

Travel to Tahiti ♦ Chicken ♦ Skin cancer awareness

COSTCO Connection®

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS

Fair farms

A look at two programs
that protect those
who grow our food 24



MAY 2023



SUMMER RECREATION

Inflatable hot tubs
Supplier profile: Ebgo
Buyers' picks

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May 2023

Volume 36

Number 4

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Buyers' picks

**The growing sport
of pickleball** offers
fun for all ages and
ability levels.

QUEEN OF TARTS

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vary by location.

CRUST

125 mL (½ cup) raw, unsalted almonds
60 mL (¼ cup) unsweetened
flaked coconut
60 mL (¼ cup) coconut oil
45 mL (3 Tbsp) maple syrup
1 mL (¼ tsp) salt
125 mL (½ cup) rolled oats

Heat oven to 180 C (350 F) and lightly grease a 25 cm (10-in.) tart pan with removable bottom.

To make the crust, pulse almonds and coconut in a food processor until fine. Add coconut oil, maple syrup and salt and process until smooth. Add rolled oats and process until coarse. Place mixture in tart pan and press onto bottom and sides. Bake for 12 minutes and allow to cool.

FILLING

125 mL (½ cup) heavy cream, chilled
250 mL (1 cup) mascarpone,
softened at room temperature
80 mL (⅓ cup) powdered sugar
5 mL (1 tsp) vanilla
Zest of one lemon

For the filling, whip heavy cream to stiff peaks with a mixer and set aside.

In a separate bowl, beat mascarpone until smooth. Add powdered sugar, vanilla and lemon zest and beat until smooth and fluffy. Gently fold whipped cream into mascarpone mixture. Spread filling into cooled tart crust and refrigerate for two hours.

Slice **Fresh Strawberries** and coat with sugar, if desired.
Add the strawberry topping once tart is cooled.

TOPPING

500 mL (2 cups) **Fresh Strawberries**, sliced
15 mL (1 Tbsp) sugar,
optional

Serves 6–8



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The Mighty Mushroom



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EDITORIAL DIRECTORS

Canada/U.K. Stephanie E. Ponder sponder@costco.com

U.S. T. Foster Jones tod.jones@costco.com

INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Christina Guerrero cguerrero2@costco.com

Dan Jones daniel.jones@costco.com

U.S. TEAM

Katie Coleman katie.coleman@costco.com

Will Fifield wfifield@costco.com

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDITION

William Giroux, Céleste Savoie

COPY EDITORS Miriam Bulmer, Jodie Warren

CONTRIBUTORS

Dawn M. Barclay, Jim Byers, Mark Cardwell, Milly Dawson, Jane Doucet, Constance Exley, Joseph Hanna, Judi Ketteler, Erik J. Martin, Marisa Moore, Suja Natarajan, Andrea Downing Peck, Marc Saltzman, Lana Sanichar, Hannah Selinger, Irene Middleman Thomas, Alison Thompson, Lawrence Varga

ART DIRECTOR Lory Williams lwilliams@costco.com

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTORS

David Schneider dschneider@costco.com

Brenda Shecter bshecter@costco.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Ken Broman, Grant Collier, Isabelle Lafrance, Steven Lait, Megan Lees, Chris Rusnak, Jacob Walker

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER

Antolin Matsuda amatsuda@costco.com

PRINT, PAPER AND PREPRESS MANAGER

MaryAnne Robbers mrobbers@costco.com

PRINT PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Grace Clark graceclark@costco.com

PUBLISHING PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Jodie Moy jodie.moy@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT DIRECTOR

Shannon Ambrose shannon.ambrose@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT MANAGER

Karine Lapointe-Moses karine.moses@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Sophia Burgin sophia.burgin@costco.com

ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL COORDINATORS

Sonia Girard, Christin Hudon, Solange Richer St-Jean
cdnconnection@costco.com

ADVERTISING COPYWRITER Bill Urlevich

BUSINESS MANAGER Jane Johnson

ONLINE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Dorothy Strakele

COSTCO CANADA HEADQUARTERS

(Faisant affaire au Québec sous le nom Les Entreprises Costco)
415 West Hunt Club Road, Ottawa, ON K2E 1C5
1-800-463-3783; service@contactcostco.ca; Costco.ca
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service@contactcostco.ca

CONTACTING THE CONNECTION

For information on product availability, our warehouse operations or changing your subscription information, contact service@contactcostco.ca. For comments about what you've read in the Connection: connection@costco.com.

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SKIP

ASSISTANT
VICE
PRESIDENT'S
NOTE

Summer fun

Hello, May. We are so happy to see you! This is a great time to celebrate a wedding, spoil Mom and enjoy the many outdoor pleasures Canada has to offer.

Sunday, May 14, is Mother's Day. How about treating those special moms or mother figures in your life to a feast she doesn't have to prepare? I suggest some of the tempting recipes in this issue, which feature chicken, hot sauce, raspberries and blackberries, and many more great ingredients you can find in your local Costco warehouse.

With the bounty of summer fruits and vegetables starting to show up in the warehouses, it's the ideal timing for our cover story on Equitable Food Initiative and Fairtrade. These programs help improve conditions for farmworkers and raise agricultural standards.

April showers bring May flowers. What better way to enjoy these new blooms than to come out of hibernation, get outside and see the beauty around us. In this issue, you will find all kinds of summer delights to help you do just that. Recently, I have taken up pickleball, and you can read about this rapidly growing sport in these pages. Maybe an inflatable hot tub is more your speed. Or cruising on an electric bike. Perhaps you're interested in visiting Mexico by RV. If so, this is the issue for you. The options for summertime fun are nearly endless.

No matter what you do, just get out in the sunshine and take in all that May has to offer. And give that special mom a big hug! ■



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Sue Pudrycki
is Assistant
Vice President
of Marketing.

Coming next issue
From the proposal to the honeymoon, we look at how Costco can help you plan a dream wedding.

Follow us on  

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Best friends

May is chock-full of pet-related observances, including National Pet Month, National Pet Week and National Rescue Dog Day. Pets come in different shapes and sizes, from furry or feathered to bristly or scaled. Who's your best friend?



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Inside scoop

COSTCO PROVIDES a variety of pet products for furry family members, including food, treats, bedding, grooming, clothing, toys, health items, supplements, pet prescriptions and more, available in the warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

And if you are a dog or cat owner, as a Costco member you may be eligible to receive an exclusive discount on quality pet insurance plans provided through Pets Plus Us. Visit [Costco.ca/pets-plus-us.html](https://www.costco.ca/pets-plus-us.html) for more information.



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Beauty for the best

Mother's Day (May 14) is certainly not the only day we should celebrate these amazing people, but it is a great reason to shower them with presents. Find a variety of jewellery options, including cultured freshwater pearl earrings (pictured), in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

LEFT: © DAVSTOCK / STOCK.ADOBE.COM; RIGHT: COURTESY OF CRYSTAL SPICE

SUPPORT CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

Children's Miracle Network

From May 1 to June 4, Costco members will be asked to support the needs of children's hospitals across Canada by donating when they check out. One hundred percent of every donation goes toward improving the lives of children like Steven. To learn more, visit Childrensmiraclenetwork.ca.



**DONATE
TODAY**

Steven, 11, patient ambassador

RESPECT FOR THE SUN

Spotlight on sunscreen

The Canadian Cancer Society (cancer.ca) offers the following tips to better understand sunscreen labels:

- Look for "broad spectrum" and "water-resistant" on the label.

- Use sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and reapply often.
- Check the expiry date.
- Physical sunscreens can be mineral-based and sit atop the skin, while chemical sunscreen is absorbed.
- Put sunscreen on first, before any makeup or insect repellent.
- Use sunscreen during every season, even when it's cloudy or cold.



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◆ INTO THE WILD

With almost **362** million hectares (or about 895 million acres) of forest, Canada has 9% of the world's forests, according to Natural Resources Canada.



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STAR WARS DAY

The Fourth is strong

A galaxy far, far away is celebrated on Star Wars Day: May 4. The first organized Star Wars Day took place in Toronto in 2011. Find Star Wars-themed Lego sets at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca) and theme park travel at [CostcoTravel.ca](https://www.CostcoTravel.ca). May the Fourth be with you!

STAR FIELD: © MOZZZ / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



HOLE-IN-ONE

A Signature shot

Costco member Ken Davidson, left, sank a hole-in-one on June 4, 2022, using a Kirkland Signature™ ball at Oakfield Golf & Country Club in Nova Scotia. Find golf balls, clubs, gloves, push carts, shoes and more in select Costco warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.Costco.ca).



KEN DAVIDSON: GOLF TEE © PIA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

ORANGE AND FENNEL

Slow-Roasted Salmon

680 g (1½ lbs) salmon fillet	10 mL (2 tsp) honey
45 mL (3 Tbsp) extra-virgin olive oil, divided	125 mL (½ cup) chopped fresh herbs (basil, tarragon, dill or mint)
1 orange	2 mL (½ tsp) coarse salt
1 fennel bulb, halved and thinly sliced, reserving some fronds	1 mL (¼ tsp) freshly cracked black pepper
1 shallot, thinly sliced	
½ lemon, zested and juiced	

Preheat oven to 93 C (200 F). Set a rack in the middle of oven. Place salmon on a parchment-lined baking sheet (skin side down), then brush the top with 7 mL (½ Tbsp) olive oil.

Slice orange in half and juice one half, then peel the other half and thinly slice the fruit into half moons.

Put the remaining olive oil; orange pieces and juice; fennel; shallot; lemon zest and juice; honey; herbs; and salt and pepper in medium bowl; add chopped fennel fronds if desired. Gently stir to combine.

Pour mixture over top of salmon. Roast salmon for 30 to 45 minutes, depending on thickness of the fish. The colour will remain a more vibrant orange than other baked salmon recipes, looking undercooked, though it's not. (The suggested internal temperature for fish is 70 C/158 F.)

Remove salmon from oven, serve it straight from the sheet pan and scoop any extra pan juices on top. Makes 6 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Lisa Bryan (downshiftology.com)





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According to the World Health Organization, 15% of the world's population has some sort of disability.

FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Build your business

How to accommodate customers with disabilities

by CONSTANCE EXLEY

People with disabilities are a large and underserved consumer group. Did you know that approximately one in five Canadians over the age of 15 has at least one disability? Or that seniors are Canada's fastest-growing age group, soon to make up 25% of the population? Making your business accessible to them can have a positive impact on its reputation, long-term sustainability and bottom line.

Language matters

People with disabilities often say the most challenging barrier to overcome is other people's attitudes. Educate yourself and your staff about the various types of disabilities and what is considered respectful language. Language is dynamic and ever evolving, but a good practice is to use people-first language—for example, "person with a disability," "people with epilepsy" or "individual who uses a wheelchair." If in doubt, just ask the person what term they prefer.

Removing barriers

Many people are surprised to learn that 70% of disabilities are not visible. This means that stairs aren't the main barrier for most people with disabilities. A customer



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with low vision may need to have information read out loud. A customer with a speech disability may need you to repeat, rephrase or write down what you've heard. A customer with joint pain may appreciate being able to sit down while being served.

In addition to letting customers know that they can request assistance from you, there are other barriers you can easily eliminate, such as clearing pathways, placing items within reach, offering accessible versions of written and digital materials, ensuring signs are clear and easy to read, providing adequate lighting and offering sensory-friendly shopping times.

