

Travel to Palm Springs ♦ Waffle makers ♦ Shutterfly

COSTCO Connection®

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS



Plush life

Whimsical, lovable, cuddly and unassuming, Squishmallows have taken over the toy world **26**



OCTOBER 2023



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Supplier spotlight:
iRobot

Stand mixers

Buyers' picks

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COSTCO Connection *October*

October 2023 | Volume 36 | Number 9



Stand mixers
can handle a variety
of culinary tasks.

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Cuddly and cute, Squishmallows have made a big splash in the toy market.

by Mark Cardwell

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by Erin Silver

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by Mandy Ellis

Buyers' picks

Waffle makers
by Christina Guerrero



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**Easy Cheesy Smashed Potatoes with Chorizo,
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mozzarella.
1 1/2 cups dry chorizo, cubed
6 jalapeño peppers, seeded
and finely chopped

Sour Cream Topping:

1 1/2 cup sour cream
6 Tbsp fresh chives, chopped
1 1/2 lime, juiced
Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

Step 1: Preheat oven to 450 °F and place the rack in the center.

Step 2: Place little potatoes in cold water and boil for 15 minutes, until tender and drain.

Step 3: Gently smash little potatoes with slotted spatula, brush with oil, and place on oiled tray. Bake for 10 minutes.

Step 4: In a small bowl, mix all the sour cream ingredients. Set aside.

Step 5: Garnish baked little potatoes with mozzarella, chorizo, and jalapeños, then grill in oven for 1-2 minutes. Top with the sour cream topping.

Easy tip: Our
smashed little
potatoes pair
great with any
other toppings
your family loves !



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Fall in Love

16-18 IN. HIGH POLISH LOVE KNOT NECKLACE IN 14KT THREE-TONE GOLD
Itm. 1743690



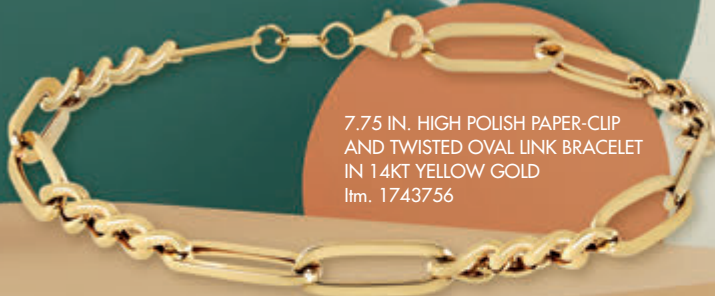
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ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Seasonal sensations

Welcome to the heart of fall! We cannot help but reflect on all the things that we are thankful for. Thanksgiving is at our doorstep, and with it comes a time to celebrate with family, friends and food.

Speaking of food ... one of my favourite kitchen appliances is my stand mixer. It is truly amazing how easy this appliance makes even the toughest kitchen mixing jobs. It has a place of honour on my kitchen counter. This month's special section features several small appliances—including stand mixers—that make many tasks easier. And they're all available at Costco.

On a fun note, check out our cover story on Squishmallows. These plush, cuddly toys took the world by storm during the pandemic, appearing all over social media. In this issue you can get the inside story behind the company that has had the distinction of being the top-selling toy of the year in both Canada and the US.

Because we celebrate Thanksgiving this month (October 9), I am thinking about all of the things I am grateful for: my father, my husband of 30 years (this month in fact!), my two children, my 32-year Costco career—and many of the people around me. What are you thankful for?

From all of us at Costco, we would like to thank all of you, our valued members, for shopping with us. We are truly grateful for each and every one of you. Happy Thanksgiving to all! ■

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Sue Pudrycki
is Assistant
Vice President
of Marketing.

Coming next issue
Our cover story will take a look at fun, alternative ideas for holiday entertaining.

Follow us on  

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Food triangle

October is Pizza Month, and your local Costco warehouse has piping hot pizza—featuring pizza dough that is always made fresh from scratch. To help you celebrate, go to your local Costco Food Court and order by the slice or get an entire 46-centimetre (18-inch) pie. Or choose from a variety of frozen pizzas, including the Kirkland Signature™ Deluxe Cauliflower Crust (above, Item 1630281).

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Back story

RESIDENTS OF ANCIENT Egypt, Rome and Greece enjoyed flatbread with toppings, according to History.com. But Naples, Italy, was the birthplace of the modern pizza in the late 18th or early 19th century.

Italian immigrants who came to the United

States in the early 20th century introduced pizza. Canada's first pizzeria opened in Montreal in 1948, and Greek-born Canadian Sam Panopoulos put his own spin on the circle by inventing the Hawaiian variety in 1962. Today, you can enjoy pizza almost anywhere, including at Costco.

SAFE TRICK-OR-TREATING

Spook-tacular safety

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Put electronic devices down and keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street.
- Never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.
- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers.
- Choose face paint and makeup whenever possible instead of masks, which can obstruct a child's vision.
- Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
- When selecting a costume, make sure it is the right size to prevent trips and falls.



LEFT: © STEVEN LAIT; TOP: TORNADO DESIGN / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

Hooray for teachers

October 5 may be World Teachers' Day, and whether it's an invitation to lunch or a handwritten note, every day is an ideal day to thank a teacher who has made a difference in your life.

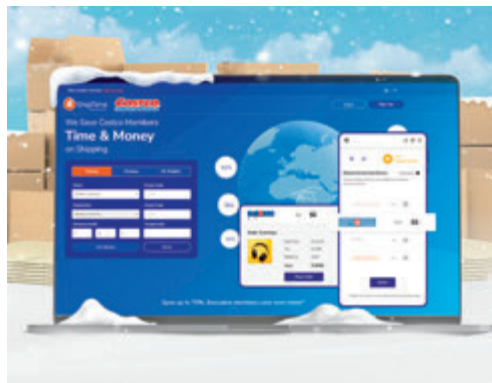


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With October being Fire Prevention Month, now is a good time to make sure your smoke alarm is in working order with fresh batteries.



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COZY COOKING

Spinach Lasagna Roll Ups

8 lasagna noodles, cooked and drained according to package directions
 430 mL (1¾ cups) ricotta
 500 mL (2 cups) cottage cheese
 500 mL (2 cups) Monterey Jack cheese, shredded and divided
 250 mL (1 cup) Parmesan cheese, shredded and divided
 750 mL (3 cups) chopped fresh baby spinach
 4 garlic cloves, minced
 Kosher salt
 Fresh cracked pepper
 750 mL (3 cups) spaghetti sauce, divided
 Fresh parsley, chopped

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F). Gently place cooked noodles on parchment or foil in a single layer to cool. In a large bowl combine ricotta, cottage cheese, three-fourth of the Monterey Jack cheese, half the Parmesan, spinach, garlic and a couple large pinches of salt and pepper.

Spread half the sauce into the bottom of a 23-cm (9-inch) broiler-safe baking dish.

Spread filling mixture evenly onto each noodle. Gently roll up each noodle lengthwise and place seam side down in the baking dish. Drizzle roll ups with remaining sauce and top with remaining cheese. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 30 minutes.

Remove foil; broil for 1 to 2 minutes or until the cheese is dark golden brown. Garnish with fresh parsley. Makes 8 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy Kylie Lato (midwestfoodieblog.com)



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Where has your card been?

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According to tech firm Businessolver, 87% of CEOs agree that a company's financial performance is tied to empathy in the workplace.

FOR YOUR
BUSINESS

Good vibrations

Why empathy matters and how to foster it in yourself

by NICOLE PRICE

For many years, I was described as anything but an empathetic leader. I had a tell-the-truth—regardless, take-no-prisoners leadership approach. It was so bad that one of my teams nicknamed me the “Nik-O-Nator”, a combination of my name and the Arnold Schwarzenegger character in *The Terminator*.

I wish I could say that one day I was in an empathy workshop and I walked out transformed. Instead, I learned the hard way through a series of crushing experiences in my personal life. During that time, I tried to suppress my grief and soldier on at work as if nothing happened, which severely affected my job performance.

Prior to these events, I believed two things about empathy: that people had it or they didn't, and that it prevented leaders from making the most logical decisions. But I was wrong. Empathy can be learned, and a leader who can balance empathy and compassion with logic and reason is a better leader to work with.



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Empathy is an essential element in understanding other people. It involves putting ourselves in their shoes and understanding their feelings, thoughts and experiences. Empathy is important because we gain insights into the needs of our staff, which can help us improve our company culture.

