860s, gold miners moved into the Paradise

Valley to work the lodes. Among the settlements they built is Old Chico, a mountain village a half-hour north of Yellowstone, now home to just a handful of people who live in an assortment of old cabins and newer houses with breath-stealing views of the peaks. Within walking distance sits Chico Hot Springs Resort & Day Spa, centered around a large geothermally heated swimming pool. The resort’s barnwood-lined dining room, which serves grass-fed beef and fresh fish, also happens to rank among the best restaurants in the state. After dinner, I swam in the hot pool, steam shrouding the mountain scenery.

The 19th-century miners here also needed to eat, and so cattlemen and their herds made their way to the Paradise Valley. A gold miner named Nelson Story drove 1,000 cows from Texas across the plains, up the Bozeman Trail and on to Montana where he founded a ranch tucked in the mountains near a town called Emigrant. Now a sprawling spread, it’s called the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, a high-end rustic retreat owned by Arthur Blank, chairman of Home Depot.

I joined Interstate 90 at Livingston, a windblown railroad town with a quaint historic downtown backed by a sudden rise of mountains. I spent the night in a meticulously refurbished railcar (listed on the vacation-rental site VRBO), set in a cottonwood grove a few miles south of town.

This region was still largely cattle country when I first came west in

GEAR SHIFT Clockwise from top: Overlooking Yellowstone River from just outside the northern border of Yellowstone National Park; the Garden of a Thousand Buddhas; Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, a high-end dude ranch in the Paradise Valley.



the 1970s, but it has since become a destination for the world’s well-heeled who come for the scenery, skiing and fly fishing. “I think it’s because the landscape and people are still authentic,” said Cyndy Andrus, deputy mayor of Bozeman, the bustling college town just 30 minutes from Livingston.

After lunch in Bozeman, at a popular place called Dave’s Sushi, I stopped at the Madison Buffalo Jump, a seven-mile detour (one way) off the Interstate, some of it on a bumpy gravel road but worth the trip. The tribes who came here over the centuries got dressed like bison and whooped and yelled, luring and chasing the creatures down lanes lined with rock, and over the cliff to their death or near death on the rocks below. I hiked to the top for an expansive view of the valley. It’s the kind of place, as the saying goes, where you can watch your dog run away for three days.

Just up the road, the town of Three Forks is named for the nearby site where three rivers—named the Madison, Gallatin and Jefferson by Lewis and Clark—meander and oxbow and finally get their act together to create the beginning of the mighty Missouri. I hiked around the Missouri Headwaters State Park and found the exact spot where three rivers become one.

I motored on to Helena, my hometown, founded in 1864 when four exasperated prospectors, on the verge of giving up, finally plucked gold nuggets out of a small creek that tumbled out of the mountains. The gold-filled creek became Last Chance

Gulch, the main street of what quickly evolved into a prosperous city. Some say that for a time, Helena claimed more millionaires than any town its size, which is easy enough to fathom when you drive through its 19th-century mansion district. Today, new coffee shops, a microbrewery and a wine bar line the gulch. Jill Roberts, who returned home to Helena after many years as a sommelier in New York, co-owns the wine bar, Hawthorn Bottle Shop and Tasting Room. “My Dad used to sing in a barbershop quartet in front of this building,” she said. “I wanted to be part of bringing back historic Helena.”

The shortest route from here to Glacier zips through the Swan Valley, but who’s in a hurry? I headed west, driving a couple of hours to Missoula, another lively college town in the mountains. The novel “A River Runs Through It” was partly set here, and a river called the Clark Fork does indeed run through the center of town. Surfers in gleaming black wetsuits gather below the Higgins Avenue Bridge to ride its rapids.

A few miles north of town, I stopped at what may be the least likely Montana tourist attraction: the Garden of One Thousand Buddhas, a legion of statues built by a Buddhist monk from Tibet on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The road from there winds past the National Bison Range, where I stopped for a peek at the herd, and through the Mission Mountains, named for a 19th-Century Jesuit mission set in, for my money, one of Montana’s prettiest valleys at the mountains’ foot.

I finished my trip in northwest Montana with a night at the century-old Kalispell Grand Hotel, and then on to West Glacier, the gateway to Glacier National Park. This is huckleberry country, where the blueberry’s wild and more flavorful sibling, stars in menus all over town—in pies, milkshakes, Martinis, beer; come July, locals will tell you where to pick your own.

When I finally drove into Glacier National Park, snow still clogged the high country there. I sat on the shore of Lake McDonald, at the edge of the park, and looked at the famed peaks at the far end of the water’s edge and their mirror image in the still surface.

THE LOWDOWN // ROAD TRIPPING IN WESTERN MONTANA

STAYING THERE

Near Livingston, the **Centennial Inn**, a restored railway car, sleeps four. Fishing on the Yellowstone is a short walk away (from \$195 a night, vrbo.com). At the luxe **Mountain Sky Guest Ranch** many cabins date back to the 1920s (from around \$4,000 a week per person, all-inclusive, www.mountainsky.com). In Helena, try the **Sanders Bed and Breakfast**, a 19th-century mansion built by a prosecutor for vigilantes (from \$140 a night, sandersbb.com). The **Kalispell Grand Hotel** in Kalispell,



is a family-run place with a great Italian restaurant, Scottibellis, next door (from \$72 a night, kalispell-grand.com).

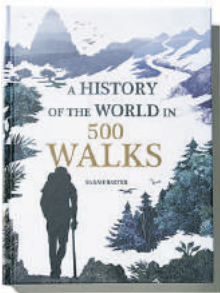
EATING THERE

Chico Hot Springs draws as many patrons to its dining room as to its spa (163 Chico Rd., Pray, chichotsprings.com). Built in 1910, the **Sacajawea Hotel** in Three Forks also houses a top restaurant (5 North Main St., sacajaweahotel.com). In Missoula, **Red Bird** offers upscale, locally sourced fare like grilled bison tenderloin (111 N. Higgins, redbirdrestaurant.com).