Spreading the word

A website designed in a way that people with disabilities can easily navigate is also a good investment. Doing so makes it easier to use for everyone, improves search engine optimization and can attract new customers. Aim to meet the international standards for website accessibility outlined in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (w3.org).

The question to ask yourself is not why your business should be more accessible to people with disabilities, but rather how you can make life easier for those customers. ■

NELL CHITTY



Constance Exley, CEO of Accessibility Services Canada (accessibilitycanada.ca), teaches organizations how to make their marketing and communication tools accessible.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco offers a variety of essentials for small businesses, from products to services, at great value. Learn more at Costco.ca in these two sections: "Business Delivery" and "Services."

Accessibility smart

There are many things you can do to become a more accessible and inclusive business owner. Here are some suggestions to get started:

- Offer accessibility awareness training to your staff.
- Increase the font size you use, both digitally and in print. Bigger is better!
- Add accessibility information to your website.
- Invite customers to contact you if they need assistance accessing your goods or services.
- Include people with various disabilities in your marketing materials.—CE

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According to Statistics Canada, in 2020, over 6.2 million Canadians put aside \$50.1 billion for their retirement by making contributions to their RRSP.

FINANCIAL CONNECTION

Funding retirement

A look at getting the best from contributing to a retirement account

by LANA SANICHAR



Often I receive questions from readers about when it is and when it is not appropriate to contribute to a registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) or a tax-free savings account (TFSA).

I reached out to Jason Heath, a certified financial planner and managing director of Objective Financial Partners Inc., for his tips on when it does and does not make sense to contribute to your RRSP. Here's what he had to say.

- RRSP contributions save you tax because you can deduct them from your income. If you had an income of \$75,000 in 2022, an annual \$100 RRSP contribution will reduce your taxable income and save between \$28 to \$38 of tax, depending on your province or territory of residence. That means a tax savings of 28% to 38% on the RRSP only. If you make a larger contribution, or if you have other tax deductions, like child care expenses or pension contributions, for example, you may not save as much tax. As your taxable income goes down, so too does the tax savings from an RRSP contribution or other deduction.

- If your taxable income is below \$50,000, the tax rate you pay on withdrawing from your RRSP in retirement may be higher than the tax rate you save on the initial contribution. This can make RRSP contributions questionable at lower levels of income. The higher your income is above \$50,000, the more beneficial RRSP contributions could be for you. If your income is below \$50,000, a TFSA may be a better way to save.

- If you have debt, you need to reconsider investing versus paying down debt. Investors with a low risk tolerance may not earn a high enough rate of return to be better off contributing to an RRSP or a TFSA compared to paying down debt. This is especially true if you have no employer matching contributions, like a group RRSP or a defined contribution pension plan, or if you have high-interest rate debt, like a balance you are carrying on your credit card. ■

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



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

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

Email topic suggestions to moneyinfo@canadianmoneysaver.ca.

Costco members are offered a one-year special introductory price with online subscription. Go to canadianmoneysaver.ca and click on "Subscribe," or call 519-772-7632. Online, use "Costco" for the discount code at the bottom of the page.

Tax deductions

According to Canada.ca, you cannot claim a deduction for:

- Any capital losses in your registered retire-

ment savings plan (RRSP)

- Amounts you pay for administration services for an RRSP

- Brokerage fees charged to buy and sell

within a trustee RRSP

- The interest you paid on money you borrowed to contribute to an RRSP

—LS



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An organic light-emitting diode (OLED) is a semiconductor that is about 200 times thinner than a human hair, according to Howstuffworks.com.

TECH CONNECTION

Crystal clear

Laptops with OLED screens have jaw-dropping displays and emit less blue light

by MARC SALTZMAN



Laptops with OLED screens display stunning images.

No doubt you've seen super-slim televisions with gorgeous screens powered by OLED (organic light-emitting diode) technology. These amazing displays on TVs are also found in some premium smartphones and computer monitors—and now, laptops.

Because they display clean, stunning images, OLED laptops are ideal for content creators, such as digital artists, graphic designers, photographers, video editors, game designers and animators. Computer gamers and movie lovers will appreciate the up to 120-hertz refresh rates of most OLED screens, which allow fast-moving images to be rendered smoothly.

Dream screen

OLED (pronounced “oh-led”) is a carbon-based semiconductor film layer that emits light when electricity is applied. The result is an amazingly beautiful image; in part because each pixel is its own light source, there's no backlighting required, unlike other screen technologies, including LCD. As a result, OLED screens produce incredible contrast levels.

Along with producing deep, dark blacks, colours on an OLED display seem to pop off the screen. This is primarily because of the high contrast

levels and the ability to display more colours, and with greater colour accuracy. According to laptop manufacturer ASUS, its OLED screens can display more than 60 times more colours than its LCD laptops can. That amounts to 1.07 billion compared to 16.7 million.

Other OLED advantages

OLED screens also display a greater consistency of brightness across the screen. They produce up to 600 nits (a unit of brightness); most laptop LCD screens only produce up to 250 nits. This technology provides wider viewing angles and is easier on your eyes; you're exposed to up to 70% less harmful blue light than with most LCD screens, because OLEDs use only the light needed without the white backlight.

Several factors should go into deciding which laptop is for you: the processor (the engine that drives your computer's performance), graphics capabilities (important for gamers), the amount of storage and the kind of drive to go with (hard drive or solid-state) and how much system memory (aka RAM) you need—and you can add screen technology to that list.

Once you use a laptop with an OLED display, it will be difficult to go back to anything else. ■

SEVAS SAGHERIAN



Marc Saltzman

is a tech journalist and host of the *Tech It Out* podcast. He answers selected questions in this column and regrets that all questions can't be answered individually.

Twitter

@marc_saltzman

Email

connection@costco.com

Please include “Tech Connection” in the subject line.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of OLED laptops in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Priced perfectly

OLED laptop prices have started to drop, but they still cost a little more than their LCD counterparts—on average

\$100 to \$200 more—with all other specs being equal. Some OLED laptops have ultra-high-definition 4K displays and/or touch screens, too, which will also add to the

price. You may find the advantages of a laptop with an OLED screen far outweigh the extra cost.—MS

Tahitian treasures

Tahiti and her islands will stimulate and soothe your senses

by JIM BYERS



COURTESY OF JIM BYERS

Jim Byers has been covering travel for national and international publications for 14 years, and was the travel editor at the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest newspaper.

Few places conjure up as strong a mental image as Tahiti. The food is a magical mix of French and South Pacific cuisines, the hotels are as decadent as a triple hot fudge sundae and the water comes in colours crayon makers haven't even invented. You'll also find a warm and welcoming culture that embraces visitors from around the world.

Tahiti is great for honeymoons, but it's also wonderful for families and soft-adventure lovers, and it can be surprisingly affordable.

Here's a look at some of my favourite places, activities and, of course, food.

Bora Bora

An overwater bungalow in Tahiti is sheer magic, with views of craggy, green Mount Otemanu and Mount Pahia rising out of the crystal-clear Bora Bora lagoon. One of the great activities here is a cultural lagoon tour, which will allow you to swim with manta rays

and harmless blacktip sharks, paddle a Tahitian canoe and enjoy a shady, homemade lunch.

Casual Bloody Mary's restaurant (think open air, with sand on the floor) has been attracting Hollywood A-listers and sports celebrities for decades. The fish of the day can be expensive, but you can also grab a burger and a beer.

Tahiti Island

The main island of Tahiti is home to the capital, Papeete. Head south to the quiet peninsula called Tahiti Iti (Little Tahiti), where you can go on half-day water tours of the peaceful southern section of the island. You'll glide over stunning blue water and check out sensational surfing spots (the surfing competition for the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics will be held here) and towering, spiky green mountains. You can also find tours of the rugged, almost entirely deserted Papenoo Valley, home to lush jungle growth, sweet-smelling flowers and sparkling waterfalls.



Above: Tahitian tranquility on Bora Bora. **Right:** One of the delectable dishes at Raiatea's Fish & Blue restaurant.

COURTESY OF ST. REGIS BORA BORA



COURTESY OF JIM BYERS

Moorea

You can take a short ferry trip from Papeete to beautiful Moorea. Try renting a moped and do an around-the-island tour of your own, checking out homes and elegant overwater bungalow resorts, as well as the jagged peaks that rise over serene Cook's Bay.

Tahaa

Tahaa is known around the world for its vanilla farms. You can hire a local guide to take you on a tour of fertile valleys and vanilla plantations, where you learn how vanilla plants have male and female parts that have to be pushed together (they call it a "marriage") before the vanilla pod can begin growing.

Raiatea

This beautiful, low-key island is great if you want a taste of old Tahiti, with no big resorts, about 13,000 residents and virtually no traffic. Fish & Blue restaurant serves excellent sushi and seafood, and the décor is like a dreamy, upscale beach house. The south end of the island is home to Marae Taputapuātea, the remains of an old Polynesian temple area that's a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Huahine

This island (technically two islands separated by a few metres) is a great place to get away from it all. Take a hike through the thick, green forests or hit a local market in one of the eight small villages for fresh island bananas, melons and vanilla. Huahine Chez Tania is a fun, casual spot for barbecue on a warm, sunny day. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers Tahiti vacation packages, as well as cruises, vacation packages, rental cars and hotel-only options for destinations in Canada, the United States and around the world. To learn more, visit [Costco Travel.ca](https://www.costco.ca/travel) or call 1-855-863-0357.

Flights of fancy

Last October, Air Tahiti Nui launched non-stop flights between Papeete, Tahiti, and Seattle. Seattle joined Los Angeles as the airline's

second North American departure point. Flights from Seattle operate on Wednesdays and Sundays, with a return on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The routes are serviced by Boeing

787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, which feature 30 lie-flat business-class seats, 32 premium economy seats and 232 standard economy seats.—JB



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Fairness in farming

Equitable Food Initiative and Fairtrade are two non-profit certification programs focused on improving farmworker conditions and agricultural standards worldwide, which in turn lessens environmental impacts and improves food safety.

by **Christina Guerrero**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



A farmworker holds strawberries harvested at Buenaventura Ranch, an Equitable Food Initiative-certified farm in Santa Maria, California.



As he drives through the El Milagro de Baja farm fields, located in San Quintín and Camalú, Mexico, Alfonso Santiago Velazco, the head security guard for El Milagro de Baja, tells me how the work culture used to be different. Workers were too intimidated to report problems on farms—from working conditions to safety concerns—where the culture was to keep your head down.

“I have seen many changes and we have also seen how people themselves have collaborated to give their point of view. They have known their rights as well as their obligations,” says Santiago Velazco, who was elected by fellow workers to be part of a team to help improve conditions on the farm. “We have seen a result, not only in work, but in the way [workers] live in and out of the field.”

Empowering the farmers

Eleven years ago, El Milagro de Baja partnered with Equitable Food Initiative (EFI; equitablefood.org), a non-profit certification program focused on improving working conditions for farmworkers and raising agricultural standards internationally. El Milagro de Baja supplies strawberries to Costco through its parent company, Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce, under the GoodFarms brand.

The organization provides workers with updated training on health and food safety regulations, including hygiene, proper hand-washing and sanitation. Workers are also trained on how to identify sexual harassment in the workplace and on health and safety issues, including injury prevention,

with instructions on warm-up exercises and proper use of equipment, such as carts to transport the produce.

Being part of the organization enabled the farms to act quickly when health and safety guidelines were updated during the pandemic. For example, Andrew & Williamson increased sanitizing of communal areas, carts and tools, farmworkers wore personal protective equipment, such as face coverings and gloves, and practiced social distancing.

