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UPCYCLED ART

When Waste Becomes Art

By Contributing Writer

What would end up filling landfills, in the hands of artists has become a form of sustainable art that highlights the degradation of the planet and surprises with its originality. **What Is Upcycled Art?**

Today's society generates an enormous amount of waste. As a result, recycling has become essential. Two approaches have emerged, downcycling and upcycling. In the former, the destructive cycle is slowed down but the resulting objects lose quality, while in the latter they acquire value.

Our waste deserves a second chance and uprecycling has led to the emergence of an artistic movement known as recycled art that is currently inspiring many artists with its critical message regarding excessive consumption and environmental pollution. This type of art seeks to transform waste such as paper, cardboard, wood, glass,



plastics, metals and rubber into art. The concept goes beyond the conventional recycling of materials by creating objects that exceed the economic, cultural and social value of the original product.

This kind of artistic expression is not new. In fact, we can compare it with movements from other times. For example, collages made by Pablo Picasso or George Braque with old newspapers or magazines or works belonging to schools such as Pop Art, Trash Art or Drap Art. But the concept itself was born in 2002 when William McDonough and Michael Braungart



defined upcycling in their book Cradle to Cradle.

Advantages Of Transforming Waste Into Art

One of the main characteristics is that it is not limited to any discipline. We can find recycled art in a painting, in a sculpture, in haute couture or in furniture. The environ-

mental values have as much value as the artwork.

The environmental benefits of recycled art include contribution to the use and extending the useful life of materials and reducing the amount of waste generated. It takes a great deal of creativity and a degree of technique to work with these materials. In addition to this, the artists who create this type of work must ask themselves some questions before facing the challenge: Will the energy consumed in creating the work be excessive? Are the materials to be used really waste? What percentage of my work will be made up of waste? Will the work bring an environmental benefit?

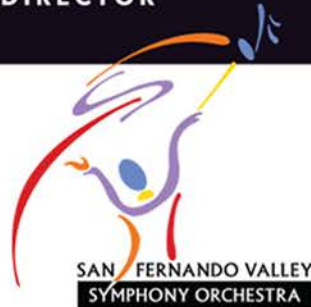
The people who buy this type of art not only find the works attractive for their artistic value, but they are also motivated by contributing to the planet's welfare giving the materials a second life they would otherwise not have had. This movement is also a very interesting educational tool to raise awareness in society, especially among children, regarding the consequences of our actions on the environment and the importance of recycling.

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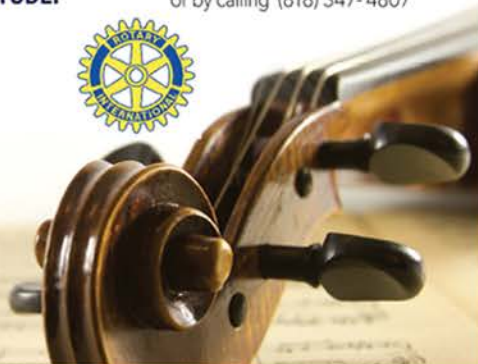
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Coolerest Holiday Getaways

By Barbara Beckley

What do you get when you combine the magic of travel with the magic of the Holidays? The best celebration ever!! From California's north to south, ocean to mountains, here's where to bring family and loved ones together to make holiday memories that will live forever.

If you're a young family, hit the road south to LEGOLAND California Resort (www.legoland.com/california). They're turning sunny Carlsbad into a winter wonderland of brick-tastic holiday fun on select days beginning November 18 through January 2024. Falling snow, extravagant décor, millions of twinkling lights, garlands, gifts, Christmas trees. New LEGO characters. And three special Festive Zones.

Meet the new LEGO Snowman and LEGO Reindeer at the iconic LEGO tree. Then pose for selfies at the larger-than-life LEGO wreath. Sing and dance at Benny's Ugly Sweater Party. Sample Granny's Apple Fries with a holiday twist. Ooh and ah at festive fireworks. Celebrate at the seasonal "Peppermint Plaza" to meet the Lego Toy Soldier, sing along with The Mint Marching Band, and go holiday shopping at The Big Shop. Enter "Merry Mistletoe Town" for a step back into a classic Christmas with traditional décor and foodie delights like Merry Mini Beignets. In "Wizard's Winter Hill" the wizard has cast a spell over Castle Hill, turning it into a wintry kingdom with exclusive treats like peppermint ice cream, and a special Yeti milkshake topped with holiday donuts! Delish. Say hello to LEGO reindeer and play some reindeer games in "Holidays in Miniland." Enjoy sweet treats and your holiday songs at "Jingle Jamboree."

Ring in the New Year on December 31 with dazzling fireworks, delicious treats, festive entertainment – all at a kid-friendly hour. LEGOLAND'S "Kids' New Year's Eve" countdown and "midnight" festivities begin at 7 p.m.



View fireworks with special 3D glasses that turn the bursts into LEGO bricks. And join the Miniland scavenger hunt to help the Minilanders find their New Year's Eve party hats. It's all included with general park admission beginning at \$79 per person for a day-pass, and a 2-day pass beginning at \$114 per person. Family vacation packages at both Legoland Hotel and The Castle Hotel begin at \$158 per person including California Hopper Tickets, early theme park entry, and more.

Also, north to the Alisal Ranch (www.alisalanranch.com), in the Santa Ynez Valley outside Santa Barbara, where

families and friends of all ages have been holidaying for generations. Festive décor and rolling hills make an idyllic setting for togetherness, with activities for everyone and every age. You don't have to be horsey. But if you are, there's 50 miles of trails across 10,500 acres. Also, archery, air rifles, axe throwing and fishing at the lake. Horsemanship 101, a Picnic Ride, Ropes Course, tennis, fitness courses, an 18-hole golf course, guided E-bike excursions, even a Pickleball Clinic. Kids Club, for ages 4 and up, activities include paint-your-own-horseshoe, build-a-bird-feeder, and a Kids Night Out (to give parents a night out, too). Enjoy holiday cocktails in The Oak Room Bar and meals in the Chuckwagon Grill and Ranch and Sycamore dining rooms. Dinner dress is "country formal." Men – a sport coat is required, with blue or black jeans. Nice for the holidays. Rates: a one-bedroom cottage for up to five guests begins at \$1,520 a night; a cottage for up to three guests begins at \$1,220. Kids under six are free! Includes breakfast and dinner, and tons (but not all) of activities. If you have a special interest, check the packages, such as the "Saddle Up and Save," "BBQ Bootcamp" for foodies, and "Golf Package."

Visit the Danish village of Solvang (www.solvanguisa.com) just down the road. Named "The Best Christmas Town in California" by Reader's Digest, Old World traditions and non-stop activities make "Solvang Julefest," November 24 to January 5, a joy to experience. And with 150 mom-and-pop shops and boutiques specializing in Danish and hard-to-find treasures you're assured of finding the perfect gifts. Then the festivities – oh my! To name a few: The December 1 Christmas Tree Lighting at 5:30 p.m., with ballerinas and costumed carolers; followed by the Julefest Parade, December 2, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., featuring more than 50 groups of dancers, floats, horses, marching bands. Say hello to Santa and pose for pics – they're free – in Santa's Village, December 2, from 2 to 4 p.m., and December 9, 16 and 23 from noon to 4 p.m. *Continues next page.*

Candlelit Walking Tours, December 8, 9, 15, 16 and December 18 – 23, at 5 p.m., with a costumed guide, Santa, hot chocolate, caroling and more. Tickets: \$36. The open-air Euro-style Christmas Market “Maker’s Market,” December 6, 5 – 7 p.m. featuring hand-made gifts, art, food, and fun in Solvang Park. The Julefest Light & Music Show every hour on the hour for 10 minutes between 5 and 9 p.m. transforming Solvang Park into a spectacle of sparkling lights and decorations. In Santa Ines, January 5, 2024, at 5 p.m. Also check the site for the two-day Julefest Wine & Beer Walk, Shop, Mingle & Jingle event; the Nativity Pageant bringing the Christmas Story to life on the outdoor stage at the Solvang Festival Theater; and Danish dancers in Jensen Square.



Pair Solvang with a holiday stay in Santa Barbara – on the water at The Ala Mar Motel (www.alamarin.com), a darling boutique inn across from the ocean between State Street and Sterns Warf and the Harbor. Enjoy comp continental breakfasts and spectacular ocean and Channel Island views from the large upstairs sundeck. Maybe book the Penthouse Suite for \$252. Rates begin at \$172 per night. It’s easy for holiday shopping along State Street; and taking the beloved “Lil’ Toot Santa Barbara” harbor cruise onboard the festively decorated water ferry, Lil’ Toot, Fridays and Saturdays, December 1 through December 23. Adults, \$25; ages 12 and under, \$20. Other holidays specials include the Thanksgiving Wine Tour by Santa Barbara Wine Country Tours, 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., November 22. \$215 per person. And The Irish Tenors 25th anniversary “A Family Christmas” at the Granada Theatre, December 21, 7 p.m. Tickets: \$70.

Make it a fairytale vacay – in Carmel-By-The-Sea (www.carmelcalifornia.com), where the holiday décor

heightens the charm of this storybook town. Enjoy the streetside restaurants, cozy wine-tasting bars, fabulous holiday shopping at one-of-a-kind boutiques, sunset-perfect Carmel Beach and festivities including the Holiday Tree & Menorah Lighting on Carmel Plaza, December 1, and Inns of Distinction Tour, December 3. Stay at the iconic Cypress Inn (www.cypress-inn.com), in the heart of town and once owned by Doris Day. Be sure to enjoy a meal on the patio of Terry’s Lounge, named after Doris’ son. Rates begin around \$329 per night. Or – go genuine Victorian – at Clint Eastwood’s Mission Ranch Hotel (missionranchcarmel.com), five minutes away. It’s a meadow-like compound of updated Victorian cottages, barns, bunkhouses, and farmhouses, overlooking the ocean. Play tennis, dine at The Restaurant at Mission Ranch, with gorgeous coastal views. Be sure to see the flock of sheep – and Clint’s single black sheep. Rates begin at \$140 a night!

