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Aquatic therapy ★ The perfect pizza party ★ Destination: Amsterdam

# COSTCO Connection<sup>®</sup>

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS

## Story teller

Bestselling author  
Danielle Steel is literary  
royalty in the publishing  
world **32**



MAY 2023



### SUMMER RECREATION

Pickleball

Packing tips

Music festival  
essentials

# COSTCO Connection *May*

May 2023 | Volume 39 | Number 5

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**PUBLISHER** Sandy Torrey [storrey@costco.com](mailto:storrey@costco.com)

**EDITORIAL DIRECTORS**

U.S. T. Foster Jones 425-313-6748

[tof.jones@costco.com](mailto:tof.jones@costco.com)

Canada/U.K. Stephanie E. Ponder 425-427-7134

[sponder@costco.com](mailto:sponder@costco.com)

**U.S. TEAM**

Katie Coleman [katie.coleman@costco.com](mailto:katie.coleman@costco.com)

Will Fifield [wfifield@costco.com](mailto:wfifield@costco.com)

**INTERNATIONAL TEAM**

Christina Guerrero [cguerrero2@costco.com](mailto:cguerrero2@costco.com)

Dan Jones [daniel.jones@costco.com](mailto:daniel.jones@costco.com)

**COPY EDITORS** Miriam Bulmer, Cindy Hutchinson

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Dawn M. Barclay, Jane Doucet, Jackie Duda,

Marcy Goldman, Judi Ketteler, Vikki Moran, Suze Orman,

Andrea Downing Peck, Christine Persaud, Michael Redstone,

Kirsti Sharratt, Jerry James Stone, Irene Middleman Thomas,

Alison Thompson, Rachel Weingarten, Kristi York

**ART DIRECTOR** Lory Williams [lwilliams@costco.com](mailto:lwilliams@costco.com)

**ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTORS**

David Schneider [dschneider@costco.com](mailto:dschneider@costco.com)

Brenda Shecter [bshecter@costco.com](mailto:bshecter@costco.com)

**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS**

Ken Broman, Steven Lait, Chris Rusnak

**EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER**

Antolin Matsuda [amatsuda@costco.com](mailto:amatsuda@costco.com)

**PRINT, PAPER AND PREPRESS MANAGER**

MaryAnne Robbers [mrobbers@costco.com](mailto:mrobbers@costco.com)

**PRINT PRODUCTION SPECIALIST**

Grace Clark [graceclark@costco.com](mailto:graceclark@costco.com)

**PUBLISHING ADVERTISING MANAGER**

Kathi Tipper-Holgersen 425-313-6581 [ktipper@costco.com](mailto:ktipper@costco.com)

**ASSISTANT ADVERTISING MANAGER**

Susan Detlor 425-313-6916 [sdetlor@costco.com](mailto:sdetlor@costco.com)

**ADVERTISING SPECIALIST**

Raven Stackhouse 425-416-1632 [rstackhouse@costco.com](mailto:rstackhouse@costco.com)

**ADVERTISING COORDINATOR**

Aliw Moral 425-313-2558 [mmoral@costco.com](mailto:mmoral@costco.com)

**ADVERTISING COPYWRITER** Bill Urlevich

**ADVERTISING PRODUCTION SPECIALIST** Josh Livingston

**ADVERTISING GRAPHIC DESIGNER** Christina Muñoz-Moye

**NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE**

Michael Colonna 973-664-7797

[michael.colonna@mediapartnersgroupllc.net](mailto:michael.colonna@mediapartnersgroupllc.net)

**BUSINESS MANAGER** Jane Johnson

**CIRCULATION MANAGER** Rossie Cruz [rcruz@costco.com](mailto:rcruz@costco.com)

**CIRCULATION COORDINATOR** Luke Okada

**ONLINE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

Dorothy Strakele [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com)

**COSTCO WHOLESALE**

P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088

999 Lake Drive, Issaquah, WA 98027

Fax: 425-313-6718 Email: [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com)

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**MAIL** Membership Processing, P.O. Box 34783, Seattle, WA 98124-1088



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

# Summer daze

**S**ummer is coming! The days are getting longer, the leaves are back on the trees and the flowers are blooming.

Longer, sunnier days mean more time and more options for outdoor activities.

For example, pickleball is sweeping the nation and the world. Our article provides some background into how the sport developed, why it has become so popular and what terms like "dink" and "dillball" mean in that game's vernacular.

If you're heading to a one-day or dayslong music festival, our Buying Smart piece will help you figure out what essentials to bring along, and how Costco can help make the experience enjoyable and comfortable.

Similarly, the article on vacationing with a neurodiverse child provides tips and suggestions for making travel as smooth and anxiety-free as possible for everyone in the family.

For me, warmer weather means more time in the water, swimming, snorkeling and water-skiing. To that list I can add aqua therapy, covered in this month's For Your Health section. I'm not currently nursing any injuries, but it's good to know about this effective, low-impact way to address pain and mobility issues.

And what is summer without good beach books? Currently, I'm on a rom-com kick—fun, escapist reads that can take me away from the day-to-day stresses of life. Whatever kind of reading you enjoy, Danielle Steel, our cover story subject for this issue, has probably written in that genre. Not one to be pinned down to any specific writing category, Steel spins several bestselling novels each year, and her enduring popularity is evident in the hundreds of millions of books she has sold to her worldwide fan base.

Here's to the lazy, hazy days of summer! ■



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**Sandy Torrey** is Senior Vice President, Corporate Membership, Marketing and Publisher, *Costco Connection*.

**Coming next month**  
How Costco can help with your wedding plans.

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MEMBER  
COMMENTS



## Calling all chefs

If you are a professional chef and you use Costco as part of your holiday meal planning, we'd love to hear from you for possible inclusion in an upcoming cover story. Please send an email to [wfifield@costco.com](mailto:wfifield@costco.com) that briefly describes how foods from Costco figure into your favorite recipes and more. Please put "Pro chef" in the subject line.

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### Thanks for having a heart

Good for you for profiling Denise Redeker ["An open heart," April 2023]. Her idea of starting an organization that provides affordable and clean lodging for heart transplant patients to recover in is stellar. A transplant coordinator I talked to told me about a man who lived in his RV after getting a heart transplant. Nobody should have to do that or be denied a transplant because they don't have the money.

*Wendy Wolfson, Irvine, California*

### An ad that affirms

In the April issue, you ran a full-page ad of a handsome young man with Down syndrome modeling Spyder active wear. As a mother of a child with Down syndrome, I just want to say thank you for being so inclusive.

*Janiel DeBoer, Morgan, Utah*

### Happy with humility

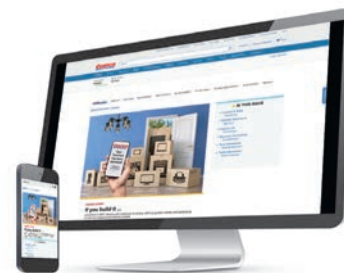
I always find your magazine articles worth reading, but "Humble leaders," written by Marilyn Gist, in the April issue is a standout. Bravo for that kind of [story] in a culture rife with ego!

*Nancy Henrickson, via email*

### In praise of the garage door program

Costco's garage door program is the best ["A door to savings," March 2023]. I did a lot of research before going with Costco to replace my door and opener. Amarr doors are top of the line, and LiftMaster has the most updated and current technology for openers. Plus the Costco Shop Card was a great added bonus. No other store offered the options and pricing I found with Costco! I checked them all.

*Tonja Bellard, Chino Hills, California*



## Advertising and products

All advertisements will indicate whether a product is available in a Costco warehouse, at Costco.com or both. Products are scheduled to be available at the time of publication unless otherwise noted. Items may not be available in all locations and selection can vary. Costco.com carries many of the products available at the warehouses and much more. Prices may vary in AK, HI, PR and at Costco.com. Applicable tax laws may require sales tax on pre-discounted prices. These taxes are in addition to product price.

## Digital edition

Access the magazine online each month at Costco.com (search "Costco Connection").

## Talk to us

Do you have a comment about something you read in the *Connection*? Please send a note, including your full name, phone number and address, to:

**EMAIL**  
[connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com)

**MAIL**  
Costco Connection  
P.O. Box 34088  
Seattle, WA 98124-1088



THE COSTCO WAY



**Kingsford® Grilled Flank Steak Fajitas**

Grill up a seasoned steak with onions and bell peppers for your next family barbecue. View this recipe and others at Costco.com. Search: "Quick & Easy" and click "Entrees."



## Pay it forward

Many of us have experienced the life-changing impact of a good teacher. National Teacher Day (May 2) honors teachers and recognizes the lasting contributions they make to our lives.