Similarly, 16 years ago, banana supplier Equifruit, located in Montreal, partnered with Fairtrade (fairtrade.ca), a global non-profit certification system that set standards for better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade. Since 2021, Equifruit has supplied Costco warehouses in the Toronto area with organic and Fairtrade-certified bananas from two cooperatives. Appbosa is a cooperative made up of 555 small producers farming collectively in Peru and employing 385 community members. Asoguabo is a cooperative located in Ecuador founded by a group of small-scale farmers, which has grown to 132 banana farms.

Cooperatives band together jointly to invest in communal improvements, such as produce packing stations, and create quality control and certification review teams building export relationships with Fairtrade licensees, says Jennie Coleman, president and owner of Equifruit. Cooperatives and suppliers work with Fairtrade to eradicate outdated banana business practices.

“When we look at how low prices for bananas at production level are achieved, they’re often achieved through cutting corners on wages for workers,

Clockwise from left:
A worker shows off a banded bunch of Fairtrade-certified Equifruit organic bananas.

El Milagro de Baja farm head security guard Alfonso Santiago Velazco.

Workers harvest berries at EFI-certified GoodFarms, in Oxnard, California.

A hand-washing station at Rancho Don Juanito, an EFI-certified strawberry farm, in San Quintín, Mexico.





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© EDGAR PINTO



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investments in working conditions for workers and on environmental practices. And so under Fairtrade we don't want to see those corners cut," says Coleman. "We want to be proud to stand behind a product which doesn't reflect that kind of toxic, 100-plus-year-old way of doing business. And while this might make a Fairtrade banana a little bit more expensive, it is still a very, very affordable fruit."

Protecting the environment

In addition to improving farmworker conditions, EFI and Fairtrade support lessening the environmental impacts of agricultural businesses.

Farms are expected to reduce the amount of pesticides used on crops in conjunction with pesticide-management tactics. For example, farm-friendly insects, such as ladybugs, are introduced to eat other pests that are harmful to crops. Marigolds planted at the end of rows deter unwanted insects. Strips and boxes holding a liquid that attracts and traps pesky insects are placed around the perimeters.

Some farms also use vacuum-cleaner-like machines that suck up unwanted pests. Others have microbiology teams that produce beneficial fungi, which are applied to the soil to fight pathogens that are harmful to plants. And others use rainwater reservoirs or water desalination plants to help with water management, providing water for the crops through drip irrigation systems or micro sprinklers instead of traditional sprinkler systems, where about 60% of the water is carried away by wind or lost to evaporation.

For example, the Appbosa cooperative built a water supply system that collects 30% of the water used on the plantation that was previously washed away. The run-off water is used for the bananas and improves productivity by cutting the amount of time it takes to water the crops from four hours to two.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



How Fairtrade works

Fairtrade's approach enables farmers and workers to have more control over their lives and decide how to invest in their future, says Julie Francoeur, CEO of Fairtrade Canada. Produce with the Fairtrade mark means producers and businesses have met internationally agreed upon standards, which have been independently certified. Farmers and workers have a strong voice at every level of Fairtrade, from how they invest in and run their local organizations to having an equal say in Fairtrade's global decision-making.

"Fairtrade is more than just about certification. It's a movement for change that believes farmers and workers know what's best for their businesses and for their communities. It's about redistributing the power in supply chains and ensuring they have an equal say," Francoeur says.

The Fairtrade Minimum Price aims to cover the average costs of producing sustainable crops. The Fairtrade

Premium, an extra sum of money paid on top of the selling price to invest in business or community projects. Between November 2021 and January 2023, more than \$245,670 from cases of bananas purchased by Costco has gone back to the cooperatives in Peru and Ecuador.

Since 2003, the farmers of Appbosa have invested in local schools, health centres, potable running water for homes, a women's leadership and entrepreneurship workshop and a cable-way system for banana transportation from the farm to packing stations and refrigerated storage facilities. Asoguabo has invested in initiatives, such as equipping children with school bags, providing retirement care for seniors, building schools for disabled children, providing a shelter for victims of sexual violence and ensuring the safety of drinking water.

The EFI approach

EFI's approach also focuses on empowering farmworkers at all levels to help solve issues on the farms.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Look for Equitable Food Initiative- and Fairtrade-certified food in your local Costco warehouse.



A worker at one of Equifruit's small producer partners in Ecuador manages the process of removing latex, a kind of sap, from the stems of freshly cut bananas.

From the consumers' perspective, the EFI certification on fruits and vegetables signifies that the workers harvesting the produce have been treated respectfully and compensated fairly, says Ruzzamenti. And growers are assured that the workforce has been given the skills and support to address critical issues like food safety and traceability, so they can excel in a global marketplace.

Currently, 54 farms have been certified (26 in Mexico, 24 in the U.S., three in Canada and one in Peru) and 10 more are pending certification with leadership trained. This means more than 55,000 workers are on farms with trained EFI teams.

Farms in Canada and other countries certified by EFI are paid a premium by retailers for produce meeting the requirements of the programs. The premium on certified produce appears on the workers' checks as an EFI bonus. Since 2017, the program has generated over \$19 million in farmworker bonuses.

Growers also benefit from engaged workers who report higher work satisfaction and help solve issues. Amalia Zimmerman-Lommel, director of social responsibility for Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce, says the program relieves pressure on farm managers, because now the workforce is communicating, collaborating and problem-solving. That in turn increases productivity and quality.

"No person or situation is perfect, so continuous improvement is part of this culture change," Zimmerman-Lommel says. "The culture change goes both ways, from the workforce to top management, there is improvement for all and everyone participates in improving processes with clear and transparent communication." ■

Annual audits

Both EFI and Fairtrade work with a third-party-certified auditing body to verify the farms follow the standards set by each organization. When audits are completed and farms are certified, which can vary in length of time depending on the number of workers, the farms are allowed to label produce as coming from a certified supplier. Annual audits, which include worker interviews, are conducted to ensure the farms remain in compliance and any new workers have been trained.

The certificate holder is responsible for reporting to the non-profit, as well as the committees, the amount of product sold. This determines the amount of premiums generated, which are evaluated and audited as well.—CG

"The EFI structure helps change the culture on the farm," explains LeAnne Ruzzamenti, the organization's director of marketing communications. "We create an open, trustworthy culture where farmworkers are engaged and have a voice, which improves working conditions throughout the whole farm."

An elected leadership team of farmworkers and managers is trained in communication, collaboration and problem-solving skills, and then applies those skills to help the farming operation meet EFI standards, which focus on working conditions, food safety and pest management.



© EQUIFRUIT

Produce at Costco

Costco supports Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) and Fairtrade by paying the premium for certified produce, which is labelled

with a mark. The Costco buying team encourages suppliers to participate in those programs.

EFI and Fairtrade each provide a verifiable program that helps enrich the lives

of agricultural workers while empowering them to harvest a better-quality product for Costco, where possible.—CG

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Fans of fun

Whether you're embarking on an adventure or sticking close to home, there's plenty of enjoyment to be had this time of year.

In this Summer Recreation Special Section, we share ideas for parents who are vacationing with anxious, inflexible or neurodiverse children and provide packing tips to make your next trip easier.

Also, discover why the sport of pickleball is so popular, and read up on innovative e-bike manufacturer Ebgo. If you've ever considered purchasing an inflatable hot tub, find out how to best take care of it. Finally, our buyers' picks take fun to another level.

Pack like a pro



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Pump it up



COURTESY OF BESTWAY

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Pickleball power

The funny-named sport is transforming first-time players into full-time fanatics

by ANDREA DOWNING PECK



Find pickleball sets and other athletic equipment in most Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

When Costco member Denise Jagoda first swapped her tennis racket for a pickleball paddle, she quickly discovered why nearly 5.8 million people in the United States and Canada have made pickleball one of the world's fastest-growing sports.

Pickleball is played on a court roughly one-fourth the size of a tennis court. As with tennis, players serve, volley and hit ground strokes, but pickleballers use a solid-surface paddle and a perforated plastic ball. Serves must be underhanded, making pickleball easier for beginners. Games are played to 11 points and must be won by two points; points are won only while serving.

Professional Tyson McGuffin of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, describes pickleball as the likely outcome if "pingpong, badminton and tennis had a baby and that baby was extremely social, super embracing and there was a lot of camaraderie."

The small court creates fast-paced fun and built-in socializing, attributes

that made Jagoda an enthusiastic convert to the sport. "I've never gotten so much joy playing something," the Temecula, California, resident says. "I love this game."

A social sport

Pickleball was cobbled together in 1965 by three dads on a backyard badminton court on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Nearly 60 years later, the game has rocketed from obscurity to rock-star status.

USA Pickleball chief marketing officer Chuck Menke says the pandemic served as a "hyper accelerator" for the sport by providing a social and recreational outlet for quarantine-fatigued people of all ages who could reconnect at safe distances on a pickleball court.

McGuffin credits pickleball's exploding popularity to the fact that new players, no matter their age or ability, can step onto a court and quickly have a 10-ball rally even if scoring points is challenging. "It's easy to get good," he explains. "It's very difficult to get great."

Easy to play and low impact, pickleball's popularity is on the rise.



Tom Keane, president and co-founder of the East Toronto Pickleball Association, maintains that pickleball's unpretentious atmosphere is the secret of its success. "I firmly believe I could travel anywhere in the world to a pickleball court and somebody would say, 'Here's a paddle to borrow, buddy. Jump on a court.' I don't think that would happen in many other sports," says Keane, who started playing in 2021. "It's just a different breed of people."

The pickle history

The truth about how pickleball got its name debunks a tail-wagging tale. Jeff Pritchard, nephew of pickleball

co-inventor Joel Pritchard, notes that his aunt Joan Pritchard borrowed the term "pickle" from collegiate crew, where the "pickle boat" is filled by random rowers not selected for competitive races. Pickleball became a fitting name for a game combining pieces of other games.

While an often-repeated tale maintains pickleball was named after the Pritchards' family dog, Pritchard explains that the cocker spaniel arrived later and was named after the game. "[Pickles] is a fun story, but it isn't accurate. The boat story is the true origin of the name," the Costco member says.

More than a game

Mo Waja, a pickleball player in Ottawa, says the sport has motivated him on many levels. "It's inspired travel and adventure and helped build new friendships," the Costco member says.

Dick Johnson of Boise, Idaho, and Mesa, Arizona, discovered the game a decade ago after elbow and spinal fusion surgery curtailed a successful amateur tennis career, which led to weight gain and diabetes. The Costco member praises pickleball for helping to restore his health.

"I came to Arizona, found this great diabetic program, lost weight, got off the meds and concurrently discovered pickleball," says Johnson, a multi-champion senior player. "Those things together saved my life." ■

Andrea Downing Peck is a freelance writer from Bainbridge Island, Washington, the birthplace of pickleball.



LEARNING THE LINGO

Five-time grand slam champion Tyson McGuffin admits "some of pickleball terminology is a little silly." But, he adds, "it goes with the name."

Here are a handful of the game's quirkiest terms:

Dillball. Incoming ball that has bounced once

Dink. Soft arching shot hit on a bounce inside the kitchen

Falafel. Shot hit without power

Flapjack. Shot that must bounce before being hit

Kitchen. The 2.1-metre (7-foot) no-volley-zone near the net

Pickled. Scoring zero points in a game—ADP

FROM LEFT: © RON ALVEY; GALINA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Sport on the rise

At the professional level, pickleball is thriving. Major League Pickleball—the sport's newest professional league—is attracting a

celebrity-filled roster of team owners, such as quarterback Tom Brady, basketball star LeBron James and model Heidi Klum, all of whom have boasted about their personal exploits on the

pickleball court.

