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COSTCO **Connection**

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS

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DECEMBER 2023



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COSTCO Connection *December*

December 2023

Volume 36

Number 11



Explore the world
around you with your
best friends this winter.

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Buyers' picks

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**ASSISTANT
VICE
PRESIDENT'S
NOTE**

Season's greetings

Happy December everyone! As we head into the holiday season, we cannot help but think about food.

In this issue's cover story, you will find great recipes from professional chefs to delight your family and guests. You'll also find a host of other food stories with tantalizing ingredients. From dried fruit and pears to feta and caviar, Costco has lots of great ingredients at great prices to help you prepare these fantastic dishes. My mom had a love of cooking and that passion was passed down to me. Although I am not the culinary maestro that she was, I do love to try new recipes. And I am sure to try the many that are listed on these pages.

You will also want to dive into our Special Section this month, as we look at various forms of entertainment. From reading and journaling to house concerts and outdoor activities, there's a little something for everyone.

And if a winter wonderland isn't your ideal setting, how about a sunny vacation to San Diego, Phoenix or Miami? It is amazing what a little sunshine can do to raise our spirits and help us relax.

As our buying and warehouse teams are busy in our workshop getting ready for the season, we wanted to take time to reflect on how grateful we are that you have chosen to shop with us. Thank you! Our Costco family wishes you and your families a very happy and healthy holiday season. We are looking forward to what 2024 will bring our way. ■



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Sue Pudrycki is Assistant Vice President of Marketing.

Correction

In the "Protect your tech" article in September 2023, AppleCare+ in Canada does not provide coverage for incidents of theft or loss for a fee.

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- ◆ Member stories
- ◆ Timely tips
- ◆ And more



A season to smile

Gift-giving traditions abound this month. When you walk into a Costco warehouse or browse Costco.ca, you'll know you've come to the right place. From gifts for loved ones to food to share, we've got everything to make you smile this season and beyond.

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Back-story

THE HOLIDAYS ARE a traditional time for giving and exchanging gifts, which may be one of the oldest of human activities. The reasons are many. For some, it's a religious or historic tradition. For others it's the magic of recapturing memories of youth and creating new memories for the next

generation. Wrapped up in those reasons are the love and affection we feel for each other, and the chance to express those emotions by surprising and delighting the people in our lives. The gift giver may also feel a sense of purpose and satisfaction, making this thoughtful act a win-win.



HAPPY HANUKKAH!

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COSTCO BAKERY

Goodies galore

Need some baked goods this holiday season? Check out Costco Bakery for freshly baked desserts, pastries, bread and more. Various options will be available throughout the month—stop into a warehouse or use Costco Grocery at Costco.ca to see what's new. From peppermint bark to raspberry cream cake, there's something for everyone.



Nanaimo Bars

The Jewish Festival of Lights

This year, Hanukkah begins at sundown on Thursday, December 7, and ends at nightfall on Friday, December 15. The festival is observed by lighting the candles of a menorah, singing Hanukkah songs, playing dreidel and eating traditional foods, such as latkes. Happy Hanukkah to all who celebrate!



The Children's Miracle Network Campaign supports organizations, such as the CHEO foundation.

CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK

The gift of giving

The 2023 Children's Miracle Network Campaign, which runs in May, raised more than \$13 million dollars in Canada. The contributions, which come from Costco members, vendors, employees and the Costco corporate match program, make a significant impact by supporting various children's hospital foundations across Canada. These efforts demonstrate Costco's commitment to making a difference in the lives of children and families in need through community support.

LEFT: LARSEN RAMIREZ; RIGHT: © DUSANPETKOVIC / STOCKADOB.COM



KEEPING ACTIVE

Winter fitness tips

Cold weather can be a deterrent when it comes to exercising and practicing good health habits. These tips can help you with your fitness goals, no matter the conditions.

- Take the stairs
- Trim down the amount of sugar- or calorie-heavy condiments you use
- Carry a water bottle to stay hydrated
- Get up and move during TV commercials

◆ HERE TO HELP

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'TIS THE SEASON

Product safety and recalls

Some toys are not safe. You can find information on product safety, recalls, holiday safety tips and more at Canada.ca. For recall information on items that were sold in Costco warehouses or at Costco.ca, go to Costco.ca, scroll down to "Customer Service" and click "Recalls and Product Notices." Stay informed this season and enjoy the holidays.



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EASY APPETIZERS

Goat Cheese Stars with Pesto and Sun-Blushed Tomatoes

These can be made in a flash and they will disappear equally fast! You can try many different fillings, but these are particularly colourful and festive.

Flour, for the work surface

340 g (¾ lb) puff pastry, thawed according to package instructions if frozen

99 g (3.5 oz) fresh goat cheese

60 mL (¼ cup) basil pesto

60 mL (¼ cup) sun-blushed (semi-dried) tomatoes in olive oil, drained and finely diced

Fresh basil sprigs, for garnish

On a lightly floured work surface, unroll the sheet of pastry. Using a 7-cm (2¾-inch) star-shaped cookie cutter, cut out 24 stars. Carefully transfer each star to a cup in a mini-muffin pan, pressing it gently against the bottom and extending the points up the sides to form a tartlet shell. Spoon a generous 2 mL (½ tsp) of the cheese onto the bottom of each tartlet shell. Chill for 20 minutes. While the pastry is chilling, preheat the oven to 204 C (400 F).

Bake the pastry until golden and crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and spoon about 5 mL (1 tsp) pesto into 12 of the pastry shells, then divide the tomatoes evenly among the remaining shells. Arrange on a platter, scatter the basil around the stars and serve immediately. Makes 24 stars.

Recipe courtesy of Christmas at the Palace: A Cookbook by Carolyn Robb (Weldon Owen, 2022; not available at Costco)



JOHN KERNICK

CALLING ALL MEMBERS

Amazing holiday recipes

Have you developed a holiday food recipe that all your friends adore, or possess a tried-and-true family recipe that's been passed from generation to generation? If so, we'd love to hear from you for consideration in a future article. Send your story, recipes and high-resolution images to daniel.jones@costco.com.



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A Robert Half Canada Inc. survey found that 50% of Canadian workers were considering a job change in 2023.

FOR YOUR BUSINESS

by FRED SIEVERT

Whether you are starting a new business, embarking on an entrepreneurial venture or are part of a large corporation, certain key traits will serve you well.

As a seasoned manager at a life insurance company, I thought long and hard about what traits would help an employee be recognized as someone with high potential. I believe the following tips will put you in the right frame of mind to succeed almost anywhere.

Know your mission. Memorize the company's mission statement. Why? As you consider difficult decisions, you can instantly recall the mission and readily test your decisions against it. It is critically important that decisions align well with the company's mission.

Develop organizational awareness. Regardless of the size of the organization, develop a network of contacts across the company. Show an eagerness to learn and understand the culture, how the company operates, who does what and how things get accomplished.

Demonstrate strategic capability. An almost universal success factor for business leaders is their ability to think strategically. To do so, become familiar with your company's products, services and target markets. What is your company's edge over the competition? Can the company sustain it? Strategy is about beating the competition, so identify and learn as much as you can about the competition and their strategies.



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Growth potential

Developing key traits can put you on the path to success in any endeavour

Understand the financial underpinnings of your business. Many business owners and leaders simply don't understand or appreciate the importance of financial results. This shortcoming is often a significant career blocker.

If you don't have adequate financial training or knowledge in this area, ask someone in the accounting department to help you gain a rudimentary understanding of the company's income statement and balance sheet. Once you have that understanding, start a quarterly tracking of the following six numbers:

- From the income statement: revenues, expenses and net profit.
- From the balance sheet: assets, liabilities and net equity.

Few among your peers, even those above you on your company's organizational chart, will track these key six metrics over time. Doing so will differentiate you. ■



Fred Sievert retired in 2007 as president of New York Life Insurance Company, a Fortune 100 company.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Business Centres offer a variety of essentials for small businesses, from products to services, at great value. Learn more at Costcobusinesscentre.ca under "Services" at the top of the page.

Who are you?

It's important to note that not everyone thrives in leadership positions. Many people thrive in key support roles. Throughout my career, I have managed employees with

varied skill sets and career aspirations. Many people seek positions based largely on title and compensation. That approach often leads to stress, depression and even marital problems.

You will be the most

fulfilled if you first identify your passions and skills and then choose a career that will use your skills to fulfill your passion. That applies equally for entrepreneurs, executives, middle managers, skilled workers and technicians.—FS

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Fool.com says that Gen Z investors are more likely than other generations to own cryptocurrency rather than a retirement account.

by LANA SANICHAR

At *Canadian MoneySaver*, one of the most popular topics that investors seek advice about is understanding the steps to better help them invest for the future. While everyone's personal situation is different, and the topic is broad and very nuanced, there are some basic rules.

So, I reached out to Keith Richards, president and chief portfolio manager at ValueTrend Wealth Management, for insight on the subject. Here are his three tips for anyone investing for their future.

Asset Allocation

Asset allocation means dividing your portfolio's assets according to your goals, risk tolerance, time horizon and market conditions. The main asset categories are equities, commodities, fixed income and cash. Not all asset classes are appropriate for every investor. For example, an investor seeking income from their investments may want to focus on fixed income. A growth-seeking investor may want to focus on equities. The biggest mistake investors make is overconcentration.

Trend awareness

People say that you can't time the markets, therefore you should remain invested in equities. This advice is too simplistic. For example, what happens if life forces you to reduce risk? Moreover, if the market has been performing negatively, should you hold onto your stocks? Prolonged bear markets can result in long periods of poor performance. For example: Canadian and US markets only recently began recovering to levels seen two years ago. Who wants to earn



No time to lose

What to consider when investing for your future

nothing from their investments for two years? All investors should learn the basics of trend recognition.

Discipline

Investing involves knowing what, and when, to buy. It also involves knowing when to sell. You need to have structure to help you identify when there is potential opportunity in an investment. Is now a good time to buy? Or are risk levels higher than normal? When is the right time to sell? When do you sell a losing investment? Cutting your losses is just as important as taking your gains!

When it comes to investing, every investor should exercise due diligence and seek professional advice before making any financial decisions. ■

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.

COURTESY OF LANA SANICHAR



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

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Future forward

According to the article "Best Long-Term Investments in Canada" on the website Milliondollarjourney.com, investors should keep in

mind these five key factors when looking at options for long-term investments:

- Understanding how much money you are willing to invest and, therefore, can live without for at least a year

- Deciding what your goals are
- Looking for options to diversify your portfolio
- Keeping costs low
- Knowing your risk tolerance—LS

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Electricity pioneer Nikola Tesla first demonstrated wireless charging in the late 19th century, according to Computerworld.com.

by ANDY PENFOLD

Keeping your devices juiced up used to be a simple affair—you simply plugged your laptop or phone into an electrical outlet using the cable and plug supplied in the box. But these days, devices don't always come with chargers, as manufacturers seek to reduce their environmental impact through the reduction of plastic waste. And some companies say that most people already have several chargers. If they're sold separately, you need to get the right one. Add to that the rise of fast charging and wireless charging, and keeping your battery level up can be confusing and complicated.

Here's a look at today's landscape, to help you buy the most efficient chargers for your devices.

Watts the matter?

Before you buy a charger, it's important to know the power needs of the device you will be charging. Phones need between 18- and 120-watt chargers, though most will require between 20- and 30-watt chargers. Tablets tend to be similar, while laptop chargers will generally need to be at least 30 watts (more to be able to charge while you're using it). This information is usually listed on a device's specification sheet or in its manual.

Standards

You'll also need to know the charging standard your device supports. Most will support the power delivery standard (usually marketed as PD). If a device doesn't support PD, you'll need to buy a charger directly from



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the manufacturer. If it does support PD, you'll have a range of third-party options to pick from. Choose a charger that matches both the wattage and the charging standard of your device, otherwise it will charge very slowly.

Fast charging/wireless charging

USB PD is the universal standard for fast charging. Fast charging usually works best when the battery is closer to empty. As you get to 50% full, charging will slow down.

While wireless charging generally takes longer, that may not matter to you if you're charging a device overnight. And you'll be glad for the lack of cables cluttering up your bedside table. The standard to look for in wireless chargers is called Qi (pronounced "chee"). Most phones work with this standard.

It's a bit tricky to figure out what's best for your situation, but with this information, you won't get caught with a flat battery just when you need your device the most. ■

Power up

Tips to be sure that you have the right chargers for your devices

HUGH BURDEN



Andy Penfold

is a Bristol, England-based freelance technology writer whose work has appeared in *Macworld* and other national publications.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of various types of chargers in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Portable power

A portable battery pack is a smart investment for peace of mind when you're out and about. These range from simple pocket-sized

power banks that store energy, to solar-powered battery packs and even portable power stations, which cost thousands of dollars and provide more than 2,000 watts. The latter

category can be bought in rugged designs and feature full wall-style plug ports—ideal for camping trips and parties.—AP



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Happy places

Enjoy some unique outdoor experiences in these vibrant cities

by PETER GREENBERG



HANDE BAVAR

Peter Greenberg has won multiple Emmy Awards as the travel editor for CBS News and is host of *The Travel Detective* on public television (petergreenberg.com).

These dark winter days are an ideal time to enjoy the outdoors in a milder climate. Here are three of my favourite city destinations when I want to chase the sun.

San Diego

Balboa Park runs a sprawling 1,200 acres and holds a wealth of museums, theatres and cottages. But the gems of the park are its gardens, such as the Japanese Friendship Garden, the Sculpture Garden and the Desert Garden—the last of which contains more than 1,300 cacti, succulents and other drought-resistant plants, some of which seem to come from a Dr. Seuss book. Visit in January through March, during the peak blooming period.

Get up close and personal with leopard sharks, turtles and dolphins on a kayak tour of La Jolla. Weather permitting, you can kayak into the sea cave in La Jolla as well. (Another way to visit is through a tunnel and stairs accessible at the Cave Store on Coast Boulevard, which lead directly to the sea cave.)

One of my favourite ways to explore a city is on two wheels. Rent a bike in Coronado and pedal down the Bayshore Bikeway. Along the way you'll pass landmarks such as the legendary Hotel del Coronado, the US Naval Amphibious Base and Silver Strand State Beach.

Phoenix

Start your morning with a sunrise hike at Camelback Mountain, about 20 minutes from downtown Phoenix. The 4-kilometre out-and-back trail ascends 432 metres (1,417 feet), and along the way you'll have the chance to see wildlife such as desert tortoises, chuckwalla lizards and cottontail rabbits, with a reward at the top of panoramic views of the surrounding area.