BOOKSHELF

WALKING DOWN MEMORY LANE

From Manhattan’s High Line to the New Zealand coastline, these three books cater to travelers whose favorite mode of transportation is their own two feet



A History of the World in 500 Walks
By Sarah Baxter (\$28, Thunder Bay Press)

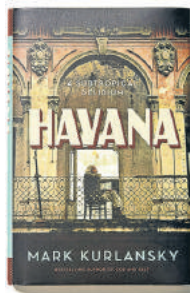
British travel writer Sarah Baxter tackles an ambitious task in this 400-page volume: compiling a list of walkable routes that have shaped natural and human history. These range from a hike in what is now Québec through the crater left by a meteorite crash 350 million years ago,

to the Kokoda Track through the mountains of Papua New Guinea, where Japanese and Australian soldiers fought during World War II. Fittingly, the book is organized by historical period, starting with pre-human history and moving to the Middle Ages up through the 20th century. Descriptions of the walks’ historical significance are accompanied by maps, photographs and practical tidbits on when to go and the degree of physical ability required, whether it’s a two- to three-hour meander on Boston’s Freedom Trail or a six- to 10-day trek up Kilimanjaro.



Magnetic City: A Walking Companion to New York
By Justin Davidson (\$22, Spiegel & Grau)

This new book by architecture critic Justin Davidson offers walking guides for visitors to New York, whether it’s their first Big-Apple trip or their 100th. Mr. Davidson planned each of the seven itineraries—through Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx—to expose walkers to a wealth of cultural and architectural history. The Upper West Side walk, for example, takes you past a Georgian beaux-arts mansion which, at the turn of the 20th century, was home to philanthropists Isaac and Julia Rice. While her husband pored over chess boards in the basement, the book reveals, Julia fought against river-traffic noise pollution, founding the Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noises. The society wielded a degree of political power, notes Mr. Davidson, but only temporarily, like so much in an ever-changing city with what he calls “layered ghosts on every block.”



Havana: A Subtropical Delirium
By Mark Kurlansky (\$26, Bloomsbury)

A flâneur, a frequent figure in 19th-century French literature, wanders city streets, keenly observing urban life from under the brim of his top hat. Mark Kurlansky makes a case for Havana as catnip for modern flâneurs (sans top hats) in his kaleidoscopic portrait of Cuba’s capital. “There is still probably no other city in the world where a strolling visitor is afforded so many candid domestic scenes,” he writes. To be clear, the book doesn’t include maps or walking routes. Instead, the author, a former foreign correspondent, intersperses pages on Havana’s cultural and political history with vivid descriptions and anecdotes about specific sites, from Revolution Square to Ernest Hemingway’s (many) former watering holes to the UFO-shaped ice cream parlor commissioned by dairy-loving Fidel Castro—furnishing enough intriguing intel to propel your own aimless ramble. —Sydney Lazarus

F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



EATING & DRINKING

Still-Life With Gelato

Creamy and crunchy, sweet and tart, the deftly composed coppetta is what you might get if the sundae went to art school in Italy

BY GABRIELLA GERSHENSON

YOU MIGHT not think of gelato as a lower-fat option. But talk to New York City pastry chef Meredith Kurtzman, and you learn all sorts of things. Italian-style gelato, she explained, contains a fraction of the cream used in American-style ice cream and way more milk. “Fat coats your tongue and obfuscates flavor,” she said. For a pastry chef fixated on expressing the character of her ingredients, this is a pretty big deal.

Ms. Kurtzman started churning gelato at Esca, an Italian restau-

rant in Manhattan, and went on to gain wide acclaim for her frozen desserts (and a cult following for her olive-oil gelato) during her 12-year run as the founding pastry chef at Otto, Mario Batali’s Greenwich Village pizzeria. Her contributions to the craft continue—she’s now working as a consultant to ice cream companies and plotting a cookbook—as does the dessert program she created at Otto, based on house-made gelati, sorbetti and the sundaes they star in, which Ms. Kurtzman dubbed coppette.

“Coppetta just means little cup,” said Ms. Kurtzman, in her unassuming way. But really, in her hands, it’s a dessert composed with remarkable finesse. “You want it crunchy and creamy. Ideally you want it hot and cold, but that’s not always possible,” she said. “You want different textures. The flavors always have to balance out. Sweet has to be counteracted by acid or bitter.” One of Ms. Kurtzman’s coppette, the Meringata, illustrates this principle particularly well. A sort of deconstructed lemon-meringue pie, it brings together lemon sorbet (acidic and cool), lemon curd (sweet and creamy), torched meringue (warm), blueberry compote (juicy) and crumbled pie crust (crunchy). The cumulative effect? Sheer delight.

In preparation for her role at Otto, Ms. Kurtzman went to Italy to hone her gelato-making skills. She brought back lessons on what to do—and what not to. “Most places in Italy start with a white base and toss in different flavor compounds,” said Ms. Kurtzman. “I wanted to do it the from-scratch way.” That meant, for instance, steeping mint leaves in milk to build a surpassingly minty gelato from the base up. She’s also been known to pinch every nectarine at the Union Square Greenmarket to find the best ones for sorbet. Though coppette are Ms. Kurtzman’s invention, her commitment to finding the best ingredients and letting them shine is very Italian. “I always want you to know what you’re eating,” she said. “Otherwise what’s the point?”

For the crunch element, Ms. Kurtzman recommends toppings ranging from streusel to pretzels to granola. The richness could come from the gelato, and/or from a creamy topping, like crème fraîche or whipped cream. Sauces can certainly include favorites like chocolate or caramel, but Ms. Kurtzman recommends experimenting with



Coconut Gelato Coppetta With Lime Granita, Macerated Strawberries and Mint
ACTIVE TIME: 1½ hours TOTAL TIME: 9 hours (includes freezing) SERVES: 8

For the coconut gelato:
1 quart whole milk
1½ cups unsweetened dried coconut
10 large egg yolks
¾ cup sugar
½ cup heavy cream
½ teaspoon salt

1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
For the lime granita:
1 cup water
½ cup sugar
Zest of 2 limes
½ cup lime juice, from 3 to 4 limes

For the macerated strawberries:
1 pint strawberries, washed and sliced into bite size pieces
2 tablespoons sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
A few leaves basil or mint, sliced into thin ribbons, for serving (optional)