At the local level, find courts to play on and people to play with at [Pickleballcanada.org](https://pickleballcanada.org).—ADP

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Fun for all

Vacationing with an anxious, inflexible or neurodiverse child

by DAWN M. BARCLAY



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Dawn M. Barclay is the author of *Traveling Different* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2022; not available at Costco). Find her at Travelingdifferent.com.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco warehouses and Costco.ca carry noise-cancelling headphones, snacks, luggage and more.

Summer is when most families take their vacations, but for the majority of families whose children have “invisible needs” such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and bipolar disorder, travel dangles like a dream just beyond their grasp. However, thanks to a recent focus on travel inclusion, travel doesn’t need to remain a dream.

A 2018 survey of families with children on the spectrum showed that while 87% of families with invisible needs don’t travel, 93% said they would if they knew the right travel strategies, such as how to limit or avoid sensory meltdowns (caused by an overwhelming barrage of unfamiliar sounds, smells and other stimuli) and how to make travel part of the predictable routine their children need. Their other requirement: locating destinations that cater to their unique needs, such as providing ways to avoid long lines and posting

signage that identifies where children can go in a theme park or museum to decompress.

And such strategies aren’t just for kids with special needs. Once they are removed from their comfort zone, all children have the potential to become anxious and inflexible.

Strategies to enhance every vacation

Successful family travel starts with introducing the concept of travel far in advance of the vacation. Find picture books with your children’s favourite characters in travel situations, watch videos that preview every aspect of the upcoming trip and incorporate role play of appropriate behaviour.

Start small with mini experiences, such as the Premium Kids event that has been held for several years at Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, usually in April, and provides participants with a dress rehearsal of the airport experience from arrival up until boarding.



The right planning will make travel enjoyable for all family members.

You can also stay at a friend's house or local hotel before a long hotel stay to discover where any sensory triggers may lie, set up a tent in the backyard before a camping trip or take a commuter train ride before a longer journey. Label trips to museums or garage sales as "tours," because a successful local experience can create a positive frame of reference for actual tours taken at vacation sites.

Certification programs

Thanks to a growing number of certifying organizations, travel professionals and suppliers are becoming more knowledgeable and empathetic about the needs of those on the spectrum. Foremost is the

International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES; Ibcces.org), which trains travel professionals as Certified Autism Travel Professionals.

Venues

In the case of indoor attractions, accommodations can include making photos and schedules available to visitors in advance to provide predictability, and posting maps, arrows and signs throughout the facility.

Certified parks and other outdoor attractions may provide sensory guides that list what sensory materials, such as sand and rubber, might be encountered; whether family restrooms and ramps are offered; where quiet and shady places are available; and the existence of potentially risky features such as ponds that pose a danger for individuals who may be drawn to water or tend to wander.

At theme parks, along with providing quiet areas to decompress, and sensory guides and signage alerting visitors to potentially unpleasant lights and unusual smells, accommodations can mean creating procedures so those on the spectrum can avoid long waiting lines, and use of a stroller as wheelchair to accommodate children who can't stand for prolonged periods of time.

With these destinations and strategies in place, take the advice of Michelle Zeihr of Barrie, Ontario, the mother of two girls, one of whom is on the spectrum with ASD and ADHD: "Don't be afraid to go. The more you travel with [your children with invisible needs], the easier it gets. Remember, where there's a will, there's a way." ■



FROM LEFT: © GAYSORN/ONYXPRJ / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

For the family

Along with autism-friendly resorts with kids' clubs, theme parks and cruises, camping and sports vacations can be great choices for families with both neurotypical (nonautistic) and neurodiverse children. Camping offers several options (tent, cabin, RV) and the freedom to determine your destination and daily activities. Meanwhile, individual sports, such as adaptive skiing, horseback riding, golf, scuba diving and even surfing, are more conducive for children on the spectrum because they can participate without stress-filled social interaction. Neurotypical children can use the vacation to learn new skills or improve old ones. Everyone returns home with a new skill and happy memories.—DMB

Avoiding meltdown

Creating a child-centric vacation can prevent meltdowns before they start:

- Vet two or three destination options and then

let the child decide.

- Avoid overstimulation by pacing the trip to the child's abilities.
- Carry a go-to bag with snacks, noise-cancelling headphones, etc.

- Include activities focused on a child's special interest or passion.

- Arrange the vacation with a Certified Autism Travel Professional (autismtravel.com/travel-agents).—DMB

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Soak in the savings

Inflatable hot tubs offer value and convenience

by ERIK J. MARTIN



Enjoy the benefits of an inflatable hot tub.

COURTESY OF BESTWAY

COSTCO CONNECTION

The Bestway Palm Springs Inflatable Hot Tub (Item 1593368, above) is available in most Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Yearning for the soothing sensation of a hot tub without the high expense? Consider a space-saving, plug-and-play inflatable hot tub, which can be easily set up for seasonal enjoyment.

A portable hot tub—typically made of PVC, nylon and other synthetic fabrics—is inflated with air, filled with water from a garden hose and attached to a pump that inflates, heats, filters and powers the unit when plugged into a nearby external GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlet. Best placed in a sheltered yard area and topped with a protective cover, it's designed to operate in warmer months when the temperature is above freezing. Best of all, an inflatable hot tub can fit nearly all budgets.

Brian Taylor, a Costco member in St. John, New Brunswick, says he loves the inflatable hot tub he purchased from Costco. “Two people can easily move it to wherever you want to use it,” he says. “Ours is set up conveniently behind our house and we use it two or three times a week.”

Matt Vartola, vice president of business development for Bestway USA, a Costco sup-

plier of inflatable hot tubs, says they “have the same basic features and functions of traditional hot tubs at a fraction of the cost, with easy-to-replace parts and only simple maintenance required.” (See “Expected upkeep.”)

However, inflatable hot tubs usually are smaller in size than hard-shell models, have less-powerful jets and shouldn't be placed in direct sunlight or exposed to rain or snow, which can degrade the materials.

Owning an inflatable hot tub in Canada can be a comforting and relaxing experience, according to Marissa Johnson, founder of Inflatableblast.com, which provides information on a variety of inflatable objects. “A hot tub provides numerous health benefits, such as relieving muscle tension and soreness, improving sleep and reducing stress,” she says. “It can be easily deflated and stored during the winter months, too.”

If you're warming up to the idea of an inflatable hot tub, now might be a good time to jump in. ■

Erik J. Martin is a Chicago area-based freelancer.

Expected upkeep

To prolong the use and lifespan of your inflatable hot tub, prepare to:

- Apply manufacturer-recommended chemicals

(often chlorine or bromide tablets) regularly to maintain proper pH balance.

- Check the filter daily, rinse it weekly and replace it every three months.
- Drain the water every

few weeks or when dirty, hand-clean all materials with gentle detergent (one that won't hurt the liner) and refill.

- Take a shower before use (residues on the skin can degrade the materials).—EJM

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Perfectly packed

Enhance your trip by getting organized

by ALISON THOMPSON



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of luggage is available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Do you love the joys of vacation travel but hate packing for it? It's a seemingly straightforward task that many people dread, but a few clever tactics can make it quicker, easier and altogether less stressful.

The right luggage

First things first. Before buying new luggage, think about how and where you'll be using it, to ensure you choose something with useful features for your journey.

For instance, wheeled rigid suitcases are easy to move, highly durable and offer protection in transit, making them perfect for many trips, including resort vacations and cruises. However, soft backpacks or carry-ons may be a better choice for multi-stop tours where your bag will be stowed in numerous vehicles, especially if luggage space is awkward or restricted.

Hybrid bags, meanwhile, have both wheels and zip-away back straps, which are ideal for walking and navigating trickier spaces, such as stairs.

Plan your packing

Effective packing is all about planning, according to professional travel blogger Monica Stott of The Travel Hack (thetravelhack.com). "Always write a packing list," she says. "It will be quicker to pack your bags and you won't overpack or sneak in any extra just-in-case items."

As part of this process, plan your outfits first and be selective, opting for mix-and-match garments that complement each other and can be worn on multiple occasions, dressed down for daytime or accessorized for evening wear.

Pack smart

Though it's difficult to completely eradicate creases, Stott recommends rolling up clothes and placing them in zipped packing cubes to compress them and save space. This also helps with organization, making it easier to find things at the destination. ■

Alison Thompson is a freelance writer.

Travel checklist

Here are a few pro travel tips:

- Pack tickets, passports, money, valuables and prescription medications in carry-on luggage to keep

them safe and available.

- Check your airline's baggage size and weight allowances, and weigh bags at home to avoid excess fees.
- Remember earbuds,

chargers and a power travel adapter.

- Mark your luggage for easy identification.
- Have your mail held by Canada Post while you are away.—AT

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E-bikes excite

Ebgo is making electric bikes fun and affordable

by MARK CARDWELL



COURTESY OF EBGO; © LUCA P/B / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Eric Alain is proud of the success that Ebgo has enjoyed since he started the electric bike company in 2013 in the garage of his family's home in Victoriaville, Quebec. But he's even more pleased by the boost he believes his business has given to the popularity of e-bikes in Canada by supplying the market with quality products at affordable prices.

"It's easy to build a \$10,000 electric bike using the best brand-name parts," Alain says. "The challenge is to make a reliable bike for under \$3,000. By doing that, we're helping to democratize e-bikes, which are great for people of all ages who want to get around and go further in a safe and environmentally friendly way."

According to Alain, quality and affordability were top of mind when he and his son Charles first started tinkering with e-bike designs in 2013. "We saw it as a promising business venture," recalls Alain, a former florist and sporting goods store manager who had seen and ridden many electric bikes at trade shows. "There was no doubting their growing popularity."

It took three years for their company—dubbed Ebgo (an acronym for "Electric Bike—GO")—to launch its first commer-

cial model. That was the CC47, a step-through design that remains the company's bestseller. Designed by Alain exclusively for Costco and built in Asia, the first 200 units of the new bike sold out in just two days at the Costco warehouse in Drummondville.

Since then, Ebgo has been on a journey to the top of Canada's e-bike industry, selling tens of thousands of its three models—with Costco being the only retailer the company sells through.

Alain says Ebgo provides its customers with first-rate after-sale service both online and over the phone. "We have instructional videos on our website and a dynamic team that is always eager and happy to answer questions people may have in regard to maintenance or riding their e-bike," he says.

According to Alain, Ebgo is still growing and its products are evolving to embrace market trends, such as the recent addition of model CCEF, an off-road fat tire bike.

"We're always tweaking our designs in an effort to make our bikes easier for people to use and enjoy," Alain says. "We're very passionate about what we do." ■

Mark Cardwell writes—and rides an e-bike—in Saint-Ferréol-les-Neiges, Quebec.

COMPANY INFO

Name Ebgo

CEO Eric Alain

Employees 16

Headquarters

Victoriaville, Quebec

Items carried at Costco

CC60 Electric Bike, above. Item 1634877. Warehouses/Costco.ca.

Quote about Costco

"Working with Costco has been an absolute pleasure since day one. We support each other to ensure the best-quality product on the market. We are absolutely proud to be an exclusive [business] partner with Costco."