The following are three ways to practice empathy:

Use focused listening. This enables us to understand the motivations behind the words. Pay attention to the tone of the person's voice, their body language and the context of their words.

Show gratitude. Show appreciation for people's time and efforts, making the experience of interacting with you as smooth as possible.

Be proactive. Anticipate challenges and address them before they become problems. Provide clear instructions, offer solutions and be transparent about any changes.

I learned the hard way that empathy is important for bonding with primary caregivers, friends and other key people in your life. ■

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Nicole Price is author of *Spark The Heart: Engineering Empathy In Your Organization* (ForbesBooks, 2023; not available at Costco). She is also the CEO of business coaching firm Lively Paradox.

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Other benefits

A 2017 study by faculty at both the Leiden University and the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition, in South Holland, showed that:

- Children with higher levels of empathy are better able to regulate their emotions.
- Higher affective empathy—the ability to share others' feelings without direct emotional stimulation to oneself—

predicts constructive conflict resolution.

- Cognitive empathy—understanding the emotions of others—predicts sustainable, higher-quality friendships.—NP

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ALSO ON COSTCO.CA
Various item numbers

by LANA SANICHAR

When we were children, our first personal finance lessons were taught to us by our parents. Now that many of us are parents, our kids are learning from us about financial matters. Even though some financial literacy is taught in schools, parents are certainly the first educators in this area, with those lessons continuing throughout the teen and young-adult years.

In my September column, Fred Masters, former professional educator and president of Masters Money Management Inc., noted that understanding and acting on the "earn, save, invest cycle" is a crucial element of personal financial success for young people.

Here's a look at each of the elements of that cycle so that we're better able to talk about and model financial responsibility with our teens and young-adult children.

Earn. Finding work that we love is important because it opens the door to lifelong learning, which leads to specialization and increased earnings potential. It's worth noting that experiential learning programs at both the secondary and post-secondary levels help students make better career path decisions.

Save. It's critical to save on a regular basis. The best way to do this is to automate the process. Automatically move money after each pay period to one or more savings accounts so as to save for financial goals.



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Invest. For post-secondary school costs, parking dollars in risk-free savings accounts is the only way to go. When it comes to reaching long-term goals such as retirement, the earlier you start investing, the better.

Teaching kids about money is not an easy task. Even though I've tried my best to instill the concepts of earning, saving and investing in my children, my 22-year-old struggles repeatedly with the concept of saving. But practice makes (somewhat) perfect, and I will continue to talk about money with him daily. So, don't be discouraged. Continue the conversation, and your children will eventually understand how money functions. ■

Please do your own due diligence when making any financial decisions. This column is for general informational purposes only and may not apply to all provinces. It is meant to get the reader thinking about their finances; it is not meant to be used in lieu of advice from a professional.

Home schooling

Understanding a parent's role in modelling financial responsibility

COURTESY OF LANA SANICHAR



Lana Sanichar is president and editor-in-chief of *Canadian Money-Saver* magazine.

Through an exclusive arrangement, *Canadian Money-Saver's* experts partner with the *Costco Connection* to share advice about relevant financial topics.

Email topic suggestions to moneyinfo@canadianmoney saver.ca.

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Financial education

According to the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, almost half of Canadians engaged over the past five years in some type of financial

education to strengthen their financial knowledge. This was most commonly by reading a book or other printed material consulting online resources or taking financial courses at work.

Other strategies Canadians took part in included enrolling in in-person courses at a school or through a not-for-profit or community organization.—LS



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According to CNET, Altec-Lansing introduced the very first soundbar system in 1998.

TECH CONNECTION

by CHRISTINE PERSAUD

Nothing beats a fully immersive home theatre experience including both video and audio.

You don't typically think of a single soundbar for that, but you can get fabulous sound from a premium soundbar. They're affordable, take up less space and are easy to set up.

Here are some tips to help you get the most out of a soundbar:

Active or passive. You'll need to choose between an active or passive soundbar. An active soundbar has a built-in amplifier and connects directly to your TV, eliminating potential lag and sync issues. A passive soundbar connects to an amplifier or receiver. If you aren't adding more speakers, an all-in-one active soundbar solution is simple and effective.

Audio support. For an immersive, three-dimensional experience from a single soundbar, look for Dolby Digital, Dolby Atmos, DTS:X, or spatial audio support. Confirm that the streaming TV or music service you use supports this, too. Be sure that you are subscribed to the appropriate tier for these features and that you choose supported content. Each service will note if their version of this enhanced audio experience is available in the content description.

Consider connectivity. Built-in Wi-Fi and/or Bluetooth means you can pair a smartphone, tablet, laptop or other wireless-enabled device to the soundbar to listen to music or podcasts, take phone calls and more, without using a TV.



COURTESY OF SONOS

Play matchmaker. Consider matching the brand of your soundbar with the brand of your TV. Some TV manufacturers make soundbars with integration features. LG's latest soundbars include slide-in mounting systems to fit seamlessly beneath its newest TVs. LG's WOW Orchestra technology and technologies like Samsung's Q Symphony combine the manufacturer's TV speakers and soundbar to improve immersive sound and eliminate lip sync (when audio and mouth movements aren't lining up) and distortion.

Turn off the TV's speakers. Combining the TV's built-in speakers with a soundbar (without special features like WOW Orchestra or Q Symphony) can be distracting. Either disable the TV's internal speakers (if there's a settings option) or mute the TV volume and turn up the soundbar volume. ■

Feel the sound

How to get the most out of a soundbar

JOHN THOMSON



Christine Persaud is a Toronto-based freelance writer. Her work has appeared in *Wifihifi.com*, *Digital Trends*, *Reviewed/USA Today*, *XDA*, *Android Central* and other publications.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of quality soundbars in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

All about the bass

Don't forget to invest in a good set of cables rated to support the highest quality audio possible that the soundbar and TV can produce.

HDMI is usually your best bet. Also, if the soundbar doesn't come bundled with a subwoofer, consider investing in one to enjoy deeper bass and more booming sound when

watching action movies.

Some soundbars have proprietary connectors so verify this before choosing one to make sure it is compatible.—CP

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The desert oasis of Palm Springs offers a variety of ways to rejuvenate

by LISA TE SONNE



VICTOR DORFF

Lisa TE Sonne has travelled all seven continents and is the award-winning author of several travel books, a TV series and an Oscar-winning film.



COURTESY OF HYATT REGENCY INDIAN WELLS RESORT & SPA

Nature, culture, food and fun beckon people to Palm Springs, California, year-round. About two hours by car from Los Angeles, Palm Springs has served for decades as a desert oasis of rest, relaxation, romance and reset. Here are just a few reasons why.

Desert heights

For a dynamic overview, start with the breathtaking ride up Mount San Jacinto on the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. The tramcar rotates 360 degrees as it ascends 4 kilometres to its destination at 2,600 metres (8,516 feet) (tip: bring an extra layer, as the temperature drops precipitously). On a clear day, you'll see beyond the nine desert cities of Greater Palm Springs in the Coachella Valley, all the way to the Salton Sea. Topside highlights at the mountain station are restaurants, films, telescopes, walking paths to 80 kilometres of hiking trails, and lovely places just to sit and enjoy the pine forests.

Cuisine, from casual to fine

A delicious part of Palm Springs culture is food. Some of my family's favourites include the casual Sherman's Deli and the more elegant Wally's Desert Turtle. Newer, colourful places popular with locals and visitors are large venues like Lulu and Eight4Nine.

For something unique, seek out PS Air Bar. Inside, you're "flying" in a 737 with vintage first-class and coach seats and decor that's a nostalgic and humorous homage to air travel.

The art of browsing

Between meals, I like to visit the welcoming boutiques, galleries and museums and stroll the Walk of Fame—check out the photo op next to the 10-metre (26-foot) statue of Marilyn Monroe. People-watching is vibrant in a place that attracts golfers, hikers, part-time residents, retirees, foodies, families and spring-breakers.

If you are an aviation fan, the Palm Springs Air Museum has a historic collection of World War II airplanes.



TOP TO BOTTOM: COURTESY OF LA QUINTA RESORT & CLUB; COURTESY OF THE RITZ-CARLTON, RANCHO MIRAGE

Clockwise from left: The water slides and lazy river at Hyatt Regency Indian Wells Resort & Spa; The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage's The Edge Steakhouse; historic settings at La Quinta Resort & Club.