1. Make coconut gelato: Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spread coconut over a metal baking sheet and roast until barely colored, 10-15 minutes. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring milk and cream to a bare simmer, then remove from heat. When coconut is finished roasting, use a spatula to nudge it into hot milk and let steep 30 minutes (and no longer). Pass milk through a fine-mesh strainer and discard coconut.
2. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, heat strained milk with ½ cup sugar, stirring until steamy. Remove from heat. In a heatproof bowl, whisk egg yolks and remaining sugar. Gradually ladle hot milk into eggs, whisking to combine, until you’ve added about half the milk. Return custard to saucepan and heat gently over medium-low heat, stirring with a spatula until mixture is steaming but not boiling.
3. Quickly strain hot custard into a heatproof container, then stir in salt and condensed milk. Place container over a bowl of ice water, and stir

- to cool down quickly. Cover cooled custard and chill in refrigerator at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.
4. Freeze gelato in an ice-cream maker according to manufacturer’s instructions. Cover with plastic wrap and chill in freezer at least 1 hour.
5. Make lime granita: In a saucepan, heat water and sugar until sugar dissolves and liquid is clear. Stir in lime zest and cool syrup in refrigerator. Once cool, strain out zest and discard. Stir lime juice into syrup. Pour lime mixture into a shallow 8-by-8-inch metal or glass pan and place in freezer. Use a fork to scrape liquid around pan every half hour, until mixture is flaky, evenly textured and icy, not rock hard or mushy. Keep it in freezer until ready to serve.
6. Macerate strawberries: 1 hour before serving, in a medium bowl, toss strawberries with sugar and salt. Chill in refrigerator.
7. To serve, scoop gelato into center of a chilled dish. Add a scoop of granita on one side and a dollop of macerated strawberries on another.



other tasty drizzles, like maple syrup or good olive oil.

Above all, produce inspires this chef. “Fruit is my favorite thing to work with,” she said. “Since I couldn’t make pies at Otto, I worked fruit into the coppette.” Ms. Kurtzman’s favorite method is to simply toss fresh fruit with a bit of sugar, a pinch of salt and maybe some citrus zest, liqueur, balsamic vinegar or fresh herbs. Sugar and salt draw out

fruits’ natural juices, she said, which in turn bathe the fruit in its own flavor. “You want to taste the fruit first,” said Ms. Kurtzman. “The other stuff is just an accent.”

If you’re feeling ambitious, you can make an entire coppetta, gelato and all, from scratch. Above is Ms. Kurtzman’s recipe for coconut gelato and lime granita with a strawberry-mint topping. Or, you can produce a perfectly complex and

delicious coppetta using store-bought ingredients. In the recipe at left, Ms. Kurtzman recommends marrying vanilla gelato with cherries and amaretti cookies.

Finally, consider the manner in which you convey the coppetta to your mouth. “You want to combine a bit of each thing in each spoonful,” said Ms. Kurtzman. “The fun of a coppetta is that you can put it all together in one bite.”

HALF FULL



1. Cambridge Brewing Banryu Ichi, 14% ABV
Brewed with sake’s uniquely high-octane yeast strains, this barleywine has a frilly, floral, cantaloupe-and-vanilla aroma masking a tough and toothsome caramel core.

2. Dogfish Head Bitches Brew, 9.0% ABV
A mix of traditional African mead and English stout, this slow-burning sipper grooves with chocolate and charcoal.

3. Unity Vibration Triple Goddess KPA, 7.0% ABV
KPA starts with fizzy, funky kombucha, then turns lambic-like with sour yeast in an open fermentation tank and finishes with an IPA’s worth of hops.

4. Jester King SPON Albariño & Blanc du Bois, 6.7% ABV
A truly Texan hybrid beer fermented with wild yeast and local white-wine grapes, dry and gritty as the soil, with a sweet, purple-candy glow

5. Allagash Victor, 7.4% ABV
Cabernet Franc grapes in Pilsner grain play red-fruit melodies over a spiced and snappy beat: candied ginger with a side of raspberries.

6. Firestone Walker Zin-Skin, 7.0% ABV
Aged on grapes for three weeks, then fermented in barrels for a full year, ZinSkin emerges surprisingly light and sprightly: a summer brew to sip among the vines.

CRACK OPEN A WILD ONE

Refreshing new beer-wine hybrids—among other Frankenbrews—bring in the funk

SUMMER IS ABOUT wild combinations: sandals with a suit, books on the beach. ’Tis the season of ice cubes in your wine glass and iced tea in your lemonade—and now, in your beer glass, a new breed of hybrid brews. These cross-genre blends of beer, wine, booze and soda bring playful irreverence to summer refreshment.

Experimenting with wild yeasts and natural fermentation, brewers have found common ground with winemakers. Once the staff at Texas’s Jester King Brewery saw neighboring Hill Country wineries using the same natural-fermentation tricks they did—barrels, open tanks, local microbes—borrowing fruit from them seemed a logical next step.

Jester King SPON Albariño & Blanc du Bois is a Belgian-style lambic beer refermented with wine grapes. “We had to develop our palate,” said Jester King founder Jeffrey Stuffings, “learn to identify what flavors are good, what’s bad, what just needs time.” One early experiment with Blanc du Bois grapes gave off “this funky, overripe-fruit smell,” Mr. Stuffings said, “but then we drank some Sauvignon Blanc made with those grapes and tasted the same flavor. That gave us confidence we weren’t off course.”

All these beer blends are born of exploration, made by brewers chasing exotic yeasts once limited to cider, mead and even sake.

Unity Brewing Co. ferments a gluten-free beer using the bacteria and yeast normally found in kombucha. Cambridge Brewing uses sake’s unique mix of yeast and koji (a mold). To produce its Bitches Brew, Dogfish Head studied the traditional honey fermentation that makes ancient African tej wine.

Before the advent of modern brewing, with its clearly delineated styles and designated yeast strains, brewers worked with a splash of this, a pinch of that and a hefty helping of respectful resignation to the mysteries of fermentation. There’s an element of improvisation to these new brews, and that’s what makes them fun. “In the early days, we were crushing grapes with baseball bats,” said Allagash brewmaster Jason Perkins.

They’ve grown up, somewhat. Dogfish Head plans to release its Bitches Brew in canned six packs this year—big news for a beer once available only as a centerpiece-size shareable bottle. Will that workaday packaging detract from its distinctiveness? Allagash’s Mr. Perkins believes these beers deserve attention, not affectation. “When I’m drinking wine, it’s usually out of grandma’s juice glasses,” he said. And he drinks these beers from nothing more pompous than a short, wide-mouth glass to direct and disperse their aromas. “I’m practical,” he said. “We’re brewers at heart.” —William Bostwick

EATING & DRINKING

ON WINE LETTIE TEAGUE



How Oak Makes—Or Breaks—a Wine

SOME WINE LOVERS fear it. Many winemakers overdo it. And most every wine merchant and sommelier spends lots of time explaining it. I'm talking about the relationship between wine and oak, a perennial hot topic in the wine world.