With its calm, consistent weather, Phoenix offers a special way to experience sunrise: a hot-air balloon. These quiet early morning rides let you fly over the Sonoran Desert at a cruising altitude of 609 to 1,524 metres (1,998 to 5,000 feet), witnessing a sea of cacti, wild javelinas, quails and jackrabbits.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © JONATHAN ROSS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM; © FRIPHOT; © FELIX MIZIONIKOV

Clockwise from left: Camelback Mountain, Phoenix; Balboa Park, San Diego; Stiltville, offshore from Miami.

The art walk on the first Friday of the month in Roosevelt Row in downtown Phoenix features free admission to more than 70 galleries and studios, and a number of museums. You'll encounter live music as well as eclectic street art and murals on nearly every corner in one of the city's most vibrant neighborhoods. Quench your thirst at the beer garden at Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co.

Miami

My Sunday mornings start with a trip to the Surfside Farmers Market, open every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. just a block away from the beach. (Note: The farmers market is open seasonally from October to May.) First

stop: Conscious Brew, a mobile cafe serving coffee and wellness drinks, like the Cosmic Arnold, their spin on the Arnold Palmer.

Then go to the farmers market and have them pack some of their artisanal jams and spices, like the Pink Flamingo Jam, a guava-based jam with strawberry and pear, for your trip home.

At SoundScape Park, a massive 7,000-square-foot projection wall, known as WALLCAST, combines art and technology: As the symphony orchestra plays within the New World Center, their performance is filmed and broadcast on the projection wall, giving you perhaps the best seat in the house—outside of the house. Film screenings are held every Wednesday night as well. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

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

Stiltville, Florida

Stiltville, 2,414 metres (7,920 feet) offshore from Biscayne Bay, was once a smuggler's paradise, with as many as 27 houses standing in the

shallow waters. With just six houses remaining, built on the water on large wooden stilts, it's a different way to learn about Miami's history of Prohibition-era bootleggers and rum runners. The houses

are now owned by the National Park Service but privately managed by the original owners, and there are tour companies with special permits to take you there.—PG



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Costco members respond to our poll, posted to Costco's social media

Antarctica. The solitude and beauty are breathtaking. And who doesn't like penguins (*lots of penguins*)?

Sue Lazear

French Polynesia. We ... swam with sharks and stingrays in the most beautiful waters.

Monica Triplett Stuve

Thailand, the Land of Smiles (and tears from the delicious spicy food).

Judith Minkoff-Grey

New Zealand! Absolutely stunning and the whole country is beautiful. I cannot wait to go back one day!

Rachel Moran

Italy for sure! [We] stayed in a former castle ... and drank superb wine, all while enjoying the most breathtaking landscapes and history imaginable.

Laura Nausadis Bieber

Germany and all of Europe!

Larry Downs

So far? Great Smoky Mountains, Maui and New England top the list for me.

John H. Campbell

The Le Blanc resort in Cancun, Mexico, was a dream come true!

Amy Leach

My local Costco.

Mike Chin



According to Atlys.com, Hong Kong is the most visited city in the world.

Costco Travel's top travel destinations

Looking forward to travelling? You're not alone! If you are looking for some inspiration as to where to vacation, Costco Travel has you covered.

Bon voyage!

Top Costco Travel vacation package destinations

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Top Costco Travel cities in Canada

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Watch for the poll at [Facebook.com/CostcoCanada](https://www.facebook.com/CostcoCanada) or Instagram: [@costco_canada](https://www.instagram.com/costco_canada).



Ty Kotz

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by Jen Madera

Cooking with Costco



T

he holidays often mean a surge in cooking and baking. Whether you're a professional chef, recipe developer or home cook, you need fresh, reasonably priced ingredients. Here's a look at some recipes from chefs and recipe developers who use Costco products. Try them out for your holiday table and discover a new favourite.

Looking for something new to cook this season? How about a gourmet meal made with Costco products, featuring curated recipes provided by Costco members. Plus, get to know the experts behind the recipes. Whether you're cooking for yourself, your family or a crowd, try a dish or two from food industry professionals.

Private dining

Ty Kotz, a professional chef based in Charleston, South Carolina, shops at Costco regularly for fresh ingredients to use in his cooking. "What I love about the Costco products is the quality. The price too, but mainly the quality," says Kotz. With more than 30 years of experience, Kotz has cooked in New York City restaurants, and now offers high-end dining experiences in people's homes as a private chef. "Costco offers some great items around this time of year," he adds.

Briny delights

Bryan Fordham of St. Andrews, New Brunswick, shops at Costco for salmon because of its size. "When selecting salmon to smoke, it is important you buy salmon that is thick," he explains. Now retired, Fordham has been a professional chef for 60 years. In 2010, he volunteered with the former Canadian Executive

Service Organization to teach students at the Nizhny Novgorod Hotel School in Russia. "I was assigned for three weeks to teach the culinary students Western culinary skills," Fordham adds. While there, Fordham taught the students his recipe for salmon brine. He promises the recipe will be a crowd-pleaser: "Friends will ask you for your method of curing."

The meat of it

"Costco often carries unique and specialty items that can add flair to my dishes," says Ilan Dagan, a chef based in Kanata, Ontario. "I usually find imported cheeses, gourmet sauces, international ingredients or specialty cuts of meat at Costco. These items can elevate my recipes and introduce new flavours and textures. The possibilities are endless. I love being creative and having fun experimenting," he says.

Dagan is an alumnus of Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, has 25 years of professional experience and has cooked in several five-star restaurants around the world. Dagan calls his recipe for lamb "a perfect cut for your holiday dinner ... the end result is a juicy piece of meat that's almost falling off the bone."

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From top: Ilan Dagan, Debra Borchert, Bryan Fordham, Kasyndra O’Kane



© FROM TOP: © XAMTIV / STOCK.ADOBE.COM; ANDREW FOGG; BERRY EDWARDS; BRYAN FORDHAM; KATRINA BISSON



Good eats—and good reads

Debra Borchert praises one of Costco’s most popular items: the rotisserie chicken. After she’s enjoyed it as a meal, she repurposes what’s left: “I simmer the remains in water overnight in a slow cooker and strain the liquid for a rich, robust stock I use in most of my soups.”

Borchert is a novelist and cookbook author based in Bellevue, Washington. She even developed soup recipes to include in her book series, *Château de Verzat* (debraborchert.com/recipes; not available at Costco). “I rely on Costco for most of the ingredients,” Borchert explains, detailing how she roasts organic vegetables from Costco in Kirkland Signature™ Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil to make a puréed base for her soups.

As sweet as pie

As a pastry chef with 11 years of experience, Kasyndra O’Kane says shopping at Costco warehouses ensures high quality—at an affordable price. “I can trust that the ingredients I purchase from Costco meet my stringent standards for taste and freshness. This assurance allows me to plan my holiday menu with confidence, knowing that I’m serving delicious dishes while staying mindful of my budget,” O’Kane says. “Costco’s dedication to affordability and quality aligns perfectly with my approach to budget-conscious meal planning during the festive season.”

O’Kane, a graduate of The Culinary Institute of Canada who lives in Rusagonis, New Brunswick, particularly enjoys using fresh fruit in her holiday baking: “From juicy berries and luscious stone fruits to zesty citrus varieties, Costco’s seasonal fruit selection offers both variety and affordability.” ■

Salmon Brine

45 mL (3 Tbsp) coarse kosher salt
125 mL (½ cup) brown sugar
45 mL (3 Tbsp) fresh dill,
finely chopped
125 to 250 mL (½ to 1 cup)
apple juice
1 kg (2.2 lbs) Kirkland Signature
Atlantic salmon

Mix the salt, sugar and dill together. Add the apple juice to make a wet paste. Add more apple juice, if desired, to sweeten the brine. Rub the paste on both sides of the salmon. Place the salmon on a plastic wrap-lined tray, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate to cure for up to 24 hours.

Thoroughly wash the brine off, then dry the salmon with paper towels before smoking. Smoke the salmon according to your favourite recipe, usually for up to 4 hours depending on your smoking method. Makes 12 appetizer servings.

Recipe courtesy of Bryan Fordham



“What I love about the Costco products is the quality.”

— TY KOTZ ◆

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Shaved Spinach Salad

908 g (2 lbs) baby spinach **180 mL (¾ cup)**
227 g (½ lb) pecorino **extra-virgin olive oil**
Romano cheese **500 mL (2 cups)**
500 mL (2 cups) pine nuts **dried blueberries**
3 lemons

Stack the spinach leaves, cut into thin strips and add to a large bowl. Using a microplane grater, grate the cheese into a bowl and set aside. Heat a large stainless steel or non-stick pan over medium. Add ½ of the pine nuts in a single layer. Cook and stir until pine nuts are golden brown, then place on a paper towel-lined plate. Repeat for the remaining pine nuts. Let the pine nuts cool completely. Juice the lemons and strain, then set juice aside.

In a large stainless steel or wooden bowl, combine the sliced spinach, cheese and pine nuts. Mix with tongs until well combined. Mix the olive oil and lemon juice. Drizzle ½ the dressing on the salad and toss, adding more dressing as desired. Top with the blueberries and gently stir in. Plate and serve immediately. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

Kotz offers these tips: “This is an incredible dish for the holidays and guaranteed to create spinach fans all around the table. The key to this dish is preparing the spinach. Use a sharp knife and cut it as thin as possible. It is also very important to grate the cheese using a microplane to give it a soft consistency that melts into the salad as you mix it. Lastly, do not mix the salad ahead of time. Once ingredients are prepped, set them aside and mix right before serving to keep the texture of the spinach intact.”

Recipe and photo courtesy of Ty Kotz

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



Lamb Chops with Pomegranate Arils, Figs and Green Vegetables

MARINADE

- 500 mL (2 cups) pomegranate juice**
- 500 mL (2 cups) red wine**
- 6 garlic cloves, chopped**
- 125 mL (½ cup) vegetable oil**
- 6 thyme sprigs**
- 2 rosemary sprigs**
- 1.5 kg (3 lbs) lamb loin or saddle chops**
- 250 mL (1 cup) small white mushrooms**
- 3 portobello mushrooms, cut in ¼, stems removed**
- 5 shallots, halved**
- 8 garlic cloves, halved**
- Sea salt, to taste**
- Black peppercorns, to taste**

GREEN VEGETABLES

- 1.5 kg (3 lbs) mixed green vegetables (asparagus, broccoli tenders, French green beans)**
- 45 to 60 mL (3 to 4 Tbsp) olive oil**
- Sea salt, to taste**
- Black pepper, to taste**
- 6 figs, halved**
- 30 mL (2 Tbsp) brown sugar**
- 400 mL (1½ cups) pomegranate arils**

Prepare the marinade: Mix all the marinade ingredients in a bowl. Refrigerate ½ the marinade in a sealed container.

Pour ½ the marinade over the lamb in a non-corrosive dish. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight, turning the lamb over at least once.

Heat the oven to 180 C (350 F). Line a large dish with parchment paper. Add the mushrooms, shallots and garlic. Top with the reserved marinade not used on the lamb and 250 mL (1 cup) hot water. Add salt and peppercorns and mix well. Add the lamb, discarding the remaining marinade, and season with salt and peppercorns. Cover the lamb with parchment paper, then seal the dish with foil. Roast for 1½ to 2 hours, or until the meat is very tender and almost falls off the bone. Remove from the oven. Carefully transfer the marinade liquid to a pot. Cover the lamb and vegetables to keep warm and set aside. Cook the marinade over medium-high until reduced by ½, about 10 minutes.

Prepare the vegetables: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare an ice water bowl big enough to hold the vegetables. Add the green vegetables to the pot and cook in batches for 2 to 3 minutes, or until crisp-tender. When done, transfer the vegetables immedi-

ately to the ice water. Allow vegetables to cool and transfer to a paper towel-lined tray. Season with olive oil, sea salt and pepper and set aside.

Heat the oven to 220 C (425 F). Uncover the lamb and glaze with the reduced marinade. Add the green vegetables, top with figs and sprinkle with sugar. Roast uncovered for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the meat has a nice crust and the figs are caramelized. Top with pomegranate arils before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Ilan Dagan

“Costco often carries unique and specialty items that can add flair to my dishes.”

— IIAN DAGAN ◆

Holiday Spiced Apple Pie

- | | |
|--|--|
| 310 mL (1¼ cups) sugar | 1 mL (¼ tsp) ground nutmeg |
| 60 mL (¼ cup) cornstarch | 0.5 mL (⅛ tsp) salt |
| 15 mL (1 Tbsp) orange zest | 908 g (2 lbs) baking apples or pears, peeled and sliced |
| 15 mL (1 Tbsp) ginger, freshly grated | 30 mL (2 Tbsp) orange juice |
| 7 mL (½ Tbsp) ground cardamom | 2 (23-cm/9-inch) unbaked pie crusts |
| 1 mL (¼ tsp) ground cinnamon | 1 egg |
| 1 mL (¼ tsp) ground cloves | 15 mL (1 Tbsp) water |

Preheat oven to 220 C (425 F). In a large bowl, combine sugar, cornstarch, orange zest, ginger, spices and salt. Rub sugar mixture vigorously between hands to release the oils. Add apples and orange juice and toss to coat. Line a pie dish with one pie crust. Add the apple mixture, cover with the remaining pie crust, roll up edges to seal and crimp edges together. Beat the egg and water to create an egg wash. Brush the egg wash over the pie crust. Decorate with crust trimmings, then cut vents into the crust. Place pie on a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes, then cover edges with foil. Reduce heat to 180 C (350 F) and bake for another 30 to 40 minutes, or until the crust is a deep golden brown and the juices are bubbling. Transfer to a wire rack and allow to rest for 4 hours before slicing. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Tip: Use cookie cutters to create topping designs out of extra pie crust.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Kasyndra O'Kane



COSTCO CONNECTION

Most ingredients to make these recipes can be found in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.



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Cranberry Sauce with Orange Liqueur

- 500 mL (2 cups) orange juice**
- 250 mL (1 cup) frozen apple juice concentrate**
- 1.5 L (6 cups) cranberries**
- 1 orange, skin and pith removed, coarsely chopped**
- 1 Granny Smith apple, coarsely chopped**
- 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tbsp) orange liqueur**
- 2 mL (½ tsp) cinnamon**
- 1 mL (¼ tsp) nutmeg**
- 1 mL (¼ tsp) cloves**
- 1 orange peel, finely grated, optional**

Bring orange and apple juices to a simmer over medium in a large, heavy pot. Add cranberries and stir occasionally. When cranberries begin to pop and mixture begins to foam, stir in the orange and cook for 10 minutes. Add the apple and cook for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. When all cranberries have popped, the foam has subsided and mixture has thickened, add orange liqueur. Cook the sauce down on very low heat until mixture is thick and a deep, shiny red. Remove from heat and stir in spices and orange peel, if desired. Allow to cool, then refrigerate. Makes about 750 mL (3 cups).