Red Jeep Tours takes you on private desert roads to the San Andreas Fault. Our guide, Travis, showed us how both wildlife and Indigenous Cahuilla survived in this arid area. He broke off parts of plants for us to eat and showed us how to find water. We also took short hikes through a re-created Cahuilla village and through the curves of narrow slot canyons.

Mmm-ahhh-sage

With Palm Springs' reputation as a place of ultimate relaxation, you don't want to miss out on the Azure Palm Hot Springs Resort & Day Spa Oasis in Desert Hot Springs to soak in natural warm mineral springs. You can enjoy

an expert massage and rest in a room walled with Himalayan salt rocks or chill in an ice room.

There's always more

A visit to Palm Springs always leaves me with a "next time" list, like walking with wallabies at the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, taking self-guided tours of celebrity homes and mid-century architecture and checking out the long-awaited Agua Caliente Cultural Centre and Spa.

As I drive out of town, I see a city banner proclaiming, "PS I Love You." I smile and think, "Yes, I do." I think you will too. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers Palm Springs vacation packages, as well as cruises, vacation packages, rental cars and hotel-only options for destinations in Canada, the United States and around the world. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.ca or call 1-855-863-0357.

Costco Travel

Here are a few of the Palm Springs resorts now offered through Costco Travel.

La Quinta Resort & Club opened in 1926. This iconic

hotel has five golf courses, 41 pools, a spa and tournament-style tennis courts.

Hyatt Regency Indian Wells Resort & Spa features a water park, two golf courses, tennis and a spa.

The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage features a luxury spa with holistic therapies incorporating Indigenous ingredients.

—Casey Livingston,
Costco Travel buyer

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Soft sell

Only time will tell if Squishmallows make it to infinity and beyond. But as toy stories go, the marshmallow-like plush toy's meteoric rise to the top of the US\$100-billion global toy market is one for the ages.

by **Mark Cardwell**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



Part of Squishmallows' appeal is the variety of personalities and sizes.



COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of Squishmallows are available in most Costco warehouses.

Toys mean the world to Herb Mitschele. A father of four young daughters and a toy industry expert who has worked for such iconic companies as Mattel and Playmates Toys, he's spent the past two decades helping make and market objects that educate and entertain kids of all ages.

As executive vice president with Jazwares, the Florida-based company that makes Squishmallows, Mitschele now leads a team that is tasked with expanding the global reach of the world's best-selling toy. "I've never been involved with anything like this, it's a once-in-a-career thing," he says. "Toy brands come and go. But Squishmallows are here to stay."

Toys with personality

Launched in 2017 by Kellytoy, an American toymaker acquired by Jazwares, Squishmallows are plush toys that range from 5 to 61 centimetres (2 to 24 inches).

Made with super-soft fabrics and stuffed with squishy proprietary materials, the colourful plush toys sport cartoon faces of whimsical personalities like Cam the Cat, or licensed movie favourites such as Dumbo and Buzz Lightyear.

There are now more than 2,000 styles, each with a unique personality and design. More than 100 million Squishmallows have been sold in more than 55 countries, earning the plush toy a variety of international industry awards, including Top-Selling Toy of the Year.

"The next stage is 200 million—and we will cross that mark very soon," says Mitschele, who leads Jazwares' global sales and planning division. "And we still have lots of opportunity to grow and expand in existing and new markets."



He credits the brand's lovable styles and personalities—each of them designed and created in a collaborative process that includes illustrators, designers and production and brand team members working both remotely and at 20 offices worldwide, including Jazwares' headquarters in Sunrise, Florida—for driving its popularity as a toy and collectible item across all age groups.

"It's rare to see a toy with such multi-generational appeal," says Mitschele. "Finding, buying and sharing Squishmallows has become a way for friends and family members to connect. It's a huge social phenomenon."

Squishy success

If their squishy softness and cute personalities have helped make Squishmallows a runaway success, social media has helped to fuel its rocket ride to the top of the toy world.



ALL SQUISHMALLOW IMAGES COURTESY OF © JAZWARES

There's at least one Squishmallows personality for everyone.

According to Mitschele, Squishmallows videos have been viewed more than 11 billion times on TikTok and fans have posted more than 1 million times on Instagram.

In addition to announcing new personality releases, the company uses that online reach to promote live Squishmallows events like the five-stop 2022 US East Coast Squish Tour and the arcade-like 'human claw machine' at the annual 2022 VidCon convention in Anaheim, California, where people waited up to four hours for a 20-second chance to grab all the Squishmallows they could while suspended from a crane.

"We have many rabid fans who absolutely love the brand," says Mitschele. "It's amazing to see people's reactions online and at events."

The brand received a huge boost on social media in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when celebrities such as Lady Gaga and Kim Kardashian published messages and photos of their Squishmallows collections that went viral on TikTok.

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From left: Jack the Black Cat, Gideon the Guacamole, Adila the Antelope, Yara the Rainbow Yeti

CUDDLY COLLECTIBLES

Of the 2,000 Squishmallows that have been created since 2017, Cam the Cat is one of the oldest personalities.

But in terms of collect-

ability, Jack the Black Cat—the 500th Squishmallows personality to be created—is the brand's meow.

Only 500 copies of the 40-centimetre (16-inch) toy were made when it was released in 2020. It is one of the rarest and

most sought-after Squishmallows, fetching thousands on online auction sites.

Other rare Squishmallows—like ones with holographic, golden and silver tags—are also being resold for astronomical prices.—MC



Super fan Melanie Schroeder at VidCon in Anaheim, California.

COURTESY OF MELANIE SCHROEDER

Fandom fun

Melanie Schroeder, a Squishmallows super fan, didn't think many people would watch the amateur 10-second video she made and posted on TikTok about her hunt for Squishmallows at a local store in 2021.

"But right away things went crazy," recalls Schroeder, a doctoral student in audiology at Pacific University in Oregon. "It ended up getting 11 million views."

Since then, she has become a social media influencer with a Squishmallows-loving audience of almost 200,000 followers on TikTok, another 15,000 on Instagram, and is now an official brand ambassador.

"It's a real honour for me because I absolutely love Squishmallows," says Schroeder, who has collected 800 of the plush toys since she bought her first one—a peach named Phyllis.

"I started out with the fruits, but now I like the animals like cows and frogs—oh, and mushrooms," she says. "I also like the newer [personalities] like Pokémon and SpongeBob."

Schroeder keeps her collection on a bunk bed in her off-campus apartment and posts photos and videos of them online. She also shares other people's posts about squish hunting or squish meets, when people get together in parks or parking lots to display or trade their toys.

"Squishmallows are just so cute," says Schroeder. "I love the vibrant colours and them all looking at me. They're like my own personal rainbow."

Squishmallows mania

With stories like Schroeder's, it's easy to see why toy industry analyst and consultant Chris Byrne—aka The Toy Guy—says the Squishmallows craze has taken the normally staid plush or stuffed toy category by storm.

"They have been the hottest thing in the industry for the past couple of years," says Byrne, who compares "Squish" mania to the frenzy over Care Bears and Beanie Babies. "Like them, Squishmallows are affordable and their selling point is sweetness. They're very tactile and comforting for both kids and adults coming out of the pandemic."

Unlike faddy toys that come and go, Byrne thinks Squishmallows has legs. "They're very trendy now and that cycle will pass," he says. "But like Care Bears or even Barbie, I think they'll remain a classic toy that Jazwares will be able to renew each year thanks to the [personalities]."

Mitschele says Jazwares' roughly 1,000 employees—who playfully refer to themselves as 'Jazmanians'—are working hard to keep





Squishmallows on top. “Our team has done a fantastic job laying out licensed partnerships and creating collaborative consumer programs with more than 60 best-in-class partners around the world,” he says.

In addition to developing new video games and products for people and pets, Jazwares teamed with McDonald’s and Universal Music Group to launch McDonald’s Happy Meal Squishmallows in June 2023.

“We’re continuing to innovate to enhance and evolve the Squishmallows fan experience. The sky’s the limit.” ■

Mark Cardwell is a writer and kid at heart in Saint-Ferréol-Les-Neiges, Quebec.



Jazwares owners, Judd and Laura Zebersky

COURTESY OF © JAZWARES

A dream fulfilled

In 1997, Florida lawyer Judd Zebersky decided to leave the law office where he worked with his wife Laura to found a toy company that would make safe, high-quality products for kids young and old.

Fast forward 25 years and Judd and Laura, who joined her husband in 2005, are hands-on owners of Jazwares (the ‘Jaz’ being Judd’s initials), a \$1-billion business (40% from sales of Squishmallows).