—Eric Alain

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Buyers' picks

Product selections from Costco's Sporting Goods buying team



François Sylvain



Eric David

High Tide Towable Tube

This tube from Havasu Watersports can hold up to three riders and includes a tow rope. Made to last, the tube features a double-stitched nylon cover, heavy-gauge PVC bladder and double webbing foam handles with neoprene knuckle and body pads. Other features include a 12-volt pump, two-speed safety valves for fast inflation and deflation and a quick-connect tow system. Weight limit of 231 kilograms (510 pounds). Item 1654557. [Warehouses/Costco.ca](https://www.warehouses/costco.ca).—François Sylvain



Spikeball Game Set

Spikeball is a new activity that combines volleyball and four square. Teams of two take turns serving and score by spiking the ball away from their opponents. It can be played in the water, in the garden, at a beach or park, indoors—just about anywhere. The kit includes a spikeball set, leg floats, an anchor bag, three balls, netting, a drawstring bag and a rule book. Item 1680884. [Warehouses/Costco.ca](https://www.warehouses/costco.ca).—Eric David

Giant Inflatable Lake Island

The Tobin Sports 7-person inflatable island is your ticket to all-day lake enjoyment. It features six cup holders, two built-in coolers and extra-large pillow backrests. Ropes on each end make the island easy to maneuver in and out of the water. The mesh opening in the centre of the float provides a relaxing way to cool off while staying in the sun. Includes an anchor bag and repair patch. Weight capacity of 630 kilograms (1,388 pounds). Item 1654600. [Warehouses/Costco.ca](https://www.warehouses/costco.ca).—FS





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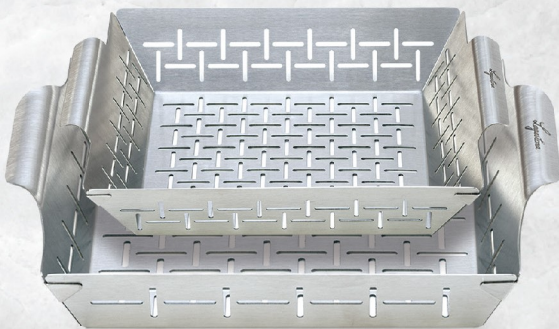


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Some like it hot

For heat and flavour, hot sauce is hard to beat

by HANNAH SELINGER



COSTCO CONNECTION

Hot sauces can be found in Costco warehouses and are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.

Move over, ketchup. Hot sauce is gaining ground as the world's most popular condiment. But hot sauce, which gets its piquancy from chile peppers, is far from new. The ancient Aztecs used it in their cuisine, for medicinal purposes and even in warfare.

Hot sauce preference is personal. Just ask the fans of Sriracha sauce, Frank's RedHot and Tabasco, who line up behind their favourites. "I always tell people to choose what speaks to them," says Julia Skinner, founder of Root-kitchens.com, where she teaches fermentation classes that include hot sauce production.

Sriracha sauce, which originated in Thailand, is fermented with garlic to achieve a spicy, slightly sour taste and thick consistency. Other sauces, such as Frank's RedHot and Tabasco, are produced by blending hot peppers and vinegar.

Hot sauces can be mild, medium or scorching, so, depending on your palate, you can find what suits you. There's a technical measurement for heat, called the Scoville

scale, explains Heather Suter, owner of New York state's Greenport Fire, a specialty gift and hot sauce store. The hottest peppers in the world are rated over 1.5 million Scoville heat units (SHUs), she says.

At 1,750 SHUs, Frank's RedHot sauce occupies the other end of the spectrum; Sriracha sauce has around 2,500 SHUs and Tabasco Original Red Sauce comes in at 2,500 to 5,000 SHUs.

Because hot sauces differ in heat content, texture and even sweetness, experiment by cooking with them. Mix them with other condiments, such as ketchup, mayo and salad dressing, or add them to marinades or to spice up cocktails, such as bloody marys, margaritas and Caesars. Tabasco is great on eggs and fried fish, Sriracha sauce pairs well with Asian and Mexican cuisine, and try Frank's RedHot on nuts and popcorn.

As Skinner adds, don't be afraid to pick a favourite.

—Hannah Selinger is based in Massachusetts.

*“I always tell people to choose
what speaks to them.”*

— JULIA SKINNER ◆
Founder of Root-kitchens.com

Chili Con Carne

15 mL (1 Tbsp) oil
750 g (1½ lbs) lean ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
15 mL (1 Tbsp) chili powder
15 mL (1 Tbsp) ground cumin
1 (400 g/14 oz) can diced tomatoes
2 (400 g/14 oz each) cans red kidney beans,
drained and rinsed
Tabasco Original Red Sauce, to taste
Salt and pepper, to taste
Steamed long-grain rice, grated cheddar
cheese, sour cream, for serving

Heat oil in a large pan over medium-high heat. Add the ground beef; cook until browned on all sides. Remove the beef to a bowl, using a slotted spoon.

Add the onion and garlic to the pan. Lower heat to medium and cook until they are soft, about 5 minutes. Return the beef to the pan, stir in the chili powder and cumin, and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the tomatoes with their liquid, plus the kidney beans, Tabasco, salt and pepper.

Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Turn down the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes to blend the flavours, stirring occasionally.

Serve chili with rice, cheese and sour cream. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

*Recipe and photo courtesy of Gary Evans,
Tabasco® international corporate chef*



Tofu Buffalo Wings

908 g (2 lbs) extra-firm tofu	90 mL (6 Tbsp) mayonnaise
90 mL (6 Tbsp) cornstarch	30 mL (2 Tbsp) tahini
1 mL (¼ tsp) salt	10 mL (2 tsp) Dijon mustard
1 mL (¼ tsp) pepper	10 mL (2 tsp) apple
30 mL (2 Tbsp) light	cider vinegar
brown sugar	30 mL (2 Tbsp) chives,
15 mL (1 Tbsp) smoked	finely chopped
paprika	125 mL (½ cup) Frank's
7 mL (½ Tbsp) chili powder	RedHot Original Sauce, plus
15 mL (2 Tbsp) oil	more for serving

Preheat the oven to 205 C (400 F).

Drain and pat the tofu dry with a paper towel or a clean tea towel, and slice into 20 thin slices. Combine the cornstarch, salt, pepper, brown sugar, smoked paprika and chili powder, then toss tofu slices with mixture. Drizzle the tofu with the oil, transfer the tofu to a lined non-stick baking tray and bake for 30 minutes, or until golden, turning after 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, mix together the mayonnaise, tahini, Dijon mustard, vinegar and chives. Set aside.

When the tofu is cooked, spoon on the Frank's RedHot sauce and gently toss. Serve with the additional sauce on the side. Makes 4 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of McCormick & Company




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Finger-lickin' chicken

Take your recipes across a new road

by MILLY DAWSON



© MELISSA BELANGER

COSTCO CONNECTION

Kirkland Signature™ chicken breasts, thighs, drumsticks and wings, and whole and rotisserie chickens are available in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.

A friend of mine says roasting a seasoned whole chicken is “the world’s easiest dinner.” It’s also one of the most satisfyingly delicious.

Whether it’s fried, barbecued, roasted, braised, curried, in kebabs or in soup with noodles or matzo balls, chicken is endlessly variable, affordable and nourishing. About as big as a deck of cards, a 100-gram (3.5-ounce) serving of roasted chicken with skin contains 239 calories, 27 grams of protein and 13 grams of fat.

Skinless chicken breasts are very healthful, with 165 calories, 31 grams of protein and only 4 grams of fat per serving. Boneless breasts can be pounded or rolled thin for use in recipes such as chicken cordon bleu, schnitzel and chicken Marsala. It’s best to flatten breasts when cooking with even, direct heat, such as searing or frying them in a pan, baking them in the oven, or poaching or braising them. The breast is the costliest part.

In contrast to breasts, leg quarters are the least expensive part. Containing more fat, thighs and legs are richer, more flavourful and perfect for grilling. Season them heavily and pan-fry them, skin side down, for deli-

cious crispy skin, or oven roast them or use your air fryer. These scrumptious dark parts contain heart-healthy monounsaturated fats.

Whether you prefer drumettes, which resemble small chicken legs, or wingettes, also known as flats, wings are great for sharing. They can be deep-fried, baked, air-fried or even cooked in a slow cooker and flavoured with sweet, savoury and/or spicy sauces or the traditional Buffalo sauce.

One note: Although chicken skin can be yummy, it contains saturated fat. For example, a baked breast with the skin has more than twice the fat of the same breast without the skin. To cut back on the fat, prepare chicken parts skinless, or leave the skin on, so the fat moistens the chicken during cooking, and then discard it.

Avoid overcooked and dry chicken by removing it from the heat source when the internal temperature of the thickest part of the breast is 82 C (180 F) for whole birds and 74 C (165 F) for pieces.

Simple, easy and delicious! ■

Milly Dawson is an Orlando, Florida-based writer.

Chicken Cordon Bleu

2 (170 g/6 oz each) chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
6 to 8 slices Swiss cheese
4 to 6 thin prosciutto slices
60 mL (¼ cup) chickpea flour
1 mL (¼ tsp) sea salt, divided
1 mL (¼ tsp) freshly ground black pepper, divided

125 mL (½ cup) almond flour
4 sprigs fresh thyme, leaves only
1 garlic clove, minced
2 eggs
15 mL (1 Tbsp) extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat oven to 205 C (400 F).

Lay the chicken between 2 pieces of plastic wrap. Using the flat side of a meat mallet, gently pound the chicken to 0.64-cm (¼-inch) thickness; take care not to pound too hard because the meat may tear or create holes. Remove the top plastic, placing the clean side down on the work surface. Move 1 breast to this plastic. Lay 2 slices of Swiss cheese on each breast, followed by 2 slices of prosciutto and then 2 additional slices of cheese; leave a 1.3-cm (½-inch) margin on all sides to help seal the roll. Tuck in the sides of the chicken, then roll it up tightly like a jelly roll inside the plastic wrap. Squeeze the log gently to seal and twist both ends tight. Repeat with the remaining chicken.

Season the chickpea flour with 0.5 mL (⅛ tsp) each of salt and pepper; spread in a flat dish. Mix the almond flour with thyme, garlic and 0.5 mL (⅛ tsp) each of sea salt and pepper in a separate flat dish. Beat eggs in a third dish.

Remove the chicken roulades from the plastic wrap. Lightly dust the chicken with the chickpea flour, then dip each in the egg mixture, then gently coat in the almond flour mixture. Lightly coat a baking pan or dish with the olive oil; carefully transfer the roulades into the pan. Bake until browned and cooked through, about 25 to 35 minutes, or when chicken reaches an internal temperature of 74 C (165 F). Cut into pinwheels before serving. Makes 2 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Lacey Baier (asweetpeachef.com)



The Best Grilled Chicken Thighs

MARINADE

355 mL (12 oz) beer
45 mL (3 Tbsp) barbecue dry rub
30 mL (2 Tbsp) soy sauce
30 mL (2 Tbsp) Worcestershire sauce
30 mL (2 Tbsp) balsamic vinegar
15 mL (1 Tbsp) garlic, minced
2 mL (½ tsp) coarse salt

8 to 12 boneless, skinless chicken thighs

Prepare the marinade: Stir all ingredients together in a large bowl.

Add the chicken thighs to the bowl, coating with marinade. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for a minimum of 1 hour, up to 24 hours.