Celebrate a White Christmas in Big Bear (www.bigbear.com). Ski and snowboard – or give the gift of lessons – at Bear Mountain and Snow Summit Ski resorts. Then party in The Village, beautifully decorated with twinkling lights and seven expertly carved bears and other woodland creatures for memorable photo opps! The Tree Lighting ceremony with live music and Santa and Mrs. Claus is November 24 at 5 p.m. Thrill to “A Celtic Christmas by A Taste of Ireland,” award-winning Irish dancers and musicians twirling beneath the mistletoe with traditional tunes, ballads, carols, and red-hot rhythms, December 4, 7:30 – 9:20 p.m., at the Big Bear Performing Arts Center. A must-see, the “New Year’s Eve Torchlight Parade,” with 200-plus skiers and snowboarders swishing down Snow Summit and live DJ tunes in the viewing area, December 31, 8:30 – 9 p.m. Admission is free. Cheer the New Year at Wyatt’s Family New Year’s Eve Party, December 31. Doors open at 5 p.m. at Wyatt’s Grill & Saloon featuring kids’ activities, live music, dancing, and dining, with a special upscale menu and children’s meals. Hotel ideas are nearly limitless from The Lodge at Big Bear Lake a Holiday Inn Resort (www.ihg.com), starting at \$89 a night; to private cabins through Perfect Big Bear Rentals (www.bigbearcoolcabins.com)

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Continued from previous page

BE OLD FASHIONED!

Escape to old time holidays in the Sierra Nevada foothill village of Three Rivers (www.threeriverschamber.org) at the main entrance to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks. Stroll the historic main street and take a step back in time among the festive decorations and unique shops filled with great gift ideas. Stay at The Lazy J Ranch Motel (www.lazyjranchmotel.com), with cottages and rooms from \$153 a night.

Also, historic Nevada City in California's gold country for a Victorian-style holiday straight out of a Charles Dickens novel. Stroll the town's narrow, hilly streets still lit by glowing gas lamps, sharing the scene with carolers in period dress, brass bands, and bagpipers. On the very streets where the 2021 Hallmark Channel movie *The Christmas Card* starring Ed Asner was filmed. Take a carriage ride, munch on roasted chestnuts, and shop for gifts in the historic shops. Stay at the iconic National Exchange Hotel (www.nationalexchangehotel.com), circa 1856. Rates from \$226.

And Julian (www.visitjulian.com) in the mountains north of San Diego with its glorious "Country Christmas." Cozy up with just the two of you – or bring the kids. Kick off the season at the annual Tree Lighting, November 25, 5:30 p.m., in Town Square and Christmas Market, with gifts, crafts and musical entertainment from noon to 8 p.m. Sip tea Victorian

style at "The Julian Tea & Cottage Arts 29th annual Victorian Christmas Teas" six days a week December 1 through December 23. Enjoy wreath-making, candle-dipping and more at the "Christmas Market at Julian Mining Company." Kids of all ages, and pets, are invited to pose with Santa Claus at "Santa at Town Hall," noon – 4 p.m., December 2,



3, 9, 10, 17 and 18. "Country Christmas Light Parade" of gayly decorated vehicles, December 16, 5:30 p.m. along Main Street. And "Christmas Caroling" December 17, beginning at noon along Main Street. Accommodations range from the upscale Orchard Hill (www.orchardhill.com) bed and breakfast for two guests (from around \$244 per night) to family – and pet – friendly Julian Lodge Mountain

Retreat (beginning around \$180 per night).

Think Outside the (Gift) Box

A Cowboy Christmas 2023 (pictured left)

A Cowboy Christmas returns for another year of unforgettable holiday activities for all ages! Guests will enjoy unique holiday animal experiences, the Daring Elf Adventure (experiential pony ride through the North Pole), Tippy Ornament Challenge (horseback challenge), food & drinks (including beer/wine), Santa Meet-and-Greet (sit in Gene Kelly's vintage sleigh!) games & obstacle course, bounce house, hay bale pyramid, hot cocoa bar, the Rowdy Reindeer Ride (mechanical bull) & so much more! River View Park 151 Sycamore Drive Buellton, California Tickets on sale now at <https://www.sycowboychristmas.com>

Make it a star-struck holiday for two in the wide-open spaces and starry skies outside Joshua Tree National Park, two hours from LA, glamping in a Kosmic Tortoise Dome Tent (www.airbnb.com). Total coziness meets ultra-cool in this geodesic domed igloo-like abode in the picturesque Wonder Valley 15 minutes from the park entrance. A perfect holiday escape to stargaze – look for the big one that heralded the First Christmas – from the wide-open desert or through the hexagonal skylight and oval windows. One queen bed, a tiny cooking area, wooden flooring, and a separate bathroom. From \$219 a night.

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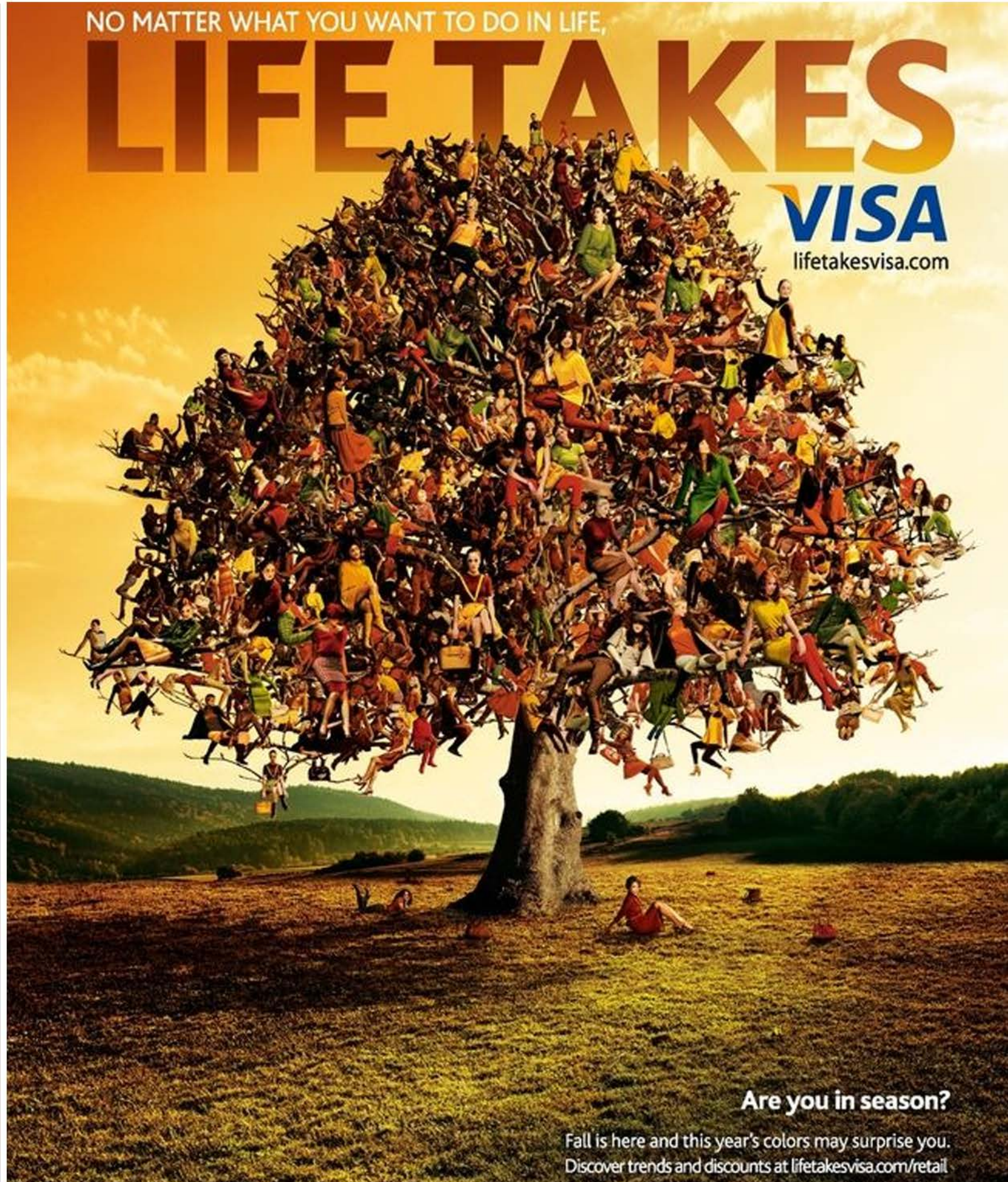


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Back To The Music: The Evolution Of Disc To Digital

By Contributing Writer

Physical formats have only been around since the 1870s — but we've managed to come up with bizarre ways to release music. Each format on this list had its moment of usefulness. But looking back might make you ask "what were we thinking?"

Regardless of how obsolete certain formats might be, they all led us to where we are today: streaming.

Most music fans purchase their music digitally — either via download or streaming. Smart artists are following suit. Many musicians are skipping out entirely on the cost of releasing physical formats — opting instead for digital music

distribution. Here's the music format timeline — from vinyl to digital and everything in between.

1948: The Record

Records, or discs, of varying speeds and materials have been around since the early 1900s —

early versions rotated at 78 RPM and were made of shellac, which made them noisy and fragile. In 1948, Columbia Records produced a 33 RPM 12-inch "long play" format, which we know today as the LP.

Shortly after, RCA Records developed a 45 RPM 7-inch "extended-play single" format, or the EP for short.



1964: 8-Track Tape

The benefit of 8-track tapes over compact cassette was their ability to house 8-parallel soundtracks with four corresponding stereo programs — they could play a lot of music in a relatively small package.

Much of the 8-track's success is thanks to the booming automobile industry of the time. By 1966, Ford Motors offered 8-track players as an option in their automobiles. At-home players were introduced the following year, and many saw the 8-track as a solution to the portability issue of records.

The compact cassette took over as the more popular choice due to its favourable size and price-tag. As a result the 8-track became largely obsolete.