“I have loved pop culture since I was a kid (and) I was into comic books and toys,” Zebersky told Reuters recently. “I looked at my wife, and said, ‘I want to make toys.’ She said, ‘Follow your dreams,’ and that’s what I did.”—MC



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Mix things up with stand mixers

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Ease of use

Having the right tools for the job can make a world of difference. In this For Your Home Special Section, we present you with items and ideas to make everyday living easier and better.

Read about Costco supplier iRobot, which has been making robot vacuums for household use since 2002. Find out just how versatile stand mixers can be, and check out our buyers' selection of other small appliances. Finally, learn how waffle makers can square away your plans for breakfast, lunch or dinner with ease.



Robots to the rescue

COURTESY OF IROBOT



Waffle inspiration

COURTESY OF LIREN BAKER (KITCHENCONFIDANTE.COM)

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46 Wide world of waffles



Clean sweep

From sci-fi to reality, iRobot is on a mission to change how we clean

by ERIN SILVER



COSTCO CONNECTION

Find the iRobot Roomba j8+ (Item 8877550, shown above) and Braava Jet m6C (Item 4555275) in select Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Colin Angle loves having a clean home, but there's a caveat. "I have a great appreciation for cleanliness, but I'd rather design a solution than do it myself," says the chairman, CEO and co-founder of iRobot, the Bedford, Massachusetts, company that's been making robot vacuums for household use since 2002. "Perhaps it's inevitable I'd use my fascination with robots and my coding skills to make it easier for millions of people to clean their homes."

A man with a vision

His journey from tech savant to CEO began after a summer internship at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab. Angle helped design the behaviour-controlled rovers for NASA that would eventually become Sojourner, NASA's first miniature space exploration rover that actually probed Mars.

Equipped with this knowledge, in 1990, Angle left his doctorate pro-

gram at MIT to establish iRobot, along with co-founders Helen Greiner and Rodney Brooks.

In addition to sending robots into space, they developed a robot that helped assist with search-and-rescue missions after 9/11. Another roving robot enabled the US military to search and dispose of explosive devices in Iraq and Afghanistan. iRobot also had robots on the ground in 2011 to help avert a complete nuclear meltdown in Japan after the earthquake and nuclear accident.

Making a daily difference

Having developed the technology to make a difference in the world, Angle and his team looked ahead to what was next.

"We really wanted to build a robot that would touch peoples' lives on a daily basis," he says. "We realized that many of the



© PHOTO COURTESY OF IROBOT

algorithms used by our mine-sweeping robots to cover a certain area could also be used by a robot vacuum to search for dirt, so we continued on a 12-year journey to simplify peoples' home lives before we got to Roomba [robots that vacuum and mop]."

During that period, the team had to overcome many challenges before they could bring a mass-market, robotic vacuum into households. "We had to solve effective cleaning," says Angle. "We had to solve floor coverage and navigation. We had to get the price point right. We accomplished this through our partnerships and research and development work."

The mission ahead

iRobot has had to solve many challenges, like making sure their robots didn't accidentally mop a customer's carpet. Their work paid off. So far,

iRobot has sold more than 40 million Roombas worldwide, and more innovation is ahead. "Going forward, it's about the intelligence of the robot, ensuring you don't have to tidy your home before Roomba

cleans," says Colin Angle, chairman, CEO and co-founder of iRobot. "We want our robots to know what to clean and to adjust how it cleans based on what it's learned about your home."—ES

The future is robot-friendly

Now, the company has produced about 10 different generations of Roomba robot vacuums at different price points that can effectively and efficiently clean floors. The addition of smart-home technology has enabled users to decide when, where and how their home should be cleaned by talking to a device or pressing a button on a phone.

With six active robots in his house, Angle tests all the prototypes himself. His goal is to create robots that are less of a high-tech tool and more of a partner, so people can interact with them the way they would interact with other members in the household to convey what they want to happen.

Robots that can vacuum are just the beginning, says Angle. "It's exciting that after so many decades of promise we can start pointing to robots in our lives as being valuable additions and not science fiction." ■

Erin Silver is an award-winning children's author and freelance writer in Toronto.



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A passion for education

iRobot helped establish National Robotics Week, which takes place starting the first Saturday in April every year. Since 2010, this celebration has been sharing innovations and inspiration with children. The company also created a museum at its headquarters that hosts more than 300 tours a year, giving students from elementary school to master's programs the potential to be excited about robots. "Over the years it became clear that nothing we could do would have as powerful an impact as sharing robots with children," says Colin Angle, chairman, CEO and co-founder of iRobot.—ES

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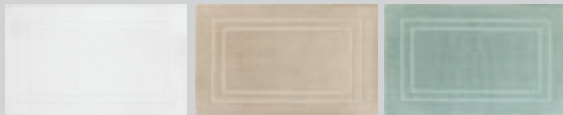
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Master your mixing

Stand mixers are a workhorse of versatility

by MANDY ELLIS



COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of stand mixers, including those from KitchenAid and Cuisinart, can be found in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

You may recognize stand mixers as the powerhouse of any baker's kitchen, but they can do more than make a mean batch of macaroons. The versatile attachments of stand mixers make a variety of tasks faster and easier, including some of the following examples.

Spiralize, peel and core. Trendy spiralizers with multiple blades create veggie faux pasta in seconds, letting you toss out handheld items that are clogging up your drawers. "They not only spiralize, they peel and core. The peeling is great for apple pie or potatoes, and makes it very little work," says Costco member Derek Ernst, vice president of global marketing and product development at KitchenAid.

Slice and shred. Skip spending lots of time slicing fruits and veggies. Virginia Willis, a chef, food writer and Costco member, advises using a stand mixer to reduce the prep time for processes like grating carrots, and thinks they are perfect for big gatherings where serious prep occurs.

Process. A smaller attachment dices, slices, shreds and juliennes. "The technology in our high-end countertop processors, like exact slicing and dicing technologies, is baked into this attachment," Ernst says. "It truly operates like a top-of-the-line food processor."

Make pasta. "The pasta attachment is absolute genius, because the hand-cranked ones are still well-made, but you need another hand. With this roller, it does it for you," explains Willis. You can now create fresh pasta, even gluten-free pasta, and macaroni noodles, quickly and easily.

Temper and slow cook. Precise-heat mixing bowls offer a ton of versatility. They heat up and hold temperatures so well that they can temper chocolate and can be used to cook anything made in a traditional slow cooker.

Juice. Speed up your juicing with a juicer and sauce attachment. "There are so many inferior single-use machines, but this attachment can be used, then



LEFT: © TESSA MALISANI; RECIPE: © BIT24 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

put in a drawer for less clutter while maximizing your mixer,” says Willis.

Grind. With a meat grinder attachment, you can grind anything from meats and sausages to coleslaw and spices. You’ll know the ingredients in your ground meat and enjoy a fast, simple appliance.

Make ice cream. “Rather than having a separate ice cream maker, you have just a single small bowl,” explains Alyssa Rimmer, recipe developer and photographer at Simply Quinoa. Pop the bowl in the freezer for a few hours, then attach it to your mixer when you’re ready to make ice cream or its healthier siblings, like gelato, sherbet or sorbet.

Mill. Using a grain mill attachment significantly cuts your custom-flour prep time. “With a grain mill, you can control the coarseness of it. So if you’re gluten-free like me, I oftentimes have to piecemeal different grains together to get the texture I want. This attachment allows me to make just the amount I need,” says Rimmer.

Strain. For fine purées, break down ingredients and remove peels speedily with this one attachment: a fruit/vegetable strainer.

Whisk. Incorporate air into ingredients or mixtures with this feature. Ideal for whipping eggs, egg whites or heavy cream, the whisk attachment can be used in recipes for angel food and chiffon cake, meringue, marshmallow, potatoes and more.

Knead. A dough hook can take on dough for things like breads, rolls, pizza, focaccia, pasta and yeast-raised coffee cakes.

Mix. Used for stirring and beating ingredients and mixtures, a flat mixing paddle is best for cookie doughs, cake and biscuit batters, frostings and pie crusts, and even for combining ingredients for meatloaf or meatballs. ■

Mandy Ellis (mandyellis.com) is an Austin, Texas-based freelance writer covering food, travel and health topics.