Recipe courtesy of Debra Borchert

"I rely on Costco for most of the ingredients."

— DEBRA BORCHERT ◆

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Make a media room



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Joys of journaling



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Celebrate the moment

With festive fun at its crescendo this time of year, our For Your Entertainment Special Section celebrates a range of activities and ideas to enrich your holiday experience.

Read up on the value of writing, specifically journaling. Discover how to make a mini media room and savour the sound of music from your home by hosting a concert. Learn more about ways to safely enjoy the outdoors with your dog(s) before kicking back, relaxing and reading our author spotlight book, *Christmas by Candlelight*. Or become a crafting star with a Cricut cutting machine, and make sure to check out our list of buyers' picks featuring even more items to improve the ways you entertain yourself and others.

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Write on

The benefits of journaling include reducing stress and boosting creativity

by WENDY HELFENBAUM



COSTCO CONNECTION

Notebooks, pens and more are available in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

Journaling can be a powerful tool to express our thoughts and feelings while expanding our creative skills. Plus, studies have shown that journaling helps people manage or reduce stress, anxiety and depression by allowing us to process and release emotions. Expressive writing following traumatic events can improve overall physical and mental health, according to a study at Cambridge University, and assist in performing difficult tasks better, as Michigan State University research showed.

Various types of journaling focus on different outcomes, explains Costco member Susan Borkin, Ph.D., a San Francisco Bay Area-based psychotherapist who specializes in helping people use writing to heal, evolve and transform their lives.

“Some people just want to keep track of their lives—‘I went here. I did this.’—or what I think of as the ‘Dear Diary’ method. But I see it as a tool for personal and professional growth, and

for awareness and understanding,” says Borkin, the author of several books including *When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Journaling* (Write Now, 2021; not available at Costco).

Often, the very act of writing something down helps you process feelings or let go of negative thoughts, adds Costco member Lynda Monk, a registered social worker living on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. Monk is the director of the International Association for Journal Writing (iajw.org), which offers many free journaling resources.

“There are many proven benefits to journaling, which is what I love about it,” says Monk, who has kept a journal since childhood.

“Research done on the ... benefits of journaling shows improved immune function, healing trauma and increased emotional self-awareness, which helps us deepen our relationships with others,” Monk adds. “Journaling is that place you can turn to for your own replenishment and self-care. It’s a mindfulness practice.”



Just jump in

There is no right or wrong way to journal; simply sit down and write, says Borkin. “However, there are guidelines. The primary one is do what works. Many people can only do a handwritten journal. My personal journal is a Word doc, which I’ve had for years,” she says.

Those who enjoy being online may find journaling apps like Day One or Penzu helpful. Journaling can involve long entries or bullet points, doodling or bits of poetry. Some people start journals to create legacy projects such as a memoir, notes Monk.

“Your journal can be a very creative, eclectic space. I fill mine with quotes,

and I’ll glue inspiring things; you can really make it your own,” she adds.

Make time for you

Monk says figuring out why we want to journal motivates us to do it regularly. “You’re engaging in self-reflection in the pages of your journal, and what’s key is knowing your own rhythms,” she explains.

“Some people love to do ‘morning pages’—a technique [introduced by] Julia Cameron—by filling three pages with stream-of-consciousness writing first thing in the morning before you’ve done anything else,” says Monk.

Or write on your lunch hour, coffee break or in the evening if that works better. “One of the beautiful things about journaling is you don’t need to write for hours to gain benefit; five to 10 minutes on a regular basis can have [a] huge benefit,” says Monk.

Above all, give yourself permission to write freely. While journals can be a place for a catharsis of emotion, says Monk, it also allows us to cultivate positive feelings, like gratitude and joy, which are crucial to mental health.

“We want to balance perspective in our journals. We don’t want to only write about the negative because that can activate even more stress inside. It’s just as important to write about what makes us happy, what brings us comfort, and what our hopes and dreams are,” says Monk. ■

Wendy Helfenbaum is a Montreal-based writer and TV producer.



FROM LEFT: © WAYHOME STUDIO; MIKO / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Journaling prompts

Staring at a blank page can be daunting. Whether you prefer starting your day with an aspirational affirmation or documenting your triumphs before bed, prompts can get creative juices flowing, says avid journal writer Susan Borkin.

Registered Social Worker Lynda Monk suggests completing these sentences:

- What would happen if ...
- I am looking forward to ...
- Right now, I notice ...
- My favourite memory of ... is ...

For free monthly journal prompts, visit iajw.org and click on “Free Resources” and then select “Monthly Journal Prompts.”—WH

Journaling habit

These tips will help you make journaling a habit.

- Decide on the format that works best for you: a handwritten notebook, a

typed document on your laptop or an app on your smartphone.

- Commit to a specific time for journaling.
- Start writing. Try stream-of-consciousness

writing, bullet points, drawing or jotting down memories, goals, affirmations or quotes.

- Think of journaling as a safe space to record accomplishments or unload your fears or doubts.—WH



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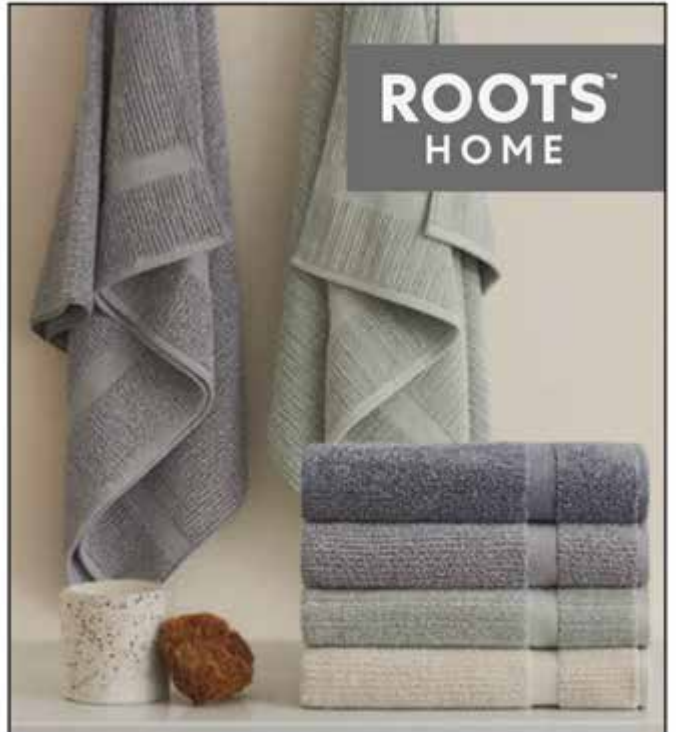
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Mini media rooms

Home theatre ideas for small spaces

by MALI ANDERSON



© TINYLUK / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco warehouses and Costco.ca carry a variety of electronics and furniture items to help you set up a mini media room.

Though your family may love movie nights and a space for teenagers to play video games, you likely don't want these activities to take up your whole living room all the time. Thankfully, you can transform an underutilized space in your home, such as a spare bedroom, into a designated media room. Any room that is self-contained and isn't in the path of daily activities could be a possibility.

"You can achieve an amazing home theatre in a small space," says Melissa Tossell, a registered interior designer and owner of Sanura Design in Toronto. "To save space, mount your TV on the wall. When you choose a high-definition TV, you will enjoy much blacker blacks and get a great picture."

Sound is a key part of the home theatre experience, but when choosing speakers recognize that technology will change over time. A soundbar is a great start for your sound system. Then, you can add a subwoofer or other components as your needs grow and new advancements are introduced.

When selecting seating, remember that watching shows and playing games requires

everyone in the group to have a clear view of the screen. Costco member Breegan Jane, a Los Angeles-based interior designer and lifestyle expert, suggests a chaise lounge as your main theatre seating, which "can be a grand seating space for one person or a nice place for a couple to cuddle."

Then, if you are hosting a game day celebration or a movie-themed birthday party, arrange bar seats in stadium style behind your chaise lounge to maximize seating without obstructing anyone's view.

The next step is to decorate the room. Jane uses shades of deep royal blue, purple and red because they remind her of rebuilt theatres. Add these hues and movie posters to bring cinema style to the space.

And if you want to improve the sound in your media room, consider sound-absorbing acoustic panels that can double as artwork. Sound panels will enhance your audio experience when you are in your media room and reduce the likelihood of sound effects spilling into other areas of your home. ■

Costco member Mali Anderson is a freelance writer based in Chicago.

The right lighting

Adding light can enhance some areas of your home, but in your media room you want to block light for optimal

viewing. That said, you still need light in order for guests to safely come and go. The following are a few options to choose from.

- Put lighting on a remote-

controlled dimmer.

- Use fibre-optic strips along baseboards.
- Place task lamps on side tables.—MA

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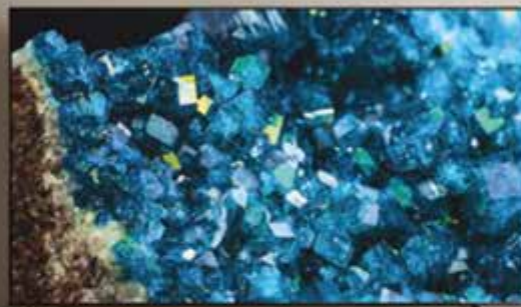


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Google TV

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House band

In-home concerts let you experience live music your way

by IRENE MIDDLEMAN THOMAS



© ANNASTILLS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of food and beverages for hosting a house concert is available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca. A selection of musical instruments is available at Costco.ca.

House concerts have been around since at least the 1800s, but they've recently found new popularity.

As the name implies, house concerts are musical events in homes, rather than public performance spaces. They usually have small audiences sitting close to the musicians, who don't use microphones.

"We love the intimate setting of house concerts," says Costco member Mare Wakefield of the married musical duo Mare Wakefield & Nomad, based in Nashville, Tennessee. "The house concert setting allows us to laugh and joke with the audience, and also to be 'real' about the songs and our music journey."

Fran Snyder, a musician and founder of the Listening Room Network (listeningroomnetwork.com), based in Florida, adds: "Most house concerts feature original music. Independent artists can share music and experiences directly [with] their fans."

Judith Milliken, a Costco member in Victoria, British Columbia, has hosted more than 30 home concerts since 2007. She became a host for Home Routes ([\[routes.ca\]\(http://routes.ca\)\), which organizes tours for featured musicians from Canada and the US, but she also hosted musicians from Cuba.](http://home</p>
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"Initially I invited friends and family, but others soon joined the guest list," Milliken says. "Guests had the chance to hear musicians in an intimate home setting. My reward was the knowledge I had created a joyful evening for musicians and audience alike."

"One of the main reasons I started hosting was because I got tired of paying to attend shows and then having people around me talk through them," says Andria Brown of Memphis, Tennessee. "The artists I most enjoy have words that matter. At a house show, I'm curating an unusual setting for most people—one where they really get to connect with the artist."

Wakefield adds, "Every audience member leaves a house concert feeling like they've had a backstage pass." ■

Irene Middleman Thomas is a Colorado-based freelance writer.

Sound advice

Whether you're hosting or performing at a house concert, here are a few things to keep in mind.

For performers. Most

house concerts are in living rooms, with little or no amplification. Attendees want to talk to you and will be very close to you. It's best to create an acoustic show.

For hosts. Performers may

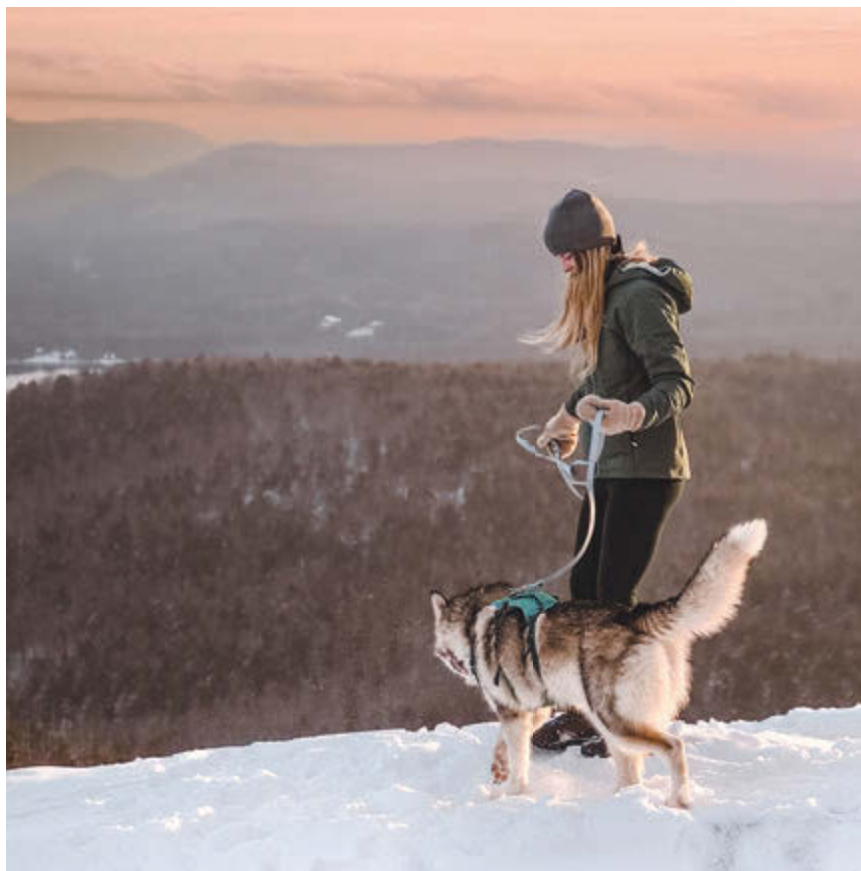
stay overnight to save money. There may be a potluck, a full meal or just dessert. Fran Snyder of the Listening Room Network recommends a "suggested donation" model.—*IMT*



Fun with your Fido

Tips for enjoying outdoor winter adventures with dogs

by JENNIFER MELLACE



COSTCO CONNECTION

The Kirkland Signature™ Pet Logo Hoodie (Item 1731628) can be found in Costco warehouses. Costco offers a variety of gear and other products for outdoor enthusiasts and their pets in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Are you looking to take your pup on some fun explorations this winter? Maybe a hike in the mountains, cross-country skiing on your favourite trails or even a snowshoe trek in your own backyard? Here are a few things you need to know before you go.

Know your dog's breed

Not all dogs are created equal. Before heading out, consider your dog's breed and whether or not they can adapt to the colder temperatures.

Costco member Adele Ng from Squamish, British Columbia, adventures with her two short-haired vizslas. They can often be found hiking in the mountains and cross-country skiing. Part of her routine requires a dog wardrobe that varies with the temperatures and precipitation. "I pay attention and know that if they're slowing down, they're probably getting cold and I need to add a layer," she says.