1972: Floppy Disk

Floppy disks are associated with data storage for computers, but during the '80s and '90s a select-few artists began releasing albums on this somewhat unconventional format. The floppy release remained fairly niche and never truly hit the mainstream.

1982: Compact Disc

CDs were officially launched as a viable format in 1982. With CDs also came portable CD players, CD-ROM drives, writable CDs and the 16-bit/44.1kHz benchmark for audio formats, which all had their own effect on how we listen to music. CDs also brought together the best of every format that came before it: high-quality audio, compact, portable, writable and inexpensive.

1992: MP3

The MP3 was developed in the the early '80s by researcher Karlheinz Brandenburg. But it wasn't until 1992 that the MP3 went mainstream, and not until 1999 — with the creation of Napster — that the format really caught fire. Napster allowed for free peer-to-peer file sharing of the MP3 audio file that resulted in widespread copyright infringement. Napster eventually paved the way for platforms like iTunes — allowing users to search, purchase, and instantly play music all with a few clicks. The effects from the shockwave that the MP3, piracy, and pure digital formats created are still being felt today. In many ways, the music industry is just now starting to recover from its own digital dawn.

2002 Until Today: Streaming

With 24/7 internet accessibility has expanded the opportunity for listening to, and discovering, new music without having to actually download files or purchase songs. Streaming platforms aimed to make digital music a sustainable business model. In many ways it has, but there's still a long way to go. These days apps like Pandora and Spotify have brought the streaming to the forefront. But nothing is forever — especially in music.

So what's next on the horizon? Maybe we'll all listen to music while our autonomous cars drive us around? Or is there a renaissance for video's role in music on the horizon (I'm looking at you, Hype)?

Because of the fragility of shellac, both Columbia and RCA Records began producing their LP and EPs on vinyl. Size and portability were the biggest strikes. Eventually the music industry sought to find a solution and developed new formats people could easily bring with them to work, parties, etc.

Despite the numerous physical formats since vinyl records, the market for them is still strong: according to the mid-year 2017 Discogs report the most popular physical music format sold so far this year is vinyl, with a year-to-year increase in sales of 13.92%.

1963: Compact Cassette

Compact Cassettes, or tapes, were invented by the Philips company. Early cassettes featured reverse housing with a max play time of 45 minutes of stereo audio per side — longer than a vinyl LP's playtime. Tapes also fit in a more affordable, compact package. The small size of tapes gave rise to portable players, making them a convenient development.

The cassette also fit perfectly into the post-war era. A boom in population and suburban expansion meant cars... lots of cars. So the need for mobile playback systems and formats was a hot concept. The invention of tapes also introduced a volatile new concept into recorded music: piracy.

Cassettes also birthed Mixtape culture, giving amateur compilation creators a way to record audio off of multiple records and compile a single playlist — a concept that runs the music industry as we know it today.

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LIVE MUSIC



By Contributing Writer

Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour

It opens with a clock counting down until show time — and then, a gentle fake out. Taylor Swift is heard before she is seen. “It’s been a long time...” her voice carries. Then the drop hits: an abridged performance of “Miss Americana & the Heartbreak Prince” into “Cruel Summer,” a track that TikTok breathed new life into four years after its initial release.

“Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour” film is a near exact replica of her blockbuster concert performance, which recaps all 10 of her studio albums across 17 years of recorded work. The film delivers on the promise of its title: this is the Eras Tour in full — conveniently viewable at a theater near you.

For those who’ve managed to snag tickets to the Eras Tour concert, it is the ability to relive the experience. For those who didn’t, it’s a chance to test expectations versus reality. But for everyone, it is the opportunity to have every seat in the house transform into the best seat in the house.

Where else but in this film can you be placed inches from Swift’s moss-covered “evermore” album-era piano as she introduces “Champagne Problems” — so close as to examine phalanges

as they press down on the final notes of the song’s coda? And where else does it sound this good? Like guitars on “Look What You Made Me Do,” differing slightly from the recording, or emphasis placed on moments like when everyone shouts, “1, 2, 3, 4, let’s go, bitch!” in “Delicate,” as inspired by a viral video?

Edits are few. Costume changes are cut down. Some songs are snipped, like “The Archer,” “Cardigan,” “Wildest Dreams,” and “no body no crime.” The “Speak Now” section is just one song long: “Enchanted,” with “Long Live” soundtracking the end credits alongside images of “Eras Tour” bloopers and an endless exchange of friendship bracelets. On stage banter, too, is limited.

The concert film, compiled from Swift shows at SoFi Stadium is expected to launch with \$100 million, or more. Advance ticket sales have already surpassed \$100 million.

AMC announced that the concert film broke its record for highest ticket sales revenue in a single day. Cinemark reported pre-sale records are more than “10 times higher pre-sales than any other cinema engagement event.”



For the premiere in Los Angeles, Swift shut down The Grove and watched her performance in an auditorium alongside a star-studded audience.

Nothing could exactly recreate the decibel-bursting exhilaration of a live music performance. But in this format, Swift gets as close as possible. And because of that, she’s able to fully communicate her power in a concert film with little to no dialogue.

(That is something available to only her and Beyoncé). Relatedly, Bey will release a documentary chronicling her Renaissance World Tour.

The success of Swift’s concert film has to do with the setting of a theater. “Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour” is meant to be enjoyed communally — a shout-along affair where fans in bespoke cosplay can dance and sing and film the screen on their smartphones.

Killers of the Flower Moon

By Contributing Writer

There tends to be fast talking and fast moving in Martin Scorsese films, often from shifty types trying to get away with something.

But in “Killers of the Flower Moon,” everything seems to slow down, especially when the camera lands on Lily Gladstone as Mollie, the Osage woman at the heart of this tale of greed and treachery.

It’s a beautiful performance, all the more impressive because Gladstone’s sharing the screen with Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro. Both turn in superb work. But Gladstone is the emotional core.

Based on David Grann’s whodunit, “Killers” is a departure for the 80-year-old filmmaker. It’s his first Western, a genre he’s long wanted to explore, with heroes and villains. And in telling this story, he focuses on a people he’s never depicted before, mindful of their experience and their rituals.

It won’t surprise anyone that Scorsese brings his artistic resources to this endeavor, along with his cinematographer, Rodrigo Prieto, and production designer, Jack Fisk. Together, in Oklahoma, they’ve created an oil boomtown astonishing in its spirit.



Scorsese has taken three and a half hours to tell his tale. It’s hard to argue that a story this hefty — a chronicle of a dark chapter in American history and a shocking true crime, all framed in a love story — doesn’t deserve the length. And with some scenes

— a prairie wedding, or a dance on a boomtown main drag — you feel you could have stayed longer.

We begin with a late 19th-century ceremony, one of many portrayals of Osage spiritual life. Then, in a memorable image, there’s a whoosh from underground: Oil, spurting from land.

Meanwhile, Ernest Burkhart (DiCaprio) steps off the train, a World War I vet with a taste for women and finer things, but no money or talent. Perhaps his uncle can help. William Hale (De Niro) is a cattle rancher but more like a king around these parts — a white man who speaks the Osage language and calls himself their best friend.

But it’s clear Hale has sinister motives, and De Niro’s just the guy to ooze sinister. Scorsese and co-writer Eric Roth depart here from Grann’s book. He wants Osage money, and tells Ernest that if he woos and marries Mollie — well, even less-than-brilliant Ernest can do the math.

So can Mollie. Trusting but hardly naive, she knows Ernest covets her wealth, but there’s growing affection between the two, and their marriage, gorgeously rendered, is a happy occasion.

But then the Osage start dying — including, Mollie’s sisters and mother. As for Ernest, he’s no angel. But is he doing more? DiCaprio’s becomes tom between marital loyalty and fealty to his uncle.

Finally, federal agent Tom White (Jesse Plemons) shows up. This last act finds its way to a courtroom scene, joined by a bombastic Brendan Fraser and a sputtering John Lithgow. Indeed, the cast includes faces you may recognize, as well as cameos of a musicians, and dozens of Osage actors in key parts. Robbie Robertson wrote the memorable score.

We learn in a prologue using silent-movie cards, the Osage become enormously wealthy. But they’re deemed “incompetent” and appointed white “guardians” to control assets. This is how we meet Mollie, asking for her money to pay medical bills.

U2 CONCERT USES STUNNING VISUALS TO OPEN MASSIVE SPHERE VENUE IN LAS VEGAS

By Contributing Writer

It looked like a typical U2 outdoor concert: Two helicopters zoomed through the sky before producing spotlights over a Las Vegas desert and frontman Bono, who knelt to the ground while singing “Vertigo.”

This scene may seem customary, but the visuals were created by floor-to-ceiling

graphics inside the immersive Sphere. It was one of the several impressive moments during U2’s “UV Achtung Baby” residency launch show at the high-tech, globe-shaped venue.

The legendary rock band, which has won 22 Grammys, performed inside the venue



with crystal-clear audio. There were attractive visuals — including kaleidoscope images, a burning flag and Las Vegas’ skyline.

“What a fancy pad,” said Bono, who was accompanied onstage with guitarists The Edge and Adam Clayton along with drummer Bram van den Berg. He stared at the high-resolution LED screen that projected a version of himself along with praying hands and bells.

Bono then paid homage to Elvis Presley. The band has rocked as far back as 1987 when they filmed the video for “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” on the Strip during a tour in 1987.

“Look at all this . . . Elvis has definitely not left this building,” he continued. U2 made their presence felt at the \$2.3 billion Sphere, which stands 366-feet

high and 516-feet wide. With visual effects, the band’s 25-show residency opened with a splash. The band members were so large on screen that it felt like Bono intimately sang to the audience.

The crowd included entertainers and athletes: Oprah, LeBron James, Matt Damon, Andre Agassi, Ava DuVernay, Josh Duhamel, Jason Bateman, Jon Hamm, Bryan Cranston, Aaron Paul, Oscar de la Hoya, Henrik Lundqvist, Flava Flav, Diplo, Dakota Fanning, Orlando Bloom and Mario Lopez.