Pizza Dough

250 mL (1 cup) warm water,
40 C to 43 C (105 F to 110 F)
7 mL (1½ tsp) granulated sugar
11 mL (2¼ tsp) active dry yeast
750 mL (3 cups) bread flour or
unbleached all-purpose flour,
plus more for dusting and rolling
7 mL (1½ tsp) kosher salt
15 mL (1 Tbsp) extra-virgin olive oil,
plus more for coating the dough

Stir the warm water, sugar and yeast in the mixing bowl. Attach the dough hook and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes, or until foamy and bubbly. Combine the flour and salt in a mixing bowl. Add the flour mixture and olive oil to the yeast mixture and mix on speed 3 until dough forms a ball and the sides of the bowl are clean. Continue kneading on speed 3 for about 4 minutes, or until dough is smooth and springy. If sticky, add 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of flour at a time until smooth. If dry, add 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of water at a time. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm, draft-free place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour. Place dough on a lightly floured surface, divide in half and form into 2 crusts. Makes 2 (30-cm/12-inch) crusts.

Recipe courtesy of Cuisinart



Tips and tricks

KitchenAid shares these stand mixer maintenance and food preparation tips:

- Always start mixer on the lowest setting.

- Chill the bowl and whisk attachment for 10 minutes before whipping cold cream.

- Wash whisk and most attachments, accessories and bowls in hot soapy

water. (Check owner’s manual to determine dishwasher-safe parts.)

- Wipe an unplugged stand mixer and its beater shaft clean with a soft, damp cloth.—ME

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Cuisinart EasyPop Hot Air Popcorn Maker

This popcorn maker takes a snacking classic to another level by using air rather than oil to cook. Simply add kernels to the popcorn maker, turn on the popper, and in minutes you've got hot popcorn fresh from the chute and into your bowl. The Cool Air function cools down the chamber for fast and easy cleanup while you add your favourite toppings. Item 2644878. Warehouses/Costco.ca.—Jacynthe Guénette



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The OneBlade Face + Body razor kit trims, edges and shaves beards and body hair. The razor includes three interchangeable combs, and the flexible razor head follows the contours of your face and body. The dual-sided blade enables you to shave in either direction to trim your hair to your preference with style and precision. The compact razor is travel ready and has a rechargeable battery. Item 1726775. Warehouses/Costco.ca.—Andrée Laflamme

Frigidaire Triple Buffet Server/Warmer

This three-section buffet keeps your meals warm for up to three hours. Featuring three 2.5-litre (2.6-quart) stainless steel chafing dishes and cool-touch handles, this server provides enough room to hold your main course and two side dishes, making it great for roasts, vegetables, pasta dishes, soups, sauces, appetizers and more. It has an adjustable thermostat, plus the clear lids include an integrated serving spoon notch. Item 1731660. Warehouses/Costco.ca.—JG



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Cooking on the grid

It's time to rethink how to use a waffle iron

by CHRISTINA GUERRERO

You don't need to be a waffle fanatic to own a waffle maker. Sure, this appliance makes traditional waffles crispy on the outside and soft and fluffy on the inside—but it can do the same thing for any number of foods. Here is some inspiration to make the waffle maker a kitchen staple.

For breakfast, try using the waffle maker to cook an omelette or even hash browns. If you're craving something sweet, try making cinnamon rolls or wonuts (these are doughnuts that look like waffles, but have a cakey, dense doughnut-like texture). Drizzle these sweet treats with icing after the dough or batter has cooked and been removed from the waffle maker.

Craving a sandwich? Use your waffle maker for grilled cheese sandwiches, quesadillas or paninis. For

dinner, try cooking cornbread, reheating leftover macaroni and cheese, or making mashed potatoes and stuffing. Consider heating precooked meats, such as breaded chicken strips, sausage or bacon, and pepperoni slices with mozzarella cheese, in waffle batter. Simply add a little batter to the preheated and prepared waffle maker, layer the meat and cover with more batter. Close the lid until the waffle maker indicates your food is done.

Vegetarian options can also be prepared in the waffle maker. Try grilled falafel, zucchini fritters, sliced apples or pineapple.

Don't forget dessert. Try cooking cake or brownie batter or even cookie dough in your waffle maker. You could even sandwich s'mores between cooked waffles in the appliance or cook them layered in biscuit dough. Try these tasty recipes (right) for a yummy start. ■

Omelette Waffles

125 mL (½ cup) cooked ham, diced
500 mL (2 cups) baby spinach leaves, packed
6 large eggs
30 mL (2 Tbsp) half-and-half
1 mL (¼ tsp) salt
1 mL (¼ tsp) pepper
125 mL (½ cup) shredded cheddar cheese, plus more for serving
Sliced green onions

Preheat the waffle maker. Sauté the ham in a small skillet until it's warmed through and all the liquid has evaporated. Add the spinach and stir until it's completely wilted. Remove the pan from the heat to cool. Whisk the eggs, half-and-half, salt and pepper in a bowl. When the ham mixture is cool, add it to the egg mixture along with the cheese and stir to combine.

When the waffle maker is hot, spray with cooking spray. Ladle about 80 mL (⅓ cup) of the egg mixture into each section of the waffle maker and quickly spread it out. The grids should be completely covered with egg but not overflowing. Close the waffle maker and hold it firmly for 8 to 10 seconds, then release. Cook for 50 to 60 seconds, or until the egg has cooked through. Use a fork to lift the edge of the waffle, then use a flexible spatula to lift it out. Set the waffles on a wire rack. Serve topped with additional cheese and green onions. Makes 6 servings.

Tip: Top with chopped tomatoes, salsa or fresh herbs.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Keri Lyn Renner (shesaved.com)

Mashed Potato and Stuffing Waffles

500 mL (2 cups) leftover stuffing
500 mL (2 cups) leftover
mashed potatoes
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
15 to 30 mL (1 to 2 Tbsp)
all-purpose flour
Leftover gravy

Preheat the waffle maker.

In a large bowl, gently mix together the stuffing, mashed potatoes, eggs, and 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of flour. Do not overmix. If the batter looks too runny, mix in additional flour.

When the waffle maker is hot, spray with cooking spray. Pour the batter in the waffle maker (about 250 mL/1 cup per waffle). Cook 5 to 6 minutes, or until the waffles are golden and crispy on the outside. Serve immediately with gravy. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Tip: Top with fried eggs or your favourite leftovers.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Liren Baker (kitchenconfidante.com)



© RACHEL KOWALCHUK

Chocolate Waffles

375 mL (1½ cups)
all-purpose flour
45 mL (3 Tbsp)
granulated sugar
15 mL (1 Tbsp)
baking powder
2 mL (½ tsp) salt
60 mL (¼ cup)
unsweetened
cocoa powder
2 large eggs

375 mL (1½ cups)
whole milk
60 mL (4 Tbsp)
butter, melted
5 mL (1 tsp)
vanilla extract
250 mL (1 cup)
chocolate chips
Whipped cream,
syrup and fresh
berries, for topping

Preheat the waffle maker. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and cocoa in a large bowl. Make a well in the middle of the ingredients and set aside.

Separate the egg yolks from the whites. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites with a mixer until fluffy. In another bowl, mix the egg yolks, milk, butter and vanilla extract. Fold in the egg whites, leaving it lumpy. Add the egg mixture into the well of the dry ingredients and mix with a rubber spatula until combined, leaving it lumpy. Add the chocolate chips. When the waffle maker is hot, spray with cooking spray. Ladle batter, about 150 mL (⅔ cup) per waffle, into the waffle maker. Cook the waffles until crisp.

Serve hot with whipped cream, syrup and fresh berries. Makes 6 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Rebecca Hubbell (sugarandsoul.co)



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COSTCO CONNECTION

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1 onion, peeled and quartered

1 lemon, quartered

22 mL (1½ Tbsp) fresh rosemary

22 mL (1½ Tbsp) fresh thyme

22 mL (1½ Tbsp) fresh sage

250 mL (1 cup) unsalted
butter, softened

5 mL (1 tsp) salt

2 mL (½ tsp) freshly ground
black pepper

6-8 cloves garlic, minced

If the **Kirkland Signature
whole turkey** is frozen: Thaw
in the fridge, 24 hours for
every 5 pounds of Turkey.

Preheat the oven to 165 C (325 F).

Make herb butter by combining
room temperature butter, minced
garlic, salt, pepper, 1 Tbsp each
of chopped rosemary and
thyme, ½ Tbsp of sage.

Remove the neck and giblets
from the inside the cavities.
Pat the turkey dry.

Season the cavity with salt and
pepper, stuff with quartered
lemon, onion and leftover herbs.

Use fingers to loosen the skin
above the breasts, spread a few
Tbsp of butter underneath.