Preheat a grill to medium-high heat. Remove the chicken from the marinade and pat dry. Grill chicken for 6 to 7 minutes per side, or until internal temperature reaches 74 C (165 F). Makes 8 to 12 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Melissa Belanger (simplywhisked.com)

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250 mL (1 cup) graham cracker crumbs
125 mL (½ cup) walnuts or pecans
30 mL (2 Tbsp) granulated sugar
125 mL (½ cup) butter, melted

FILLING

1 package (8 oz) cream cheese,
room temperature
125 mL (½ cup) powdered sugar
250 mL (1 cup) plain 2% Greek yogurt
5 mL (1 tsp) lemon zest
30 mL (2 Tbsp) lemon juice, separated
125 mL (½ cup) **Fresh Blueberries**
125 mL (½ cup) **Fresh Raspberries**
5 mL (1 tsp) gelatin
30 mL (2 Tbsp) warm water

TOPPING

250 mL (1 cup) whipped cream
250 mL (1 cup) **Fresh Blueberries**
250 mL (1 cup) **Fresh Raspberries**

Prepare a standard loaf pan by lining with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on the sides.

Using a food processor, pulse the graham crackers and nuts into fine crumbs. Add granulated sugar and melted butter to the food processor and pulse until combined. Press onto the bottom and slightly up the sides of the pan. Set aside.

In a small bowl, stir gelatin powder and water. Let bloom 10 minutes. In a small saucepan over medium heat, warm 15 mL (1 Tbsp) lemon juice, **Fresh Blueberries** and **Fresh Raspberries**. Stir continuously for 3 minutes until the berry juices begin to release. Smash the berries as the mixture continues to simmer for 2-3 minutes. Add the gelatin mixture, stir and let cool.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, Greek yogurt, lemon zest and remaining juice until smooth and creamy, about 2-3 minutes. Mix in the cooled berry mixture until well combined.

Pour cheesecake filling over crust. Cover and chill in refrigerator 4 hours or overnight. Lift cheesecake out of pan using the parchment paper. Before serving, top with whipped cream, blueberries and raspberries. Serve cold.

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Blackberries and raspberries are bursting with sweet health benefits

by MARISA MOORE



Lemon Raspberry Crumb Bars

© AMBER BRADY (DESSERTNOWDINNERLATER.COM)



COURTESY OF MARISA MOORE

Marisa Moore
(marisamoore.com)
is an Atlanta,
Georgia-based
writer, consultant
and recipe developer.

Blackberries and raspberries have been gathered worldwide as a nutritious food for thousands of years. These jewel-toned berries have slightly different structures, with raspberries sporting a centre pocket while blackberries contain a soft edible core. Both offer sweet flavour and nutrition benefits.

Just 250 millilitres (one cup) of the fresh berries provides about 30 milligrams of vitamin C, which is essential for immune health, healing wounds and more. With an impressive 8 grams per 250 millilitres (one cup), the fibre in these berries may help promote good gut health and keep blood sugar and blood cholesterol levels in check.

Storage tips

Keep the berries dry and refrigerated, and enjoy within a few days. Wait to rinse the berries until just before eating to stave off spoilage.

For longer shelf life, freeze berries in a single layer, then store in a freezer-safe container. Make a refrigerator jam or

compote by cooking the berries with lemon juice and honey or sugar until the berries melt into a jammy consistency. Alternatively, use a water bath and a tested recipe to properly can raspberry jam or blackberry preserves for shelf-stable storage.

Recipe ideas

Blackberries and raspberries elevate both sweet and savoury recipes. Enjoy these berries as a stand-alone snack, over oats or tossed into a smoothie. Bake them into fragrant muffins, or prepare a simple dessert by layering white cake, fluffy whipped cream and berries.

Blend raspberries into a vinaigrette to liven up a simple spinach salad. Add a pop of colour and nutrition to waffles with a generous drizzle of warm raspberry sauce. Pair blackberries with creamy goat cheese, walnuts and arugula on flatbread, or roast a blackberry-glazed salmon for dinner.

The ways to enjoy these berries are boundless. ■

Lemon Raspberry Crumb Bars

CRUST/TOPPING

180 mL (¾ cup) butter, at room temperature
250 mL (1 cup) brown sugar, packed
250 mL (1 cup) quick oats
330 mL (1⅓ cups) flour
2 mL (½ tsp) salt
5 mL (1 tsp) baking powder

FILLING

1 (397 g/14-oz) can sweetened condensed milk
125 mL (½ cup) lemon juice (about 2 large lemons)
Zest of 1 lemon
1 egg yolk
250 g (1 cup) raspberries
15 mL (1 Tbsp) flour
30 mL (2 Tbsp) sugar

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F).

Prepare the crust/topping: In a large bowl, mix together the crust/topping ingredients until there are no butter chunks and the mixture begins to clump together. Press three-quarters of the mixture on the bottom of a lightly greased 18 x 28-cm (7 x 11-inch) baking pan.

Prepare the filling: In a separate bowl, mix together the sweetened condensed milk, lemon juice, lemon zest and egg yolk. Spread onto the crust. Toss the raspberries with the flour and sugar. Mash lightly with a fork, keeping some fruit intact, then dollop the raspberries into the lemon filling. Crumble the remaining crust mixture over the top of the raspberries.

Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until the crust browns and the centre of the filling is set when tested with a toothpick. Cover with foil if browning occurs before the filling is set.

Chill 1 to 2 hours before cutting and serving. Cover and refrigerate any leftovers. Makes 12 servings.

Tip: Line the pan with parchment paper hanging over the sides to easily lift the dessert out of the pan.

Recipe courtesy of Amber Brady (dessertnowdinnerlater.com)

Black and Blue Spring Salad

VINAIGRETTE

125 mL (½ cup) fresh blackberries
15 mL (1 Tbsp) sugar
30 mL (2 Tbsp) balsamic vinegar
30 mL (2 Tbsp) extra-virgin olive oil
15 mL (1 Tbsp) honey
Salt and pepper, to taste

HONEY-ROASTED PECANS

7 mL (½ Tbsp) butter, melted
15 mL (1 Tbsp) honey
125 mL (½ cup) pecans
Salt, to taste
145 g (5 oz) spring mix lettuce
340 g (12 oz) fresh blackberries
85 g (3 oz) blue cheese, crumbled

Prepare the vinaigrette: Place the blackberries and sugar in a food processor or blender, then blend until berries are crushed. Let sit for a minute, then add remaining vinaigrette ingredients and blend until smooth. Set aside.

Prepare the pecans: Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F). Pour melted butter into a bowl, then add honey and pecans; toss to coat. Spread out pecans on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and bake for 5 to 6 minutes, or until brown and fragrant; watch carefully so they don't burn. Sprinkle lightly with salt and set aside to cool completely.

Divide the lettuce among plates. Top with the blackberries, blue cheese crumbles and honey-roasted pecans. Dress with berry-balsamic vinaigrette, then serve. Makes 2 to 4 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Kristin Porter (iowagirleats.com)



COSTCO CONNECTION

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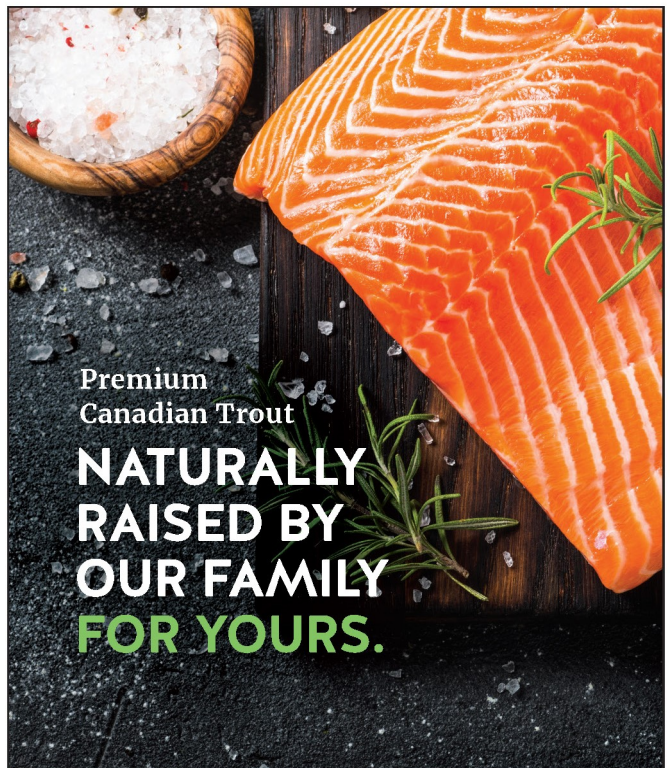
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A ray of hope

Prevention, early detection help combat skin cancer

by JANE DOUCET



COSTCO CONNECTION

Sunscreen is available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca. Hats and protective clothing may also be available in spring and summer months.

May is Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month, which shines a spotlight on one of the most common—and most preventable—cancers. Most skin cancer is caused by damage from the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV rays). Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer, affecting as many as 60,000 Canadians each year. Costco member Sandy Hargraves, an author in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, is among them.

In 2018, Hargraves noticed a quarter-sized, blister-like sore on her right shoulder that wouldn't heal. After a dermatologist diagnosed basal cell carcinoma, Hargraves began regularly applying Aldara, a medicated cream that stimulated her immune system. Three months later, the sore had finally healed. Between then and 2021, five more

basal cell carcinomas appeared—on her shoulders, forehead, chin and chest.

Hargraves, 57, expects to see more. "When I was young, no one talked about sunscreen," she says. "We didn't have the knowledge about skin cancer that we do now. Growing up, I played outdoors and lay out at the beach, and I tanned really well. I thought I looked better with a tan. We all feel pretty pasty in Canada after the winter, and our summer is so short, so you want to be in the sun as much as possible."

Know the numbers

Costco member Dr. Cheryl Rosen has heard women say they think they look better with a tan, as well as thinner and sexier. The head of Toronto Western Hospital's division of dermatology, and a professor in the University of Toronto's department of medicine, warns that



FROM LEFT: © ANTONINA; TRAVNIKOVSTUDIO; MARK BLADO/EYEEM; TAMARA MALESEVIC/EYEEM / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

tanning poses serious, sometimes deadly, health risks.

“The incidence for melanoma, the most fatal form of skin cancer, is increasing,” says Rosen.

It’s important to note that anyone can get skin cancer. Melanoma develops in the cells that produce melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour. According to the Canadian Cancer Society, if recent trends continue, 72% more new melanoma cases are expected to be diagnosed between 2028 and 2032 than were diagnosed between 2003 and 2007.

Better tools at hand

Thanks to developments in treatment over the last decade, patients with melanoma have a better chance of living longer.

Sunscreen formulations have also become more effective. “Canadian sunscreens have UVA-absorbing compounds that are not available in the U.S.,” says Rosen. “They are more effective because they do a better job at protecting against UVA damage.”

Addressing women who insist their face moisturizer with SPF 15 is adequate, Rosen says, “Moisturizers with sunscreen may not contain UVA-absorbing compounds, so they don’t offer broad-spectrum protection. And 15 isn’t a high enough sun protection factor. You need at least 30, and to apply it to all exposed skin. The risk of skin cancer far outweighs any possible chemical absorption.”

When Hargraves hit her 40s, she started wearing sunscreen when she noticed signs of sun damage showing up in people around her. Today, she wears SPF 60 on her face (a higher number turns her face red and blotchy) and SPF 110 everywhere else, dons a wide-brimmed hat and a lightweight, long-sleeved T-shirt, and stays in the shade when possible.