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### Back story

**IN 1980**, National Teacher Day (also called National Teachers' Day) was established to show appreciation for the enriching and rewarding investment that teachers at all levels make in their students' lives.

A poll conducted by the National Education Association found that teachers appreciate cards,

flowers and drawings from their students. These gestures are a small way to let them know their efforts don't go unnoticed.

Visit [Nea.org](https://www.nea.org) and search "National Teacher Day" for more celebration ideas and general info about the day.

★ BRIEF BIT OF INFO

**Costco produced** more than 2 million four-packs of Kirkland Signature™ Boxer Briefs in 2022. That's enough to give eight pairs to every member of the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force.



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THE BALLOONS ARE BACK!

## Supporting children's hospitals

After a two-year hiatus due to COVID restrictions, the yellow-and-red fundraising paper balloons for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals are back!

From May 1 through 31, Costco member donations at the registers and at Costco.com go toward your local children's hospital, funding research, equipment and care. The 170 children's hospitals across the U.S. and Canada help more than 10 million kids every year.



© CMN HOSPITALS

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

## Beauty for the best

Mother's Day (May 14) is 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 gifts, including jewelry, flowers and more, in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



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COMPANY WITH A CONSCIENCE

## Greenworks' sustainable efforts

As the weather warms and we spend more time performing yardwork chores, we can appreciate Costco supplier Greenworks and its efforts to not only manufacture quality battery-powered lawn care equipment, but also to responsibly manage the entire life cycle of its products.

The company's batteries are designed to last. Greenworks offers Costco members an eight-year battery guarantee at [Greenworkstools.com/pages/costcomember-advantage](https://www.greenworkstools.com/pages/costcomember-advantage) once you register your products. And if you need to recycle your lithium-ion batteries, the company recommends taking them to drop-off locations in your area; look for one at [Call2recycle.org/locator](https://www.Call2recycle.org/locator).



The key to success in business is all about people, people, people.  
—Richard Branson,  
founder of Virgin Group

FOR YOUR  
BUSINESS

by RACHEL WEINGARTEN

The expression “soft skills” can be hard to define but easy to recognize. Soft skills are abilities that go beyond technical expertise. They might include interpersonal skills that inspire trust from colleagues.

“Soft skills should be called essential skills, because they are essential traits one needs to succeed socially and professionally,” says etiquette expert Arden Clise.

Although soft skills may not be instinctive for everyone, with practice they can improve. “Soft skills, like any skill, require deliberate practice and reinforcement,” says Gorick Ng, a Harvard career adviser and author of *The Unspoken Rules* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2021; not available at Costco).

Before you shrug off the need to improve your soft skills, realize that neglecting them could cost you your job or a promotion. “The common perception among managers is that hard skills may get you hired, but a lack of soft skills is what gets you fired,” Ng says. Even if you keep your job, if you lack the necessary soft skills, it can be obvious to your boss, colleagues and clients.

But, I hear you ask, how can I improve my soft skills?

**Be an active listener.** Purvi Desai, founder of skin care brand Zaaina, relies on customer feedback to perfect products. “We take every review, question and concern very seriously and make necessary changes accordingly,”



© PARRADEE / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Desai says. By being accessible to customers, Desai reinforces their importance to her business.

**Define shared goals.** It can be frustrating to work within a team with differing ideas and approaches. Costco member Pat Roque, a career and leadership expert at coaching firm Rock On Success, aims for clarity in all interactions. To work well with others, Roque says, it’s crucial to “commit to shared goals that matter.” This common sense of purpose strengthens a group dynamic while enabling team members to improve soft skills.

**Reconnect.** If you’re not quite ready to brush up on all of your soft skills, consider the deceptively simple act of reconnecting with others. Roque says that helps people stop feeling invisible, while instilling a sense of belonging. ■

# Inspire trust

Develop soft skills to create a harmonious workplace environment

© S. WALKER



**Rachel Weingarten** is a marketing strategist, journalist and author.

## COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco warehouses and Costco.com offer a variety of essentials for small businesses, from products to services, at great value.

## A different view

A lot has been written about the different ways introverts present themselves in the workplace, compared to their extro-

verted counterparts. If you’re overwhelmed by the idea of improving your soft skills, try to redefine them first. Author Gorick Ng thinks of soft skills as navigational skills, or “the

skill of knowing how to get from point A to point B by navigating people, processes and politics.” Soft skills may ultimately help you better navigate your career.—RW

According to research firm ValuePenguin.com, 88% of those who wear a smartwatch say their device has helped them achieve a fitness goal.

by CHRISTINE PERSAUD

**W**earable fitness trackers can do more than monitor steps. They can track your heart rate, sleep, respiration, sports activity and more. Digesting the data can be overwhelming, but the insight is invaluable for keeping on top of personal health and wellness. Here are tips to interpret the data and get the most out of a wearable.

**Monitor heart rate.** Check your heart rate while exercising and aim to reach 50% to 70% (for moderate exercise) or 70% to 85% (for vigorous exercise) of your peak, which is 220 minus your age. That means a peak heart rate for a healthy 50-year-old is 170 beats per minute (bpm), so the maximum should be about 144 bpm while exercising. Watch the number and modify your pace to stay in the right zones. Resting heart rate—the number of times your heart beats per minute—is also important. Review the history to see if your heart rate is trending lower, which indicates your heart function is becoming more efficient, and how it varies.

**Check respiration.** Oxygen saturation monitors how efficiently oxygen is carried through your bloodstream. The normal range is typically 95% to 100%. Knowing this number can be especially helpful for individuals with sleep apnea; they can observe overnight breathing rates for anomalies and take appropriate steps.

**Pay attention to sleep.** In deep sleep, your body builds and repairs muscles, bones, tissues and the immune system, while REM sleep plays a role in brain



COURTESY OF FITBIT

development. Look at the breakdown to determine how well you really slept. Are there lifestyle changes you can make to improve your sleep quality, such as avoiding caffeine and not watching TV too close to bedtime?

**Recovery.** Fitbit calls it “Readiness Score,” Garmin calls it “Body Battery” and other trackers have their own names for it. They all factor in recent activity, heart-rate variability and sleep to suggest whether you should tackle an intense workout, engage in moderate activity or take a rest day to maximize results.

Altogether, these features provide a holistic view of your overall health and wellness. Historical data in your device’s companion app can help you determine progress toward goals and might prompt you on how, and what, to improve. Explore the app to get the most out of a wearable. ■

# Let’s get personal

## How to get the most out of your wearable fitness tracker

JOHN THOMSON



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

### COSTCO CONNECTION

You’ll find a selection of wearables in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com).

## Going deeper

Wearable fitness trackers focus on mental health too, with features like stress monitoring, mindfulness

exercises and programs, and one-minute deep-breathing sessions. Some features can be accessed right from the wrist-worn device, others within the app. Some require

a subscription, but many are free. Learn what the different models have to offer for both your body and mind to choose the right fitness tracker for you.—CP

According to the Society of Actuaries, a 65-year-old woman in average health has a 50% probability of living beyond age 88; for men, 85.

by SUZE ORMAN

Readers of my *Connection* column ["Patience pays off," January 2023] told me that they understood the financial upside of waiting until age 70 to start claiming Social Security. But I also heard concerns about whether that strategy makes sense given the current conversations about Social Security benefits. Let's take a look.

### Not the first time for changes

We've been here before. Exactly 40 years ago, the government enacted Social Security reform to put the program on more solid financial footing.

A big change made in 1983 was to raise the full retirement age (FRA)—when you are entitled to 100% of your earned Social Security benefit—from age 65 to age 67.

This was based on the fact that by the 1980s people were living longer than in the 1940s, when benefits were first paid—an average of five years or more for men and women who reached the age of 65.

### No overnight changes

This is important: The higher FRA that was enacted in 1983 was only applied to younger Americans. If someone was at least 46 years old in 1983, their FRA did not change. For everyone else, the shift was phased in based on birth year. For example, the current FRA (67) applies only to anyone born in 1960 or later. That means that when the change was made in 1983, the people



whose FRA was shifted to age 67 were no older than 23! That's a lot of time to adjust and plan.

I expect the FRA may be raised again, perhaps to age 70. But I don't anticipate that the goalposts will be moved for people currently in their 60s.

The program could be shored up in other ways too, including raising the income limit for charging the Social Security tax. In 2023, the tax only applies to income below \$160,200.

More than 90% of Americans surveyed by AARP a few years ago said Social Security is an important government program. I am betting that when Congress does address the issue, it will take care not to upend the financial security of those in retirement or nearing retirement. ■

# Secure strategies

## Anticipating and planning for changes in Social Security

MARC ROYCE



### Suze Orman

is an Emmy Award-winning TV host, *New York Times* bestselling author and host of the *Women & Money* podcast. Orman will answer selected questions in this column. She regrets that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

### Email

connection@costco.com  
Please include "Financial Connection" in the subject line.