Wine has been matured in oak barrels for centuries, of course; some of the greatest wines in the world are aged in oak, sometimes for several years. Yet a backlash against oak has been building for decades, and it seems to have gained momentum in recent years. More and more winemakers have either reduced the time their wines spend in oak or eliminated the use of oak altogether, believing the practice can obscure the true taste of a wine. Rioja-based winemaker Telmo Rodríguez called oak a “cosmetic” in a recent email to me, saying that it masks “the taste of the terroir”—and he’s far from alone in his opinion.

How could something so important be so maligned? The right oak barrel, judiciously employed, can add character and interest, structure and richness to a red or white and even some rosés. But oak can also overpower a wine if it’s a poor match, resulting in that feared and maligned “oaky” wine.

Wine drinkers are especially wary of oaky whites, according to Jason Jacobeit, wine director at Bâtar restaurant in New York. A Chardonnay aged in new oak will be much richer than one aged in stainless steel, and much darker-gold in color. Burlingame, Calif.-based wine merchant Gerald Weisl said he believes that often customers ask for a “less oaky” Chardonnay because they think a wine with more oak will be higher in alcohol. (Not true.)

The oak applied to Chardonnay is invariably French oak, more or less the gold standard for barrels in the case of both red and white wines—and its price reflects that fact. A new French oak barrel from a top cooperage (*tonnellerie*) costs around \$1,000, while a new American oak barrel costs about \$600. Though barrel makers source oak from all over the world—notably Russia, Hungary and Slovenia—French and American oak barrels are the two most important types and they lend some very different characteristics to wine.

American oak tends to confer more obvious, sweet notes of vanilla and coconut (thanks to a higher concentration of something called lactones in the American species of wood), while tighter-grained French oak contributes more restrained savory-spicy notes.

The differences between American and French oak actually start with the forests themselves. In America, the forests that supply barrel wood are privately owned; the French oak forests are mostly



OAK TALK // WINE-LABEL TERMS DECODED

“Aged in 100% new French oak.” This signals that the winemaker has spent some money, since new French oak barrels are costly. The wine is likely to be full-bodied, densely-fruited and, when young, tannic.
“Aged in American oak.” American oak imparts a sweet vanilla note drinkers love or loathe. Wines aged in this kind of wood tend to be softer. Popular Silver Oak Cabernet from California is aged in American oak as are many Riojas. American oak costs a lot less, so it often shows up in cheaper wines, too.
“Aged in French and American oak barrels.” Some winemakers hedge their bets financially and stylistically by using both kinds of barrel, giving the wine a more tannic structure with the French oak and sweeter aromatics with the American oak.

managed by the French government. Few producers know the names of the very best American sources, while the five key sources of French oak—Allier, Tronçais, Nevers, Vosges and Limousin—are known to winemakers and oenophiles as their names often appear on the ends of barrels.

Each of the French forests produces a particular type of oak, sourced by tonneliers or brokers who specialize in a particular type of barrel. A barrel is called new if it hasn’t previously been used to hold or age wine, but the wood used to make a barrel ages for two, three or even four years—the longer the aging the mellower the wood—before becoming a barrel.

“Toasting” describes the process of flavoring a barrel and also reducing the astringency of the oak by placing the newly-made barrel directly over a flame. Winemakers can order barrels toasted

to their specifications—light to medium, medium-plus or heavy toast; the process stops short of outright charring—directly from the barrel producer or their barrel salesman.

A good barrel salesman can help interpret a winemaker’s vision of a wine. One of the best in the business for decades, Mel Knox is the San Francisco-based sales consultant to two of the top tonnelleries, François Frères in Burgundy and Taransaud in Cognac. Over the years, Mr. Knox has acquired new clients after tasting wines that he felt needed his help and paying the winemakers discreet calls.

Mr. Knox has probably sold more barrels to top winemakers in California than anyone else in the business—including stars like Steve Kistler and David Ramey. Mr. Ramey, a Sonoma-based winemaker, probably knows as much about barrels as Mr. Knox. He’s

backed away from using large quantities of new oak, most notably in his Chardonnays. His single-vineyard Chardonnays were once aged for 65-70% of the time in new oak barrels and the rest of the time in previously used barrels. “Now it’s more like 20% new oak,” said Mr. Ramey. This has meant a big savings on new barrels. “My wife, who writes all the checks, is ecstatic,” he added.

Yet for him the choice was a stylistic rather than an economic one, noted Mr. Ramey. He simply preferred the way his Chardonnays tasted with a more limited impression of oak. By contrast, he has not backed away from new oak with his Cabernet and Merlot-based Napa reds. “Those wines can absorb it without being overwhelmed,” said Mr. Ramey. Of course, he added, that kind of oak has to be applied to denser, more concentrated fruit—“hillside not valley floor,” in Mr. Ramey’s terms—which has bigger tannins and is substantive enough to stand up to and thrive in new oak.

A winemaker has to have the vision and integrity to assess his wine accurately. And of course the wine has to be worth the investment of many new \$1,000 barrels each year. This last fact is especially important since the worth of a new barrel drops precipitously after it’s used—much like a new car after it’s driven off the dealer’s lot.

A used French or American oak barrel is worth about \$20 according

to Ron Celaya, the sales manager at Demptos Napa Cooperage, a French outfit in Napa and France. “Most winemakers will use [new] barrels for three to five years,” said Mr. Celaya. His company offers winemakers a “buy back” for the barrels and ships them to whisky producers in Scotland.

Like Mr. Knox, Mr. Celaya plays an active role in helping producers select the right barrel, usually tasting a wine during various stages of its development. “It comes down to tasting a few wines to get a sense of

Some winemakers say that oak masks the ‘taste of the terroir.’

what they want,” he said. If a client is looking for a sweeter profile, for example, he might recommend American over French oak. But above all, a good barrel salesman has to be able to “deconstruct” a wine and to imagine how it will evolve over time.