Smaller dogs can enjoy the winter action, too. Ngaio Hotte, also from

British Columbia, enjoys winter hikes, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing with her pug and older Labrador-mix rescue. "I have to be sure [the pug] is well-dressed because his tolerance of the cold is much less," Hotte says. "Usually, the hike up keeps him warm, but if we stop for a while, he gets cold. So, I bring a doggie sleeping bag and a backpack so I can carry him down."

Brittany Cummings lives in upstate New York with her six pups, four of which are Northern breeds that can withstand colder temperatures. "They were built to endure long days and extreme temps, and some days they are the ones motivating us to get out there," she says.

Train a solid recall

A reliable recall is important for safety purposes.

"Obedience training is a big part of what we do so we can go out safely," Ng says. "We have bears, cougars and wolves where we hike. If I want to go out, I still take my dogs and I expect them to listen."



“One of our biggest fears is ice—the dogs falling through on lakes or slipping on scrambles during hikes,” Cummings adds. “For this we make sure we have solidly trained commands for recall and wait, and we leash the dogs in areas of concern.”

Know your dog’s limits

“When temperatures fall below -6.7 C (20 F) it’s best to limit exposure to the elements for extended periods,” says Dr. Liam Bisson of the Shelburne Veterinary Hospital in Shelburne, Vermont. It’s also important to protect sensitive paws with dog boots or a layer of petroleum jelly or wax made specifically for dog paws. “Also be sure to



Left to right: Adjust the length of your hike to your dog’s fitness level; being prepared ensures a fun time for everyone.

inspect your dog’s feet after time spent outside and wash off any salt or chemicals,” the Costco member says. “Ingesting those chemicals can make your dog ill.”

Knowing your dog’s level of fitness is key. If you’ve ever hiked through the snow, you know the extra energy it takes, and it’s no different for your dog. It’s also a good idea to carry treats and water so that your dog can replenish calories and stay hydrated.

Ng uses canine conditioning exercises to help her dogs stay strong. She also takes preventative measures by feeding them a joint supplement.

“Don’t push a dog [that] is too old or too young,” she adds. “And if you have a puppy, wait until they’re fully grown—at least 1 year old—before you start anything strenuous; especially skiing.”

Ng’s best advice is to listen to your dog. “Try different things and see what they like. If your dog is happy, that’s what matters in the end.” ■

Jennifer Mellace is a freelance writer in Frederick, Maryland.

Adventuring with a reactive dog

Ngaio Hotte of British Columbia adopted her Labrador retriever mix and quickly learned that he was reactive to other dogs. Instead of forcing him into situations, here are a few strategies she uses to get him on the trails safely:

- Choose trails with good visibility and no surprises.
- Bring a friend and their dog to intercept and distract off-leash dogs.
- Consider popular on-leash trails.
- Embrace the muzzle—a signal to other people that your dog wants space.
- Know your dog’s limits and choose trails accordingly.—JM

FROM LEFT, BRITTANY ALLEN; ADELE NG

Caution in the cold

If your dog goes into the water, don’t panic. Many breeds have thick coats, which give them added protection against the

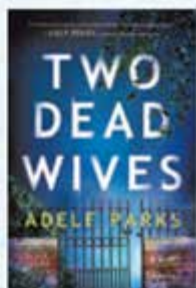
elements. However, prolonged exposure for these breeds, or for breeds with short coats, may lead to hypothermia. It’s important to get them inside and dried off. Making sure your dog is

well-hydrated before an outing can also help head off hypothermia. Things to watch out for include shivering and lethargy, says veterinarian Dr. Liam Bisson.—JM

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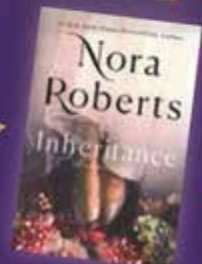


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Snowed in

Danger and romance mingle in Karen Swan's latest Christmas saga

by ELLEN SCHWARTZ



Christmas by Candlelight (Item 2023981) will be available in December in most Costco warehouses.



Karen Swan

© ALICIA CLARKE

As snow falls, Libby and her new boyfriend travel to meet old friends at Archie Templeton's grand family estate. Stranded by a snowstorm, the group is forced to spend the night. When the power goes out, secrets from the past begin to unravel, old antagonisms resurface and Libby is confronted with a truth she has long tried to deny.

That's the psychological roller coaster that UK-based Karen Swan takes us on in her latest romance novel, *Christmas by Candlelight*. Swan writes two novels each year, one for the summer and one for the Christmas season.

Swan says that her success is surprising. "I'm something of an accidental author. I started out as a fashion journalist," she says. "After I co-authored a self-help book, a literary agent urged me to try my hand at fiction. So, I wrote a scene and—eureka! It felt right, and I immediately knew that this was what I was meant to do."

Swan has had more than 20 books published—both contemporary and historical fiction. "I love doing research, especially for the historical novels," she says. "I dig into the culture, politics and lives of the era, and then create my own world within that sphere."

Swan is more interested in the connections among her characters than just the "boy meets girl" part of the story. This was particularly true with *Christmas by Candlelight*. "Because there is a large cast of characters, and because the story unfolds in a claustrophobic setting, it was like writing a movie to be filmed entirely in close shots. I had to know all the characters very well, and it took several drafts to get there."

Swan is strict about her daily writing regimen. "I can write anywhere because I learned to be flexible when my children were small. But when it comes to output, I aim to produce 15,000 words over five weekdays," she laughs. "That might sound like torture, but knowing that I'm making steady progress actually calms me down as I work through the book."

Swan is now finishing work on the third book in a historical series. Then it will be onto the next Christmas book for this productive "accidental" author. ■

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

KIDS' PICK

BOOK *Cat Kid Comic Club: Influencers*

AUTHOR Dav Pilkey

This funny and thought-provoking graphic novel finds the Cat Kid Comic Club in the middle of a crisis.

The baby frogs are plagued with self-doubt and anxiety after learning that one of their comics will be published. Will they be able to get their creative groove back? Will either Naomi or Melvin emerge as a leader? And will Flippy be able to convince them to straighten up and fly right?

For ages 7 and up.
—Stephanie E. Ponder



COSTCO CONNECTION

Cat Kid Comic Club: Influencers (Item 1767777) will be available in December in most Costco warehouses.

Books that educate, entertain, and delight children of all ages!

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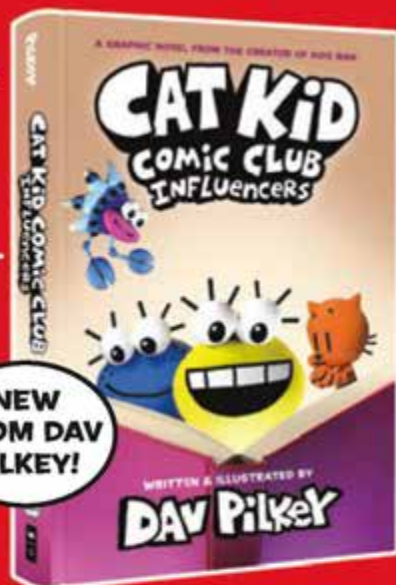
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FOR TEENS

SCHOLASTIC

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Cutting edge

Tips for making holiday magic

by CHRISTINA GUERRERO



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CRICUT



COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find the Cricut Explore 3 Smart Vinyl & Iron-On plus Digital Content Bundle (Item 5490883) in select Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca. Additional project inspiration and Cricut bundles are also available at Costco.ca.

Not being crafty when it comes to the holiday spirit, I rely on purchased cards and gifted ornaments. However, it feels like everyone I know—from my best friend to my boss—swears that an electronic cutting craft machine that cuts through paper, card stock, vinyl and even iron-on transfers is the way to go to create a festive vibe at home. I decided to investigate and put together this list of ideas that even I could manage.

Greeting cards. Learning to design holiday cards (and envelopes) will become the gift that keeps on giving. This skill will come in handy for birthdays, invitations or any of your other greeting card needs throughout the year.

Home décor. Holiday countdown calendars are a must-make to keep you and your family on track. If you don't have a fireplace, create a vinyl one that can be used year after year—and you won't ever have to clean up the soot. In addition to hanging handcrafted stockings and wreaths, you can change the mantle for the different seasons. Put together a winter wonderland with a variety of snowflake designs to decorate the windows.

Gifts. Make custom ornaments, pillows, wine bags, T-shirts and drinkware, such as mugs, water bottles and wine glasses. And don't forget matching gift tags, bags, boxes and gift wrap. Send guests home with homemade leftover food in handmade to-go containers.

Tablescapes. Paper flowers for centrepieces look just as beautiful as real flowers and you never need to water them. Personalized place settings are a nice touch and you can even turn this into a fun activity for children by setting them up to colour their own. Spiff up old cloth or paper napkins with monograms or seasonal decorations. And don't forget to mark dishes with custom food labels for guests with dietary restrictions.

New year. Ring in the new year with party hats, masks, banners and fun photo props. Custom-made stemware name tags are a must for that special toast.

Wishing you happy holidays and an amazing new year! ■



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Buyers' picks

Product selections from
Costco's buying team



Tom Waloszek

Eric David

Hape Learn with Lights Piano with Stool

This 25-key piano is designed to teach children ages 3 and older how to play music by following the lighted keys. When a child feels more confident, they can add one of six tunes or eight drum beats. The compose button gives children the freedom to create and record their own music, while the smart play function enables them to always hit the right note. The piano is powered by either four AA batteries or a USB cable; both are included. Item 1601294. Warehouses/ Costco.ca.—*Tom Waloszek*



Sno-Storm Children's Snowboard

It's all downhill fun from here with this multi-purpose snowboard, which accommodates one standing rider or two sitting riders ages 5 and up. Built to take on winter conditions, it features a tow rope and a slick bottom for smooth riding. Made of foam in eye-catching colours, the board measures 122 centimetres (48 inches) and can hold up to 86 kilograms (190 pounds). Warehouses only. Item 2001128.

—*Eric David*



Eurographics puzzles

What better way to spend quality time with friends and family—or get some serious alone time—than by assembling one of Eurographics' 1,000-piece puzzles? The range of images in the Eurographics puzzle assortment includes The Cat Nap, Surf Shack, Lake Como, Delicious Goodies, Garden Birds and Planets of the Solar System. The images are sure to appeal to a variety of interests. Item 2147905. Warehouses only.—*TW*

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Know your roe

Try this tender, briny delicacy with these tips and serving suggestions

by SCOTT JONES



Fettuccine with Caviar

LEFT: © MARCO MAVER; ILLUSTRATIONS: © DARIAUSTIUGOVA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



LIESA COLE

Scott Jones (@JonesIsThirsty) is a food and wine writer living in Birmingham, Alabama.

Throughout the ages, caviar has been associated with luxury and opulence. While caviar is not an everyday food, it's a special occasion treat that's worth the splurge and can be enjoyed at home without pomp or fussiness.

For those new to this delicacy, caviar is sturgeon's salt-cured eggs (roe), historically from the Black and Caspian Seas. Today, the most widely available types—beluga, oscietra and sevruga—are produced from farm-raised sturgeon. The tender eggs, ranging in colour from black to steel grey to amber to golden, are salt-cured and then hand-packed into tins.

Sold in sizes ranging from 28 grams (1 ounce) to an entire kilogram (2 pounds), a good rule of thumb for buying caviar is to

plan for 28 grams (1 ounce) per person. If you want to entertain a large party of 25 to 30 guests, go for the kilogram (2 pounds). If you're counting calories, caviar has about 74 calories per 28 grams, along with 6 grams of fat and 7 grams of protein.

Caviar is highly perishable. Store it in the coldest part of the refrigerator and, once open, eat it within 24 hours. To serve, place the tin or jar in a bowl of crushed ice to ensure the caviar stays cold.

When eating caviar, keep it simple. Scoop out the tender eggs with a mother-of-pearl, bone or wooden spoon rather than stainless steel, which adds an unwanted metallic flavour. Roll the briny, nutty-flavoured eggs between your tongue and the roof of your mouth, allowing them

Fettuccine with Caviar

Salt, to taste
200 g (7 oz) fettuccine
or pasta of your choice
30 mL (2 Tbsp) extra-virgin olive oil
Black pepper, to taste
50-g (1.7-oz) tin of fresh caviar

Add salt to 2 L (8½ cups) water and bring to a boil. Cook the fettuccine according to package directions. Reserve 60 mL (¼ cup) of the cooking water from the pasta. Drain the fettuccine then drizzle with oil, pepper and the reserved cooking water. Toss with tongs to coat pasta evenly. Arrange on 4 plates, top with caviar and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Quintessence Caviar



to soften slightly. Then break them against the roof of your mouth for the full flavour experience.

If you want to up your serving game, use warm blinis (tiny buckwheat-flour pancakes) or low-salt potato chips as a base, then top the caviar with just a touch of crème fraîche or sour cream. Other serving options include eggs (hard-boiled, soft-scrambled), thinly sliced salmon (smoked, cured), brie and milk chocolate.

Don't forget the drinks. Chilled vodka and brut-style Champagne are classic caviar pairings. Both cleanse the palate, readying you for another bite. Dry white wines (Chablis, Albariño) and German-style Pilsner beer also work well. ■

Caviar with Homemade Blini and Crème Fraîche

CRÈME FRAÎCHE
250 mL (1 cup)
heavy cream
30 mL (2 Tbsp)
cultured buttermilk

180 mL (¾ cup)
heavy cream
45 to 60 mL
(3 to 4 Tbsp) water
1 large egg
15 mL (1 Tbsp)
butter, softened

BLINIS
250 mL (1 cup)
all-purpose flour
2 mL (½ tsp)
baking powder
Pinch of sea salt

TOPPING
Caviar of your
choice, chilled
Sprigs of dill or
chopped chives

Prepare the crème fraîche: Mix cream and buttermilk and seal in an airtight container. Let rest for about 8 hours, then refrigerate for 2 days, or until thick and creamy.

Prepare the blinis: Mix the dry ingredients in one bowl and the wet ingredients in another bowl. Mix the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients. Preheat a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Using a tablespoon, spoon small circles of the blini batter into the pan. Once bubbles appear in the batter, flip each blini. Continue until all the batter is cooked.

Prepare the topping: Once the blinis have cooled, spoon a dollop of crème fraîche on top. Top with caviar. Garnish with dill or chives. Makes 15 servings.