## Run your numbers

The Social Security website has a free calculator that will give you a personalized estimate of your benefits at different starting ages. You

need to set up a free My Social Security account (ssa.gov/myaccount). Once registered, you can get estimates of your Social Security retirement benefits based on your earnings record on file. The tool shows

your potential benefit at age 62, your full retirement age, age 70 and any juncture in between. You can also download your Social Security statement and your actual earnings record.—SO

# Canals run through it

The city of Amsterdam shines with a rich heritage of art and culture

by VIKKI MORAN



MEGAN MUMFORD

**Vikki Moran** is an award-winning travel writer residing in Smyrna Beach, Florida (vikkitravel.journoportfolio.com). Amsterdam is one of her favorite places to visit and write about.



**A**msterdam is a picture-perfect destination. Its charmingly tilted houses, winding cobblestone streets and bucolic canals date back hundreds of years and are enhanced by a multicultural vibe, a vibrant art scene and a variety of inviting bars, cafés and restaurants. Sweeping vistas of magnificent tulips and windmills add a secret sauce to a city unlike any other.

## Art and history

Many masterpieces are housed in Amsterdam's art museums, all within a short walk of each other.

The Rijksmuseum holds Dutch masters like Rembrandt, Vermeer and Hals—the most extensive exhibition in the Netherlands.

The neighboring Van Gogh Museum boasts the most comprehensive collection of the impressionist's work, and the Hermitage Amsterdam is presenting *Rembrandt & His Contemporaries, History Paintings from The Leiden Collection*, on display until August 27.

For a taste of modern art, don't miss the Modern Contemporary (Moco) and Stedelijk museums.

The Anne Frank House is a gut-wrenching but important historic site to include on your visit. Plan to take at least a full hour in the house, following the self-directed audio. This site is a tiny house that needs to accommodate millions of visitors annually, so book early to ensure you do not miss it.

## By water, wheels and trams

Every trip to Amsterdam, especially a first-time trip, should include at least one canal tour for education on the city and to get your bearings. The canals are engineering marvels and provide a unique historical perspective of the city. There are sunset tours, daytime tours and party boats with wine and beer. They all offer relaxation, wonderful guides on the winding waterways and great fun.

Amsterdam is a hugely popular bicycling city. To enjoy the city as its



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: © YASONYA, RH2010 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

inhabitants do, look into taking a bicycle ride along the canals. As an active tourist, you can rent a bike and enjoy sightseeing at your own pace. Amsterdam also boasts an impressive public transport network of buses, metros, trams and trains to get you around; the distinctive blue-and-white trams frequently crisscross the city.

A day trip out into the country is easy. Opportunities to enjoy local cheeses, authentic Dutch food and sightseeing are as bountiful in the outskirts as in the city.

My go-to method of traversing Amsterdam is walking—my step counter runs overtime in this grand city! I like to walk, stop for a cocktail



Amsterdam's many iconic canals are a huge feature of the city. Visitors tour them by boat, walking and cycling.

or marvelous peppermint tea that is made with just boiling water and clipped peppermint, and people-watch.

#### Multicultural cuisine

Restaurants in Amsterdam offer everything from Michelin-starred *kaiseki* from Japan to *rijsttafel* from Indonesia; my favorite is the latter, as you can choose anything your taste buds wish. Make sure you're hungry when you go to a *rijsttafel*, because the excellent food is never-ending.

If you wish to try authentic Dutch food, visit another standout: The White Room. The chef's ingredients include the Netherlands' finest cheeses, vegetables and fish from the North Sea. My most recent meal at The White Room included goat cheese with *baharat* (a Middle Eastern spice blend), egg yolk and lemon balm; I still crave it.

Amsterdam is a city that you need to visit at least once. It will likely beckon you back again and again. ■

#### COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers Amsterdam vacation packages, as well as cruises, vacation packages, rental cars and hotel-only options for destinations in the United States and around the world. To learn more, visit [Costco Travel.com](https://www.costco.com/travel) or call 1-877-849-2730.

## Leaning into it

Early 17th century engineers created the canal system, beginning with one canal connecting the North Sea to the city. Along the canals,

houses were built on wooden pylons that began to sink into the marshy soil, thus causing the beguiling tilting evident today. This became a standard architectural feature, as furniture

and large objects needed to be hoisted into the tall, narrow homes from the street or canal. Most canal houses have a hoist beam leading to a pulley system in the attic.—VM

Follow us on



MEMBER  
POLL

# How will you observe Memorial Day this year?

Costco members respond to our poll, posted to Costco's Facebook page

Honoring my late son, who was a Marine. We set time to visit, honor and remember him and his fellow brothers and sisters in arms. God bless them all.

*Wendy Meyers*

I will donate platelets at the American Red Cross. It's my way of paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

*Elmer Christian A. Balague*

Thinking about all those who gave their lives for freedom.

*Jason Wolters*

Attending a community remembrance picnic at a local park. We have a short, formal program and then hot dogs and socializing with friends and neighbors.

*Karen Gilbert Mayo*

Opening up our lake cottage and remembering our heroes!

*Maureen Mann*

I will be teaching and playing pickleball with people who have lost their friends or families, plus grilling up some Costco ribs and seafood to feed the masses.

*Jeff Doyle*



## Don't forget

This year, Memorial Day is observed on Monday, May 29.

## How to observe

According to the Memorial Day Foundation ([memorialdayfoundation.org](http://memorialdayfoundation.org)), the holiday is a national day of mourning, and began as a way to honor service members who, while in the line of duty, made the ultimate sacrifice.

The foundation offers the following tips to actively remember the Americans "who have paid the price for the blessings of liberty":

- Place flags or flowers on fallen soldiers' graves.
- Fly the American flag at half-staff until noon.
- Visit memorials.
- Renew the pledge to help fallen soldiers' widows and orphans.
- Assist disabled veterans.



Watch for the poll at [Facebook.com/Costco](https://www.facebook.com/Costco). Or weigh in at [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com), with subject line "Poll."



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COVER  
STORY

# Tough as Steel

*Danielle Steel's accomplishments speak for themselves. She's written 204 books, including more than 180 novels, 18 children's books, five nonfiction books and one book of poetry. Her books have been translated into 45 languages and are sold all over the world.*

*In this Connection exclusive, she talks about her prolific career and more.*

by **IRENE MIDDLEMAN THOMAS**

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teel has been in *Guinness World Records* three times for being on the *New York Times* bestseller lists longer than anyone else, and France named her an officer of the Order of Arts and Letters as well as a knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honour.

Yet despite her success, she still worries every time she sends a manuscript to her editor, including her latest, *The Wedding Planner*. “I think, ‘Oh, she’s going to hate it! I’m a very anxious person, always worrying about things,’” says Steel, adding that to this day she is still stunned and thrilled when her editor is pleased. “I really try not to rest on my laurels, and I never take my success for granted.

“I’m just a normal person. I don’t play ‘star,’ I’m not a diva, and I’m very shy.”

#### Falling in love with writing

When the *Connection* caught up with Steel, she was in Paris, where she lives for about eight months a year. The remainder of her time is spent in San Francisco. “I love living in France. I’m steeped in French culture. In some ways, I am more French than anything else,” says Steel, who considers herself bicultural. “It’s confusing ... because I am certainly American too.”

After college, Steel worked in advertising and public relations, and wrote as a freelancer for several magazines. “I had written poetry when I was young and in my teens. The publisher of one of the magazines said I should try writing a book. So I did. And I fell in love with it.”





MICHAEL COSTE

*“I really try not to rest on my laurels, and I never take my success for granted.”*

— DANIELLE STEEL ★

That first book, *Going Home*, was written when Steel was 19 years old. It deals with a woman facing a tragedy that forces her to confront her past in order to decide her future.

“I knew with that first book that I had found my niche and work I loved. I wrote a second book as soon as I finished the first one, and I haven’t stopped since,” she tells the *Connection*.

**Work ethic**

Steel considers herself a workaholic. “I work too hard and don’t play enough,” she admitted in a 2012 interview in *Vanity Fair*. That said, she admits to writing even more now that her nine children are adults and living on their own.

“I have a rigid sense of discipline and tremendous work ethic,” she says. Indeed, she claims to write nonstop for up to 22 hours, adorned in her signature cashmere nightgowns. “They make for very unglamorous work,” she laughs.