Fortunately oenophiles don’t have to deconstruct the wines they drink to know if they’re too oaky. Even in a young wine, the oak should never stand out too much. A well-made wine is always balanced, whether fermented and aged in oak or not.

► Email Lettie at wine@wsj.com.

SLOW FOOD FAST SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES

Grilled Okra With Spiced Yogurt, Peanuts and Mint



The Chef
Steven Satterfield

His Restaurant
Miller Union in Atlanta, Ga.

What He’s Known For
A deep affinity for vegetable cookery, from root to stem. Inventive dishes that seem timeless

A COUPLE YEARS ago, when Steven Satterfield was writing his cookbook “Root to Leaf,” the publisher nixed a chapter devoted to peanuts at the last minute. “It was deemed too colloquial,” said Mr. Satterfield. “The book was meant to have national appeal.” But the Savannah-born, Atlanta-based chef couldn’t let it go; he knows how versatile and appealing this Southern staple can be. So he presented the jettisoned recipes to another publisher, Short Stack Editions, and four months ago his “Peanuts” cookbook hit the shelves.

That’s where this recipe, his final Slow

Food Fast contribution, comes from. It stars grilled okra, nestled into a lemon-yogurt spread spiced with cumin and coriander. Generous handfuls of toasted peanuts and torn mint are scattered overtop.

“Grilled okra gets a nice green-bean texture and a bit of smokiness from the grill,” said Mr. Satterfield. If you’re wary of the viscous quality okra can have, take heart: This quick-cooking technique produces crisp-tender results without that familiar ooze. But it’s the crunch of the toasted peanuts that really gives this quick summertime recipe snap. —*Kitty Greenwald*

TOTAL TIME: 20 minutes SERVES: 4

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1 cup whole Greek yogurt | 1 teaspoon coriander seeds, toasted and coarsely smashed | 3 tablespoons olive or peanut oil, plus more for drizzling |
| 1 large garlic clove | 1 teaspoon pepper flakes | ½ cup roughly chopped dry-roasted peanuts |
| 1 lemon | Kosher salt | ½ cup torn fresh mint |
| 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and coarsely smashed | 1 pound fresh okra | |

1. Submerge several 6-inch wooden skewers in water to soak. Preheat a grill.
2. Place yogurt in a medium bowl. Use a fine grater to grate garlic and lemon zest over yogurt. Halve lemon and squeeze one half into yogurt. Add cumin, coriander, red pepper flakes and season with salt and more lemon juice, if needed. Stir to combine and refrigerate until ready to use.
3. Thread a skewer through 4-6 okra pods just below caps. Thread a second skewer through the same pods, about ½ inch from the tapered

- tips, creating a secure plank of skewered pods. Repeat with remaining skewers and okra, leaving about 1 inch of bare skewer at each end.
4. Brush both sides of okra with oil and sprinkle with salt. Place okra skewers on hot grill and cook until okra begins to char, about 2 minutes. Flip and grill opposite side until charred, about 2 minutes more. Transfer grilled okra to a platter and discard skewers.
5. To serve, spread yogurt sauce over a serving platter or individual plates. Drizzle with oil and top with okra. Garnish with peanuts and mint.



FLAME CATCHER Okra quick-charred on the grill has a smoky flavor, a satisfying bite and none of the oozy aspect that slow-stewed okra can have.

BRYAN GARDNER FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, FOOD STYLING BY HEATHER MELDROM, PROP STYLING BY NIDIA CUEVA; ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL HOEWELER

DESIGN & DECORATING

Bloomin’
Shames

Fourteen design pros voice very strong opinions, both scathing and affirming, on summer flowers

BY CATHERINE ROMANO

I KNOW IT’S WRONG to de-test a poor innocent little flower, but....” So demurred one of the design pros we approached when compiling a list of least-favorite blooms. Even the most diplomatic designers, florists and architects have preferences, however. Some blossoms please, some bring on bad memories. Of the widely disdained sunflower, Key Biscayne-based designer James Duncan said: “It reminds me of lurid 1970s kitchens and tacky fall decorations.” Here, picks from 12 other aesthetic experts.

Loathed “I really dislike zinnias, which are pretty common in plant beds in Houston,” said **Paloma Contre-ras**, a Texas interior designer. “They don’t look very delicate, and the colors are too bright and garish for my taste.”

Beloved “I’ve recently come around on baby’s breath,” she said. “For years, it’s been regarded as a loathsome filler flower, but when you arrange big bunches together, the result is super chic and fresh.”



Loathed “Nothing says just in from the supermarket and out of the cellophane like the unimaginative pink star-gazer lily bouquet,” said **Michael Amato**, creative director of the Urban Electric Company, who adds this description: “Pointy ruffled petals, speckled interior—the combination makes them look like a diseased tongue.”

Beloved “I grew up in New England, and daffodils always meant spring was here,” he said. “And my grandfather called them narcissus, their proper name, so they make me think of him.”



Loathed “Gerbera daisies are revolting—loud, cloying, obvious and garish,” said **Adam Rolston** of INC Architecture & Design, in New York. “Andy Warhol wrecked that flower for me in his 1980s series of them. He could hold a mirror up to our worst vulgarities and make us hate ourselves for it. In this case, I just ended up hating Gerbera daisies.”

Beloved Mr. Rolston appreciates the deep purple and pink of the banana blossom as well as its uncommon silhouette.

Loathed “Unless you’re trying to re-create the colors of Switzerland in summer, impatiens are hard to use well in almost any garden,” said **M. Brian Tichenor**, of Tichenor and Thorp Architects, in Los Angeles. Despite this drawback, impatiens prevail, he said, because they grow “just about anywhere.”

Beloved “We use a wide variety of succulents,” said Mr. Tichenor, “which most people don’t think of as flowering. The latest favorite is echeveria ‘Doris Taylor,’ with its cadmium red flower.”



Loathed “Forsythia is this glaring, egg-yolk yellow that arrives early and therefore has only brown, gray bark to sit with,” noted **Annie Selke**, whose eponymous company, based in Pittsfield, Mass., sells rugs, linens and furniture. “If it came out with more green around it, I’d probably have a much more favorable view.”

Beloved Ms. Selke could not settle on one: “Peonies for their shape, color and scent; lily of the valley for its delicacy and scent; and ranunculus, for the complexity of petals and the fantastic colors it comes in,” she said.