*Recipe and photo courtesy of Rachel Galvin
(themaplecuttingboard.com)*



COSTCO CONNECTION

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Smarter snacks

Simple Mills provides healthy ingredients, sustainably sourced

by TIM TALEVICH



Katlin Smith

© COURTESY OF SIMPLE MILLS

Simple Mills makes crackers and snacks using nontraditional ingredients, with a goal of being healthy not only for people but for Earth. *The Connection* recently chatted about sustainable food-sourcing practices with CEO Katlin Smith, who started the company in her kitchen a decade ago.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You can find Simple Mills Almond Flour Sea Salt Crackers (Item 1400953) in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Costco Connection Simple Mills doesn't focus on being sugar-free or fat-free. Instead it focuses on the ingredients it includes. Can you elaborate?

Katlin Smith There are so many items out there that are made with things that we want to be eating less of, instead of things we want to be eating more of. Our products [include] only carefully selected, natural ingredients, nothing artificial ever.

CC The ingredient lists on your products reflect that. Rather than wheat and corn, we see buckwheat, watermelon seed and arrowroot, to name a few. Why are these ingredients important?

KS These ingredients help people diversify their diets. And having those diverse ingredients is really important for our broader agricultural system.

I started this company after cleaning up my own diet and taking out a lot of the processed food and sugar, and realized how much of an impact that eating healthy foods can have on our bodies. And from there, I realized food has a really large impact on our planet as well. In using all these different ingredients, we're supporting regenerative agriculture (see "Diverse ingredients"), which is designed to be a self-feeding system where you don't need chemical inputs to grow your food, and where you don't have to continually replant food.

CC Working closely with farmers is very important to you. How do you achieve that?

KS We believe farmers are key to transforming our food system, so we have forged direct contracts and share with them our vision to build more sustainability into how we feed people. Also, we actively support partnerships that promote farming practices that have the potential to improve soil health and food safety. It's really remarkable how different the land looks when you see these practices implemented. ■

Diverse ingredients

Sugar cane, corn, rice and wheat are the mainstays of many foods today. Simple Mills uses over 40 unique

crops beyond those. Growing a diverse variety of crops is a cornerstone of regenerative agriculture, which strives to improve soil health, provide

pollinator habitat and increase soil carbon storage through steps such as no-till farming, planting cover crops and avoiding pesticides.—TT

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Upside Down Spiced Pear Cake

LEFT: © CAYLIE CROSSLAND (BAKERSTABLE.NET); DRIED FRUIT AT RIGHT: PIXIBANK; DIANA TALUIN; KRAFLA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM
© SONIA LACASSE (EVLTKITCHEN)

Pearing up

The fall fruit that pairs well with sweet and savoury recipes

by LAURA LANGSTON

Delicious pears used to be called butter fruits because of their soft, butter-like flesh. Native to Asia, Europe and North Africa, this popular fruit is now grown and enjoyed all over the world.

Pears are rich in nutrients. They're an excellent source of fibre and vitamin C, and they also contain potassium, phytonutrients and other antioxidants.

While there are more than 3,000 pear varieties, some are more common than others. The Bartlett (sometimes called Williams) pear is extremely juicy with the classic pear flavour. Bosc pears are crisp and

woody with a honey sweetness. The Rocha variety is mild, moderately sweet and crunchy.

Firmer pear varieties, such as Bosc, are excellent for poaching, baking or grilling because their dense flesh holds shape when heated. They're also good canned or in chutneys and jams, as is the slightly softer Bartlett variety, which is sometimes called the canning pear. Rocha is a little drier than some varieties, which makes it ideal for poaching, for lunchboxes and for storing.

Pears are incredibly versatile. Serve them with yogourt, granola or pancakes, or bake them into hearty muffins for breakfast. At lunch, add pears to a salad, turn them into pear and cheddar soup, or top crostini with pears, prosciutto and goat cheese. Pears add surprising depth to entrees, especially chicken and pork. They're a natural dessert choice in cakes, crisps and pies.

Pears are harvested when they're mature but not ripe. Leave firm, unripe pears at room temperature to ripen. Bartlett pears change from green to yellow when ripe, but most varieties don't change colour. Check for ripeness every day by applying a little pressure to the neck or stem end of the pear. If it yields to pressure, it's ripe and ready to eat. Once the pear is ripe, refrigerate and eat it within five days. If you find yourself with a few too many ripe pears, blend them into smoothies, soups, sauces or purées. ■

Laura Langston lives and writes in the Pacific Northwest, and her favourite way of preserving pears is in pear chutney.

Upside Down Spiced Pear Cake

60 mL (¼ cup) butter, melted
250 mL (1 cup) light brown sugar, packed and divided
4 ripe pears, peeled and thinly sliced
375 mL (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
5 mL (1 tsp) baking soda
5 mL (1 tsp) baking powder
15 mL (1 Tbsp) ground ginger
5 mL (1 tsp) ground cinnamon
2 mL (½ tsp) ground nutmeg
2 mL (½ tsp) salt
1 mL (¼ tsp) ground cloves
125 mL (½ cup) butter, softened
2 large eggs, at room temperature
250 mL (1 cup) unsweetened applesauce
125 mL (½ cup) blackstrap molasses
Vanilla ice cream
Nuts, chopped
Honey

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F). Grease a 23-cm (9-inch) springform pan.

In a small bowl, mix melted butter and 125 mL (½ cup) brown sugar. Spread mixture evenly in the pan. Top evenly with pears, covering the entire mixture.

In a large bowl, whisk dry ingredients. In a stand mixer bowl, beat softened butter and remaining sugar with the paddle attachment on medium-high until fluffy. Add eggs and beat until airy. Mix in applesauce and molasses. Mix in dry ingredients on low until just incorporated. Pour evenly over the pears.

Place aluminum foil under and around sides of pan. Bake for 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Cool until safe to handle, then flip onto a plate. Serve with vanilla ice cream, nuts and honey. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Sonia Lacasse (eviltwin.kitchen)

Pear Brie Flatbread

2 naan flatbreads, approximately 125 g (4.4 oz) each
Olive oil, for brushing
227 g (8 oz) brie, rind removed and sliced
2 medium pears, thinly sliced
5 mL (1 tsp) rosemary, chopped
15 to 30 mL (1 to 2 Tbsp) honey
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 205 C (400 F). Place the naan on a large baking sheet. Use two baking sheets if needed. Brush lightly with olive oil. Top evenly with brie, sliced pears and rosemary. Place in the oven and bake for 7 to 10 minutes, or until brie is melted. Remove from the oven and drizzle with honey. Season with salt and pepper. Cut the flatbread into pieces and serve immediately. Makes 8 appetizer servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Maria Lichty (twopeasandtheirpod.com)



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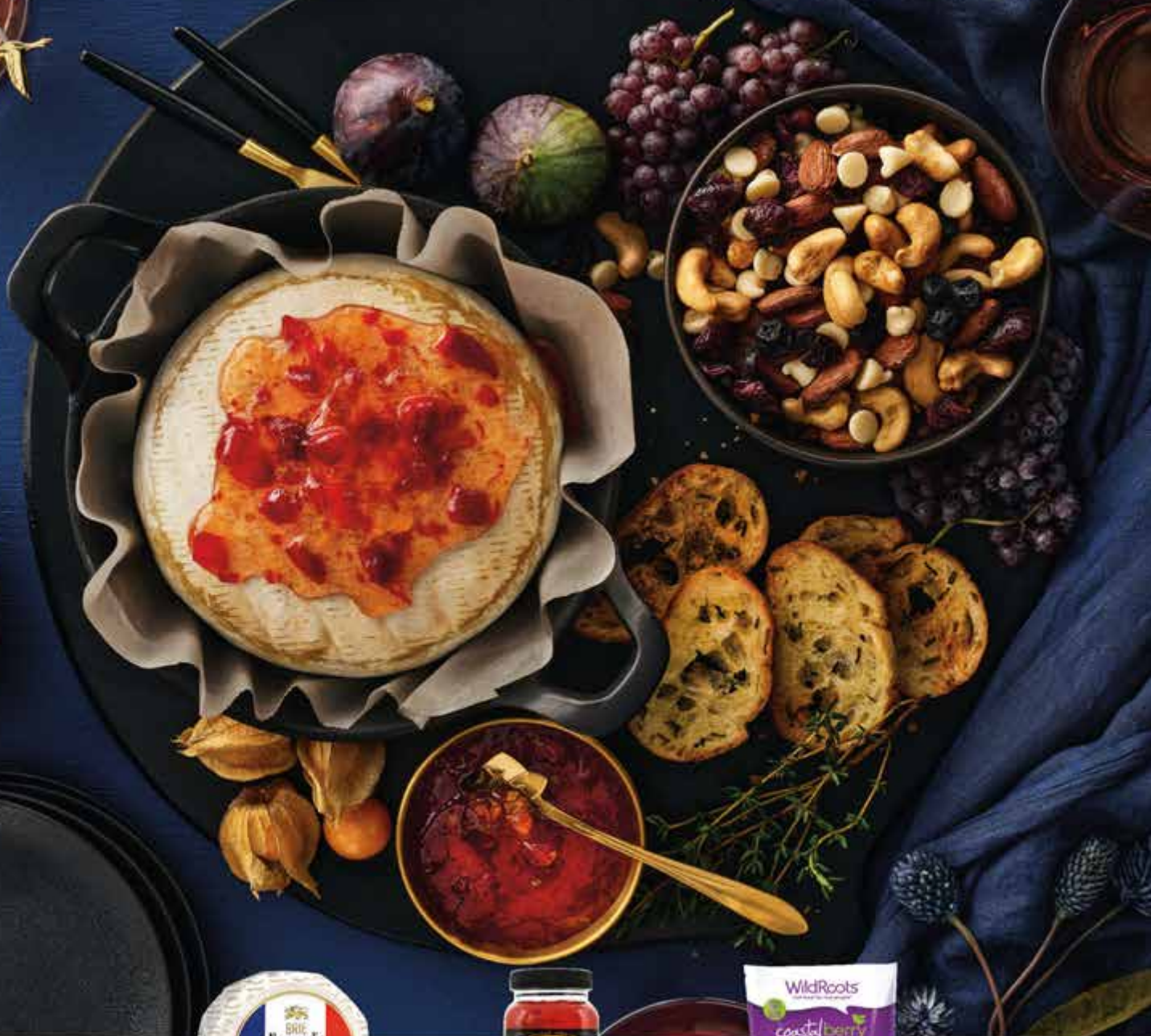
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SHRIMP & PROSCIUTTO SKEWERS

16 slices of **Beretta Prosciutto**
16 large shrimps, deveined and peeled
16 slices of zucchini cut lengthwise

MARINADE

5 mL (1 tsp) pink peppercorns, crushed
30 mL (2 Tbsp.) lime juice
30 mL (2 Tbsp.) chives, chopped
125 mL (½ cup) extra virgin olive oil
Salt to taste

In a medium bowl with olive oil, lime juice and salt, add crushed pepper and chopped chives. Place shrimp in the marinade and let rest in the refrigerator for 2 hours.

Drain the shrimps from the marinade, wrap them in a zucchini slice, then in a slice of **Beretta Prosciutto** and thread them in pairs onto small wooden skewers.

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Place shrimp skewers in the skillet. (Discard used marinade.) Cook shrimp skewers until pink, about 45 seconds per side. Place skewers on a platter.



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SERVES
12

SMOKED SALMON TARTLETS

225 g **Premier Seafoods Wild Smoked Sockeye Salmon**

1 lime, peeled and segmented into 1/2-in pieces
125 mL (1/2 cup) sour cream
60 mL (1/4 cup) fresh chives, chopped
2 mL (1/2 tsp) freshly cracked black peppercorns

FILO TARTLETS

One sheet of filo pastry
Butter, melted

Lay filo pastry flat over a cutting board. Using a clean brush, gently butter the pastry sheet. Then cut the sheet into 5 x 5 cm (2 x 2-in.) squares with a sharp chef's knife.

Butter the muffin cups and line each one with 3 buttered filo squares in offset layers. Bake pastry for 5-7 minutes in the oven or until they turn a light golden brown.

Once shells are cool, spoon 5 mL (1 tsp) of sour cream into the base of each tartlet and top with a strip of **Premier Seafoods Wild Smoked Sockeye Salmon** and a lime segment.

Add freshly cracked black peppercorns and chopped chives. Serve cold.

CHEDDAR HERB FOCACCIA

250 mL (1 cup) **Balderson 2-year Royal Canadian Cheddar**, shredded

250 mL (1 cup) warm water

5 mL (1 tsp) granulated sugar

8 g (1 pkg) active dry yeast

875 mL (3 1/2 cups) all-purpose flour

125 mL (1/2 cup) warm milk

60 mL (4 tbsp) olive oil, divided

2 mL (1/2 tsp) salt

1 clove garlic, minced

30 mL (2 Tbsp.) finely chopped fresh rosemary

30 mL (2 Tbsp.) finely chopped fresh thyme

2 mL (1/2 tsp) each flaked sea salt and cracked pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).

In a bowl of stand mixer, stir together warm water and sugar. Sprinkle yeast over top. Let stand for 8 to 10 minutes or until foamy. Stir in 250 mL (1 cup) flour, milk, 30 mL (2 Tbsp.) of olive oil and salt; beat on low speed in a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook until combined.

Beat in remaining flour for 4-6 minutes or until dough gathers into a ball, and dough is smooth, slightly sticky and elastic. Transfer to a greased bowl, cover and let rise for 1 to 2 hours or until doubled in size.

Grease 15 x 10 in. rimmed baking sheet.

Lightly punch down dough; transfer to lightly floured work surface. Pat down dough; using palms of your hands, stretch into a rectangle, about 4 cm (1 1/2 in.) thick. Place in the centre of the prepared pan (dough does not have to fit the pan). Cover and let rise for 30 to 60 minutes or until doubled in volume.

Pat dough into 2.5 cm (1-in.) thickness. Using fingertips, create dimples in dough. Stir together remaining oil and garlic; drizzle over dough. Sprinkle **Balderson 2-year Royal Canadian Cheddar**, rosemary, thyme, salt and pepper over top.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown and cheese is melted. Let cool in the pan on a rack for 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and cut into large squares. Serve warm.



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Better with feta

This tangy, creamy, crumbly textured Greek cheese can live up more than just salads

by MILLY DAWSON

When you hear feta, do you immediately think Greek salad? It's likely, as that is where most feta winds up. But creamy feta, with its tangy, slightly salty profile, can play a starring role in many more dishes. It brings a burst of flavour not only to cold dishes but also to cooked ones.

Feta belongs to a family of young white cheeses. These varieties are aged from at least two months to approximately a year, and they have no rinds. Although feta is a young cheese, its origins date back to ancient Greece.

In *The Odyssey*, Greek poet Homer mentions Odysseus and his men noticing the delightful smell and sight of woven baskets full of feta in the cave of a Cyclops, who was a shepherd.