After wrapping up The Beatles’ jam “Love Me Do,” Bono recognized Paul McCartney, who was in attendance. He acknowledged Sphere owner James Dolan’s efforts for spearheading a venue that’s pushing forward the live concert audio landscape.

The U2 frontman pointed into the crowd and shouted out Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg and Jimmy Iovine. At one point he became emotional when he dedicated a song to the late Jimmy Buffett’s family.

Bono spoke about performing onstage without drummer Larry Mullen Jr., who is recovering from back surgery. He acknowledged Dutch drummer Bram van den Berg’s birthday and him filling in.

As U2 wrapped up the show, a bright light shined from the ceiling and the massive screen began to fill with images of birds, insects and reptiles above a lake. The band closed its first Sphere concert with “Beautiful Day.”



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TECH TALK



What Is The Internet Of Things (IoT)?

By Contributing Writer

The Internet of Things, or IoT, is a network of physical devices. These devices can transfer data to one another without human intervention. The Internet of Things can include anything with a sensor that is assigned a unique identifier (UID). The primary goal of the IoT is to create self-reporting devices that can communicate in real time. You use IoT devices every day:

Smart home devices. Smart devices are interactive electronics that use wireless to understand instructions. Smart home devices like thermostats and home security systems can work autonomously. For example, you may program your smart thermostat to adjust automatical-

ly to a cooler setting before you arrive home. Or, you may receive a security camera notification to inform you that someone is at the door.

Wearable technologies. One of the most common examples is smartwatches. Fitbits and Apple Watches connect to other devices (like your smartphone) to share data. They also connect to the internet to track GPS.

Personal medical devices. Personal medical devices like pacemakers are also IoT devices. Remote medical devices can monitor and share a patient's vital signs or detect early signs of health issues.

Autonomous vehicles. Self-driving cars and connected vehicles rely on the internet to share real-time information. Sensors help map its surroundings, transmit camera footage, and respond to traffic signals.

Billions of devices are connected to the internet, collecting and sharing information. They range from smart home setups like cooking appliances and smoke detectors to military-grade surveillance equipment.

Consumer IoT

Consumer IoT refers to personal and wearable

devices that connect to the internet. These devices are referred to as smart devices.

Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT)

The Industrial

Internet of Things is the interconnected devices in the industrial sector. Manufacturing machinery and devices used for energy management.

Commercial IoT

Commercial IoT refers to tools and systems used outside of the home. Businesses and health care leverage commercial IoT for data trails and consumer management.

Internet Of Things Platform

An IoT platform manages device connectivity. It can be a software suite or a cloud service.

The purpose is to manage and monitor hardware, software, processing abilities, and applications.

Sensor Technologies

Smart sensors, convert real-world variables into data that devices can interpret and share. For example, temperature sensors detect heat and convert temperature changes into data.

Unique Identifiers

The core concept of the IoT is communication among devices and users. Unique identifiers (UIDs) establish the context of a device within the larger network.

Internet Connectivity

Sensors can connect to cloud platforms through a network protocols for the internet. This enables communication between devices.

Benefits of the Internet of Things

IoT enables costs, increased safety and productivity, and overall improved customer experience. Here are a few notable pros:

Automation. Removing the need to perform mundane tasks increases efficiency and quality of life.

Conservation. Automation makes it easier to manage energy consumption and water usage without human oversight or error.

Big data analytics. Information that was difficult to collect and analyze can be tracked effortlessly.




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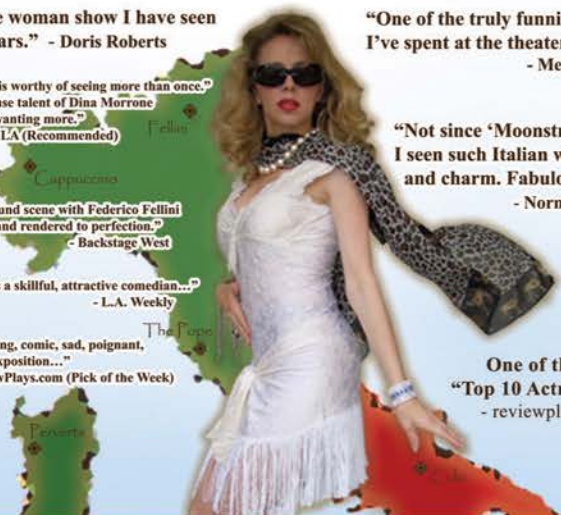
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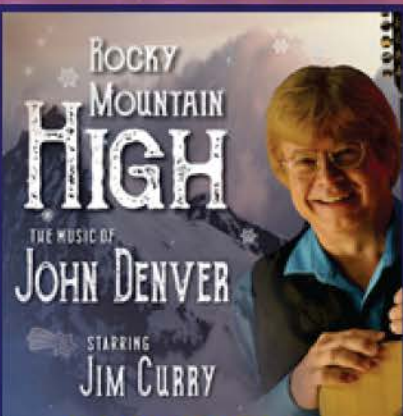
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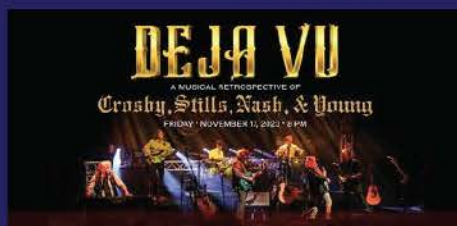


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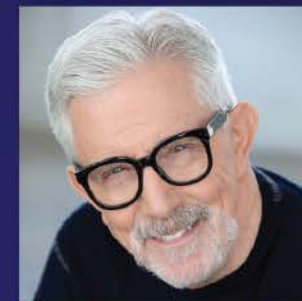
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TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY DRINKS

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By Contributing Writer

Mulled wine uses red wine and sometimes port wine and spices such as cinnamon and clove. In addition, you may find a few orange peels for added flavor and decoration. The Swedish version adds sugar, rum, and brandy.

It's rooted back to Scandinavia and can be found not only there, but across Europe and in America today as well. You'll often find Americans drinking the Holiday Glogg at Christmas markets or at Kindmarkt's around the country, celebrating German roots and heritage.

To prepare Holiday Glogg, it's heated and simmered over a medium-low heat for about 15 minutes, until sugar is dissolved but

before the mixture begins to boil.

Gluhwein is traditionally red wine seasoned with spices, sometimes raisins, and served warm. According to Culture Trip, it began in Germany when the wine was heated using red-hot irons. One of the oldest appearances of gluhwein in German history dates back to 1420 when a nobleman sipped the sweet and spicy beverage.

EGGNOG

This drink is made from eggs, sugar, milk or cream, and sometimes liquor. There is much debate on eggnog's origins. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it was "a kind of strong beer brewed in East Anglia" in 1693. However, many people claim that the



term "eggnog" is an Americanism from the 1700s. Miriam Webster says it was first used in 1775.

There's also speculation that the term eggnog was created from the practice of rapidly pouring the mixture between two pitchers to mix it thus creating eggnog or the British term, "egg flip."

HOT TODDY

A hot toddy is a mix of liquor, water, honey, herbs, and spices served hot. While the drink began in Europe, warming the troops with a kick, hot buttered rum also has roots in America. The colonists in America began importing rum from the Caribbean and started setting up distilleries in the Northeast. This liquor favorite slowly made its way from tropical drinks to holiday drinks!

THE MANHATTEN

This holiday cocktail consists of whiskey, vermouth, and sweet bitters. My parents thoroughly enjoy it during the holidays, and maybe yours do too. The obvious idea is that it started in Manhattan, and some sources say that it did.

A popular theory is that it was created by Dr. Iain Marshall in the 1870s at the Manhattan Club in New York City. The drink was so successful people began calling it the Manhattan cocktail, after the club. This drink is popular North Frisian island of Fohr in the North Sea, where it is a standard drink in all cafes and restaurants.

Sharing a special cocktail with friends and

family adds a nice cozy feeling that will ease the tensions of daily life, and reminds us what sharing is all about. Happy Holidays and Enjoy!



Time To Talk Turkey!

Non-Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner Ideas

By Contributing Writer

Break tradition this Thanksgiving by switching up your menu. These ideas bring new life to classics.

Artichoke Hearts Gratin

Artichokes aren't exactly synonymous with Thanksgiving, but that will change once you try this simple appetizer.

Roasted Pumpkin Soup

There are endless ways to incorporate pumpkin into your Thanksgiving dinner, but what better way to kick off the feast than this flavorful pumpkin soup? You will impress even the fussiest of eaters.

Roasted Pumpkin and Goat Cheese Crostini

If you're looking to start your Thanksgiving dinner with a bang, these elegant crostini are sure to impress. Sliced baguettes are topped with garlic, olive oil, goat cheese, and a roasted pumpkin-leek mixture that is then drizzled with a balsamic glaze.

Apple Pie Shot

Bring the party to the table with these shots that taste like a favorite Thanksgiving dessert.



Citrus Turkey Brine

With all the heavy casseroles and sides on the table, brining your turkey with this citrus-flavored brine will bring bright and fresh flavor to the table.

Bacon-Wrapped Pork Medallions

So simple to prepare, yet it looks and tastes like it took a lot of

time and effort. Step aside turkey. These pork medallions wrapped in bacon might just be a new tradition.



Tangy Honey-Glazed Ham

For many of us, ham for Thanksgiving isn't anything new, but this pineapple-honey glaze brings a whole new flavor.

Cranberry Stuffed Turkey Breasts

If you still want to keep turkey on the table, these stuffed turkey breasts put a new twist on a traditional Thanksgiving main dish.

Mushroom Cream Gravy Sauce

Turkey gravy is cool and all, but smother your bird in this divine mushroom gravy and you may never go back to your old recipe.

Cranberry-Jalapeño Relish

This spicy take on a Thanksgiving classic is sure to leave a lasting impression.

Sweet Potato Rolls

During the holidays, dinner rolls are always on the table. But they don't have to be boring. These festive, fall rolls are made with sweet potato purée for a change from the usual.