Loathed “Orchids are a rare, special breed, a small treasure,” said New York designer **Frank de Biasi**. “My favorite is the lady slipper, especially when seen in the wilds in Virginia, where I grew up.” But the white orchid, in its ubiquity, recalls “banal, cookie-cutter high-rise condo buildings,” he said.

Beloved The purple flowers of the Verbena bonariensis recently planted on his terrace “make for a beautiful arrangement—chic and airy with a mind of their own and perfectly contrasted with all the green in our apartment.”

Loathed “The ruffled edges of the carnation remind me of a ruffled tuxedo shirt that has been wadded up and thrown on the floor,” said **Leslie Hendrix Wood**, a Midland, Texas, designer. “A boyfriend in high school sent me a make-up bouquet of carnations after we had a terrible fight. I dumped



GETTY IMAGES (FLOWERS); ILLUSTRATION BY VIDHYA NAGARAJAN

the boyfriend and developed a lifelong aversion to carnations.”

Beloved Ms. Wood prefers ranunculus. “The layers and layers of soft petals give the flower a dreamlike quality,” she said.

Loathed “Generally, the flowers I don’t like are those that are overused,” said **Stephen Block**, president of Inner Gardens in Los Angeles. “Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, for example, has miles of beds overflowing with pink impatiens. I am bored to tears.”

Beloved A flower’s comeliness depends upon its context, said Mr. Block. “That same pink impatiens in a pretty black planter can be striking and beautiful.”



Loathed “The colors of azaleas are too strident, the overall form of the plant ungraceful and the ratio of flowers to foliage too equal,” said **Joan Dineen** of Manhattan’s Dineen Architecture and Design. “On Mother’s Day, everywhere one looked were scrawny

pink-flowered plants with matching hot-pink tin foil wrapping their plastic pots. They no longer looked like living things. We would get my mom one nevertheless.”

Beloved “Bright pink enormous peonies are bold and elegant and fun.”



Loathed “Cana lilies have long, shaggy stems from which sprout relatively small, usually harshly vivid flowers,” said **Jeffrey Weisman**, of San Francisco-based Fisher Weisman. “They never blend into a garden.”

Beloved “For my 40th birthday my husband terraced a hillside on our Sonoma property and planted 400 rose bushes. I spent most weekends over the next decade happily toiling there.”

Loathed “Begonias are missing the organic nature and soul that I love about so many flower and plant species,” said **Laurie Blumenfeld-Russo**, of Brooklyn firm LBR Home. “The waxy leaves look plastic.”

Beloved Liatris tops the designer’s list.

“Spectacular bright purple tufts of flowers open from the top down on a tall spike,” she said.

Loathed “I find the smell of Casablanca lilies sickening, and they remind me of death,” said New York designer **Philip Gorri-ran**. “My mother is from Casablanca, so I always grew them. But she doesn’t like them either.”

Beloved “Foxglove are quintessential English garden flowers,” he said. “My favorites are vibrant pink.”



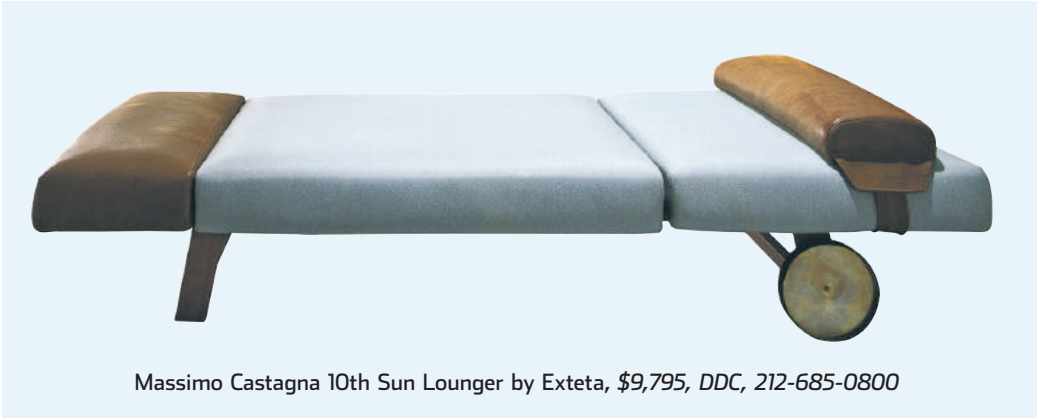
Loathed “The mustard of a sunflower’s petals, combined with the brown centers, are not tones I would normally go with,” said Los Angeles florist **Eric Buterbaugh**, whose clients include Beyoncé and Tom Ford. “And their thick, prickly stems make them hard to arrange with other flowers.”

Beloved “Peonies. The fragrance, the size, the colors, the way every day it looks a little different—it truly is the queen of all flowers.”

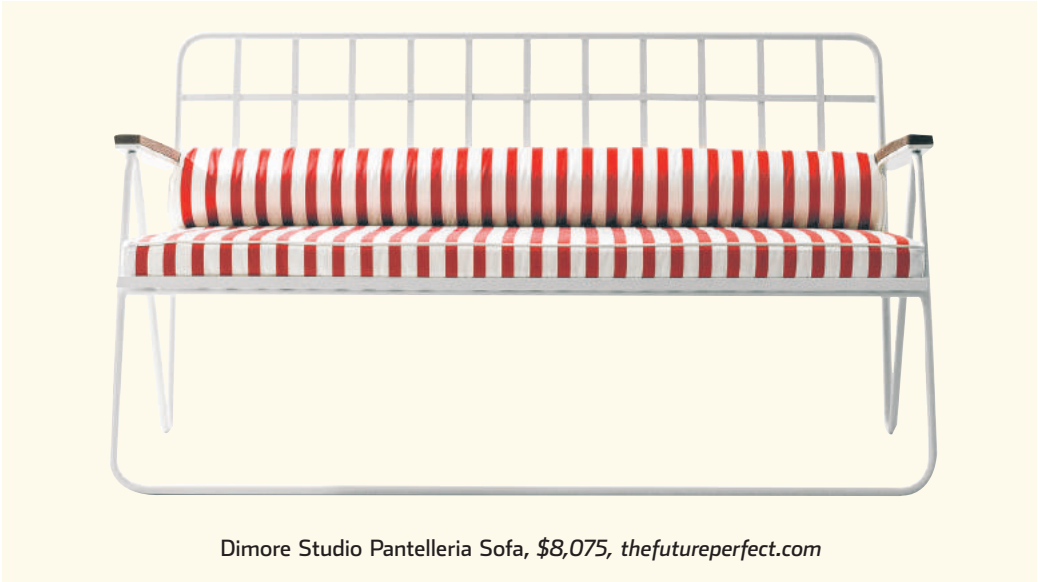
THE MEDIATOR

DECK-CHAIR DEADLOCK

The conflict: He wants to bring a contemporary, leather-accented lounge into their outdoor space. She’s not parting with her tradition-tinged patio bench. Three designers conduct the décor equivalent of couples counseling, suggesting all-weather accessories—from a pillow to a rug—to bridge the aesthetic gap