The Greek word feta means slice. Originally, feta came only in blocks for slicing or crumbling just before use, but it is now available in crumbles. Authentic Greek feta comes with the Protected Designation of Origin certification, which

identifies it is made in a specific geographical area in Greece. Traditional Greek feta is made from sheep's milk steeped in brine, although many contemporary feta cheeses combine sheep's milk and goat's milk. What sets feta apart is its distinctive flavour and crumbly texture.

When Greeks put feta on their salads, they lay it in thick slices across a mix of tomatoes, cucumbers and Kalamata olives, with no lettuce or leafy greens involved. Try feta crumbled onto a bowl of tomato, vegetable or lentil soup. Add small chunks to tabbouleh. Stuff a pita with roasted vegetables and feta, or scatter some on salmon before baking.

Versatile feta is flavourful no matter how you serve it. ■

Milly Dawson is an Orlando, Florida-based food, health and medicine writer.

Feta pairings

Looking for an easy way to enhance the flavour of feta? Try these specially selected food and beverage pairings.

Beer

Hefeweizen
Pale ale
Witbier

Condiments and spices

Chives
Honey
Maple syrup
Mint
Parsley
Rosemary

Fruits and vegetables

Cantaloupe
Cucumbers
Green beans
Honeydew melon
Olives
Onions
Peppers
Strawberries
Tomatoes
Watermelon

Grains, nuts and starches

Almonds
Crostoni
Pasta
Pita chips/bread

Protein

Anchovies
Chicken
Hamburger
Lamb
Shrimp

Wine

Pinot noir
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COSTCO CONNECTION

Kirkland Signature™ Feta (Item 555301) is available in your local Costco warehouse. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.

Love your leftovers

Tasty transformations to use up your holiday foods

by SUJA NATARAJAN

The holiday season is the joy of coming together with loved ones and indulging in festive meals. Yet, as the holiday cheer settles, do you wonder what to do with all the leftovers? With some planning and a dash of creativity, you can turn those ingredients into delicious meals for your family. Here are some delightful ways to use up the remaining food.

Savoury flavour

Not sure what to do with all the turkey or ham? Wraps, pot pies, sandwiches, fried rice, calzones, salads, casseroles, lasagna rolls and enchiladas can put a delicious twist on leftover meat. Hamilton, Ontario-based recipe developer Kris Osborne suggests pairing turkey with shawarma-style pita, yogurt sauce and veggies.

Or, cook a hearty turkey [or ham] soup with sweet potatoes and peas, recommends Seattle-based recipe developer, cookbook author and Costco member Alyssa Brantley. If you have extra mashed potatoes, Brantley has a suggestion for those, too: Pan-fry them into patties with egg, cheese and your favourite seasonings.

Keep it sweet

Dessert and drink leftovers can be reimagined, too. Use extra eggnog instead of milk for pudding, coffee, hot cereal, cakes and more. London, England-based recipe developer Lucas



Ham and Cheese Quiche with Spinach

© KRISTY MURRAY (LINGERLITTLE.COM)

Guizo recommends using eggnog to make a richer batter for golden-fried French toast.

Repurpose leftover fruitcake into various delights such as cake pops, yogurt toppings, bread pudding, ice cream or cookies. Guizo suggests a fruitcake trifle layered with cream, fresh fruit and nuts for a delectable dessert.

Leftover cranberry sauce can make a delightful addition to sweet rolls, waffles, pancakes or sandwiches. Add cranberry sauce to overnight oats or smoothies for a burst of flavour, or use it as a tangy glaze for grilled meats. New York-based recipe developer Jessie

Johnson recommends whipping up a cranberry-mayonnaise vinaigrette-style salad dressing.

Wondering how to store your leftovers? Keep them in shallow, airtight containers or airtight packaging in the refrigerator. Freeze the leftovers for up to four months and always reheat to 74 C (165 F) before eating. Keep the festive vibes going after the holidays by creating delicious dishes with cleverly repurposed leftovers. ■

Suja Natarajan is a writer based in Virginia.

Ham and Cheese Quiche with Spinach

4 large eggs
125 mL (½ cup) heavy cream
125 mL (½ cup) whole milk
2 mL (½ tsp) salt
2 mL (½ tsp) black pepper
250 mL (1 cup) ham steak, cubed
250 mL (1 cup) Parmesan cheese, grated
500 mL (2 cups) baby spinach, loosely packed
1 (23-cm/9-inch) par-baked pie crust in a pan

Preheat the oven to 200 C (400 F). In a medium-size bowl, beat 4 large eggs for 2 to 3 minutes, or until well blended and fluffy. Add cream, milk, salt and pepper. Continue to beat until fully blended, about 1 minute. Stir in ham, cheese and spinach. Stir until everything is combined.

Pour the egg mixture into the pie crust and bake for 40 to 50 minutes. The edges of the filling should be firm but the middle should still slightly jiggle. Remove from the oven and place the pie pan on a cooling rack for 15 to 20 minutes to continue to cook and firm up. Serve warm. Makes 8 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Kristy Murray (lingeralittle.com)

Cranberry Coffee Cake

560 mL (2¼ cups) all-purpose flour
2 mL (½ tsp) baking soda
2 mL (½ tsp) kosher salt
250 mL (1 cup) unsalted butter, softened
430 mL (1¾ cups) cane sugar
3 large eggs
Zest of 1 large lemon
10 mL (2 tsp) pure vanilla extract
250 mL (1 cup) sour cream or Greek yogourt
250 mL (1 cup) leftover cranberry sauce, at room temperature

GLAZE

250 mL (1 cup) icing sugar
30 mL (2 Tbsp) fresh lemon juice or milk
2 mL (½ tsp) pure vanilla extract, optional

Preheat the oven to 180 C (350 F). Grease and flour a 2.5-L (10-cup) Bundt pan. In a bowl, whisk flour, baking soda and salt. Using a mixer, cream butter and sugar in a separate bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time. Beat in lemon zest and vanilla. Alternate mixing in the flour mixture and sour cream on low until combined. Spoon ½ the batter into the pan. Add cranberry sauce and top with the remaining batter.

Bake for 55 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cover loosely with aluminum foil if needed. Remove from the oven and cool for 10 minutes inside the pan. Invert the cake onto a wire rack over a plate or serving dish. Allow cake to cool completely.

Prepare the glaze: In a bowl, whisk the icing sugar, lemon juice and vanilla. Drizzle over the cake. Slice and serve. Makes 10 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Katya Kurmayev (littlebroken.com)



COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find turkey, ham and other ingredients for holiday recipes in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.



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Apple and Pear Salad

Serves 4-6

Salad

7 ounces mixed greens
 1 pear, thinly sliced
 1 apple, thinly sliced
 180 mL (½ cup) crumbled feta cheese
 180 mL (½ cup) dried cranberries
 45 mL (3 Tbsp) toasted sliced almonds

4 slices of bacon, cooked and chopped

Balsamic Vinaigrette

45 mL (3 Tbsp) balsamic vinegar
 30 mL (2 Tbsp) olive oil
 15 mL (1 Tbsp) dijon mustard
 15 mL (1 Tbsp) minced shallot
 15 mL (1 Tbsp) maple syrup
 Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

Add the spring mix to a serving bowl. Top it with the sliced apple and pear, crumbled feta, bacon, dried cranberries and almonds.

Add the ingredients for the vinaigrette in a glass measuring cup and whisk until combined.

Serve the vinaigrette next to the salad to keep the ingredients from becoming soggy.

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FRENCH GREEN BEANS
 Itm. 400615



Creamy Broccoli Casserole, Crispy Crumbs

Serves 6-8

2 bags frozen Nature's
Touch broccoli
Cheesy Béchamel
45 mL (3 Tbsp) butter
2 garlic cloves, minced
60 mL (¼ cup) all-purpose
flour
375 mL (1 ½ cup) milk
125 mL (½ cup) 15% cream
A small pinch of salt
Black pepper, to taste
250 mL (1 cup) grated cheese

Crispy breadcrumbs
15 mL (1 Tbsp) butter
80 mL (⅓ cup) italian
breadcrumbs
10 mL (2 tsp) salad
seasoning
Before you begin, pierce
each bag of Nature's Touch
broccoli then microwave for
5 minutes. Meanwhile, make
the cheesy béchamel.

Cheesy béchamel

Melt the butter over medium heat then add the garlic. Brown for 1 to 2 minutes then sprinkle with flour. Form a roux. Gradually pour in the milk, whisking well. When it boils and the sauce has thickened, pour in the cream. Add the salt and black pepper and the cheese. Mix with a whisk until a homogeneous sauce is obtained. Reduce the heat to low then add the broccoli. Stir to coat and remove the pan from heat. Pour into a serving dish.

Crispy breadcrumbs

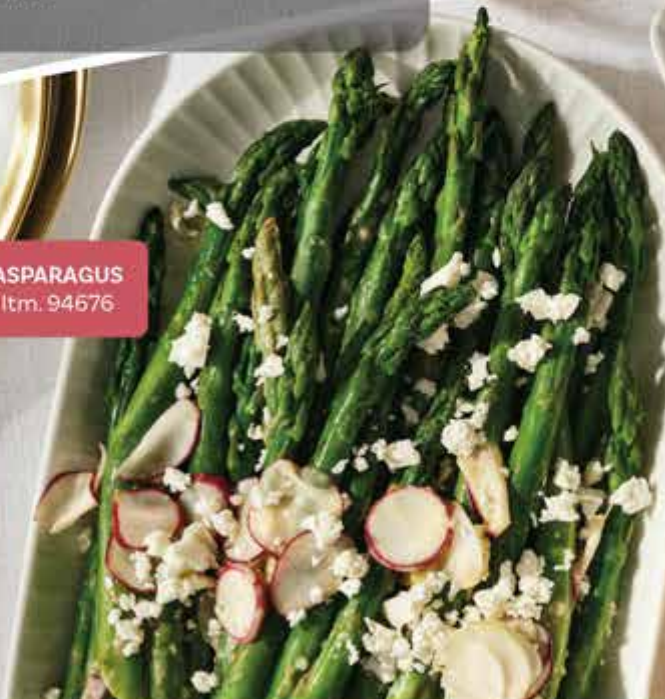
Melt the butter in a small skillet over medium heat then add the breadcrumbs. Mix to coat. Allow the breadcrumbs to colour for 2-3 minutes, watching carefully. Add salad seasoning, toss one last time. When the breadcrumbs are crispy, remove the pan from the heat.

Sprinkle the broccoli with the crispy breadcrumbs and a little bit of paprika then serve.

**NATURE'S TOUCH
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KALETTES
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Maple Glazed Ham with Roasted Pears and Brussels Sprouts

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

1 (2.5 kg / 5 lb) Fletcher's Black Forest Ham

15 mL (1 Tbsp) cloves
750 mL (3 cups) brussels sprouts, washed and trimmed
4 pears, peeled, halved and cored
30 mL (2 Tbsp) olive oil
5 mL (1 tsp) cinnamon, ground
5 mL (1 tsp) nutmeg, ground
5 mL (1 tsp) ginger, dry ground or fresh

125 mL (½ cup) cranberries, whole and thawed if frozen
180 mL (¾ cup) water

Glaze Ingredients:

180 mL (¾ cup) maple syrup
180 mL (¾ cup) brown sugar
45 mL (3 Tbsp) Dijon mustard
5 mL (1 tsp) cinnamon, ground
2 mL (½ tsp) nutmeg, ground
5 mL (1 tsp) salt

To prepare glaze: Add all above ingredients into a saucepan on medium-high heat and bring to a boil for 2-3 minutes.

Pre-heat oven to 160 C (325 F)

Take Fletcher's Black Forest Ham out of packaging and stick cloves into the surface of the ham approximately 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart until the entire surface is covered. Place into a roasting pan and baste with half of the glaze. Then add water to the bottom of the pan. Cover with foil and place into the oven for 30 minutes.

Combine Brussels sprouts, pears, olive oil, cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger. Toss until olive oil and all spices are evenly distributed.

After 30 minutes, remove foil and add the Brussels sprouts and pears to the roasting pan, surrounding the ham. Bake for 1 more hour.

Remove ham after the remaining hour is done and remove foil. Turn heat up to 200 C (400 F), and baste the ham with the remaining glaze. Stir Brussels sprouts, pears and add cranberries. Return to the oven without the foil and bake for 11-12 minutes.

Garnish with Fresh Rosemary sprigs and orange slices

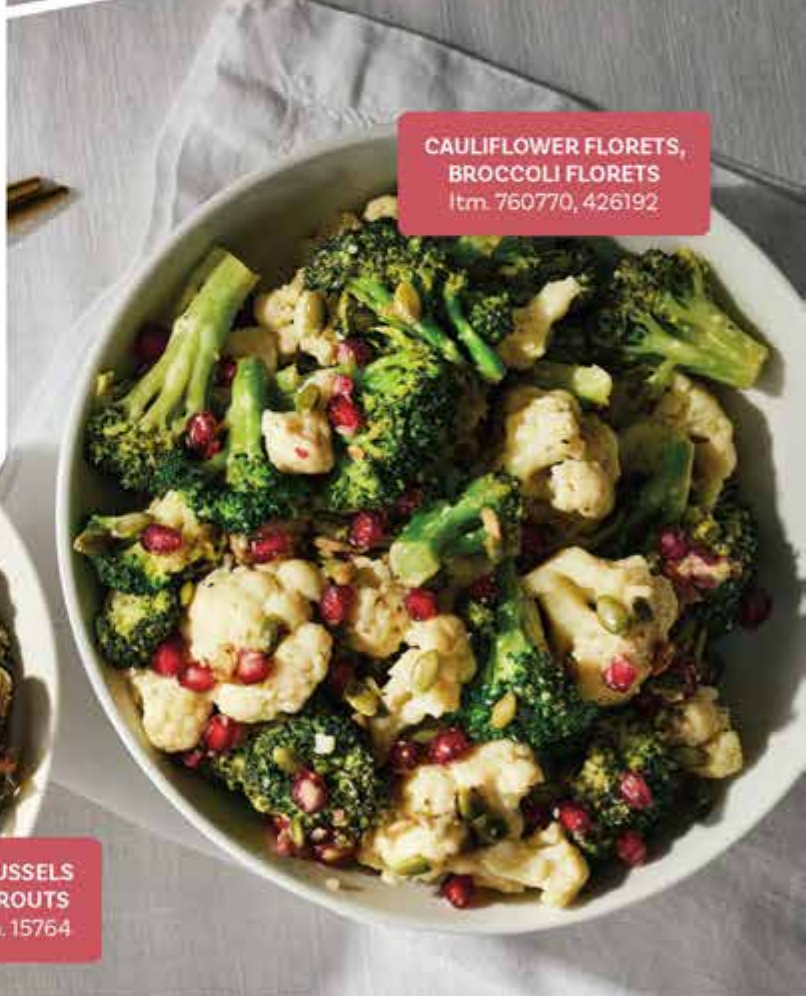
After removing from the oven, top with diced cherry tomatoes, red onion, avocado and microgreens. Serve with lime wedges and enjoy!