While Steel somewhat laments her self-imposed rigid work ethic, she does admit to a little pleasure that many of us share. Steel is an avowed chocoholic. “I am sitting here right now with a Scharffen Berger dark chocolate bar,” she tells me, with a chuckle. “You can get anything from me with chocolate!”

**Just her type**

Quirky but true: Steel writes on a 1946 Olympia manual typewriter, named Ollie, which she bought many years ago for \$20.

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**Must love dogs**

What does one of the bestselling authors in the world do for enjoyment?

Danielle Steel is very involved with her adult children, as well as with her three teacup Chihuahuas: Minnie, Lili and Blue.

Minnie is the star of two of Steel’s children’s books, *Pretty Minnie in Paris* and *Pretty Minnie Goes to Hollywood*. “My dogs are so spoiled,” she says with a sigh—*IMT*



**Above:** The self-described workaholic enjoys a rare moment of relaxation.

**Left:** Steel writes all of her novels on Ollie, a 1946 typewriter.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLE STEEL



## Fashion forward

Fashion design and fashion in general have been a passion since Danielle Steel was a young girl, fascinated by her chic grandmother's attire. The author attended New York University and Parsons School of Design in a double program at age 15. She attends Paris fashion shows and inspired three of her daughters to work in the field. The art world is another of her interests—Steel owned a contemporary art gallery in San Francisco for several years. After the gallery closed, she served as a guest curator for shows at other galleries.—*IMT*

Since then, she has bought many more used models in order to replace parts. Yes, she owns a laptop, but all of her books are written on the typewriter. “I am deeply, powerfully and sincerely technologically challenged. I’m happy this way, unconfused and entirely unmodern,” she explains on her blog at [Daniellesteel.net](http://Daniellesteel.net).

Steel often is immersed in writing five to seven books simultaneously, and each requires its own meticulous research, which is accomplished with the assistance of a researcher. “All of the details in my books that relate to real life are true,” she says. For example, 2016’s *The Award* deals with the efforts of courageous people in a French town who hid and transported thousands of French Jewish children to safety from the Nazis during World War II. And 1988’s *Zoya* is a story with many historical facts about the Russian Revolution, focusing on the czar’s family, particularly a cousin who escaped to Paris and eventually became a ballerina.

“I think one of the strong appeals of [my] books is that the [settings] and the situations are familiar, so the readers can relate to them. The same things, both good and bad, happen that happen to all of us,” explains Steel. “I think it is the familiarity of the circumstances and emotions that make people feel comfortable. They get enchanted and engaged, and in the end, it all wraps up.”

She notes, “I am much smarter in my books than in my own life. I can make it all work out the way I want it to, but in my own life, not so much.”

While she keeps her plots distinct, her books are known for their strong, independent women and emotionally resonant storylines with a focus on human interactions, especially familial relationships.

Danielle Steel promoting her 2021 novel *The Affair*.



BRIGITTE LACOMBE



### Meaningful message

The author's work offers persistent messages of resilience and hope. Steel has endured a hefty share of life's struggles and strives to give her readers motivation through her characters.

One of Steel's sons died by suicide in 1997 at age 19, inspiring Steel to write *His Bright Light: The Story of Nick Traina* and *A Gift of Hope: Helping the Homeless* to commemorate him.

The proceeds of the books' sales have funded the Nick Traina Foundation ([Nicktrainafoundation.com](http://Nicktrainafoundation.com)), which is dedicated to battling mental illness, mostly in the San Francisco area. It focuses on suicide and child abuse prevention.

Steel's decades-long agent, Mort Janklow, who died last year at 91, urged her to embrace and promote resilience. "He told me, 'It doesn't matter how wounded you are; you just have to get back in the game.' It is so true," she says. She adds that she realizes the characters she writes about are role models for her readers. "I very much want to give people hope.

"I care about the things that happen to all of us. We are all concerned about the same stuff. No one is exempt," Steel adds. "I try to be positive, you know, 'victory at a price.' In life, there are bad surprises, but there are also good surprises." ■

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Irene Middleman Thomas is a Colorado-based freelance writer and an avid reader. She hasn't written any books yet, but maybe someday.



### **The Wedding Planner**

Danielle Steel's newest novel deals with the everyday life, trials and tribulations of Faith Ferguson, a highly successful wedding planner. Ironically, Ferguson has endured two failed engagements and has never married. As a planner, she thrives on making storybook experiences for her clients but believes that such an experience is not in her own future. As is customary with Steel's books, resilience and hope are in the cards for the wedding planner herself. *The Wedding Planner* (Item 1738747; 5/2) is available in most Costco warehouses.

—IMT





Picking up pickleball

© JO / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



Buyers' picks

COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT



Packing tips

© BUBLIKHAUS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

# Outdoor 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 issue's Summer Recreation Special Section, we share ideas for parents who are vacationing with anxious, inflexible or neuro-diverse 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 its rules and history. Finally, our buyers' picks take outdoor fun to another level.

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# Pickleball power

The sport with the funny name is transforming first-time players into full-time fanatics

by ANDREA DOWNING PECK



## COSTCO CONNECTION

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

**W**hen 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 pickleball champion Tyson McGuffin of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, the sport's No. 2 ranked men's singles player, 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

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



quickly have a 10-ball rally even if scoring points is a challenge. “It’s easy to get good,” he explains. “It’s very difficult to get great.”

Tom Keane, president and co-founder of the East Toronto Pickleball Association, maintains that pickleball’s unpretentious and welcoming 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 pickleball 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

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 7-foot no-volley zone near the net

**Pickled.** Scoring zero points in a game—ADP

FROM LEFT: © RON ALVEY; GALINA / STOCK.ADOBEL.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 former NFL champion Tom Brady, NBA 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 [Places2play.org](https://Places2play.org).—ADP



# Fun for all

## Vacationing with an anxious, inflexible or neurodiverse child

by DAWN M. BARCLAY



© MARTY UMANS

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

### COSTCO CONNECTION

Noise-canceling headphones, snacks, luggage and more can be found in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).

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, family trips don’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 incorporate travel into the predictable routines 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 on the spectrum. 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 favorite characters in travel situations, watch videos that preview every aspect of the upcoming trip and incorporate role-playing of appropriate behavior.

Start small with mini experiences, such as Wings for Autism, a program offered by The Arc, a national nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of people with disabilities. Wings for Autism 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](http://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 a wheelchair to accommodate children who can't stand for long 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 disabilities], 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 (non-autistic) 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

## Avoid meltdowns

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 noise-canceling headphones, snacks, 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](http://autismtravel.com/travel-agents)).—DMB



# 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.com

**D**o you love the joys of travel but hate packing for it? It's a seemingly straightforward task that many of us 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 carryalls 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.

Rolling duffel 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 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 tips to travel like a pro:

- Pack tickets, passports, money, valuables and prescription medications

in carry-on luggage to keep them safe and available.

- Check baggage size and allowances, and weigh bags to avoid excess fees.
- Remember a phone charger and travel adapter

for electrical items.

- Mark your luggage distinctively so it's easy to spot when you arrive.
- Have your mail held or have someone pick it up while you are away.—AT



# Music immersion

## Costco can help outfit you for your next festival



MIKE PEARCY

**Kirsti Sharratt** fills this issue's consumer reporter slot with this behind-the-scenes look at a variety of Costco products. Email questions about this article to *connection@costco.com*.



by KIRSTI SHARRATT

**F**rom the fabulously named Lollapalooza, which takes place in Chicago in August, to events that encourage camping—like Bonnaroo, in Manchester, Tennessee (June)—the U.S. music scene has festivals to suit different tastes and preferences. And they are certainly popular! Last year, more than a quarter (26%) of Americans planned to attend a summer concert or festival, according to finance firm LendingTree.

Whether you choose to sleep under the stars at a multiday extravaganza or spend a few hours at a small family-focused gathering, Costco warehouses and Costco.com can help you get ready with a wide range of useful items at incredible value.

### Set up home base

Costco offers a variety of tents that accommodate one to 10 people, making concert attendance much more comfortable for families or groups of friends.

“Our tents can be set up in minutes, some have integrated lighting and all parts fit in the included carry bag,” says Costco sporting goods buyer Chris Taylor. He also recommends bringing along a cooler that can keep food and drinks cool for multiple days; one with a handle and wheels will also make it easier to transport, and Costco has options that fit the bill.

Once your temporary lodging is set up, break out a compact table for a snack setup or makeshift bar. Relax in a folding chair and snuggle under a beach or picnic blanket, including versions with a water-resistant shell to keep you dry.