Place the turkey on a rack
in a roasting pan.

Microwave to soften the
remaining butter mixture.
Baste the remaining
butter all over the outside
of the turkey.

Roast for about 13-15 minutes
per pound, or until internal
temperature reaches about
165 C (325 F).

Check halfway through cooking,
and once the skin gets golden
brown, cover the top of the
turkey with tinfoil, to protect the
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Allow the turkey to rest
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SMITTEN

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- Crisp and sweet
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Waste not

Eat better and save time and money by reducing food waste

by KAREN ANSEL



LISA HANCOCK

Karen Ansel, is a New York City-based nutritionist, journalist and author specializing in health, nutrition and fitness.

COSTCO CONNECTION

FoodSaver Vacuum Sealing System (above, Item 3248298) and Kirkland Signature™ Vacuum Sealing Bags (Item 8122017) can be found in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.



More than half of Canada's food supply goes to waste every year, according to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. But food waste isn't only about frittering away perfectly good food. "It also squanders all of the resources that went into growing the food, like water, energy, labour, land, seeds and fertilizer," says Anne-Marie Bonneau (zerowastechef.com), a San Francisco Bay Area-based food waste expert.

Yet finding ways to use up all those leftover food scraps can seem overwhelming. "I like to recommend progress, not perfection," says nutritionist, food blogger and Costco member Rosanne Rust. "Begin by consciously recognizing what type of food you throw away each week." Maybe it's half a loaf of bread, the wilted vegetables in your crisper or bits of leftover cooking ingredients.

That's a good place to start. Then, try the following tips. They'll help you put all that food to good use—and make meal prep easier too.

Planning is everything

You might be surprised that the first step to reducing food waste doesn't start at home. It begins when you are grocery shopping. "I recommend having a plan for every item you put into your cart," says Rust. Then, once you get home, store all perishables properly.

For example, leafy greens, like lettuce and spinach, are happiest in the crisper, rolled up in a damp tea towel. Keep berries sweet and delicious by storing them unwashed in their original container on a shelf in the fridge. Got onions, bananas and apples? These healthy staples naturally release a gas called ethylene, which can cause other produce to ripen too quickly, so store them separately. Stash onions in a cool dark place, such as a pantry.



Reducing food waste can be easy and convenient.

COURTESY OF FOODSAVER

Then place bananas in a bowl on the counter and apples in a plastic bag in the crisper compartment.

A little prep goes a long way

The next step is prep. “Be your own sous-chef and do a bit of prep work when you get home with your groceries,” suggests Bonneau. For example, “When you prepare caramelized onions to top a pizza, cook extra to have on hand in the refrigerator, ready to go into your next dish, like an omelette or sandwich,” she says.

Even if you haven’t been to the supermarket lately, there’s probably

an entire meal sitting in your crisper. Why not dice those stray veggies and roast them for a hearty side dish, or toss them into pasta, rice, frittatas and salads? Adding a few “use it up” recipes to your repertoire can also work wonders, says Bonneau. Stir-fries, potpies, chili, quesadillas, stews and soups are all tasty ways to put stray ingredients to work.

Make friends with your freezer

“One of the easiest ways to ensure large amounts of perishable food are eaten is to batch cook and freeze some of the extra food to enjoy later,” says Bonneau. “You’ll not only reduce waste, you’ll also save time by cooking once and eating a few times.” That’s just the beginning. Freezing can add months of life to leftover ingredients. You can even freeze eggs—just crack them open and whisk them well first.

While food will stay safe in the freezer, too much freezer time can cause texture and taste to suffer. A good rule of thumb is to use most foods within three to four months. However, you can freeze uncooked chicken, roasts and chops for up to a year.

Like most things in life, reducing food waste is a matter of habit. “Once you get into the groove of storing food properly and making an effort to notice what in your fridge or pantry needs to be used up, you’ll be on your way to less food waste,” says Rust. “You’ll likely come up with some creative meal solutions too!” ■



© ЮЛИЯ БОГАТЫРЕВА / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

A BIG DILL

Costco members Andrea Wasko and Meaghan Gilbert, creators of a DIY quick pickling kit (quickpicklekit.com), say there’s a safe, simple and natural way to prevent food waste. “Rather than wasting the vegetables that took a lot of time and a lot of energy and resources to grow, pickle them,” Wasko says. Even wrinkled produce that may look past its peak is great to pickle, because the vinegar, water and spices revive them and extend the shelf life for up to 30 days, she says.

—Christina Guerrero

Sealing the deal

Air can change food’s taste, texture and colour and even cause it to spoil. Enter food storage bags, which can help foods stay fresh.

When using plastic zip-close bags, place refrigerated food in a new bag, gently pressing out as much air as possible. When freezing foods, leave at least 1.3 centimetres (½ inch) of

air space for food to expand and seal bag completely.

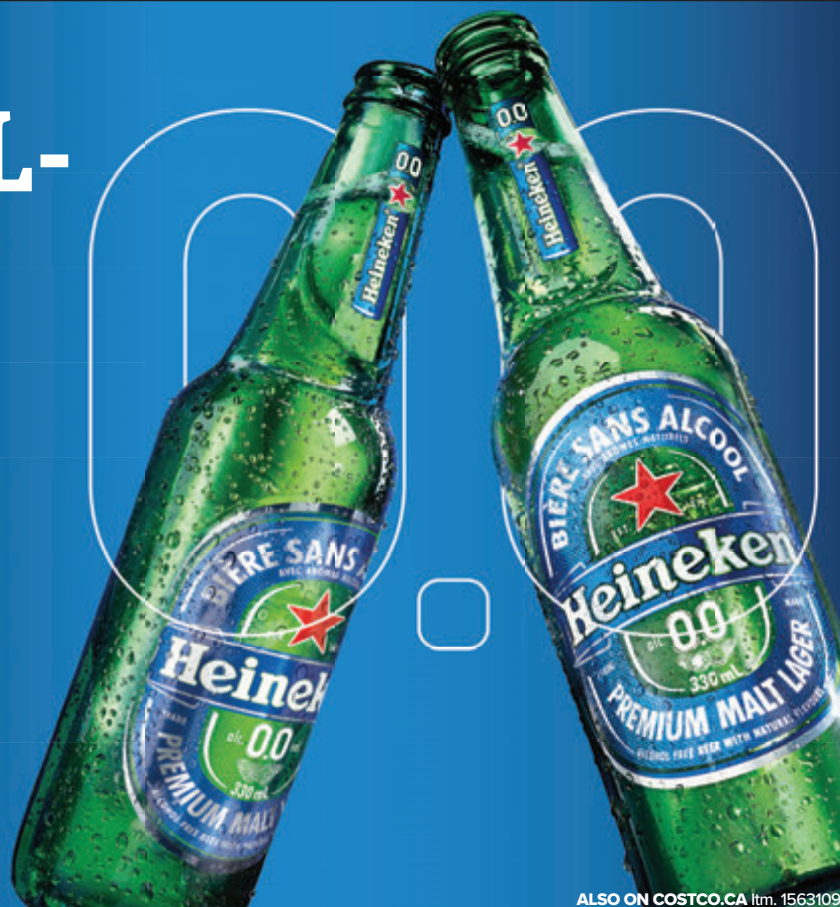
Similarly, a vacuum sealer removes the air from the bag and then uses a heated seal bar to fuse the sides together.—KA

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Picking a winner

Costco supplier Rao's uses Italian tomatoes

by OWEN ROBERTS



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A two-pack of Rao's Marinara Sauce (Item 1460350) is available in Costco warehouses and for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.

Some cooks say it's their choice of tomatoes, or a secret ingredient, that makes their signature sauces stand out. Farmers, though, say it's the climate, the landscape and the soil—known as the terroir—that impacts flavour.

The truth is, they're both right.

Costco tomato sauce supplier Rao's and its parent company Sovos Brands believe their San Marzano-style tomatoes are hard to beat. They're a special variety developed exclusively by their supplier and grown in Italy's volcanic soils, in the footprint of the legendary and still active Mount Vesuvius.

And for these tomatoes, volcanic soils are among the best. Imagine soils rich in potassium, phosphorus, sulphur, organic matter, trace minerals and ash, which is a natural fertilizer.

"It's a perfect situation for growing tomatoes," says Sovos Brands Chief Growth Officer Yuri Hermida.

For tomato sauces, San Marzano tomatoes have become a top choice for discerning chefs. These tomatoes have it all: sweet taste, thin skin, not many seeds, meaty texture and low moisture content. That makes them perfect for thick, fragrant, mouthwatering sauces that cling effortlessly to pasta.