Fancy Crusted Rosemary Scalloped Potatoes

Scalloped potatoes are always a crowd pleaser, but this recipe will really stand out among the rest — it uses sliced potatoes to create a crust around the edge of the baking dish.

Sweet Potato Streusel Casserole with Coconut

Sweet potatoes have been a holiday staple for many years and score 101 next to the regular white potato. Combining them with a coconut streusel topping is simply a divine union.

Mascarpone Mashed Potatoes

Not only is this a delicious alternative to regular mashed potato recipes, but it's a very user-friendly way to serve your potato side dish. They're really decadent: not too rich, but just rich enough.



Apple-Stuffed Acorn Squash

Acorn squash has fall written all over it, but stuff it with a mixture of apples, raisins, brown sugar, cinnamon, and cheese, and you have the ultimate fall side dish.

Roquefort Pear Salad

Skip the boring, run-of-the-mill salad and go for this autumn-inspired salad topped with blue cheese, pears, caramelized pecans, and a mustard vinaigrette.

Better-than-Boxed Vegan Stuffing

Go vegan this Thanksgiving with this stuffing that's great for those with

dietary restrictions. This vegan and gluten-free stuffing is better than the boxed stuff and very easy to make!



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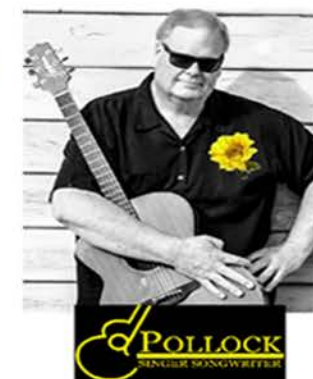
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How To Boost Your Hair's Shine, Strength And Growth With Rice Water

By Contributing Writer

Rice is a pantry staple that has beauty benefits. For hair care, rice water has become a viral beauty hack that seemingly delivers silky, luscious strands.

The milky liquid is easy to DIY at home. "Rice water comes from soaking or boiling rice within water to extract beneficial nutrients," explains Dr. Tiffany St. Bernard founder of HairDays. "This starchy water is nutrient-dense, even containing antioxidants that cleanse the scalp."

Beyond the TikTok videos testing out homemade rice water and celebrity devotees like Kim Kardashian, the beauty treatment has a centuries-old history. The Japanese ladies of the court in the Heian Period maintained floor-length hair with the help of Yu-Su-Ru, or rinse water from washing rice. In the Guangxi province of China, the Yao women are known for their extremely long and lustrous hair. The women only cut their hair once in their lives, during a public ceremony, and rice water is a key component of their hair care.

Is Rice Water Good For Your Hair?

The TikToks aren't fooling you; rice water can help you achieve serious growth, shine and silkiness. "Rice water is a great way to utilize nutrients within rice and apply these benefits to your hair," says St. Bernard. "Rice has nutrients that range from vitamin B, vitamin C, potassium, magnesium, selenium, phosphorus, amino acids and more."

Amino acids are especially helpful for hair growth. Along with the vitamins found, these elements may help with hair regeneration.

Benefits Of Rice Water In Hair

The benefits of applying rice water to the hair include "increased volume,

better hair shine and appearance, stronger follicles, repair to cuticle damage, dandruff prevention and anti-inflammatory effects on the scalp."

Rice water is also beneficial for those with thinning hair. Rice water has inositol, which has been linked to preventing premature hair loss and hair shedding.

The simple treatment is good for all hair types. All hair strands are created with a similar foundation of a cortex (inner layer) and cuticle layers that protect the integrity of your hair. While genetic factors make differences in specific hair types and characteristics, rice water will benefit all hair types because of its focus on replenishing amino acids, and nutrients.

Side Effects Of Using Rice Water On Your Hair

While rice water is safe for all hair types to try, results may vary. Different hair types see different results. Everyone has a unique "hair profile." This is a combination of characteristics including type,

porosity, volume and other factors that are unique to define the state of their hair; their hair health and how their hair reacts



to different environments, products and routines. Things that work well for one person's health may not do so for another.

With rice water, those with lower-porosity hair will see their hair less likely to fully absorb all of the nutrients.

Too much of a good thing can bring unwanted results — drying is one of the top side effects of overusing rice water, so those who are struggling with a dry scalp and strands should use it in moderation.

to use, look at the nutrient profiles — black rice, for example, has the highest levels of antioxidants.

The process to make fermented rice water is essentially the same as soaking method of making regular rice water, but it requires more time for the rice and water to sit together — at least 24 hours and up to two days.

Fermented rice water amplifies the benefits of rice water while also lowering the pH of your rinse, giving your cuticle the opportunity to retract and keep those nutrients trapped inside the hair.

Store your rice water in a jar or a spray bottle — it will keep in the fridge for up to a week.

How To Apply Rice Water

Use the rice water like a rinse in your hair. Bring your rice water with you into the shower and apply it to the scalp and hair after shampooing and conditioning.

There are plenty of hair care products that incorporate rice for the same strengthening and shine-boosting effects.

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Company, MJ And The Wiz At The Pantages For 2023-2024 Season

By Contributing Writer

“Company,” “MJ” and “The Wiz” are among seven shows coming to the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles for the 2023-2024 season.

The lineup consists of five L.A. premieres, one pre-Broadway L.A. premiere and the revival of a retired production.

“MJ” will commence the season Dec. 20, marking the Tony Award-winning musical’s Los Angeles debut. Directed and choreographed by Christopher Wheeldon and Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage, the

show centers its narrative around the creative legacy and unique sound of Michael Jackson.

“The Wiz,” which arrives Feb. 13, will also have its L.A. premiere at the venue prior to a Broadway run. The production is a revival of the Charles Small musical.

Two days after “The Wiz” wraps, “Chicago” will return to Los Angeles



March 5 to March 24 in celebration of the show’s 25th anniversary tour. Tânia Nardini will recreate the original production direction while Gary Chryst reconstructs the original choreography.

“Girl From the North Country” hits the theater starting May 14. The musical, which reimagines the discography of Bob Dylan,

received one win and seven nominations at last year’s Tony Awards.

In the summer months that follow, “Mrs. Doubtfire” and “Peter Pan” will make their L.A. debuts in June and July, respectively.



Capping off the season is a revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth’s “Company.” The show received five Tony awards last year, including best musical revival.

Tickets to Cameron Mackintosh’s production of “Les Misérables,” which returns to the Pantages Aug. 1-Sept. 10, will be available as a Season Add-on for Broadway

in Hollywood season package buyers. For more details on purchasing a season package, visit the Broadway in Hollywood website.

See below for the full 2023-2024 season schedule:

- “MJ” Dec. 20 – Jan. 28
- “The Wiz” Feb. 13 – Mar. 3

- “Chicago the Musical” Mar. 5 – 24
 - “Girl from the North Country” May 14 – June 2
 - “Mrs. Doubtfire” June 11 – 30
 - “Peter Pan” July 9 – 28
 - “Company” July 30 – August 18
- The Pantages Theatre is located at 6233 Hollywood Blvd, in Los Angeles.
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US Virgin Islands Travel Tips To Know Before You Go

By Contributing Writer

Before you plan that trip to the USVI, you need to know these travel tips!

“Good Day!”

Start interactions with Virgin Islanders on a good note if you greet everybody with an emphatic “Good morning!”, “Good afternoon!” or “Good day!”.

Save A Buck During Hurricane Season

It’s never a bad time of year to visit the USVI, but hurricane season is overlooked. For one, it’s the cheapest time to visit. And when a hurricane steers clear, it’s beautiful.

Have A Drink Anywhere!

Open container laws do not exist. Plus, the drinking age is 18!

St. Croix Is Isolated

Unlike the proximity that St. John and St. Thomas enjoy, St. Croix is a distance of 45 miles south of the two. You have options for getting there from St. Thomas: a bumpy ferry ride or a flight.

Go Island Hopping

Take advantage of the many islands and places to visit. By staying on St. Thomas, visiting St. John and Water Island as day trips are easy. Additionally, St. Thomas is the best access point to reach the British Virgin Islands.

Keep Left!

The US Virgin Islands is the only place within the United States where driving on the left side is the law. It’s a nerve-racking experience at first, but driving a car in the US Virgin Islands is easier than you think.

Bring Snorkel Gear

No matter which of the pristine beaches you end up on, you’re bound to discover colorful marine life or swim with sea turtles. Bring a set of travel snorkel gear.

Day Trip To The British Virgin Islands

It’s obligatory for every Virgin Islands travel guide to recommend a day trip to the BVIs. Departing St. Thomas, it’s easy to hop aboard a short ferry to Tortola, Jost Van Dyke, or Virgin Gorda to visit popular attractions like The Baths, Soggy Dollar Bar, and white sand beaches.

Visit The US National Parks

Virgin Islands National Park on St. John gets all the thunder. However, remember the five other sites, including St. Croix’s Christiansted National Historic Site and Buck Island Reef National Monument.

Take A Hike

Hiking on St. John, like Ram Head Trail and Reef Bay Trail, is among the best in all of the Caribbean islands. St. Croix isn’t too far behind, with epic hikes to tide pools, secluded beaches, and scenic views.



No Passport Required

Getting to the US Virgin Islands is as easy as hopping aboard a plane with a government-issued photo ID. No passport is necessary.

Protect Yourself From The Sun

The sun in America’s Paradise is hot and intense year-round. Reef-safe sunscreen is one easy solution, but high-UPF clothing is an even better one.

Stay Decent

You might be on vacation and on island time, but people do work and live here. Local customs necessitate you to cover up when not on the beach or engaging in water sports.

Book Your Place To Stay In Advance

It’s helpful to book in advance. That means your hotel, rental car, and even tours. These islands get busy beginning in December and stay that way into the summer.

St. Thomas Safari System

If you don’t want to get a rental car, a great way to get around is using a Safari Taxi. These open-air trucks cater to locals and cost just a few bucks to hop on and off. The only condition? They move in one circular direction around the island.