*“We’ve got just about everything you’ll need to make your next concert or festival a great experience.”*

— JESSICA RODGERS ★  
Costco buyer

### Liquid assets

Most festivals prohibit glass, but cans are allowed. Seasoned festivalgoers should check the drinking policy at each new festival they attend. Some allow alcohol and food at campsites or in designated areas. If your festival allows it, it pays to stock up on canned beer, hard cider or seltzer and energy drinks before you go, and decant spirits and food from glass into plastic containers. Again, be aware of where you can and cannot consume food and alcohol.

Speaking of plastic, single-use plastic bottles tend to be banned, but visitors are often able to take reusable water bottles and fill them for free on-site. Costco carries several reusable bottles, including leakproof varieties with foldable handles.

### Keep charged

For everything from keeping in contact with friends to posting pictures on social media, a mobile phone is widely regarded as a festival essential. Many events offer charging stations, but to save any queuing, a handheld power bank can provide many hours of extra battery life and charge multiple devices.

Festivalgoers often put their phone in a zip-close food bag to protect it from the elements and use a belt bag to keep their valuables safe.

### Freshening up

With limited access to showers and washing facilities at festivals, hand sanitizer and moist wipes are convenient alternatives. “Wipes are great for keeping fresh during a festival,” says Costco health and beauty buyer Jessica Rodgers, who also suggests dry shampoo and facial cleansing wipes as quick solutions to the challenge of staying clean without hot water.

### The eyes have it

Contact lens wearers hoping for a clear view of the show can find daily disposables from top brands in the Optical department, which also carries big-name fashion and prescription sunglasses in a variety of styles.

Other festival must-haves include antihistamines for hay fever. “I would also advise [attendees] to stay protected with sunscreen and keep hydrated with a hydration supplement,” adds Rodgers. Extra-large trash bags can be used as a poncho and to sit on, as well as for garbage, so pack them too. And, rain or shine, don’t forget toilet paper—probably the most essential festival product of them all.

Says Rodgers, “We’ve got just about everything you’ll need to make your next concert or festival a great experience.” ■

### FROM THE TRENCHES

Mac Benedict, a Costco assistant buyer, has been a regular at music festivals since he was 18. He says that even though he already owns most of the camping gear, he starts preparing for a festival about three months in advance. But he likes to be flexible too.

“Organizing with friends can come together at the last minute. Last year I went to a festival at the Gorge Amphitheatre in Washington state with my high school bestie, but an hour before we got to the gate, our old friend reached out to us. Suddenly we were camping with about 20 other people.”

Benedict considers eyedrops, a bandana (to mitigate dust), an umbrella and sunscreen, a reusable water bottle and sunglasses essential items.

—Will Fifield

LEFT: © BENNY HAWES; BELOW: © KATE K. / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

### More essentials

Preparation can be invaluable when it comes to attending concerts and festivals. These additional items can make your time that much

more enjoyable: sleeping bags, binoculars, flashlights, bug spray, lip balm, a daypack, rain gear, hats, umbrella, earplugs, electrolyte powder (to stay hydrated), a photo ID, debit card and ex-

tra cash, a physical copy of your entrance ticket (if anything were to happen to your phone), marker or pen, hair ties, deodorant, first-aid kit, a headache reliever and face masks.—Dan Jones





# Buyers' picks

Product selections from  
Costco's buying team



Nick Carlson

Chris Taylor

Adam Jopp



## Yellowstone Gas Fire Bowl

Take the warmth and ambiance of a traditional fire pit with you no matter where you go. Constructed of steel with a lid and a practical handle, this smokeless fire bowl that commemorates the television series *Yellowstone* is compact, lightweight and sturdy. The bowl, which runs on a 20-pound propane gas tank (not included), heats to 58,000 BTUs. Features include convenient push-start ignition, a control knob and decorative pumice stones. Item 1654615. Warehouses/ [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).—*Nick Carlson*

## Cascade Mountain Tech Trekking Poles

Great for increased balance and stability, these 100% carbon-fiber poles are a strong yet lightweight option for adventurers. Each pole weighs only 8 ounces, so they won't slow you down on the trail. They feature a secure quick-lock mechanism for height adjustments (they extend from 26 to 54 inches) and nonslip cork handles that provide a balanced grip for a variety of hand positions, no matter the environment. Poles include wrist straps. Item 2622102. Warehouses/ [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).—*Chris Taylor*



## GoPro Hero 11 Bundle

With improved digital features and Wi-Fi capabilities, the Hero 11 records dynamic point-of-view video. Its larger image sensor captures every detail, and highlights can be sent to your phone automatically. New night effects enable you to shoot footage after dark, and 10-bit color and enhanced stabilization bring videos to life. Waterproof to 33 feet. Bundle includes a miniature extension pole, two batteries, a 64-gigabyte SanDisk memory card and a carrying case. Item 6094011. [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) only.—*Adam Jopp*

# Pizza party

Instead of ordering pizza in, make your own pies at home

by MARCY GOLDMAN



MICHELLE LITTLE

**Marcy Goldman** is a Montreal-based pastry chef and cookbook author, as well as host of the popular baking site [Betterbaking.com](http://Betterbaking.com).



**P**izza is one unstoppable food. Whether it's made thick or thin, quick-baked in a gas-fired pizza oven, on a grill or in the oven, nothing is easier or more flexible. All you need is the ultimate pizza dough and a variety of toppings, and you have the ideal all-occasion meal solution.

My biggest pro tip is that genuine, pizzeria-style dough can be made with a no-knead recipe (see recipe). It only calls for brief mixing and then the dough is refrigerated for 12 to 18 hours. Dough that's been cool-risen is easy, workable and ready when you are, and makes an authentic, artisanal crisp-edged crust.

Once the dough is primed to go, there's the panning out part. For thin, crisp pizzas, gently coax enough dough for one crust into an oval or round shape

about 9 inches in diameter, then place it on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper that has been coated with olive oil. Top it as you like and let it rise. For a thin, crisp pizza, bake it as soon as you want or let it rest, lightly covered with plastic wrap, about 60 to 90 minutes.

For a thicker, chewier pizza, dress it with toppings, cover with plastic wrap and let rise two to three hours. Finally, for a large breadier or bakery-style pizza to serve a crowd, use the entire batch of dough. Pat it into an olive-oil-coated 9 x 13-inch pan, top with preferred toppings and let it rise two to three hours.

Thinner pizzas get baked quick and hot at 475 F for eight to 12 minutes; thicker, chewy pizzas appreciate a lower oven temperature of 450 F for 14 to 16 minutes. Breadier, bakery-style pizza, usually served in squares, not wedges,



© LUKAS GOJDA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

needs moderate heat, 375 F, and more time, 25 to 30 minutes.

Homemade pizza can be baked free-form on a regular baking sheet, in a cast-iron pan, on a pizza stone or in a dedicated gas-fired pizza oven. If you're baking in your regular oven, a cast-iron skillet is your best bet. The heat-retentive, dark cast iron helps bake a toasty, well-browned bottom crust.

Pizza, with its quick bake and customized topping options, is where creativity and appetite collide in a sizzling pie that is both delicious and satisfying. ■

### COSTCO CONNECTION

Ingredients for pizzas can be found in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.com.



## Cool-Rise No-Knead Pizza

- 1½ cups warm water
- ¼ tsp instant yeast
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- 3½ cups pizza flour or all-purpose flour
- Sauce, shredded cheese, toppings

In a medium bowl, stir together the water, yeast, salt, sugar and most of the flour. Stir to make a soft dough, adding additional flour to have a rough mass. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 12 to 18 hours.

Divide the dough into 3 equal portions. On a floured board, shape each portion into a ball. Cover and let rest until you are ready to bake (1 to 3 hours).

Preheat the oven to 475 F. Using your fingertips, gently spread each dough ball on a floured board until it's 9 inches in diameter, then transfer into a cast-iron pan or onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper that's been lightly brushed with olive oil. Spread about 3 to 6 Tbsp of sauce on each pizza and then add preferred toppings.

Bake 9 to 12 minutes until the crust is browned and the cheese is sizzling. Makes 3 (9-inch) pizzas.

*Recipe courtesy of Marcy Goldman*

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## Customized pizza

Most pizzas start with a sauce that is then topped with a variety of cheeses, cured meats and vegetables. About ½ cup of any topping per pizza works in combo with other toppings. Design your own pizza with mix-and-match prepped sauce and toppings:

**Sauces.** Alfredo, barbecue, curry sauce, marinara, olive oil, pesto

**Cooked/cured meats.** Canadian bacon, bacon, chicken, pepperoni, prosciutto, salami, sausage

**Shredded cheeses.** Feta, goat cheese, havarti, mozzarella, Parmesan, provolone

**Fruits and veggies.** Arugula, bell pepper, garlic, mushroom, olives, onion, pineapple, sauerkraut, spinach, squash, tomato (fresh or sun-dried)

**Herbs.** Both fresh and dried basil, oregano, rosemary, thyme—MG

# Cultural flavors

Sukhi's Gourmet Indian Foods makes it easy to put the tastes of India on your table

by MICHAEL REDSTONE



Sukhi Singh

COURTESY OF SUKHI'S INDIAN CUISINE; © ARCHIVIZ / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

**S**ukhi Singh, founder of Sukhi's Gourmet Indian Foods, has a favorite saying: "There are only two types of people: people who love Indian cuisine and those who just haven't tried it yet." True to this belief, Singh has spent much of her adult life trying to introduce people to Indian food so she could make them lovers of this cuisine.