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Veggie Burger Quesadilla

Serves 4

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4 medium flour tortillas
7 mL (½ Tbsp) butter (or coconut oil)
250 mL (1 cup) corn
125 mL (½ cup) mixed hot peppers, diced finely
250 mL (1 cup) cotija cheese
125 mL (½ cup) cilantro

Preparation

Preheat a non-stick pan over medium heat. Cook burgers approximately 7 minutes until browned. Carefully flip and cook an additional 5 minutes until heated through and well browned. Transfer to a cutting board and roughly chop each burger into 4-6 pieces.

Wipe down the skillet and return to the stovetop. Assemble quesadilla with a tortilla, cheese, peppers, corn, veggie burger pieces, and a second tortilla. Add butter to the skillet and fry the quesadilla for 4-5 minutes on each side until tortillas are browned and slightly crispy.

Slice in half, top with cilantro and serve!

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1 (340 g/12 oz) bag of broccoli
slaw mix or regular coleslaw
250 mL (1 cup) mayonnaise
30 mL (2 Tbsp) white vinegar
30 mL (2 Tbsp) sugar
Salt and cracked black pepper

to taste
8 taco size tortillas

**250 mL (1 cup) honey
mustard sauce:**
60 mL (¼ cup) mayonnaise
60 mL (¼ cup) honey
30 mL (2 Tbsp) dijon mustard

In a large mixing bowl, combine the broccoli slaw mix, mayo, vinegar, sweetener, salt, and pepper. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator.

Cook the chicken 205 C (400 F) for 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat a large skillet, over medium-high heat, warm your tortillas on both sides.

To assemble the tacos, place 3 chicken bites on a tortilla, add some broccoli slaw (or regular coleslaw) and top with a drizzle of honey mustard sauce and enjoy.

**ERIE MEATS JUMBO
CHICKEN BREAST BITES**
Itm. 2000658



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The central image shows a hand holding a smartphone. The phone screen displays the Facebook logo and the URL facebook.com/CostcoCanada, followed by the Instagram logo and the handle [@Costco_Canada](https://www.instagram.com/costco_canada). Surrounding the phone are various social media icons: red speech bubbles with white speech marks, pink hearts, and yellow smiley faces with different expressions (happy, surprised, heart-eyes). At the bottom left, a blue square contains a QR code, the Facebook logo, and the text "There's more to like" and facebook.com/CostcoCanada. At the bottom right, a pink square contains a QR code, the Instagram logo, and the text "Follow us on Instagram" and [@costco_canada](https://www.instagram.com/costco_canada).

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Chocolate Dried Fruit and Nut Bark

LEFT: © CAYLIE CROSS/AND (BAKERSTABLE.NET); DRIED FRUIT AT RIGHT: © PIXIBANK; DIANA TALUN; KRAFLA / STOCKX DOBE.COM
© SONIA LACASSE (EVLTVINKITCHEN)

Drier power

Dried fruit gives recipes added oomph

by HANNAH SELINGER

Dried fruit, preserved in the hot sun, dates as far back as 12,000 BC, according to the National Center for Home Food Preservation. Although dates and figs were some of the first fruit to be cultivated and dried, now a host of different offerings, from blueberries to mangoes to apricots, are available.

Dried fruit is a nutritional superstar, says Costco member Rosie Schwartz, a registered dietician, food writer and author based in Toronto. “They offer an abundance of nutrients, such as vitamin C and fibre,” she says. The fruit is also packed with antioxidants, and may protect against cardiovascular disease, certain cancers and even cognitive decline, Schwartz adds.

Dried fruit is also a holiday workhorse, useful in everything from savoury stuffing to an accoutrement accompanying appetizer cheese boards.

“I can’t think of a dried fruit that isn’t good for baking, although some should be reconstituted—or plumped—beforehand,” says New York-based cookbook author Charlotte Druckman. She steeps dried fruit in sweet fortified wine, fruit juice or water so they don’t dry out during baking.

To rehydrate dried fruit, bring your liquid of choice to a boil, then pour it over the fruit to soak for 10 to 15 minutes. “This allows you to infuse them with flavour and, at the same time, to plump them up and bring them back to life,” she says.

Cathy Barrow, a food writer, cookbook author and recipe developer based in Frederick, Maryland, says that dried fruit is full of baking potential. “One of my favourite things to do with dried fruit is to add it to my pie fillings,” she says. She replaces a quarter of the total fruit with dried, which helps firm the filling. She also uses dried fruit in cookies—apricots with pecans, for instance, and plums with almonds—and makes breakfast breads and holiday scones.

“The same spices we associate with the holiday season are the same ones that complement the concentrated flavours and sweetness of dried fruit,” Druckman adds. Warm, woody spices, she says, like cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, star anise and ginger, pair with them naturally.

The best way to store dried fruit, Schwartz says, depends on how you intend to use them. “Dried fruit that will be eaten over a relatively short period of time, such as a few weeks, can be stored in containers or packaging in a dry, cool place.” If you plan to keep your fruit for longer, she suggests refrigerating—for up to six months—or freezing it for up to one year. ■

Hannah Selinger is a James Beard Award-nominated food and travel writer.

Dried fruit is a nutritional superstar.

— ROSIE SCHWARTZ ◆

Registered dietician, food writer,
author and Costco member

Chocolate Dried Fruit and Nut Bark

500 mL (2 cups) dark or semisweet chocolate
30 mL (2 Tbsp) dried cranberries
30 mL (2 Tbsp) dried cherries
30 mL (2 Tbsp) dried apricots, chopped
30 mL (2 Tbsp) coconut flakes
30 mL (2 Tbsp) sliced almonds
30 mL (2 Tbsp) sea-salt cashews
30 mL (2 Tbsp) pumpkin seeds, roasted and salted

Temper or melt the chocolate. Pour onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Spread into a 30 x 23-cm (12 x 9-inch) rectangle. Sprinkle the top with dried fruit, nuts and pumpkin seeds. Allow to set. Cut or break the bark into pieces. Makes 18 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Traci Crossland (bakerstable.net)

Lemon Blueberry Granola

625 mL (2½ cups) old-fashioned oats
250 mL (1 cup) unsweetened coconut flakes
250 mL (1 cup) almonds, chopped
30 mL (2 Tbsp) brown sugar
1 mL (¼ tsp) sea salt
80 mL (⅓ cup) pure maple syrup
80 mL (⅓ cup) coconut oil, melted and cooled
Zest of 2 lemons
30 mL (2 Tbsp) fresh lemon juice
250 mL (1 cup) dried blueberries

Preheat the oven to 165 C (325 F). In a large bowl, combine the oats, coconut, almonds, brown sugar and salt. In a small bowl, combine the maple syrup, coconut oil, lemon zest and lemon juice. Pour the liquid ingredients over the dry ingredients and stir to combine. Pour the mixture onto a large parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes, or until granola is lightly golden, stirring halfway through. Remove from the oven and let cool completely. When cool, stir in the dried blueberries. Makes 15 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Maria Lichty (twopeasandtheirpod.com)



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Overcoming the burden

Exploring effective stress-management techniques to find what works for you

by TINA HALLER



MARY CECALA PHOTOGRAPHY

Tina Haller, a burnout coach (renewyoucoach.com), offers a holistic approach to help avoid burnout and regain balance.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Healthful foods are available in Costco warehouses. Exercise gear is available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca throughout the year.

Stress is an inevitable part of life, but when it goes beyond a certain level, it can negatively affect our mental and physical well-being. Therefore, it is important to recognize when stress becomes too much so that we can take the necessary steps to manage it.

Chronic stress, caused by prolonged exposure to stressful situations, differs from short-lived acute stress, which is caused by a one-time event. Chronic stress can often be difficult to identify because it can manifest in so many ways. According to the Mayo Clinic, it can lead to:

- Both physical and emotional symptoms (headaches, fatigue, depression and anxiety)
- Changes in behaviour (lack of motivation and focus, irritability and anger)
- Changes in eating habits (overeating, undereating or eating unhealthy foods)

- Changes in sleep patterns (insomnia, sleeping too much)
- Substance abuse and other unhealthy behaviours (smoking or drinking alcohol)

“I often use the analogy of a gazelle being chased by a lion to help my clients understand the fight or flight response,” says Dr. Vanessa Peters, a family medicine physician in Escondido, California. “While we may not have to worry about being eaten by lions in modern times, our daily stressors can mimic this response. Social media and the 24/7 mentality of society can exacerbate these issues, leading to increased chronic stress.”

Luckily, there are many effective ways to reduce stress and gain control of our lives. Here are some evidence-based strategies, backed by the Mayo Clinic and Harvard Medical School, to successfully accomplish this objective.



LEFT TO RIGHT: © OLGASTRELNKOVA; BEZIERMAGIC / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Exercise

Regular exercise can help improve your mood, reduce anxiety and boost your self-confidence. Exercise releases endorphins, which are hormones that make us feel good. Regular movement can also help build resilience and increase our ability to cope with stress.

Get quality sleep

When we are sleep-deprived, we are more likely to become stressed and overwhelmed. Ideally, we want to aim for seven to eight hours of sleep each night. If you have difficulty sleeping, try calming activities such as yoga or deep-breathing exercises before bed.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness is a form of meditation that focuses on being present in the moment. It can help us become aware of our thoughts and feelings without judgment. “Taking just 10 minutes each day to sit quietly in meditation can reset your nervous system to its natural,

relaxed state and improve your ability to manage the stress that is present in our everyday lives,” Peters says.

Create meaningful connections

Spending time with loved ones reduces stress, improves well-being and promotes support. Research shows that individuals who spend quality time with loved ones have better mental health, increased longevity and greater resilience in the face of life’s challenges.

Take regular relaxation breaks

To reduce stress, prioritizing relaxation breaks is essential. Try deep breathing, journaling, visualization techniques, meditation or yoga. Engaging in activities such as reading, listening to music, taking a bath or going for a walk can also be beneficial.

Eat a balanced diet

Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins reduces stress hormones and stabilizes blood sugar levels, keeping the body energized while lowering stress. Monitoring your diet in this way also helps ensure that the body is getting the essential nutrients it needs to function optimally.

Seek professional guidance

Seeking help from a professional such as a therapist, counsellor or life coach, as well as seeking advice from a holistic or medical doctor, can be effective in managing stress and developing coping strategies.

By implementing these strategies, you may decrease chronic stress and enhance your overall well-being, allowing you to unlock your full potential and live a happier, healthier life. ■



Alternative path to wellness

Consider measures beyond traditional strategies to reduce stress. Naturopathic medicine, for example, takes a holistic approach that not only complements those strategies, but also identifies the underlying physiological factors that contribute to stress, explains Kate Wharton, a naturopathic doctor. “By addressing issues such as hormone imbalances, nutrient deficiencies and organ dysfunction, naturopathic medicine can strengthen the body’s stress regulators, including the adrenal glands,” she says. “Incorporating naturopathic medicine into your stress management routine can lead to a more comprehensive approach and ultimately, a healthier, happier you.”—*TH*

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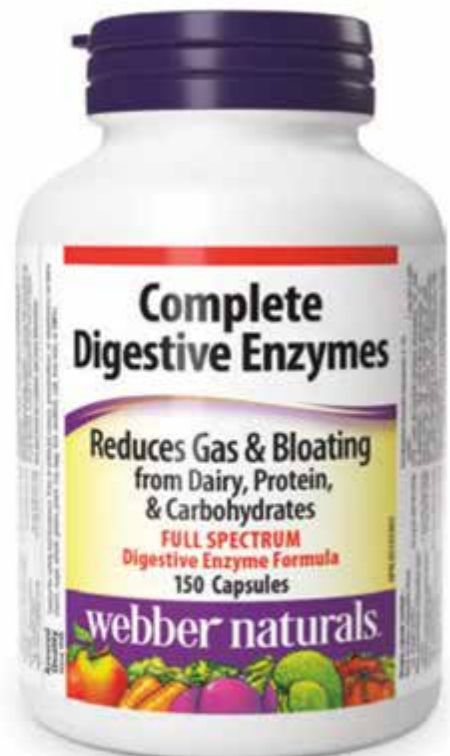
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Life-changing sugar hacks

What is blood glucose and why does it matter?

by DR. ANDREW ABRAHAM



COURTESY OF ORGAIN

Dr. Andrew Abraham is an integrative medicine specialist and cancer survivor.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Low-sugar foods and supplements are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

The term glucose is derived from the Greek word for sweet. From carrots to cupcakes, your body uses sugar for energy. As it travels through your bloodstream to your cells, it's called blood glucose, also known as blood sugar. Although blood glucose is crucial for your body's functioning and provides a major source of energy for most cells, excessive levels can be damaging. Maintaining normal blood glucose levels is an important part of avoiding long-term health issues, managing weight and supporting overall well-being.

Blood glucose levels

The body typically regulates glucose levels so that they remain within an appropriate range, helping to ensure there is enough glucose to fuel your cells, but not enough to overload your bloodstream.

It's typical for blood glucose levels to fluctuate throughout the day, but

big swings can make you feel fatigued, and for those living with diabetes, the fluctuations can be more considerable and happen more often.

What impacts blood glucose levels? Several factors can increase blood glucose levels, including low physical activity, stress, illness and dehydration, but I'm going to hone in on one of the biggest culprits: sugar. Sugar comes in various forms, including sucrose (table sugar), glucose and fructose, commonly found in fruits and vegetables, and lactose, which is in milk, cheese and ice

BLOOD SUGAR

An unbalanced sugar intake can start a cycle of blood sugar imbalance.



LEFT: © PIXEL-SHOT; NITR; ILLUSTRATIONS: INSEMAR, SIR, VECTOR, PECHENKA_123 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

cream. Beverages like a vanilla latte or soda can easily contain more than 40 grams of sugar (nearly 50 millilitres/10 teaspoons) per serving, which can cause a rapid blood sugar spike.

Even condiments like ketchup and barbecue sauce are often loaded with high-fructose corn syrup.

Eating right, in the right order

It stands to reason that decreasing your sugar intake can have a positive impact on your blood glucose levels.

Furthermore, it's not just the amount of sugar and excess carbohydrates you consume that matters, but the order in which you eat your food can also affect your health.