Massimo Castagna 10th Sun Lounger by Exteta, \$9,795, DDC, 212-685-0800



Dimore Studio Pantelleria Sofa, \$8,075, thefutureperfect.com



SOLUTION 1
Throw in an anti-geometric pillow. The organic flame-stitch pattern of this ikat cushion would soften the hard lines of the seating, said Boston designer Erin Gates, whose instinct is to make the at-odds furniture pairing less rigid without introducing a cutesy pattern. The pillow also combines the two pieces’ colors. “I would put it on the chaise to bring the red tone over,” she said. Fiamma Ikat Flame Outdoor Pillow, \$159, frontgate.com



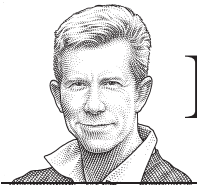
SOLUTION 2
Introduce a third completely different style. “As in any combination, three makes it perfect,” said Francine Monaco, of New York firm D’Aquino Monaco. She recommends bringing in all three of these quirky tables to introduce a third disparate theme. Result: a truly eclectic grouping, not a dispute. The various heights of the tables also let you mediate the conflicting levels of the chaise and settee. Ludovica + Roberto Palomba Paraggi Tables by Exteta, from \$1,568 each, DDC, 212-685-0800



SOLUTION 3
Amp up the linear theme. Two striped pieces? Add a third. San Francisco designer Nicole Hollis recommends this polypropylene rug by Christopher Farr, a former graphic artist. “The pattern of the rug ties in the stripes of the sofa’s fabric and the irregular blocking of the lounge,” said Ms. Hollis. The seats’ colors, deep azure and crimson, team up in the rug, which is big enough to corral the furniture’s dissonant personalities in a “room.” Asawa Bespoke Outdoor Rug, \$8,500 for 8-by-10-foot rug, Christopher Farr, 310-967-0064 —C.R.

GEAR & GADGETS

RUMBLE SEAT DAN NEIL



Dodge Unleashes a Drag-Racing Demon

BECAUSE DRAG RACERS like to get to the finish line fast: The 2018 Dodge Demon (\$86,090) is a wheelie-pulling, 840-hp version of the Dodge Challenger, extensively re-engineered for quarter-mile racing and offered as sizzle for the brand’s aging, underselling steak.

Mmmm, smell those roasted meats.

Last winter the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) certified a quarter-mile E.T. (elapsed time) of 9.65 seconds with a trap speed of 140 mph, making this rocket-propelled pachyderm the quickest production car the organization had ever tested, exceeding even the all-electric Tesla Model S, which, by the way, is lousy at wheelies. The Demon jolts to 100 mph in an eye-crossing 5.1 seconds.

Also, according to Guinness World Records, the Demon is the first production car capable of pulling a wheelie off the line. If you feel a “why” coming, no. There is no why.

These displays require favorable weather conditions and a highly prepared drag strip, both of which Dodge arranged for last week at Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis. The cars were making power and hooking up nicely, thank you. Incidentally, and not to throw shade at the Demon’s production-car record, I would like to put drag slicks and gobs of traction compound on the all-wheel-drive, 1,500-hp Bugatti Chiron and see what happens. The thing would take off like a belt sander.

The Demon is unique: a mass-produced, street-to-strip racing machine, complete with taffy-soft slicks, no less than a turnkey operation for amateurs, enthusiasts and poseurs. Every Demon will come with its own Demon Crate race-day tool chest (a \$1 option), including floor jack, cordless impact driver, torque wrench, as well as the two skinny front wheels that get thrown on once the driver is at the track. (Hereafter and unless otherwise noted, everything is Demon-branded).

This rocket-propelled pachyderm the quickest production car the NHRA had ever tested, exceeding even the Tesla Model S.

It’s not clear how many of the 3,300 Demons produced annually in Ontario, Canada, will ever boil them baloneys. For starry-eyed collectors, the car may be like the good couch that grandma keeps the plastic on. Speaking of plastic: It is not the monster engine that makes the Demon program possible but the wheel-arch extensions that shroud, just barely, the foot-wide Nitto drag



RIDING HIGH The 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon, shod with skinny front racing wheels, at the Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis.

slicks. I think these clip-ons look like hell, myself. Considering the Demon’s price tag and the production volume, these flares should have been stamped out of steel, but Fiat Chrysler Automobiles wouldn’t lay out for the tooling.

The Demon’s genius lies in its engagement with American drag-racing culture and its roots in honorific dueling. For OEMs, this is largely unoccupied emotional territory. The staging lights, the wheelies, the hateful cumulus of tire smoke enveloping the burnout box—to Boomers the Demon looks like Heaven.

Dodge’s previous assault on decency was the 707-hp Challenger SRT Hellcat in 2014. The Demon takes the Hellcat to darker places still. Under what Dodge says is the largest functional hood scoop in production, you will find the most powerful V8 engine ever stuffed in an OEM car: the supercharged 6.2-liter V8, producing 808 hp and 717 lb-ft of torque, and that’s just on 91 octane pump gas.

Fill up with 100 octane racing fuel, and max power rises to 840 hp at 6,300 rpm and 770 lb-ft of torque. *Oy!* There is a special switch in the center-stack to remap the engine-management software. Two dual-stage fuel pumps and high-flow injectors pour gas on this exquisite fire.

Crowning the engine bay, making its own cyclonic weather, is a 2.7-liter supercharger running at 14.5 psi max boost. Get this: In Drag mode, the car’s air conditioning system is used to chill intake air (cooler air makes more horsepower). This di-

version of the cabin A/C makes all kinds of sense, but since you have to roll the windows up to race, the Demon can get a bit clammy on the line. It was about 90 degrees in Indianapolis. I used my balaclava to wipe down the interior for the next driver.