## Roots in India

Singh's life is a classic American success story. The tale begins in northern India, where 7-year-old Singh began cooking with her grandmother. Those early years engendered a love of cooking that continued into adulthood after Singh; her husband, Surinder; and their three children moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in the mid-1980s.

After the family purchased a small deli, Singh's fiery entrepreneurial spirit came to the fore and she began producing Indian curry sauces to sell to her deli customers.

## Steady expansion

During the ensuing years, the entire family pitched in to help sell Singh's sauces, marinades and spice mixes at farmers markets throughout Northern California. Singh also found a niche selling her spice mixes to corporate dining chefs. Despite the growing success of her bases for Indian

meals, Singh realized that too much preparation was still required to complete a full meal. It was then that she decided that refrigerated, fully prepared entrées were the future of her business.

Today, Sukhi's Gourmet offers a full line of delicious Indian cuisine created by Singh. Sukhi's Gourmet products contain no added preservatives or artificial ingredients, and all of the chicken used is hormone- and antibiotic-free. The company's lineup includes several vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free offerings. Singh's first prepared entrée, chicken tikka masala (chicken in a creamy tomato curry sauce), remains the company's top seller.

## Prioritizing sustainability

Sukhi's Gourmet has worked with Costco to develop sustainability initiatives. "We are very proud of the compostable fiber trays that we developed for our refrigerated entrées available at Costco," says Bonnie Chimni, company president (and Singh's eldest daughter). "This allowed us to cut the plastic in our packaging 70%. We will continue to offer more sustainable solutions."

And that's just one more reason to try Sukhi's Gourmet and become an Indian food lover. ■

Michael Redstone is a writer based in the Chicago area.

## COMPANY INFO

### Name

Sukhi's Gourmet Indian Foods

### Founder

Sukhi Singh

### Employees

85

### Headquarters

Hayward, California

### Items carried at Costco

Sukhi's Chicken Tikka Masala; Item 951691. Warehouses/Costco.com. Sukhi's Chicken Coconut Curry with Mango; Item 1407995. Available in select warehouses.

### Quote about Costco

"[Being at] Costco has allowed us to truly share Indian cuisine with members nationwide."

—Bonnie Chimni, president



# Lots of 'cots

The small stone fruit big on flavor and nutrition

by JERRY JAMES STONE



LEFT TO RIGHT: © NATASHAMAMBS; DARIJUSTUGOVA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



## Savory and Spicy Apricot Sauce

**1 lb apricots, halved, pitted and chopped**  
**½ cup light brown sugar**  
**¼ cup honey**  
**1 Tbsp white miso or ½ Tbsp soy sauce**  
**½ tsp red pepper flakes**  
**2 garlic cloves, minced**  
**¼ tsp salt**  
**¼ cup apple cider vinegar**

Combine all ingredients in a Dutch oven or large saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil over a medium-high heat, then reduce heat to a simmer. Cook mixture until it begins to thicken and is syrup-like, about 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the moisture content of the apricots.

Test the sauce for doneness: Dip a spoon into the sauce, removing any excess, then drag your finger across the back of the spoon, through the sauce. If the sauce holds the line, it is ready. For a thinner sauce, use an immersion blender to purée it. Serve warm or cool. Once the sauce has cooled, refrigerate it in an airtight container and use within 10 days. Makes about 8 (¼-cup) servings.

*Recipe courtesy of Jerry James Stone*



JERRY JAMES STONE

**Jerry James Stone** ([jerryjamesstone.com](http://jerryjamesstone.com)) is a YouTube personality and cookbook author. He creates vegetarian and plant-based recipes.

### COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find fresh apricots in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).

**S**weet and slightly tart, apricots pair well with all kinds of foods. Their flavor and bright orange color make them a popular choice in a variety of baked goods, such as crumbles, pastries, pies and tarts. But apricots are also a great addition to savory dishes.

Turned into a glaze, apricots are great over carrots and almost any protein. Add fresh herbs like rosemary or thyme to take homemade glazes to the next level. Grilled or roasted apricots make a delicious addition to pizzas and salads. Substitute them for tomatoes in your next caprese salad.

Need a break from avocado toast? Add ricotta and roasted apricots to your favorite toasted bread and add just a drizzle of honey for your next snack. There's no limit to what you can make with apricots; suggestions include stuffing them with goat cheese, drizzling them with yogurt or topping them with dried fruits and nuts. Dried apricots are just as versatile and make a great addition to any charcuterie or butter board.

With twice the protein of berries and high in vitamin C, this stone fruit is a great option for switching up your fruit routine. They are also packed full of beta carotene and antioxidants, which may reduce the risk of diseases.

Apricots are in season from early May to the end of July. You can keep ripe or unripe apricots in the refrigerator for a few days, but any longer may change their texture and taste.

They are best stored at room temperature in a paper bag, away from direct sunlight and heat. Once ripe, they turn bright orange and give a bit when gently squeezed. Ripe apricots are also very aromatic, with a sweet floral fragrance.

Try this savory and spicy sauce (see recipe) over cream cheese for a quick appetizer spread. It's also great on both meats and veggies, in your next poke bowl or tossed with fried tofu and asparagus, and served over rice. ■

# Wade a while

Aquatic movement can help with pain or mobility issues, and as an alternate form of exercise

by JACKIE DUDA



Water workouts offer the ability to increase muscle in a low-impact environment.



## COSTCO CONNECTION

Swimsuits, goggles, fins and other water-related items can be found seasonally in Costco warehouses and year-round at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com).

**H**umans are roughly 60% water, so it makes sense that exercising in water, in the form of aquatic therapy, could play a part in your health.

“Arthritis and spinal cord injury patients benefit from aquatic therapy,” says Dr. Bruce Becker, founding director of the National Aquatic and Sports Medicine Institute at Washington State University and a retired physiatrist—a doctor who specializes in physical medicine and rehabilitation after disabling conditions such as stroke and spinal cord injuries. Becker, a Costco member, says aquatic exercise offers unique benefits for people of all ages and abilities, with studies showing cardiovascular, circulatory, respiratory and endocrine benefits, and improved muscle strength, walking, balance, memory and mood.

### Gain strength, reduce pain

“[Aquatic therapy is] a good option for gaining strength, because buoyancy

makes it easier to exercise in the water,” says Costco member Dr. Albert Recio, a physician in the paralysis restoration program at the International Center for Spinal Cord Injury at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Buoyancy supports them, and hydrostatic pressure, the force of water against the body, helps circulation. “Hydrostatic pressure promotes muscle relaxation and helps decrease swelling,” explains Recio.

Being in the water also decreases pain. Judy Peck, a physical therapist, has worked with patients for 24 years, witnessing the pain-relieving effects. “Our goal is to teach patients what to do to decrease pain, improve flexibility and strength, and help them mentally when they’re struggling with chronic pain,” she explains. Patients are often surprised by the mental and physical relief: “Many feel relief even hours later,” says Peck.



LEFT TO RIGHT: © NEW AFRICA / KZENON / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

### Recovering from injury

Costco member Michael Murray, president of the American Physical Therapy Association Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy, sees a wide spectrum of patients, from injured athletes to people for whom aquatic therapy was a last resort.

Murray and his colleagues at Duke studied healthy people walking in shallow water, demonstrating how buoyancy lessened impact on lower extremities and resistance increased strength and some joint mobility. “If you have a condition that’s degenerative, aquatic therapy helps strengthen you to live more independently on

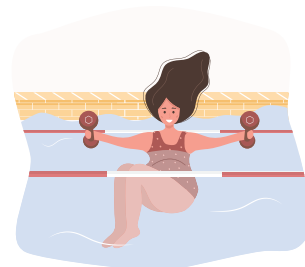
land,” says Murray. He notes that high-intensity aquatic exercises can help maintain bone density, but osteoporosis patients also need to include weight-bearing exercises on land, as a combination of aquatic and land therapy can help them to get stronger and functionally independent.