Hargraves and her husband, Ryan, are going on a Mediterranean cruise in June. “I plan to enjoy myself, but I’m going to be cautious of my sun exposure,” she says. “Now, when I see a woman who stays out of the sun, I notice that her skin is glowing. That should be our goal.” ■

Jane Doucet is a Halifax-based journalist and author.



ABOVE ART: © MIMIBUBU; PHOTO: VACHIRAPHAN / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Sun safety tips

If Dr. Cheryl Rosen is going to be outside where there’s no shade, she takes her own: a parasol. “Sunscreens are an important part of sun safety, but so is shade and covering up,” she says. Sunglasses with 99% to 100% UVA and UVB absorption may help protect against eye melanomas.

When it comes to application, Rosen advises putting a bottle of sunscreen beside your toothbrush starting in April or May, and applying it in the morning after brushing your teeth, regardless of the forecast. And be practical; if your youngsters can’t wear a wide-brimmed hat to play sports, slap on a baseball cap and slather sunscreen on exposed skin.—JD

Are you at risk?

Costco member Sandy Hargraves’ fair complexion and blue eyes put her at a higher risk for skin cancer.

She also has a family history of skin cancer. Other risk factors include:

- Blue or green eyes
- Blond or red hair
- Skin that burns,

freckles, reddens easily or becomes painful in the sun

- Certain types and a large number of moles
- Older age—JD

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Pain-free travel

How to alleviate neck and lower back pain when you're on the go

by SUJA NATARAJAN



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of luggage, other travel necessities and pain relievers are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Long-distance travel can be a pain in the neck—and the back. Here are four ways to help prevent strain and stress on your spine.

Handle with care. Costco member Ron Nusbaum, director of Back Clinics of Canada in Vaughan, Ontario, recommends packing light and using a rolling suitcase with extendable arms. “If you must lift heavy items, always bend your knees and have a straight back,” he says. “Pivot your feet rather than twisting and carry heavy items close to your body.”

Toronto-based Dr. Albert Yee, a Costco member and past president of the Canadian Spine Society, says: “A quick session by a trained physiotherapist can guide the mechanics of lifting objects.”

Mind your posture. Sitting in cramped seats for long periods causes tension in joints, muscles and discs. A blanket or a rolled-up jacket between the seat and your back offers support to the curve of the lower back. Maintaining a neutral spine posture can help prevent

back stiffness. Nusbaum suggests keeping hips and knees at right angles and shoulders pulled back and down to improve sitting posture. You may also find it comfortable to sit in a reclined position.

Use a pillow. The head and shoulders usually slump forward, causing muscle and joint stiffness while trying to sleep in a seat. “Travel pillows offer support where we need it, especially when sitting for long periods,” says Nusbaum. A comfortable neck pillow supports your head position when sleeping upright.

Move around. During long flights or rides, movement is the best way to keep the spine and neck comfortable. Getting out of a sitting posture helps keep your spine in a neutral position and can prevent back pain. Nusbaum suggests moving every 20 minutes when possible. When driving, make frequent stops to stretch and walk. ■

Suja Natarajan is a writer based in Ohio.

More tips to pack

Here are a few more ideas to ease the way for your muscles and joints when you travel.

- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated before and during the travel.
- If flying, try to get a seat with extra leg room or an aisle seat so you

can extend your leg periodically.

- Ask your doctor for gentle stretches you can do while travelling.—SN

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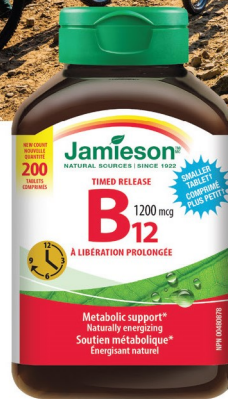
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Hope for the future

Help for those born with cystic fibrosis

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, CGP, director of Costco Pharmacy, contributed to this column.

Although only just over 4,300 Canadians have cystic fibrosis (CF), you may hear a lot more about the disease this May, which is CF Awareness Month. Just 70 years ago, those diagnosed with this rare genetic disorder—which affects the lungs, pancreas and other organs—rarely survived past elementary school age. Today, with new but very costly therapies, more than half of those with CF are over 18, with the median survival age at just over 50 years old.

Two Canadians are diagnosed with CF every week, and the vast majority are diagnosed by the age of 2. More than 2,000 mutations are known to affect the CF gene. The result is that a defective cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR) gene produces malfunctioning or no CFTR proteins; these proteins are responsible for ensuring that mucus in the body is the right consistency, and not thick and sticky.

This thick mucus in the pancreas, liver and intestines causes blockages that

stop enzymes from digesting food properly, which may lead to malnutrition, weight loss, a specific type of diabetes, liver problems and colorectal cancer. The poor quality of the mucus in the lungs causes bacteria not to be cleared out, and the result is many respiratory infections, inflammation and lung problems, potentially requiring a transplant.

While there is no cure for CF, some therapies have focused on clearing the mucus, reducing the inflammation in the lungs with inhaled medications or clearing the infection with antibiotics. Preventing infections through proper hygiene and immunizations is also important, and digestive enzymes can be helpful too.

Beyond all the medications and therapies, what many with CF need most are emotional support, a listening ear, a kind word, patience and understanding during their off days. More information can be found at [Cysticfibrosis.ca](https://www.cysticfibrosis.ca). ■

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On the horizon

Four breakthrough oral prescription drugs called cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance

regulator (CFTR) modulators have been developed to fix the malfunctioning protein, depending on the type of mutation causing the disease. They do not

help people who produce no CFTR protein at all, which makes up about 5% of those with cystic fibrosis.—LV

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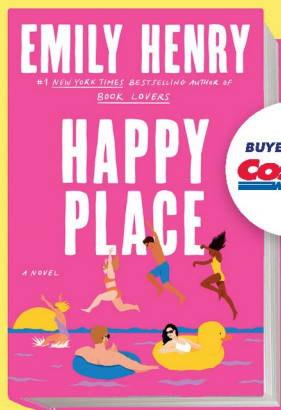
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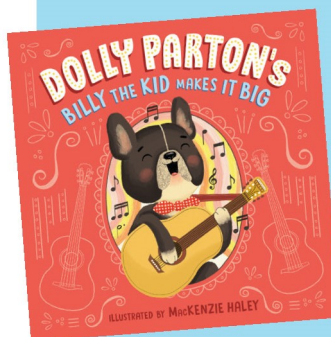
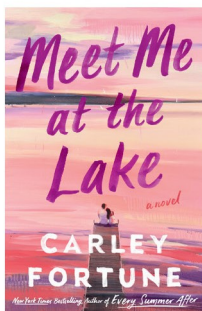


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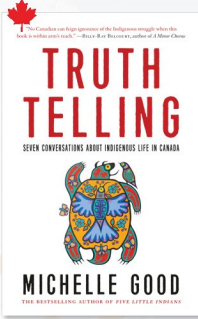
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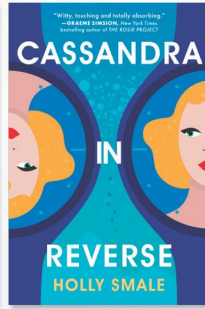
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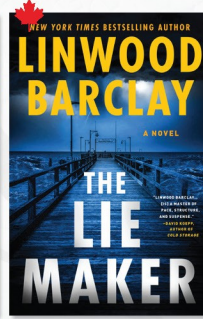
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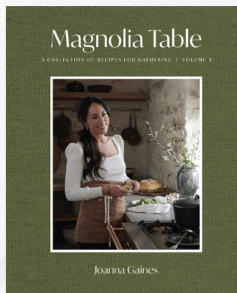
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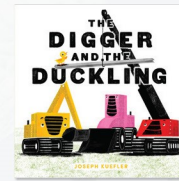
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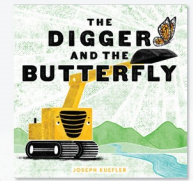
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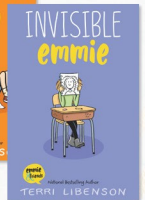
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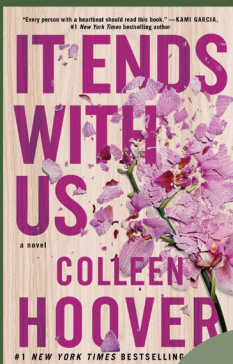
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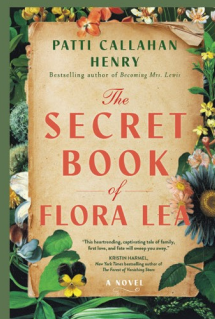


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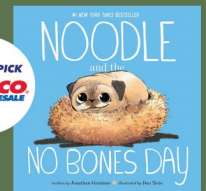
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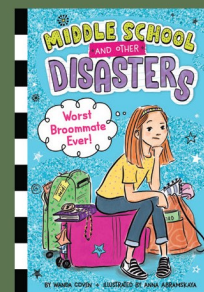
A sweeping novel about family, first love, a mysterious book, and fate from the author of *Becoming Mrs. Lewis*.
ITM. 1714888



From the authors of *The Soulmate Equation*, sparks fly when a romance novelist and a documentary filmmaker join forces to craft the perfect Hollywood love story.
ITM. 1447886



Two adorable picture books from the creator of the "Bones or No Bones" TikTok trend and the bestselling author of the *Not Quite Narwhal* series. ITM. 1714935



The hilarious new book in the *Middle School and Other Disasters* series, perfect for fans of *Dork Diaries*.
ITM. 1714890

Product selection may vary by location





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Cindy Redmond
Buyer, Books

Ever since Harriet and Wyn became an item in college, people have considered them the perfect couple. Except they're not. The two broke up nearly half a year ago, without telling their best friends.

Now they and two couples are at a cottage in Maine where they've gone every summer for a decade. Harriet and Wyn can't bear to let their friends down with their personal news, so they opt to fake it for the week. How hard can that be?

Happy Place (Item 1011482) will be available in May in most Costco warehouses.



Comedy of the heart

Emily Henry has found her new happy place in romance

by JUDI KETTELER



Emily Henry

DEVYN GLISTA / ST. BLANC STUDIOS

When No. 1 *New York Times* bestselling author Emily Henry sat down to write *Happy Place*, she thought it might be an over-the-top screwball comedic romance. She had been watching comedies of remarriage from the 1940s, like *The Philadelphia Story*, *Bringing Up Baby* and *The Lady Eve*—movies where the whole conceit was to get a couple back together. Henry thought she'd bring that fun, slapstick energy to her own plot about two characters falling back in love.

But as she wrote, it became less comical and more heartwarming—tinged with heartbreak. “I thought about what might happen to pull two people apart,” she tells the *Connection* from her home in Cincinnati, Ohio. “How do they meaningfully break up, and then how do you make it possible for them to get back together so it's not a toxic decision?”

While each draft of *Happy Place* relied less on belly laughs and more on heartstrings, Henry—a master of quippy, sexy banter—retained plenty of levity. With her perfectly timed sarcasm and easy comebacks, her fast-paced dialogue has been compared to *Gilmore Girls*, a coming-of-age television series from the 2000s. It's the ultimate compliment, she says. “I am [in] that subset of millennials [who are] exactly the right age to have been raised by *Gilmore Girls*.”