This world-historical poke gets channeled through a race-reinforced drivetrain: upsized torque converter, drive shaft, rear differential (3.07 final-drive ratio) and half-shafts. Perhaps the Demon’s most amazing feature is a factory warranty.

Rolling through the water in the burnout box, I clamped the brakes with my left foot and goosed the throttle. (The Demon does have a line-lock feature for assisted burnouts, but it’s fiddly, so I skipped it.) The supercharger screamed. The car’s back end stood up. Smoke pouring off the melting rear tires whited out the sky. OK, the tires are officially warm.

The Demon is also the first production car to use a trans-brake for launch control. This system brake-holds the output shaft of the 8-speed transmission while engine rpm spools up. Once the trans-brake is set, all the driver needs to do is release a single paddle shifter and continue to scream normally. As always, go on yellow.

I executed the trans-brake sequence as instructed, more or less, setting rpm around 1600 rpm—optimum, given the track’s adhesion, I was told. Once staged, the Demon’s stupendous V8 rattled like a medium machine gun. I released the paddle shifter.

A veritable spasm of now. The car seat slammed me from behind with an acceleration of about 1.8 g. Such extreme forces reveal humans in all their semi-gelatinous corporeality. I could feel belly fat surging toward my neck.

The vast hood reared up in front of me and didn’t level off until the car had executed three perfect upshifts and was whining like a vac-

uum cleaner ingesting a sock. The instrument display flashed: 10.8 seconds. I’ll take it.

Away from the drag strip, the Demon is a pretty weird and fetishy automobile, starting with its paramilitary stance on those 315/40 slicks and 18-inch black rims. Cops of the future sure look tough.

The Demon is hell heavy: 4,250 pounds at its lightest, i.e., wearing the skinny front wheels and with the passenger seats removed. One engineer at the press event had the gall to utter the phrase “mass optimization.” You cad.

Theoretically, the Demon may offer the plushiest highway ride in the Dodge inventory, what with its tall sidewall tires and super-soft suspension to aid weight transfer (more vehicle squat equals more holeshot traction). But cornering? After my first pass I let the 2-ton car roll through to the shutdown area to reach the last turnout. As I was braking and turning left, the Demon’s body sloshed diagonally like it was a 1970 Chrysler Newport.

To cut weight, the Demon does use a smaller front sway bar and brakes than the Hellcat, but customers are free to lard back up. The front passenger seat, rear seat and trunk-carpet kit are all \$1 options. You can order this car with heated and cooled leather seats and a 18-speaker/900-watt audio system. The sunroof is a \$4,995 option. I wonder how the NHRA feels about those?

And the fact that the Demon’s front passenger seat is optional is so poignant.

Anybody wanna go for a ride? Anybody?



2018 DODGE CHALLENGER SRT DEMON

Type Front-engine, rear-drive sports coupe	840 hp at 6,300 rpm/770 lb-ft (100 octane)
Price, as tested \$86,090	Length/height/width 197.5/57.4/78.8 inches
Powertrain Intercooled and supercharged 6.2-liter DOHC V8; eight-speed automatic transmission with manual-shift mode and trans-brake-style launch control; rear-wheel drive (3.09:1 rear-axle ratio)	Weight/wheelbase 4,250 pounds/116.2 inches
Horsepower/torque 808 hp at 6,300 rpm /717 lb-ft (91 octane gas);	0-60 mph 2.3 seconds
	Quarter-mile ET 9.65 seconds
	EPA fuel economy 13/22/16 (city/highway/combined)
	Luggage capacity 13.4 cubic feet

TECH ESSENTIALS

NICOLE SHERRY

The Baltimore Orioles’ head groundskeeper on keeping the stadium’s 2.25 acres of Kentucky bluegrass perfectly green



We cut grass at the ballpark two times a day using the **Toro Reelmaster 3100-D**. With eight separate blades on each reel, it has an almost scissor-type of cut, unlike the rotary mower you would use at home, which spins clockwise. If you have a really jagged cut or your blades are dull, it can cause infection in the grass by creating a point of entry for fungus to get into the plant and destroy it. The Reelmaster provides a healthy, straight-edge cut.



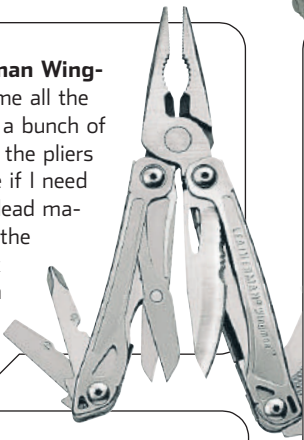
I’m here from 9:30 in the morning until an hour and a half after every game. I’m outside for 10 hours a day straight, so sunglasses and sunscreen are very important. Right now I’m wearing **Maui Jim Blue Hawaii Mavericks sunglasses**. For sunscreen, I like **Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 70**. It doesn’t feel too greasy. I just have to be mindful to reapply all the time. You can’t just put it on once.



At home, I use a **Husqvarna HU700F Walk Behind Mower**. It has a good engine, is well built and can get up the enormous hill in my backyard. Nobody wants to go home and cut grass when they have time off, but I don’t mind it
—*Edited from an interview by Chris Kornelis*



Another important tool that we use is the **AcuRite 00661 Soil Thermometer**, which helps us keep an eye on how hot our soil is. Any time the temperature is over 65 degrees, you have prime conditions for disease for the field’s Kentucky bluegrass. You can cool the soil down with water, but you have to watch it, because too much water can cause disease as well. It’s really a fine line between too much and too little, too hot and too cold. It’s something that you have to monitor a couple of times a day.



A **Leatherman Wingman** is on me all the time. It has a bunch of tools—I use the pliers or the blade if I need to cut out dead material [from the grass] or fix an irrigation head.

My main job during the game is to monitor the radar and make sure that we’re ready for any storms that could possibly impact the playability of the surface or our fans. I’m also monitoring **weather.com** and **NOAA.gov**, a government weather service that provides forecasts, discussions and warnings. It’s a site that anybody can access. There are different satellite radars and detailed weather forecasts related to air, sea, and land travel. It has deeper information than I can find on any consumer sites.

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