### Meeting special lifestyle needs

Recio works with patients of all ages with mild to severe neurological, rehabilitative or developmental needs. He published groundbreaking research on how aquatic therapy improved activities of daily living, such as personal care and hygiene, for patients with tracheostomies, colostomies and pressure injuries. “We’re trying to demonstrate we can eliminate barriers for patients with complex medical conditions. We have developed policies and procedures allowing patients with ventilators and diaphragmatic pacers in the pool for skilled therapies,” Recio explains, adding that these patients hadn’t previously been considered for aquatic exercise. “Aquatic therapy gives them more independence.”

“Everything you do from the standpoint of exercise, in water or on land, has health benefits,” Becker emphasizes. “The body is very smart. It’s always looking for ways to recover. The water facilitates that.” ■

Jackie Duda swims three times a week and engaged in aquatic therapy to recover from a life-threatening medical crisis.



© KERONNART / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

### Wading in

Knowing how to swim isn’t necessary for aquatic therapy; therapists accompany patients in the water. Some insurance companies require a doctor’s prescription. All patients should discuss any new exercise program with their doctors first.

You can find aquatic therapy programs on the American Physical Therapy Association websites ([apta.org](http://apta.org); [aquaticpt.org](http://aquaticpt.org)); or online (search “aquatic therapy near me”).

At the YMCA of Frederick County in Frederick, Maryland, for example, participants can sign up for classes like Aqua Yoga, Thera-Walk or Splashin’ to the Oldies, says Samm Meddaugh, the Y’s aquatics director. Another option is to reserve time to swim or walk in the pool lanes.—JD

### Aquatic exercises

Exercises vary, depending on whether one is pre- or post-operative, trying to lose weight, recovering from injury, strengthening

weak muscles or trying to live better with chronic pain.

Many start with walking, marching and squats in waist-deep water.

Exercises in chest-deep water might include aqua

dumbbells, noodles and kickboards for resistance, or adding ankle weights to augment the strengthening effects of water walking and leg lifts. For safety, wear an aqua belt or life vest.—JD

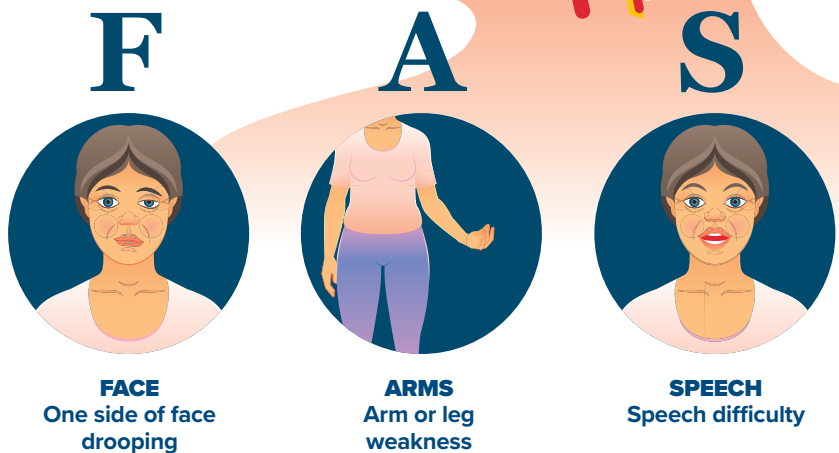
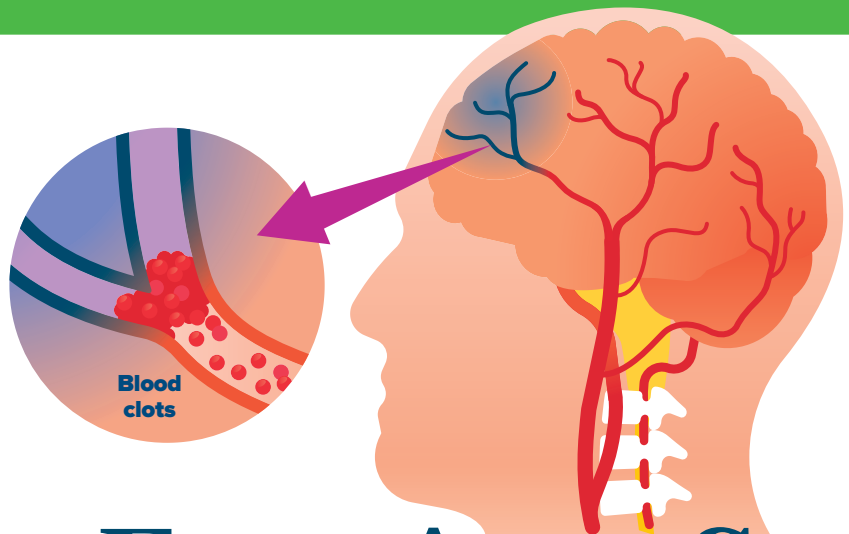
# When strokes strike

Be aware of the varying risks, types, causes and symptoms of stroke

by JANE DOUCET

## COSTCO CONNECTION

Prescription medications are available in Costco Pharmacies. Exercise equipment, healthful foods, smoking cessation items and more are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



**F**  
FACE  
One side of face drooping

**A**  
ARMS  
Arm or leg weakness

**S**  
SPEECH  
Speech difficulty

**M**ay is Stroke Awareness Month in the United States, which helps bring attention to this serious medical condition. Every year, more than 795,000 Americans have a stroke, and about 610,000 of these are first strokes. In 2020, one in six deaths from cardiovascular disease was due to stroke.

“The older you get, the more at risk you are,” says Patrice Lindsay, the director of health systems change at the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. “But because progress is being made in new treatments and research, having a stroke doesn’t mean you can’t have a meaningful life.”

The facts are frightening, but nothing raises awareness about a health condition like a celebrity who publicly shares a personal experience. Juno Award-winning Canadian musician Alan Frew, who fronts the rock band Glass Tiger, did exactly that after experiencing a stroke.

In August 2015, Frew, then 58, had a stroke while asleep in Toronto. Paralyzed on his right side, he began the long road to rehabilitation and recovery. Two years earlier, he had been diagnosed with high blood pressure and high cholesterol, but he had been feeling so well that he stopped taking his prescription medications. In hindsight, he believes he wouldn’t have had the stroke if he’d stayed on his medications.

### What is a stroke?

A stroke is a sudden loss of brain function caused by a brain blood vessel blockage (ischemic stroke) or rupture (hemorrhagic stroke). Symptoms can include weakness or loss of sensation, often on one side of the body; confusion or difficulty speaking; vision difficulties; headache; or loss of coordination and balance.

Stroke can happen to anyone, at any age, from infancy to adulthood, although most occur in those older than 60. Yet stroke disproportionately affects women—more die of stroke or have



**TIME**  
Time to call for ambulance

worse outcomes afterward, and more are living with the effects of stroke and facing more challenges as they recover. “We don’t have a great understanding about trends in treatment for women, so it’s a big area of research,” says Lindsay.

The onset of symptoms is typically sudden. The acronym FAST is used to teach people how to detect symptoms:

- Facial drooping on one side
- Arm or leg weakness
- Speech difficulties
- Time (if you experience the first three, it’s time to call 911)

“The quicker you act by calling 911, the better your outcome will likely be,”

says Lindsay. “Don’t drive yourself to the hospital. Have someone drive you. A 911 call triggers actions at the hospital, where they’ll be preparing to do the appropriate tests when you arrive.”

**Treatment**

Treatment may include the removal of a blood clot or clots, then procedures such as angioplasty or stents, or medication such as blood thinners, to prevent further clots from forming. It may take weeks or months of physical and speech therapy to strengthen the affected areas.

Now 66, Frew is able to reflect on his experience—and offer advice. “There was massive depression at first,” he says. “Stroke is such an insult to the human condition. You have to allow yourself to be broken and mourn what you have lost, then accept that this is it.”

Although people tell Frew they can’t tell he had a stroke, he says his right hand and arm will never be the same. He’s now vigilant about taking his medication, swims daily, is mindful of what he eats and has cut his sodium intake. “If I can help one person feel less stigmatized, I have done my job,” he says. ■

Jane Doucet is a Halifax, Nova Scotia-based journalist and author.

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**Young people and strokes**

Over the past 15 years, more Americans in their late 20s, 30s and 40s have suffered strokes. Why? Because more are living with high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes and obesity, and when risk factors for stroke show up early, so do the diseases they lead to, say the experts. “These conditions are often not well addressed, and they’re risk factors for stroke,” says Dr. Mitchell Elkind. Studies show that many young people are finding work environments stressful, leaving them with less time to exercise and eat well.