Know How To Stay Safe

These islands are incredibly safe for tourists, especially if you take common sense precautions.

Discover The Best Beaches

The US Virgin Islands are known for their beaches. No matter which of the main islands you end up on, you’re guaranteed to find a pristine beach to enjoy.

Explore The Main Towns

Each Virgin Island features must-visit towns. On St. Thomas, Charlotte Amalie is the territory’s capital city and largest community. Red Hook on the island’s East End is a tourist hub and

launch point to St. John’s Cruz Bay. Opposite Cruz Bay is Coral Bay, a small community of salty sailors, expats, and Virgin Islander locals.

Know The Cruise Ship Schedule And Plan Accordingly

St. Thomas is one of the busiest cruise ports in the world, with an estimated 1.4 million passengers per

Enjoy A Charter Boat

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year, pre-pandemic. If you’re staying on St. Thomas, avoid certain attractions while large cruise ships are in town. These attractions get swamped with tourists during peak hours – the greatest offender being Magens Bay Beach.

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Taylor Swift And Travis Kelce: Relationship Goals!

By Contributing Writer

Dating the biggest superstar in the world may come with a unique set of challenges, but a source says that Travis Kelce is ready for it as his romance with Taylor Swift continues.

"Taylor's unlike anyone Travis has dated before," the source shares as the 34-year-old NFL star hit the town with the "Bejeweled" singer, 33, in New York City over the weekend. "It was very unexpected for his friends, but he's so into her and very, very happy."

The insider continues, "Some people thought he was just joking around about the bracelet and having a crush on her earlier this summer, but he was serious about it," referring to Kelce's attempt to give Swift his phone number on a friendship bracelet when he attended her Eras tour at Arrowhead Stadium.

According to the insider, Swift and Kelce are "having a great time getting to know one another" and "have introduced some of their friends to each other" in recent weeks.

The source adds, "Everyone's getting along and seeing how much fun they have together. They make a very cute couple."

Before his relationship with Swift, Kelce looked for love in a different kind of public setting as the star of his own reality dating show, *Catching Kelce*. The show featured 50 women from across the country who vied for the football star's heart as he looked for his lifelong "teammate." In the end, the football star chose Maya Benberry and the two dated for several months afterward.

Following the cancellation of the *E!* series, Kelce dated fitness model and broadcast host Kayla Nicole for five years after meeting on Instagram in 2017.

Following rumors about their breakup, including that they parted ways for financial reasons, the Ohio native set the record straight during an interview with *The Pivot Podcast* in January 2023. At the time, *Barstool Sports* alleged that the reason for their split was that Kelce forced Nicole to pay for "half of everything" while they were dating. Kelce denied the accusation that he was "too cheap" with Nicole, adding, "don't buy into that s---."

He continued, "I would never say that I was supporting her. She had a very financially stable life and what she was doing in her career."

Swift and Kelce made their first big public appearances as a couple this weekend in New York City before making surprise appearances on *Saturday Night Live*, where the Kansas City Chiefs star made a cameo in a skit about him and Swift, while the Grammy-winning singer-songwriter introduced the second performance of musical guest Ice Spice.



Photos showed the two holding hands after they dined at Nobu ahead of the show and while they were on their way to the post-show party.

A separate source said the couple was "so smiley" and "so happy" throughout the evening in N.Y.C. "They were so talkative. They were really fun. They talked to every single person in the room that talked to them."

"They were super cool. Super nice, super happy," the insider added, noting that Swift and Kelce stayed at the party "until after 4 a.m."

According to the source, Kelce was "going over and touching her, putting his hand on her lower back or putting his hands on her waist and then they would do a little kiss and then they would go back to talking to whoever they were talking to."

"He kept checking in with her, but gave her space to talk to other people in the room, and he talked to a ton of people in the room too," the source shared.

Taylor and Travis...true love!

CELEBRITY NEWS



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You're Out! Robot Umpires Are Coming To Baseball!

By Contributing Writer

Don't like the strike call? Take it up with the robot.

In baseball stadiums around the US, the umpire behind home plate might be little more than a mouthpiece for a robot. Major League Baseball plans to introduce robot umpires in the 2024 season, MLB Com-

missioner Rob Manfred told ESPN this week. He framed the change as a way to speed up

There are two ways the "Automated Ball-Strike System," which is the technical term for these robot umpires, might be implemented. One is the fully



games, but anyone who's watched baseball the last few years will tell you that a machine would almost certainly call balls and strikes better than the humans do.

automated version, in which the AI-powered system calls every pitch a ball or a strike and relays the call to the umpire. Or the

MLB could decide to use the AI as a review system, like VAR in soccer or the Hawk-Eye system used in professional tennis: each side gets a certain number of challenges, which are then adjudicated by the automated system.

Robot umpires have been showing up at minor league baseball games for the last couple of years, and the tech seems to

work. (It's not that different from the strike zone you see superimposed on a TV broadcast.) The existing system was developed by a company called TrackMan, which also builds sophisticated ball-tracking tech for golfers. In practice, it's quite simple: the umpires slip a dedicated iPhone into their back pocket and an earbud into their ear, and the system signals ball or strike into their headphone after every pitch. Part of the goal has been to make the on-field product look the same, with umps making the calls — no hulking robot standing behind home plate — only faster and more accurately.

Rise Of The Robo-Umpires

Still, the robots have definitely changed the game. The automated system has tended to call more strikes than a human would, meaning players have had to re-calibrate their own understanding of what pitch is what. And even with these automated systems in place, umpires still have plenty to do calling check swings, plays at the plate, and even occasionally overruling the robots.

The robots started in the lower rungs of baseball's minor leagues, but this season, they've also been used in Triple-A games, which is the next best thing to the majors. Per ESPN, the robot umpires lop nine minutes off the length of an average game in which they're used. (Manfred also said a pitch clock could be used to speed up the game, and that could come as soon as next year.)

Robot umpires have felt like a looming certainty for some time. They won't solve everything, nor will they end fan arguments — just ask anyone who's been screwed by a VAR call in a nail-biter soccer match. But as baseball continues to look for ways to appeal to a younger generation that has no interest in a five-hour-long game, robots might help pick up the pace.



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Pet Astrology

Are You And

Your Pet Compatible?

By Contributing Writer

Knowing your zodiac sign can give you insight into your characteristics and traits, but did you know it can do the same thing for your pet?

Aquarius (Jan. 20 – Feb. 18)

Eccentric, quirky, erratic and strange – these are a few of the words used to describe Aquarian pets. If your pet is an Aquarius chances are it acts a bit...odd. Aquarian pets often seem to be lost in their own little worlds. They are extremely independent yet social by nature.

Pisces (Feb. 19 – Mar. 20)

A Piscean pet will display characteristics of many other zodiac signs. As a result, Piscean pets tend to act confused at times. They pace back and forth around a room, abruptly moving from one activity to the next or they follow you around the house. Piscean pets are also extremely intuitive and can sense your bad moods.

Aries (Mar. 21 – Apr. 20)

Aries the ram is a fire sign associated with courage, energy and impatience. An Aries pet is self-confident and extremely independent. Chances are, your Aries pet loves to explore and often thinks of itself as the alpha animal in many situations, which may lead to intolerance of (and fights with) other animals.

Taurus (Apr. 21 – May 21)

According to animal astrology, pets born under this sign are likely to be strong, easy going and compassionate – maybe a bit lazy as well. Forget playing in the backyard; for these pets, it doesn't get any better than a long nap on a soft bed, a bowl of fresh, meaty food and a nice, long rub-down from their loving owner. The Taurus pet's kind and docile nature makes it a great companion.

Gemini (May 22 – Jun. 21)

Pets born under this sign tend to be playful, creative and attention seekers. They love to show off and they are excellent communicators. You may

notice that your Gemini cat “answers” you when you speak to it or that your Gemini dog is always yapping away about something. These social creatures hate routines and often become impatient when others can't keep up.

Leo (July 24 – Aug. 23)

Leo pets are confident, fearless and a bit vain. They love to be pampered and spoiled and are always vying for the spotlight. Quite popular among other animals and people, Leo pets are actually fiercely loyal to their owners. Leos can also display less desirable traits, such as laziness and a diva-like disposition. However, many Leo pets would defend their owners to the death.

Virgo (Aug. 24 – Sept. 23)

Pets who fall under the zodiac sign of Virgo are picky, fastidious and hard workers. They thrive on order and routine, so keep mealtimes and walks

need of companionship. They love being around other animals, going on trips and getting primped and groomed so that



punctual. Pets that fall under the Virgo sign are also the cleanest of all pets, spending a great deal of time and energy on their personal grooming habits.

Libra (Sept. 24 – Oct. 23)

Animal astrology labels Libras as social pets. Most Libras are in constant

they can look their best. In fact, if your Libra pet ever feels lonely or left out, it is liable to become whiny, moody and very, very vocal about its unhappiness.

Scorpio (Oct. 24 – Nov. 22)

Scorpio pets are a bit of a paradox in that they are both extreme-

ly independent and extremely loyal to their owners. It would not be uncommon for a Scorpio cat or dog to wander off on its own for a few days on some sort of solitary adventure; but rest assured that it will always return home.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23 – Dec. 21)

Freedom is something that all Sagittarian pets crave. Pet horoscopes make it clear that these animals hate to be cooped up or kept on a leash. While they will seldom run away, they love to be on their own and out of doors. They also have an endless supply of energy.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)

Capricorn pets are calm, serious and hard-working. Your Capricorn pet is likely to be slow-moving and tedious, but if it has a job to do it will always get that job done. Capricorn animals are best for people who don't have the energy or patience for a high-strung or demanding pet. They are self-reliant, stable and serene.

To learn more about pet astrology, visit websites like Astrology-Weekly.com and Psychics.co.uk



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Super Costly Skeleton: Rare Dinosaur 'Barry' Up For Sale

By Contributing Writer

Instead of seeing dinosaurs at a museum or on the big screen, a fan with very deep pockets can actually own one.