After being harvested, washed and steam-peeled, the tomatoes are simmered in open kettles at a southern Italy processing plant. Additional ingredients are minimal. For example, the company's popular marinara sauce features just olive oil, whole leaf basil, fresh onions and garlic and other spices.

Better yet, the ingredients are all grown by a nearby multi-generational family-farming operation.

Hermida, a Costco member, says Rao's is now targeting US\$1 billion in sales. He bases that goal on consumer interest in quality retail, and on the authentic roots of Rao's sauce (see "Restaurant quality"). ■

Owen Roberts is a Champaign, Illinois-based agricultural journalist.



COURTESY OF RAO'S

RESTAURANT QUALITY

Besides a taxi, one of the hardest things to find in New York City is a table at legendary Rao's. After the restaurant was awarded three stars by an influential *New York Times* restaurant critic in 1977, reservations for Rao's southern Italian food became hard to get. To cope, the restaurant abandoned reservations altogether, and instituted assigned seating instead—for lucky regulars and their friends. The restaurant went on to develop its own retail brand, Rao's Specialty Foods, and Sovos Brands bought it in 2017. So now, you can jump the queue and head to your own kitchen for an authentic Rao's culinary experience.—OR

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Dry eye distress

Learn what causes the irritation and how you can relieve it

by JENNY WISNIEWSKI



COSTCO CONNECTION

Eye drops and vision supplements are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Have you ever experienced the sensation of having something in your eye, and it just won't let up? It may not be a loose eyelash. A gritty feeling is one symptom of dry eye disease.

Dry eye occurs when your eyes do not produce enough tears, or your tears don't work correctly to lubricate your eyes. Other symptoms include burning, redness, sporadic blurred vision and, ironically, increased tearing. If left untreated, dry eye can affect your quality of life and, in rare, very severe cases, cause scarring on the cornea and a loss of vision.

Because dry eye results from a spectrum of underlying conditions, it is difficult to pinpoint how many Canadians are diagnosed annually. However, researchers estimate that more than 6 million Canadians are currently living with diagnosed dry eye disease, according to a 2019 article in the peer-reviewed journal *The Ocular Surface*.

Causes

The Canadian Medical Association Journal reports that up to 30% of people over the age of 50 are affected by dry eye. This is partially due to the fact that as people age, they are more likely to take prescribed medications. Some of these medications—most notably chemotherapy and meds that treat high blood pressure, anxiety and depression—can lead to dry eye.

Women are at a higher risk for developing dry eye, in part due to hormonal changes. These changes can affect the quality and quantity of tear film, the layer of tear fluid on the eye's surface. Some autoimmune diseases, like psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis and Sjogren's syndrome, contribute too. Loose eyelids—the drooping of the upper eyelids, most commonly found among older adults due to aging—are another contributor.



Women are at a higher risk for developing dry eye, in part due to hormonal changes.



LEFT: © 9NONG; RIGHT: VECTORS POINT / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

tattoos can also bring on dry eye, says Dr. John Conto, an optometrist at Froedtert Hospital and the Medical College of Wisconsin Eye Institute. Some of these products and procedures are not tear-gland safe, Conto stresses, and are not always applied correctly.

Treating symptoms

If you are experiencing eye dryness, start by using preservative-free artificial tears, which can be found over the counter. Be sure to use them consistently throughout the day. If your eyes are not relieved, schedule an appointment with your optometrist. If you are diagnosed with dry eye, possible treatments include a tear-producing medication like lifitegrast (Xiidra) or cyclosporine (Restasis), tear duct plugs or, in rare cases, surgery.

Dry eye can be a pesky problem requiring only a minor addition to your daily routine. With the consistent use of artificial tears, most people find themselves feeling—and seeing—like their old selves. ■

Jenny Wisniewski is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Welcome tears

Lubricating eyes with artificial tears is the first line of defence against dry eye. Before you buy, understand the difference between artificial tears with preservatives and preservative-free artificial tears.

Artificial tears with preservatives come in multi-dose bottles. The chemicals inhibit the growth of bacteria after the bottle is opened but also may irritate the eyes. Preservative-free artificial tears, on the other hand, often come in small, single-dose vials and contain fewer additives. Recently, preservative-free, multi-dose bottles have also entered the marketplace. Both are sold over the counter.

Optometrists recommend preservative-free drops for dry eye. Keeping them handy—near your computer, for example—will help you remember to use them frequently throughout the day.—JW

However, the younger population is not immune. Dr. Pink Sidhu, an optometrist with Dr. Pink Sidhu & Associates in Toronto, Ontario, working independently as an optometrist in the Thorncliffe Park Costco location, is seeing an increase in the number of younger patients coming in.

“Children and young adults are on their devices longer than ever before. This creates a stare-and-glare evaporative dry eye symptom, directly related to evaporation of tears,” Sidhu says.

Cosmetic treatment like eyelash extensions, eyelash growth serums, extreme Botox treatments and eyelid

Prevent dry eyes

Controlling your environment and maintaining a balanced diet can help keep dry eye away. Try these tips:

- When outside in the

wind, wear protective or wraparound sunglasses.

- Use an air purifier or humidifier in your home.
- Add omega-3s to your diet. (Dr. John Conto recommends trying a daily

multivitamin plus fish oil.)

- If you spend a lot of time at a computer screen, remember to look away from the screen frequently, and blink your eyes.—JW

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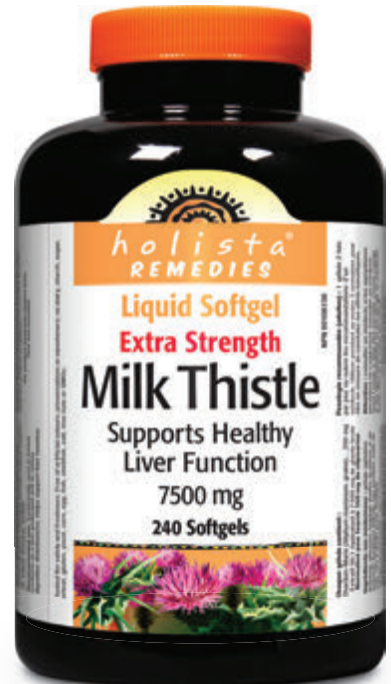
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Banishing the stigma

Treating mental health with openness and compassion

by LAWRENCE VARGA
and JOSEPH HANNA



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Lawrence Varga, B.Sc.Pharm., is assistant vice president of Costco Pharmacy.

Joseph Hanna, B.Sc.Pharm., CDE, BCGP, director of Costco Pharmacy, contributed to this column.

As we are just coming off of World Suicide Prevention Day (Sept. 10), and October contains both World Mental Health Day (Oct. 10) and Invisible Disabilities Week (Oct. 15-21), this fall means it's time to talk about what we're often afraid to discuss, even though it affects so many of us. It is estimated that as many as half of all Canadians will have dealt with a mental condition, including depression, by the time they are 50 years old, so if it isn't you, it's certainly the person sitting next to you.

It's important to recognize the signs of depression, such as the person not wanting to do things they enjoyed previously, procrastinating, moving slowly, seeming distant, distracted, indecisive, disconnected, irritable, easily fatigued, and having frequent headaches or stomach pain, or drastic changes in sleep or weight.

When you see these changes in a friend, family member or co-worker, don't be afraid to talk about it and know that it will most likely feel awkward. You can

start with, "I've noticed that you haven't seemed yourself lately. Is there anything going on that you're struggling with that you'd like to talk about?" Although many times the person will pretend to be OK, that caring question may give the person just enough hope to go on another day and maybe plant the seed in their mind to seek professional help.

Allowing someone to talk openly about their struggles without judgment or shame, and showing them empathy and compassion can be liberating and may empower them to get the help they need. Michael Landsberg's website, Sicknotweak.com, for example, allows for sharing of vulnerabilities and lived experience as a source of collective strength. We can all learn skills to help promote life, eliminate stigma and shame, and help someone who is struggling with dark, desperate thoughts. It's OK to not be OK. ■

Pharmacies in Costco's Quebec locations are independently owned and operated by pharmacists.