Happy Place centres on the relationship of Harriet and Wyn, who have been together for eight years and are engaged. Only, they've broken up months before, but their close-knit group of friends doesn't know it. When they wind up

(accidentally) going on vacation together to the group's usual summer spot in Maine, the plot thickens. Henry overlaps past with present, winding through years of Harriet and Wyn's history as the week in Maine progresses and the tension builds.

While Harriet and Wyn's story drives the action, it's an ensemble cast, featuring Kimmy and Cleo (who fell in love and run a farm) and Sabrina and Parth (who are getting married). Henry really wanted to explore the dynamics among a group of friends in their early 30s. "In your 20s, you're mostly in the same stage of life with your friends and have a lot of common ground," she says. But once people reach their 30s, lives can start to diverge, with friends getting married or divorced, having kids or changing careers. She sees it in her own life: "I'm in this stage of life where my friends and I have different things going on."

Out of college, Henry wrote young adult fiction and published four novels. "I wanted to write the kinds of books that I was loving as a reader," she says. Plus, in her early 20s, she says, she wouldn't have been able to write meaningfully about older characters. She fell into writing adult fiction—romance almost by accident. To get over a bout of writer's block, she decided to just start writing a character who had writer's block. It turned into *Beach Read* and secured her a new base of readers. She's found a home in romance, a genre she absolutely loves as a reader (her favorites right now are novelists Kennedy Ryan, Talia Hibbert and Sonali Dev). "I am perfectly content to wake up every day and just write," she says. ■

Judi Ketteler (judiketteler.com) is an award-winning essayist and has written three non-fiction books.

ADDITIONAL BOOK PICK

BOOK *True Love Experiment*

AUTHOR Christina Lauren

True Love Experiment (Item 1447886) will be available in May in most Costco warehouses.



The writing duo known as Christina Lauren is back with their latest romance: *True Love Experiment*. The two plucked romance writer Felicity "Fizzy" Chen, a fan-favourite character from their novel *The Soulmate Equation*, and have her working with Connor, a documentary filmmaker who wants to make a television show about the writer's search for true love. But will the romantic sparks be flying on- or off-screen?

Costco Connection What sparked the idea for this book?

Christina Lauren Fizzy is such a big character: She's loud and seems to have her life (reasonably) in order. She's a romance writer, and while we used bits of that in *Soulmate* for comedic purposes, we didn't want it to be a punchline, and we didn't want to poke fun at a genre that gets too much of that already. So what were her vulnerabilities? What was her story? And then it hit us: Fizzy had lost her joy. Once we had that part, the story unfolded from there.

CC What would you like readers to know about this book?

CL We think this is our best book yet—which is an awesome thing to be able to say after 29 books. It's hilarious and deeply romantic, and while we are very different romance writers than Fizzy, we share the same fangirl heart. Read what makes you happy! Listen to the music that speaks to your soul! Celebrate the things that bring you joy and never apologize for it.

Also in the warehouse

Picture books are made all the better when the words and images work together to impart a gentle lesson.

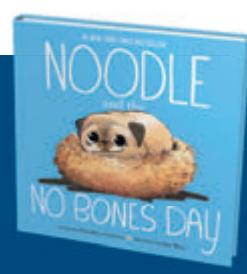
In *Weather Together* by

Jessie Sima, Nimbus learns how to endure her cloudy moods with help from a friend. In *Noodle and the No Bones Day* by Jonathan Graziano and Dan Tavis, an elderly pug, Noodle, learns that some days

you just need to be especially kind to yourself.

Both books (Item 1714935) will be available in May in most Costco warehouses.

—CR





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A great quote

Inova is making insurance easier for Costco members



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You may already be familiar with some of the perks that come with your Costco membership, but did you know that you can also access car and home insurance? Through Inova Insurance Brokers Inc., members have exclusive access to a range of home and car insurance options designed to fit their unique insurance needs. In fact, Inova's tagline says it all: Insurance made easy.

This was certainly the case for Costco member Paul Basi, who shared his recent experience with Inova.

"Inova provided me with excellent customer service as I was looking to possibly change my home and auto insurance needs. They were clear and helpful in their descriptions of the various policies and coverage, and worked diligently with me in securing the policy coverage that would work best for me and my family, and within our budget," Basi says. "At the conclusion of our phone calls, when they said they would follow up with an email and/or phone call, they did so each and every time. This is something every customer service representative says they will do, but rarely does someone deliver every time—but they did!"

Here are the top things you should know about Inova's insurance program*:

Designed for members. Inova was created specifically for Costco members across Canada, meaning their insurance program is available to members only. What's more, as a broker, Inova takes care of the shopping for you. Rest assured that they will find an insurance option that best suits your needs and budget.

Online quotes. To get started with Inova, you can fill out an entire quote for home or car insurance on their website. Their online quoting tool is user-friendly and takes just minutes to complete.

A website built to help. Once you've completed your online quote, you can access several other helpful features through Inova's website. If you're purchasing insurance, you can even complete the entire insurance buying process online. If you'd like to speak with a broker instead, you can use Inova's website to book an appointment at a time that's convenient for you.**

With a program designed to make insurance easy, there's only one question left: Did you get your quote yet? To learn more about Inova's offerings, visit Inovainc.ca or call 1-866-967-7707. ■

COMPLETELY COVERED

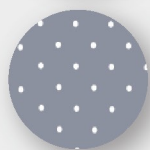
Looking for extra insurance coverage? In addition to Inova's home and car insurance program, the company also offers insurance for a wide range of other home and recreational needs.

Through Inova, you can insure your RV, boat, ATV, motorcycle, motorhome, snowmobile, cottage and rental units. To learn more about Inova's offerings, visit Inovainc.ca or schedule an appointment with one of their brokers, who can help find an insurance option that's the right fit for you.

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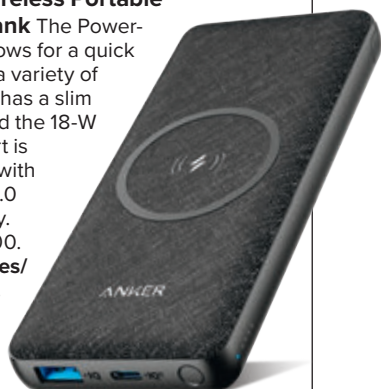
Puerto Vallarta:

Hilton Vallarta Riviera

Overlooking picturesque Banderas Bay, this all-inclusive resort is just outside Puerto Vallarta. The resort features seven restaurants offering regional and international cuisine, two infinity pools, a kids club, and the revitalizing eforea Spa. Costco Travel's package includes a Digital Costco Shop Card. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.ca.

Anker PowerCore III Sense Wireless Portable Power Bank

The PowerCore III allows for a quick charge to a variety of devices. It has a slim design, and the 18-W USB-C port is equipped with PowerIQ 3.0 technology. Item 242100. **Warehouses/Costco.ca.**



The latest Costco finds

STōK Cold Brew Coffee 2-Pack

STōK beans are steeped at a lower temperature for at least 10 hours to bring out a bold and smooth taste. STōK is for those who like their cold brew black—without cream and sugar. 2 x 1.42 litres. Item 1657589. **Warehouses only.**



Revlon Salon Wave Maker Get beautiful waves with this lightweight hair waver, featuring a 1.9 cm (¾") deep-grooved barrel. The tourmaline ceramic coating provides long-lasting waves with less hair damage. Heats up to 221 C (430 F) with 30 heat settings for precise control for all hair types. Item 1705079. **Warehouses/Costco.ca.**



Eddie Bauer Men's Short-Sleeve Shirt

This soft and lightweight shirt features a multi-colour plaid design, button-down collar and classic fit. Available in four multicolour combinations. Sizes: S–XXL. Selection varies by location. Item numbers vary by size. **Warehouses/Costco.ca.**



Inflatable Canopy Pool Island Float

Relax and enjoy the water on this canopy island constructed with two air chambers and durable three-ply material. Features a detachable fabric sun shade and two cup holders. Approximate inflated size: 199 cm x 149 cm (78.5" x 59"). Item 1707471.

**Warehouses/
Costco.ca.**



Supreme Cloud Kitchen Mat

This 50 cm x 99 cm (20" x 39") kitchen mat is constructed from 100% PVC and features a slip-resistant surface and skid-resistant backing. Available in three colours: dark grey, light grey and brown. Selection varies by location. Item 1694346.

Warehouses only.



Wavestorm Bodyboard

With foam contour molded construction and a speed slick bottom skin, riding waves all day is easy with this 104 cm (41") bodyboard. Item #1654531.

Warehouses/Costco.ca.



Puma Kids T-shirt 2-Pack

This two-piece tee set is perfect for active play or as part of a stylish outfit for the day. Available in three colour designs. Sizes: S (6) - XL (14/16). Selection varies by location. Item 1681645.

**Warehouses/
Costco.ca.**



Pekkle Infant 3-Piece Shortall Set

These infant sets include a top, diaper shirt and shortalls with various appliques, embroidery and screen prints. Available in six designs: shark, safari, dino, rainbow, butterfly and flower. Sizes: 3M-24M. Item 1676563.

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*See conditions on page 7.



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FOR SCHEDULES AND DESCRIPTIONS

Go to [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca) and search “Special Events.”
Or, from the Costco mobile app, go to “Warehouse Locator” and choose a warehouse for events info.



Vitamix Blender

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*Ipsos CAAM Report 2021

**Tested in Seq III H vs. API SP limit for high temperature oil thickening

†Visit your Costco Tire Centre for details

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FROM TOP: © DOUG CANNING; HEATHER LAYCOCK; GEORGE BYERS

ROAD BUDDIES

Dave and Darlene Smith, Costco members from Victoria Beach, Manitoba, became “Wagon-Masters” (trip leaders) after one trip with Baja Amigos. Their dog, Cleo, has happily joined them on the four Mexico trips they have led. “We liked Baja Amigos’ numbers, pace, fully escorted policy and flexibility,” says Dave. “The trips have been perfected, thus combatting the fear factor that sometimes keeps RVers away from Mexico. We take care of that.”—*IMT*



Wagons, ho!

“We love Mexico and want to share our experience with others. Starting this business was that simple,” says Dan Goy, founder and owner of Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours (bajaamigos.net), along with his wife, Lisa. Since the Goys founded the Canadian-based company in 2009, Baja Amigos has escorted and guided RVers from the U.S. and Canada on over 60 camaraderie-filled tours of Mexico.

The Goys, Costco members who live in West Kelowna, British Columbia, specialize in small caravan tours, with no more than seven RVs (travellers bring their own) and 14 people, and itineraries that include 45-day autumn tours of mainland Mexico or the Baja Peninsula and 30-day winter tours. “Travelling with a caravan gives RVers the confidence and experience to return on their own if they so desire in the future,” Dan says.

—*Irene Middleman Thomas*

From top:
RVs on Highway 1 southbound near Cataviña, Baja California; Dan and Lisa Goy; Playa Santispac, Bahía Concepción, Baja California Sur.



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- ✓ Helps to improve abdominal pain related to IBS
- ✓ Helps support gastrointestinal health
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- ✓ Non-GMO
- ✓ Gluten free
- ✓ Vegetarian



¹Howarth GS, Wang H. (2013). Role of Endogenous Microbiota, Probiotics and Their Biological Products in Human Health. *Nutrients*. January; 5(1): 58–81.

²UAS Labs. UAS Labs' Superstrain *Lactobacillus acidophilus* DDS-1. Retrieved April 17, 2019 from: <https://www.probiotaevent.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/UAS-White-Paper.pdf>

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