Starting the day with a matcha latte with oat milk sounds like a healthy alternative, but the inherent sugar in oat milk spikes blood glucose. Starting the day with low glycemic index foods, such as half an avocado and three organic eggs, will stabilize blood sugar and provide sustained energy, as the body takes longer to break down the complex molecules of protein versus sugar or carbohydrates. Fruit as a snack in the middle of the day also spikes sugar levels. Try a few almonds or a hard-boiled egg, followed by fruit, to keep blood sugar stable.

Starting a meal with potatoes, a starch-based carbohydrate, creates a huge blood sugar spike. But eating a meat or protein first, followed by the potatoes, noticeably lowers blood sugar response, according to research at Weill Cornell Medical College. Similarly, a study published on Pubmed.gov showed that eating a salad with olive oil and vinegar before eating pasta caused a lower blood sugar spike. Adding a protein source to pasta can also help manage blood sugar response.

You will be surprised just how great you can feel in just six to eight weeks of implementing these simple changes! ■



Sugar hacks

Here are three simple sugar hacks:

- Add protein, fat or both to balance out carbs.
- Order matters. When possible, eat carbs or sweets last. Add non-starchy vegetables, like a salad, before meals.
- Walk or exercise after a meal to help manage blood sugar spikes.—AA



MUFFIN

A morning muffin breaks down into glucose, spiking blood sugar levels.



PANCREAS

The pancreas releases insulin, which drops blood sugar levels.



BLOOD SUGAR SPIKE

A rapid rise and rapid drop in blood sugar levels can cause fatigue, and signal the release of cortisol, the stress hormone.



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THE CYCLE

This cycle of blood sugar imbalance can result in countless health and wellness problems.—AA

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Don't dry out

Support your skin's protective barrier by taking simple but effective steps

by DEBBIE L. MILLER



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A wide variety of skin care products, including skin moisturizers, are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

The most important function of the skin, say dermatologists, is called the barrier function, which keeps things out of the skin and essential nutrients, including water, inside. One way to boost the barrier is to moisturize. “Moisturizing helps to reinforce and replenish the skin barrier,” says Dr. Malika Ladha, a Toronto dermatologist.

What moisturizers do

Moisturizers hydrate the skin. “If the skin starts to lose water, the outer layer will dehydrate, causing cracks and splits that compromise barrier function,” explains Dr. Patricia K. Farris, a clinical associate professor at Tulane University School of Medicine.

Ingredients matter

Moisturizers typically contain three types of ingredients. According to Ladha, humectants (for example, glycerin, hyaluronic acid and ceramides) draw up water from deeper layers of the skin to the outermost layers. Occlusives, such as petrolatum and silicone, “hold water in

the topmost layer of the skin, preventing evaporation,” Ladha says, adding that emollients such as shea butter, colloidal oatmeal and triglycerides “deliver lipids to the skin and fill in rough spots, making the skin texture softer.”

Who should moisturize

Everyone, especially those in cold, dry climates, should moisturize daily. “[They] are essential in winter, because as the cold sets in and the humidity drops, the skin begins to lose water from the environment,” Farris says.

Ladha adds, “Those in humid climates will benefit from lighter moisturizers such as lotions and gels.”

When to moisturize

The best time to moisturize is just after bathing. Use tepid water to avoid drying out the skin. “Pat dry, leave a little water behind and apply moisturizer,” says Farris. This holds in water. ■

Debbie L. Miller is a Brooklyn, New York-based writer.

Facial moisturizing

Facial skin is thinner than elsewhere on the body and more exposed to weather. Dr. Malika Ladha, a

dermatologist, says, “It’s best to use a moisturizer for the face because the ingredients and formulation are designed for the specific characteristics of

facial skin.” Moisturizers for the body could cause breakouts in people with oily skin.—DLM

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Holiday heartburn

Don't let indigestion ruin your festive celebrations

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.

So you've been blessed with the joy of a house full of family and friends and enough turkey and fruitcake to feed an army, but how quickly will that turn sour?

Indulgent dinners are the perfect recipe for digestive disaster. In addition to the stress of preparing the feast, they often can contain all sorts of triggers, such as alcohol and coffee, as well as spicy, savoury, fatty and acidic foods.

Heartburn occurs when stomach acid that is made to digest food makes its way up the esophagus causing that familiar burning sensation in the middle of the chest. With age, the lower esophageal sphincter—which is the valve that helps keep acid down—weakens, allowing the extra acid to creep up where it doesn't belong, especially if one reclines after overeating. Fatty foods can digest more slowly, keeping the stomach fuller longer, and acidic foods, citrus drinks and carbonated beverages make it the perfect storm. Obviously, as the old adage goes,

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” It is best not to overindulge, and simply stop eating when full, as well as avoid known triggers.

If this hasn't worked, however, a temporary quick fix is to use over-the-counter antacids to neutralize the excess acid or a sodium alginate product, such as Gaviscon, to try and keep the acid down. If this is a recurrent problem, over-the-counter medications like famotidine or the stronger esomeprazole, if taken before the meal, prevent the stomach from making too much acid in the first place. Pharmacists in most provinces have the ability to prescribe medications under certain circumstances that may work better than off-the-shelf options, and the consultation may be covered by your provincial health plan. So go ahead and enjoy that dinner, but avoid overindulging. ■

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

Heart awareness

If your symptoms feel more like a radiating pressure, tightness or squeezing up to the arm

or jaw, rather than a burning or sour taste at the back of your throat, and are accompanied by nausea, weakness, dizziness, sweating or

shortness of breath, then it could be a heart attack, instead of heartburn. If you suspect this, chew 162 milligrams of aspirin and call 911.—LV



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Saving the trees

Sourcing sustainable palm oil helps support healthy ecosystems

by SHERI FLIES



Inspecting the fruit of palm oil trees.



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Sheri Flies is Costco senior vice president of global sustainability and compliance.

Costco understands that it has a responsibility to source its products in a way that is respectful to the environment and to the people associated with that environment. Our goal is to help provide a net positive impact for communities in the areas that produce commodities by helping to reduce the loss of forests and other important natural ecosystems. Sustainable sourcing decisions revolve around trade-offs, and palm oil sourcing is a good illustration.

First, why is palm oil important? This oil is found in many products, from pastries to ice cream, cosmetics to cleaning products. It goes by many names and it may be difficult for people to know if it's in the product they are purchasing.

The challenge is that palm oil production can contribute to deforestation and habitat loss for endangered species like orangutans and rhinos. Converting peatlands to plant palm also has negative consequences. Peatlands store tremendous amounts of carbon, and when they are disturbed, this stored carbon is released into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming.

Palm is one of the most efficient vegetable oil crops to grow per acre. If consumers choose to switch to other crops for their vegetable oil, anywhere from four to 10 times the amount of land may be used to produce the same amount of oil—potentially contributing to more deforestation and critical habitat loss.

We are committed to ensuring that the palm oil used in our Kirkland Signature™ products is responsibly and sustainably sourced. We have been working with our suppliers since 2015 to move toward using palm oil that is certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO; rspo.org), or the equivalent. This includes palm kernel oil and palm oil derivatives. For a product to be RSPO certified, it must come from producers that have met certain criteria that help minimize the negative impacts of palm oil cultivation on the environment and local communities.

Our goal is that all palm oil used in Kirkland Signature products will be 100% RSPO certified (or equivalent). As of our most recent RSPO report, we are meeting that goal. ■

More details

For more information on our sustainability efforts, visit Costco.ca, scroll to the bottom of the page

and select “Sustainability Commitment.” This site provides the highlights of sustainability efforts by Costco in Canada. For details on palm oil, select the

“Global Sustainability” link at the top of the page; our palm oil update is found in the “Merchandising” section under “Commodities & More.”—SF



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Think ahead

These insurance providers offer Costco members special savings

by SHARON CHISVIN



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COURTESY OF INOVA



COURTESY OF PETS PLUS US / © GETTY IMAGES

COSTCO CONNECTION

For more information about these services and others, visit Costco.ca and click "Services."

Life can be unpredictable, but having the right insurance coverage can help mitigate that unpredictability.

That is why Costco works with companies such as Manulife, Inova and Pets Plus Us to offer members access to specialized insurance. Here's a look at what each has to offer.

Manulife

"Manulife offers comprehensive term life, health and dental, and travel insurance plans that are exclusive to Costco members," says Costco member Tania Monaco, who is Manulife's marketing manager.

Comprehensive plans provide special rates for members, and even greater savings for Executive Members on most plans.

Term life insurance offers five- and 10-year plans to provide financial security to Costco members' families in the event of a death, while health and dental plans help cover costs such as prescriptions and fillings. Travel insurance offsets the costs of unforeseen medical emergencies that occur away from home. For more information visit Manulife.ca/connection.

Inova

Home insurance is vitally important, which along with car insurance,* is the primary focus of Inova Insurance Brokers. Inova, which services Costco members exclusively, also offers insurance for second homes and recreational vehicles.

"As a broker we shop the market for the best insurance value that combines coverage, service and price," says Louisa Bello, Inova's director of marketing and communications.

Inova's commitment to ease of use is evident from its website (inovainc.ca), where members can access quotes, complete the purchasing process and easily navigate a self-serve, 24/7 accessible portal called myInova.

Pets Plus Us

Pets Plus Us offers Costco members a user-friendly website (petsplusus.com/costco), a call centre, reduced rates of 10% to 15% and the choice of two insurance options for their pets.

The most comprehensive of these options is the accident and illness plan, explains Katie Harris, the business relationship manager for Pets Plus Us who is also a Costco member. That plan lets the insured determine their level of coverage, their deductible and how much of each bill they wish to have covered.

"With Pets Plus Us, all coverage is underwritten at the start of your policy," Harris adds. "That means that you know exactly what your pet is covered for and what exclusions apply." ■

Sharon Chisvin is a Winnipeg-based writer.

*Car insurance is not available in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.



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Located on the shores of Medano Beach, this beachfront resort welcomes guests of all ages. The resort features three infinity pools, a swimmable beach, a variety of dining venues, including a microbrewery and the relaxing Sparitual Spa. Costco Travel's package includes a Digital Costco Shop Card. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.ca.



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The latest Costco finds



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Spy Mainstay Snow Goggles

Helmet-compatible, these goggles feature a spherical mirrored lens with a bonus lens, triple-layer padded face foam for a snug fit, plus a pouch. Available in two adult sizes: small and small regular fit. Item 1654536. Warehouses/Costco.ca.





PUMA Kids' 3-Piece Set

A PUMA logo styles each piece: a cozy hoodie, paired with a short-sleeve tee and jogger pants. Available in pink/light blue/grey, black/pink/white, black/white or grey/red. Colours, sizes and selection may vary by location. Item 8888001. **Warehouses only.**



Mondetta Men's Active Short

This short has the style to be worn at the gym or dressed up with a polo. Features stretch for easy movement and a cinchable waistband. Sizes: S-XXL. Colours: black, blue mélange and grey mélange. Colours, sizes and selection may vary by location. Item numbers vary by size. **Warehouses/Costco.ca.**



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Each set features two different scenes to paint. Includes two 40.6-cm (16") x 50.8-cm (20") stretch canvases, 24 acrylic paints, six detail brushes and hanging hardware. Item 1734224. **Warehouses/Costco.ca.**

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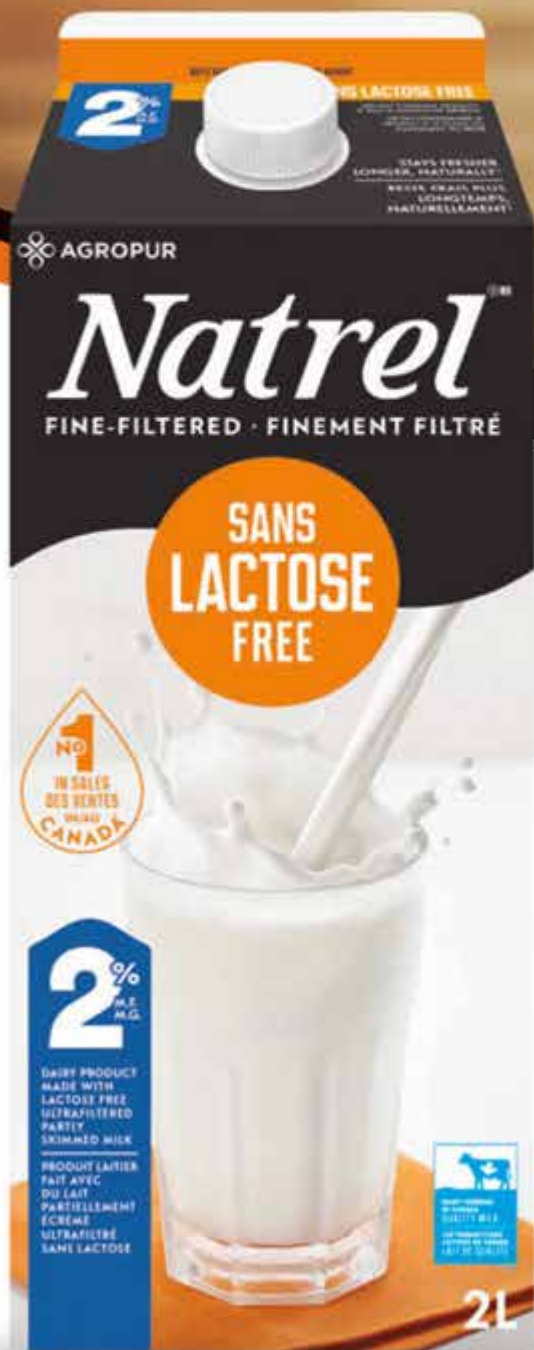
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COOKING IN CANADA

Lasagna Love (lasagnalove.org) operates in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

"It warms my heart when I make a delivery on someone's front step and, when I get back in the car, I can see them in the window expressing their appreciation and gratitude," says Tricia McMullan, regional director in Eastern Canada for Lasagna Love.—DJ



LEFT TO RIGHT: COURTESY OF ROBIN OMDAHL; COURTESY OF TAMARA CHAPMAN

Lasagna, with love

Rhiannon Menn felt the need to help others.

"Like so many people, at the beginning of the pandemic I was feeling helpless," says Menn, who lived in San Diego at the time. "I love to cook, and so I decided to start making and delivering lasagna with my then 3-year-old daughter for any family nearby that needed a home-cooked meal."

What began as a personal project has evolved into a global non-profit called Lasagna Love, which was launched in 2020. More than 45,000 volunteers help their neighbours by preparing and delivering free home-cooked lasagna and other hearty meals. In just three years since its inception, the organization, which is based in Massachusetts, now operates throughout the United States, in nine Canadian provinces and five Australian regions and has fed more than 1.5 million people.—*Dan Jones*

Clockwise from top: Lasagna Love volunteer Robin Omdahl of Peterborough, Ontario, prepares lasagna for delivery; a batch of meals is assembled.

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