A mostly complete skeleton of a *Camptosaurus* from the late Jurassic Period — which dates back to about 150 million years ago — is scheduled to go up for auction in Paris. According to Hôtel Drouot, the historic auction house handling the sale, the dinosaur nicknamed Barry is expected to sell for up to \$1.2 million.

"It is an extremely well-preserved specimen, which is quite rare," Hôtel Drouot's Alexandre Giquello told Reuters, adding that the skeleton — which was first discov-

ered in Wyoming during the 1990s and is named after the paleontologist Barry James — is 80% complete.



According to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, the *Camptosaurus* was a plant-eating dinosaur that walked either on its hind legs or all four of its limbs. It's also an ancestor of duck-billed dinosaurs.

While the auction house said that Barry will be its eighth dinosaur sale, these kinds of transactions are rare. According to BBC News, only a few of them occur worldwide.

In July, Sotheby's held an auction that included the fossil of a pteranodon, a flying reptile from the Cretaceous period, ABC News reported. At the time, it was expected to fetch somewhere between \$4 million and \$6 million.

Also part of Sotheby's auction was a fossil of a plesiosaur, a marine reptile that lived in the Jurassic Period. According to the auction house, that particular fossil was estimated to sell somewhere in the \$600,000-\$800,000 range.



"Barry is an adult specimen of *Camptosauridae*, belonging to the family *Iguanodontidae*, one of the first groups of dinosaurs discovered," Hôtel Drouot said of the fossil that measures over 6 feet tall and 16 feet long.

"Several theories have emerged on the representation of these animals," the auction house continued, adding that "the most

prominent paleontologists clashed throughout the 19th and 20th centuries over the mode of locomotion and the points of balance of iguanodontids: were they bipedal or quadrupedal? What did the position of their tails reveal about the way they moved? How has the natural environment influenced the development of the species?"

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Get To Work! With A Modern Kitchen Desk!

By Contributing Writer

Working from home has its perks (sweatpants), but it can be a challenge. Having a designated work space when you don't have a spare room can lead to creative solutions. Enter, the kitchen office. From built-in office nooks to designer desks, here are ideas for creating a functional office space in the kitchen. **Close Up Shop**

In the age of work from home, having a designated work space in your kitchen that is not obtrusive might seem impossible. But the secret might be hidden in plain sight. When



integrated into a kitchen design, office nooks built into cupboards with doors that close when the workday is over, create a seamless off-hours appearance.

Reclaim the Space

When your home office is on display, it can interfere with work-life balance.

One way to make the transition is to reclaim the space when you're not working. Stash cords, papers, and electronics into baskets or drawers, then swap in some non-work-related decor.

Everything in Its Place

The key to managing a workspace is keeping your home office space organized. Even if your desk is the kitchen table, designate an in-kitchen shelf or cupboard to hold your office supplies. File everything in clearly-labeled containers.

Go Big and Stay Home

Although it may seem counterintuitive to take up more space when planning a kitchen office, having generous storage will help reduce clutter.

Play with Light and Texture

A kitchen nook that flows into the entire design of the kitchen will always be welcome. Using cabinetry that matches the rest of the kitchen as well as coordinating countertops helps the desk area feel like it belongs there.

Rethink Open Concept

Having a kitchen office doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your open concept, you just need

to re-think it. Countertop seating and coffee bars have taken a back seat to inspiring kitchen desk spaces that are comfortable, convenient, and come with a view.

Find a Corner Office

If your kitchen and dining room are one big room, a built-in office nook may not be feasible. If you're puzzling over where to place a desk, look for a short wall or partially-concealed corner.

Choosing a desk that matches your furniture will go a long way: Modern desk design will look great in a contemporary kitchen; vintage style may call out for an antique roll top. Adding shelves and artwork will give the feeling that it is more home than office and keep the practical place from looking too utilitarian.

Repeat Colors

If you're worried your kitchen desk is making the space feel too cramped, try a designer



trick that makes even tight spaces seem curated. Repeat a color from the kitchen in your designated office area. By adding the splash of coordinating color, you'll pull the two spaces together.

The odds are you've found a spot and stuck a desk there. Define the workspace by displaying artwork directly above the desk. Creating a gallery wall using images and frames that match will give your eye somewhere to go.

Invoke Mood Lighting

One of the perks of working from home is not having to hunker down under fluorescent lights. Placing your workspace near an open window allows natural light, which can be a mood booster. It also means you can share space with houseplants.

Save Space

If square footage is at a premium, look for a wall-mounted desk with a low profile. This desk looks like a shelf, and it be used for kitchen collectibles or cookbooks. There are also a wide variety of small-footprint home desks that fold flat against the wall when not in use.

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By Andrews McMeel Syndication

"I guess we got a pilot in our house," a perplexed homeowner told a 911 dispatcher after a U.S. Marine Corps F-35 pilot landed in his backyard on Sept. 17 in North Charleston, South Carolina. The pilot, who got on the phone with the dispatcher, told her, "I'm a pilot in a military aircraft and I ejected, so I just rode a parachute down to the ground. Can you please send an ambulance?" According to Yahoo! News, the plane eventually crashed 60 miles away.

Tim Perry of Cranston, Rhode Island, has an over-the-top way of celebrating Halloween, WJAR-TV reported. His favorite horror movie, "House of 1,000 Corpses," inspired him to create "House of 1,000 Pumpkins" -- but this year, his collection will grow closer to 1,400. Cranston carves about 200 more craft pumpkins each year, starting around Oct. 1, to add to the display outside his home. "Everybody thanks me for doing it," Perry said. "They look forward to it every year. The kids go nuts." Through a Facebook fundraiser, he also collects donations to help families affected by cancer.

Eccentric septuagenarian Reginald "Reggie" Kincer is facing federal charges related to a scheme he cooked up to supply erectile dysfunction drugs to members of The Villages retirement community in central Florida, Fox News reported. He allegedly bought \$1,800 worth of the medicines with the intent to hawk them in Florida and other states. Kincer was featured in a 2021 documentary about the famous retirement community in which his wife, Anne, gushed, "The Villages have given Reggie an opportunity to grow in different ways." He is shown in the video working out while explaining, "My whole training is about ending my life with a smile on my face. I really like stimulating myself with drugs." Kincer has prior arrests for drug possession; he faces a maximum of a year in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

It's happened again. On Oct. 15, as an EasyJet flight prepared to travel from the Spanish island of Tenerife to London after a three-hour delay, the pilot announced that the flight would depart in about 20 minutes. "And that's when the incident happened with the defecation," said passenger Aaran Gedhu, according to CNN Travel. Gedhu saw two people visit the forward restroom before

an unpleasant odor permeated the cabin and word spread that someone had pooped on the bathroom floor. "Obviously, the plane was in an unsanitary state. So they had to get external cleaners out from the airport to clean it," Gedhu said. After the cleaning was complete, the pilot announced that passengers would have to disembark -- which took another 30 minutes. Another passenger, Kitty Streek, said: "We obviously can't prove whether the person simply had an accident or if they had done this out of anger for the delayed flight ... but nobody wants to be stranded in another country." And yet, they were: Gedhu was lodged in a hotel overnight before taking a "rescue" flight the next day.

A restaurant in Tokyo, Abe-chan, recently revealed the secret behind its popular pork skewers, Oddity Central reported. The skewers are dipped in a sauce jar that hasn't been cleaned in more than 60 years and is covered on the outside with a hardened goo. Each day, cooks pour new sauce over the previous day's sauce, as they have throughout three generations of owners -- a practice they say contributes to its rich flavor. Experts said as long as the concoction is heated, there shouldn't be any bacterial growth. [

As Volaris flight 221 prepared to leave Guadalajara International Airport on Oct. 6, passengers and crew were delayed by an infestation of mosquitoes in the cabin, ABC7-TV reported. The flight was headed to Mexico City, and crew members and passengers tried for two hours to eradicate the pests, swatting them and spraying bug repellent. Finally, passenger Elizabeth Corona said, the insects settled down when the cabin lights were turned off.

Fox News reported on Oct. 17 that Rowan Sturgill of Lexington, Kentucky, has documented her mother, Beth's, obsession with Diet Coke on TikTok: "This isn't even half of it, I'm not kidding," Rowan captioned her video. Beth's decor includes a soap dispenser labeled with Diet Coke and a wall full of images related to the no-calorie drink. Her Christmas ornaments are dominated by the soda, and an entire wall of her home is dedicated to a shrine of sorts comprised of bottles and cans of various sizes and shapes. One friend posted that it's like being in an "alternate reality" when they're at the Sturgills' house.

Crossword by Myles Mellor

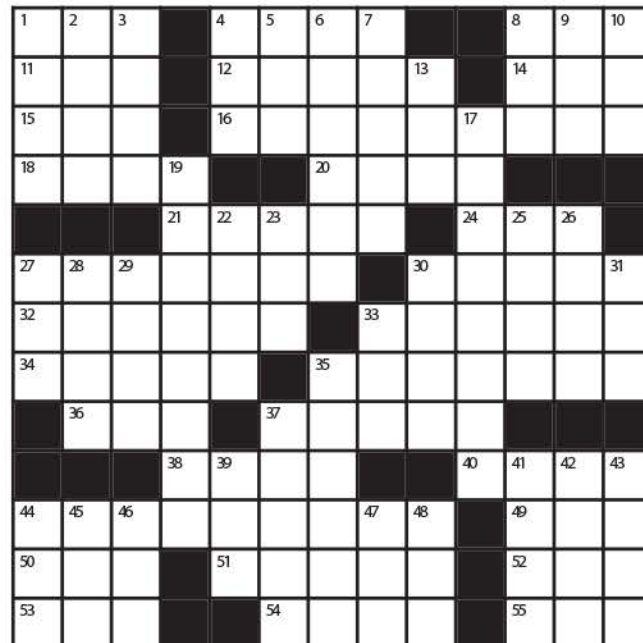
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Across

- "Hollywoodland" star, first name
- Prefix with phone
- ___ and outs
- Top trucker
- Lordly
- Pouter
- Triumphant cry
- Step by step
- Building parcels
- Annex
- 24 is best
- Meadow mother
- Pleasure seeker
- It's positive
- A young bird of prey
- Submit
- Garden pest
- Link
- Wilt
- "Tomb Raider" star
- Oyez!
- Enraptured
- Drinks server
- Tires need this
- Population: 300,000,000
- Quartet member
- Hit the slopes
- Withdrawn
- Nipper
- Sure enough!