If there’s a family history of strokes, the risk is higher. And if a young woman smokes cigarettes, has classic migraines with aura and is taking oral contraceptives, her risk is much higher.—JD

**Decrease the risks**

Certain risk factors for stroke, such as age, sex and family history, can’t be changed. Elderly women are

especially vulnerable. Hypertension (high blood pressure) is the most important modifiable risk factor, so keep it in check. Other important preven-

tion factors include maintaining a healthy weight, eating properly, exercising regularly, not smoking, not drinking excessively and controlling cholesterol.—JD



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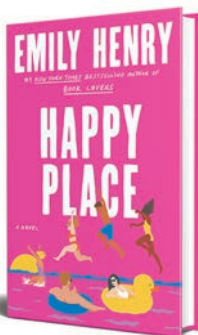
**Alex Kanenwisher**  
Buyer, Books



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.

They and two other couples are at a Maine cottage 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; 4/25) is available in most Costco warehouses.



Emily Henry

DEVYN GLISTA / ST. BLANC STUDIOS

# Comedy of the heart

Emily Henry has found her new happy place in romance

by JUDI KETTELER

**W**hen 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. “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* centers 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

© COSTCO PHOTO STUDIO



**Stacy Wells**  
Assistant Buyer, Books

*“Writing is a joyful,  
if long-term, way  
to tell a story.”*

—TOM HANKS

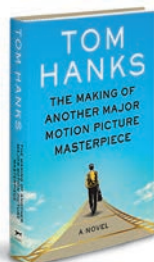
group’s usual summer spot in Maine, the plot thickens. Henry overlaps past with present, winding through years of Harriet and Wyn’s history as the week in Maine progresses and the tension builds.

Henry wanted to explore the dynamics among a group of friends in their early 30s; while Harriet and Wyn’s story drives the action, it’s an ensemble cast, featuring Sabrina and Parth (who are getting married) and Kimmy and Cleo (who fell in love and run a farm together). “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 about 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 current favorites 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](http://judiketteler.com)) is an award-winning essayist and has written three nonfiction books.

## Hanks in hardcover



*The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece* (Item 1736606; 5/9) will be available in most Costco warehouses.

They say write what you know, and Tom Hanks has done just that in his novel *The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece*. Told across several timelines, it’s about the making of a star-studded, multi-million-dollar superhero action film and the comic books that inspired it.

**Costco Connection** What inspired this novel?

**Tom Hanks** Writing is a joyful, if long-term, way to tell a story. No one knows how moviemakers make a movie unless they have spent every day with a movie-maker as the movie is imagined, written, prepped, shot, edited and, you know, made. Combining the two very different disciplines was just as much fun, as each is fraught with the possibility of disaster.

**CC** What did you most enjoy about writing it?

**TH** I enjoyed the solitude of writing, the luxury of taking all that time along with the never-ending testing of what I put on the page.

**CC** What else would you like readers to know?

**TH** If the readers come away with a sense of the hard work, serendipity, chance, both wonderful accidents and terrible decisions that every movie requires, they will understand that moviemaking is as chancy as is love, war and the restaurant business.

## Books at Costco.com

Ivy and Bean are unlikely best friends. Bean is loud and goofy, while Ivy is quiet with a head full of ideas and spends much of her time learning how to be a witch.

Readers ages 6 to 9 can follow along with their adventures in these chapter books as the girls look for dinosaur bones, face a ghost in their school bathroom, take ballet lessons and more.

The set includes the first eight books in the series, along with an activity book.

The *Ivy + Bean* eight-book box set (Item 1736525) is available now at Costco.com.

—AK





**Dominican Republic: Dreams Macao Beach Punta Cana**

Dreams® Macao Beach Punta Cana is an all-inclusive resort haven for families and couples. Enjoy 15 gourmet restaurants and bar options, plus spacious private rooms and suites. Experience the serenity of the clear blue ocean or seek adventures with a variety of activities. Costco Travel's package includes a Digital Costco Shop Card. To learn more, visit [CostcoTravel.com](https://www.CostcoTravel.com).



**Coho Pack and Carry Box**

With heavy-duty insulation and virtually indestructible construction, this ultra-portable gear case will keep your essential equipment safe from the elements, no matter how extreme. Item 1654465. [Warehouses/Costco.com](https://www.Warehouses/Costco.com).

The latest Costco finds



**Briggs & Riley Baseline Large Expandable Trunk Spinner**

With the ability to expand and compress, this wheeled luggage has a built-in trifold garment folder and two mesh lid zip pockets. [Costconext.com](https://www.Costconext.com) only.



**Traeger Redland 650 Pellet Grill**

Discover next-level consistency, unrivaled wood-fired flavor and customization options that allow you to grill with exceptional results. Includes a front shelf, drip tray, bucket liners and cover. Item 2327674. [Warehouses/Costco.com](https://www.Warehouses/Costco.com).



**Nordic Ware Double Backsplash Griddle**

Featuring a backsplash and grease channel, this aluminum non-stick double griddle is easy to clean. For use on gas, electric and glass-top stoves, as well as outdoor grills over low to medium heat. Item 665881. [Warehouses only](https://www.Warehouses.com).





**Kirkland Signature Ladies Travel Pants**

Perfect for your next adventure, these lightweight travel pants (made of 91% nylon and 9% elastane) feature a zippered side pocket. Colors: black, green and brown. Sizes: 4–22. Item 7789780. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**

**Tuff Athletics Ladies' Pull-On Shorts**

These casual, comfort hybrid shorts are made to stretch with an elastic waistband, and feature a drawstring and front pockets. Available in several colors. Selection varies by location. Sizes: XS–XXL. Item 1672581. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



**Flojos Men's Flip-Flops**

Features a memory foam footbed for ultimate comfort and a strap slit for breathability. Colors: black, tan. Sizes: 8–13. Item 1676536. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**

**Samsung 65" OLED TV**

Enjoy deep blacks, clean whites, lively colors and brightness, and picture and motion enhancements with the S90C Series 4K Smart TV. Includes a three-year Allstate Protection Plan and \$65 streaming credit. Item 9065091. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



**FOR SCHEDULES & DESCRIPTIONS**

Go to Costco.com or download the Costco mobile app from the App Store or Google Play. Click “Shop” and find “Special Events” to view the online items and events schedules.



**Infinity PR PRO Endurance Percussion Massager**  
 Infinity designs and builds premium-quality, high-performing products for a healthier lifestyle. The Infinity PR PRO Endurance Percussion Massager helps address muscle pain, tension and soreness.



**Cariloha**  
 Sleep comfier, cooler and cleaner with Cariloha premium bedsheets made of ultra-soft, sustainable viscose derived from bamboo, which naturally repels odors, allergens and bacteria.

# A limited-time showcase of exciting products



**HexClad Gourmet Cookware**  
 HexClad’s patented cookware technology uses a triple layer of magnetic stainless steel, aluminum and another layer of magnetic stainless steel, followed by a unique laser etching process, for improved heat distribution.

**WAREHOUSE HOURS**

Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–8:30 p.m.  
 Saturday 9:30 a.m.–6 p.m.  
 Sunday 10 a.m.–6 p.m.  
 Pharmacy closed Sunday  
**Costco.com 24 hours a day,  
 7 days a week**



**Gorilla Installed Sheds**  
 If you need some extra space when you’re working from home, Gorilla Sheds are a great option. You’ll have fewer distractions and a quieter work environment—with a commute of just steps, not miles. Gorilla Sheds are also a great option for an art studio, garden shed, yoga space and more.

NW



**MEMBER INFO**

**Who**  
Catherine Schmuck

**Hometown**  
Mont-Tremblant,  
Quebec

**Occupation**  
Chief cook aboard  
Canadian cargo ships

**Best part of the job**  
“The ever-changing  
scenery through my  
galley porthole.”



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CATHERINE SCHMUCK

## A taste of home

Catherine Schmuck cooks for 25 people at every meal. As chief cook on a cargo ship, her job is to keep the crew members happy and well fed as they travel the waterways of eastern Canada and the United States.

“It can be tough for the crew to be away from their families,” Schmuck explains. “I make a lot of comfort foods that can hopefully be a highlight of their day.”

Her recipes for homemade, hearty meals were so popular that she published a cookbook, *Ship to Shore Chef* (shiptoshorechef.com; not available at Costco).

A longtime Costco member, Schmuck says she gets excited when she sees Kirkland Signature™ products in her galley kitchen. “It’s like having a little bit of home with me,” she says. Personal favorites include Kirkland Signature maple syrup, chia seeds, almond flour and chocolate chips.—*Kristi York*

**Clockwise from top:** Catherine Schmuck in the galley aboard the *Baie St. Paul*; cauliflower falafel; classic fish burger and home fries.