Mental health

According to a recent Mental Health Commission of Canada report, almost three-quarters of

the annual 4,000 suicide deaths are men. Men are often not accustomed to talking about feelings. In particular, men may be afraid of being labelled

weak, lazy or unintelligent and may handle mental anguish with harmful behaviours, such as substance or alcohol dependency.—LV

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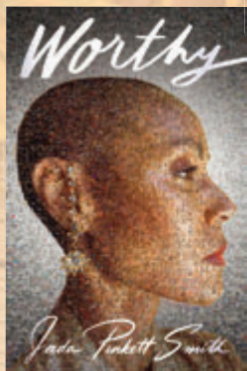
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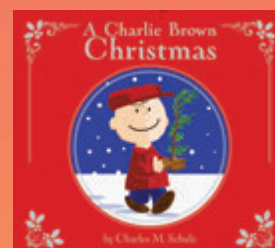
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Personal best

Andre De Grasse
races against himself
to run faster

by ELLEN SCHWARTZ



Andre De Grasse

© FINN O'HARA

First, the stats. Andre De Grasse is the first Canadian to break both the 10-second barrier in the 100-metre dash and the 20-second barrier in the 200-metre dash. He is the first Canadian sprinter to win three medals at a single Olympic Games, as he won gold in the 200 metres, silver in the 4x100 metres relay and bronze in the 100 metres at the delayed 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

His path, however, was not smooth. As a teen growing up in Markham, Ontario, De Grasse was struggling in school, dreaming of becoming a professional basketball player. His trajectory changed when a friend challenged him to compete in a high school track and field meet. Unfamiliar with the starting blocks, he took off from an upright stance, wearing a T-shirt, baggy shorts and borrowed track spikes—and ran the 100 metres in 10.91 seconds. This caught the attention of Tony Sharpe, a former Olympian, who became De Grasse's coach. Sharpe later told the *Orange County Register*, “I’ve been in this sport 40 years. In terms of pure talent, I’ve seen nothing like Andre De Grasse.”

After attending Coffeyville Community College in Kansas and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, De Grasse turned pro in 2015, signing a multi-year sponsorship contract with Puma.

Now, he has written *Ignite: Unlock the Hidden Potential Within*. In the book, he shares lessons from his journey to becoming an Olympic champion, detailing the determination, resilience and perseverance it takes to be the best. “I’m excited to share these insights from the highs and lows of my career, both on and off the track,” he says. “I hope they help people unlock their own hidden potential.”

One of these insights is that desire and talent alone are not enough. De Grasse tells the *Connection*, “You need [both] a plan to work from and clear goals, and then you have to commit to work hard to reach them. When you fall short, you have to set new goals and keep going.”

He also emphasizes that it’s important to know where your true competition lies. In *Ignite* he writes, “Although you are running against other people, you are really racing against yourself. This applies to most challenges in life. Don’t focus on what others are doing but on bettering your own record.”

That is precisely what De Grasse is doing now, as he prepares to compete at the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics. ■

Ellen Schwartz is the author of 19 award-winning books. She lives in Burnaby, British Columbia.

ONLINE BOOK PICK

BOOK

Dork Diaries 15: Tales from a Not-So-Posh Paris Adventure

AUTHOR

Rachel Renée Russell

Readers rejoice! After waiting several years, Nikki Maxwell is back. Will Nikki finally make it to Paris? Or will she and her best friends plan a Paris-themed fundraiser to help her crush, Brandon, raise money for the Fuzzy Friends Animal Shelter?

Not only is Nikki back, but so is all of the drama that is her middle school life.

Recommended for children ages 9 to 13.

—Stephanie E. Ponder



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Ignite (Item 1753665) and *Dork Diaries 15* (Item 1467811) will be in most warehouses in October.

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SCHOLASTIC

Capture the moment

Costco supplier Shutterfly has members' photo needs covered

by DAN JONES



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHUTTERFLY

COSTCO CONNECTION

To learn more about Shutterfly's range of services, visit Costco.ca/photo. Browse other Costco Services by visiting Costco.ca and clicking "Services."

Around 1.81 trillion photos are taken worldwide every year, which equals 57,246 per second, or 5 billion per day, according to Photutorial.com. That's a lot of memories waiting to be shared. Enter Shutterfly, a photo company that offers Costco members exclusive savings on personalized products and custom designs.

The *Connection* recently caught up with Corey Conklin, vice president of customer success at Shutterfly, to discuss how the company is helping Costco members make the most of their pictures.

Costco Connection What is Shutterfly?

Corey Conklin Shutterfly is the one-stop shop to bring your photos to life through our custom photo printing, photo books, holiday cards, gifts, wall art, home decor and more. With so many beautiful products and expertly crafted designs to choose from, you'll always find the one that inspires you. Choose from a variety of materials, like canvas and metal. Add a personal touch to home accents with

blankets, mugs and more—with styles to match every aesthetic. Whether you make something in minutes, customize every detail, or shop artist-designed items, you'll love what arrives on your doorstep.

CC What benefits does Shutterfly offer to Costco members?

CC Costco members get an exclusive discount of 51% off regularly priced orders (automatically applied at checkout), plus free economy shipping on orders over \$59 every time you shop at Shutterfly. Terms and restrictions apply.

CC How can Costco members get started using Shutterfly?

CC Getting set up with Shutterfly is easy—just head to Costco.ca/photo and select "Get started." Then enter your Costco membership number and link to your existing Shutterfly account or create a new one. Once your membership number is added, your exclusive Costco member discount will be automatically applied to your cart at checkout.

CC Anything else members should know about Shutterfly?

CC Shutterfly's unique and personalized items are a great option if you're looking for creative ideas and new ways to preserve your memories and stay connected with loved ones. With so many products and designs to choose from, we are sure you will find the perfect item to commemorate your special moments. ■



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The environmentally conscious design features sustainable fibrefill made from ocean-bound plastics and plant-based antimicrobial protection that keeps your pillow fresh and free of allergens. Two standard/queen pillows. Item 6543200. [Warehouses/Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

The latest Costco finds



Gourmia 6.6-Litre (7-Quart) Air Fryer with Window

Includes dishwasher-safe basket, crisper tray, multi-purpose rack and a recipe book. Item 1728676. [Warehouses/Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).



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PRIME

HYDRATION

WITHOUT LIMITS





MICHAELA BELL

ENVIRONMENT FIRST

Costco members Ashley Ward and Katie Carson had a shared goal to reimagine the resort experience. They pictured one that doesn't compromise the environment and one that values the land and the community that surrounds it.

At Hope-Wellness Eco-Resort, they use natural cleaning products crafted in-house, solar energy, locally sourced food and beverages, and rainwater for their organic gardens. Cabins were built from wood milled on-site and feature local products, including linens made of natural fibres.—WK



FROM LEFT: MADELINE TAYLOR

Inspired wellness

When the pandemic struck, BFFs Ashley Ward and Katie Carson lost their jobs in the hospitality field. While sharing a glass of wine one night, the two discussed opening a wellness resort that would not only put the environment first, but also support the community.

"We were both single mums uninspired by our jobs [and] searching for a way to

make a difference in our industry while supporting local businesses and artisans," Ward explains.

The adventure was not without hiccups. "When a piece of land came our way," Carson says, "we signed our lives away to the bank and decided to learn as we went."

The result: the Hope-Wellness Eco-Resort. It's a 20-acre, sustainable Scandinavian-inspired four-season resort in Hopewell Cape, New Brunswick, overlooking the Bay of Fundy.—Wendy Kitts

Clockwise from top: Ashley Ward leads a class in the yoga dome; resort owners Ward (left) and Katie Carson; the Nature Suites allow for relaxing and socializing.

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2023 GMC Sierra 1500 AT4

Eligible Costco members can receive exclusive savings on select,
new Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra trucks.*



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*To qualify for the \$750 Costco Member-only Bonus, you must be a Canadian resident holding a valid driver's license, have been an active Costco member as of August 31, 2023, and must: (1) Register with Costco to receive your non-transferable Authorization Number; (2) Present the Authorization Number to a participating dealer; (3) Retail purchase, finance or lease an eligible new or demonstrator 2023 (in-stock) or 2024 GM vehicle delivered from September 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023. Bonus is deducted after taxes are applied to the vehicle purchase price. The purchase or lease of a vehicle does not qualify for the calculation of the Costco Executive Membership 2% Reward. Offer may not be redeemed for cash. Conditions and limitations apply to this limited time offer. See participating dealer for details.

For full program details and for any applicable exclusions see a participating dealer or CostcoAuto.ca.

Offer is valid at participating authorized GM Canada dealers. Offer available in Canada only. Offer is subject to change without notice. Void where prohibited. Costco and its affiliates do not sell automobiles nor negotiate individual transactions.