Down

- Babylonian god
- Mountain comeback
- Cool
- Prius' plus?
- Goof
- Leave
- Sit in on
- Down with the flu
- Zero
- Good looker?
- Horse color
- Government departments
- Ceiling window
- Under the covers
- Decay
- Bounced checks, hangnails, etc.
- Taro
- Legume



- Pool exercises
- Eastern military rank
- Healthy berry
- Dusk, to Donne
- To be unwell
- Haughty
- A singing Jackson
- Former name for an EU trade organization
- Relaxed
- New Balance competitor
- Cause to fall
- "___ stop, wet day, she's there I say..." The Hollies
- Pulverized lava
- Soul artist, Charles
- Lodge member
- Deer type

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IT'S NOT ME, IT'S YOU

The Right Way For Teens To Break Up with Social Media

By Contributing Writer



In a world that thrives on constant connectivity, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for teenagers to stay connected, informed, and engaged.

The constant barrage of notifications, the fear of missing out, and the continual need to keep up can affect their well-being. So this raises the question: How can teens gracefully detach from the digital realm and go on a social media detox? Let's discover the secrets of effectively taking a break from social media.

The Benefits Of A Break

Social media has made our lives easier. Still, sometimes, the greatest solace lies in stepping away from the very platforms that keep us perpetually connected.

Here are strategies for teens to "Detox".

Announce Your Break: Inform your friends and followers about your social media break. This not only holds you accountable but also prevents people from wondering why you've gone silent online.

Delete or Temporarily Disable Apps: To reduce temptation, consider deleting or temporarily disabling your social media apps. This step makes it more challenging to access these platforms impulsively.

Schedule Limited Social Media Time: If completely cutting off social media feels too extreme, allocate specific time slots for checking your accounts. For instance, you might allow yourself 15 minutes in the morning and evening. Stick to these time slots strictly to prevent overshooting your screen time.

Unfollow or Mute Accounts: Before your break, unfollow or mute accounts that trigger negative emotions or contribute to mindless

scrolling. This step ensures that your feed becomes a more positive and uplifting space when you return.

Limit Notifications: Adjust your phone settings to limit social media notifications. By doing this, you won't be constantly reminded of updates and can focus on the real world around you.

Keep a Journal: Document your feelings and experiences during your social media detox in a journal. This will help you reflect on the positive changes and insights you gain throughout the break.

Practice Mindfulness: Learn mindfulness techniques to stay present and reduce the urge to check your phone constantly. Meditation and deep breathing exercises can help you regain control over your digital habits.

In conclusion, embarking on a break from social media as a teen can be a profound journey of self-discovery and rejuvenation. By implementing the strategies, you have the tools to regain control over your digital life and channel your energies toward more meaningful experiences. During your detox, you'll likely encounter moments of temptation and FOMO.

Embrace these challenges as opportunities for growth. Remember that a social media break isn't about permanently disconnecting but creating a healthier and more balanced relationship with the digital world. As you return to social media at the end of your break, approach it with a renewed perspective. Continue to prioritize your mental and physical well-being, using the lessons learned during your detox to maintain a healthier online presence. Social media can be a valuable tool when used consciously and in moderation. Ultimately, taking a break from social media as a teen is an investment in yourself.

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KEEP YOUR MIND HEALTHY

Tips For College Students Struggling With Mental Health

While college is an exciting time of transformation, introducing new experiences, friends, and environments, it can also stir feelings of worry and apprehension. Depending on the gravity of these emotions, students might experience increased levels of stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues.

wellness tips for college students.

Develop Healthy Habits

Regular exercise, eating nutritious foods, and getting good amounts of sleep (about 8 to ten hours a night) will help reduce the symptoms of anxiety. But it's sometimes difficult to stay on the healthy track due to long class hours, tests, and a busy social life. You will make mistakes and

By Contributing Writer

es motivation and can help determine your direction. You might write these out in a bulleted list, or channel

your creativity with a vision board. Compile a stack of magazines and cut out images and words that represent your aspirations, or utilize digital templates on websites like Pinterest and Canva.

Look For Support Online

If you're not ready to open up to your peers in person, there are resources online that can connect you to a mental health professional. Talkspace, an online therapy company, has a network of more than 2,000 licensed therapists that talk to patients via text, audio or video messaging. Other "tech-centric" resources include Better Mind, which connects students to tele-counselors, Runaway App, which connects students to trained volunteers, and the Buddy Project, a non-profit that links suicidal teens to supportive peers via Twitter.

Avoid Negative Self-Talk

Negative self-talk can present itself as putting blame on yourself, catastrophizing a situation, filtering the positive moments out of a scenario, prioritizing perfectionism, and so on. Try as best as you can to quiet this cynical voice in your head — instead, reframe your thinking and treat yourself with kindness.

Maintain Relationships With Family And Friends

Whether it's the first week of freshman year or spring semester of junior year, homesickness is real and can affect you at any point. Maintain connections with friends and family at home, so that when these feelings of loneliness unfold, you can immediately reach out to those people. The same philosophy goes for new friendships you form at college.

Visit The Campus Counseling Center

Nearly every college or university has an on-campus

counseling center, which provides clinical services and resources for anxiety, depression, sexual assault, eating disorders, and other concerns. These centers typically offer individual therapy sessions, group therapy sessions, referral services, and workshops dedicated to encouraging mental and emotional wellbeing. Plus, these consultations are often confidential and free of charge.

Speak To A Therapist

Be sure to reach out for professional support if you need it. If you visit your school's counseling center, you may be referred to an off-campus

therapist who is better equipped to help you and your needs. However, you could bypass the counseling center and find a therapist on your own. In that case, try to speak with a parent, guardian, or trusted adult to discuss logistics such as insurance coverage and potential out-of-pocket costs. Consulting your primary care physician could be beneficial as well, as they could refer you to a specialist in your college's area.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental illness, you can call the National Alliance on Mental Illness HelpLine at (800)-950-NAMI (6264) or visit their website.



How To Find The Right Therapist For You

A Harvard Medical School study revealed that one in five students reported having suicidal thoughts over the course of a single year. Among LGBTQ+ students, rates for suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and self-injury all had increased since the survey was last administered in 2009.

But there is hope for those struggling. Thrive Global, a behavior change media and technology company, spoke with B. Janet Hibbs, Ph.D., a family psychologist and co-author of *The Stressed Years of Their Lives: Helping Your Kid Survive and Thrive During Their College Years*, about dealing with "the sky is falling" anxiety. This form of anxiety is overwhelmingly persistent, and can be detrimental if left unaddressed. Below, find mental

that you can recover and learn from them.

Practice Self-Care

College life can be overwhelming while balancing classes and a social life, so it's important to schedule some time just for yourself. Try to do something that you enjoy every day, whether it be meditating, watching your comfort television show, or going for a walk. This alone time can recharge your mind and decrease the pervasiveness of anxiety.

Find Support Groups

It's important to not suffer in silence and to find others who may be dealing with similar problems. Active Minds is a non-profit organization that helps students find groups within their campus that can provide peer-to-peer support. They have 450 chapters throughout the U.S.

Set Goals

Establishing goals, either educational or personal, encourag-



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FASHION

LOOKING SHARP! FASHION TRENDS TO KNOW FOR FALL/WINTER 2023-2024

By Contributing Writer

Which Fall-Winter 2023-2024 fashion trends will we wear? Here are the key fashion trends to know for Fall/Winter 2023-2024.

Skirts Layered Over Pants

Although 2000s trends are gradually fading from catwalks, a final stylistic expression remained for



the sake of nostalgia for this fashion era. Skirts were layered over pants in matching colors and tones.

Neckties

The tie was also used to enhance a tuxedo ensemble, as well as lending new dimensions to a shirt paired with a skirt.

Short Shorts

Short shorts or underwear? It hardly mattered as long as the lengths were micro-short and showed lots of leg.

Neo-Bouquets

Flowers were delicate, embroidered, or affixed and always 3D - creating the illusion of a poetic bouquet.

Graphic Structured Shoulders

The graphic shoulder designs emphasized the face and brought a sense of rhythm to the looks.

Pretty Neckerchief

The pussybow played with elaborate volumes and matching shades, delivering a more romantic interpretation of the tie trend.

Tartan

The ever-popular Scottish print moved away from its classic punk/grunge aesthetic and covered full looks.

Ultimate Laceworks

There was lace, but it came exclusively in black. Eveningwear reveled in the beauty of sheer details and impeccable lace craftsmanship.

Black And White

Black and white worked as a team and highlighted the winter silhouettes. This austere approach reflected a desire for understated luxury.

Scenic Landscapes

The visual illusions and landscapes looked as though they were hand-painted and made us want to escape to a picturesque destination.

Sherbet Pastels

Winter doesn't have to rhyme with a gloomy or conventional color palette! Loewe, Givenchy, and Paco Rabanne brought a bright and cheerful twist.

Double Denims

Denim was doubled up - worn as a total look. The only rule? Choose similar shades for a flawless look. Whether it was bleached, raw, deconstructed, or showcased with sharp tailoring, jeans were the season's ultimate statement.

1950s Throwback

There was a distinctly feminine 1950s style out on the runways, with pin-up style dresses,



oversized petticoats, and fitted waists. It was a nod to post-war fashion, revamped for 2023.

Beige In All Of Its Shades

The ultimate exercise in color expression, a range of beige shades was used to elevate layering to become a winter fashion statement.

LBDs (With A Twist)

These are not your average little black dresses. The LBD will confirm its status as a fashion statement.

Feathers

Light and airy, feathers added a fashionable touch to star silhouettes.

Power Shoulders

'80s structured shoulder pads are making a major comeback, looking more XXL than ever.

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