

Compliments of Lynn | Holly | Christina | Mallory

Good to Be

issue 10

HOME

*WISHING
YOU A
HAPPY
HOLIDAY
SEASON*




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Realtors® CLHMS® SRES®


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Front of Tear Out Card 1




**one-pot
MAC N' CHEESE**



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Back of Tear Out Card 1

**MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS
(3 SERVINGS)**

one-pot MAC N' CHEESE

ingredients:

- 1½ c. water
- 1 c. unsweetened nondairy milk
- 2 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- Pinch cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1¾ c. elbow macaroni
- ¾ c. vegan Cheddar shreds
- 1 tbsp. vegan butter
- Ground black pepper, to taste

instructions:

1. In a pot over medium-high heat, add the water and nondairy milk and bring to a low simmer, 5 to 6 minutes, whisking occasionally to prevent burning. The mixture will get foamy.
2. Turn the heat down slightly to keep the liquid at a low simmer. Whisk in the nutritional yeast, apple cider vinegar, tomato paste, Dijon, sea salt, and cayenne, until well combined. Add the macaroni and stir. Cook the mixture over a low simmer, uncovered, for 7 to 8 minutes, until al dente. (Double-check your pasta's package directions because the cook time will vary depending on the brand and what the pasta is made from.) Stir the mixture constantly to prevent sticking.
3. When the pasta is done, the sauce will look a little thin. Take the pot off the heat and stir in the vegan Cheddar shreds, vegan butter, and black pepper. Cover the pot for 1 to 2 minutes and then stir with a wooden spoon until the sauce thickens up and the cheese is completely melted.
4. Serve with extra ground black pepper, if desired. To reheat leftovers, add 1 to 2 tablespoons of nondairy milk and heat over medium-low until warmed through.

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Dear Bill and Judy,

Is there anything better than being home for the holidays? As the season of joy, love, and light approaches, this issue of Good to Be Home is here to celebrate with you by featuring indoor and outdoor decorating tips, a holiday party etiquette guide, gadgets to simplify your season, and sweet recipes to savor.

From decorating the tallest trees in your yard to stringing up eco-friendly LEDs, decking the halls can be a wearying process, but it doesn't have to be. Check out the enclosed guides for decorating safely and sustainably so you can step back and bask in the seasonal glow.

'Tis the season for making merry! Whether you're playing host or have a host of events to attend, you'll want to make sure the get-togethers are enjoyed by all. The enclosed etiquette tips can help ensure you're the perfect entertainer or guest.

While the hustle and bustle of the holidays can keep you on your toes, you can stay one step ahead of it by utilizing helpful gadgets and technology. Automatic tree waterers, remote-control outlets, and high-tech lights are just some of the items spotlighted in this issue.

Turkey or ham might be the centerpiece of your holiday meal, but what would this season be without sweets? Inside you'll find delicious dessert recipes perfect for holiday guests of all ages.

Here's wishing you a splendid holiday season! As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

Lynn, Holly, Christina & Mallory
Generations Real Estate Group



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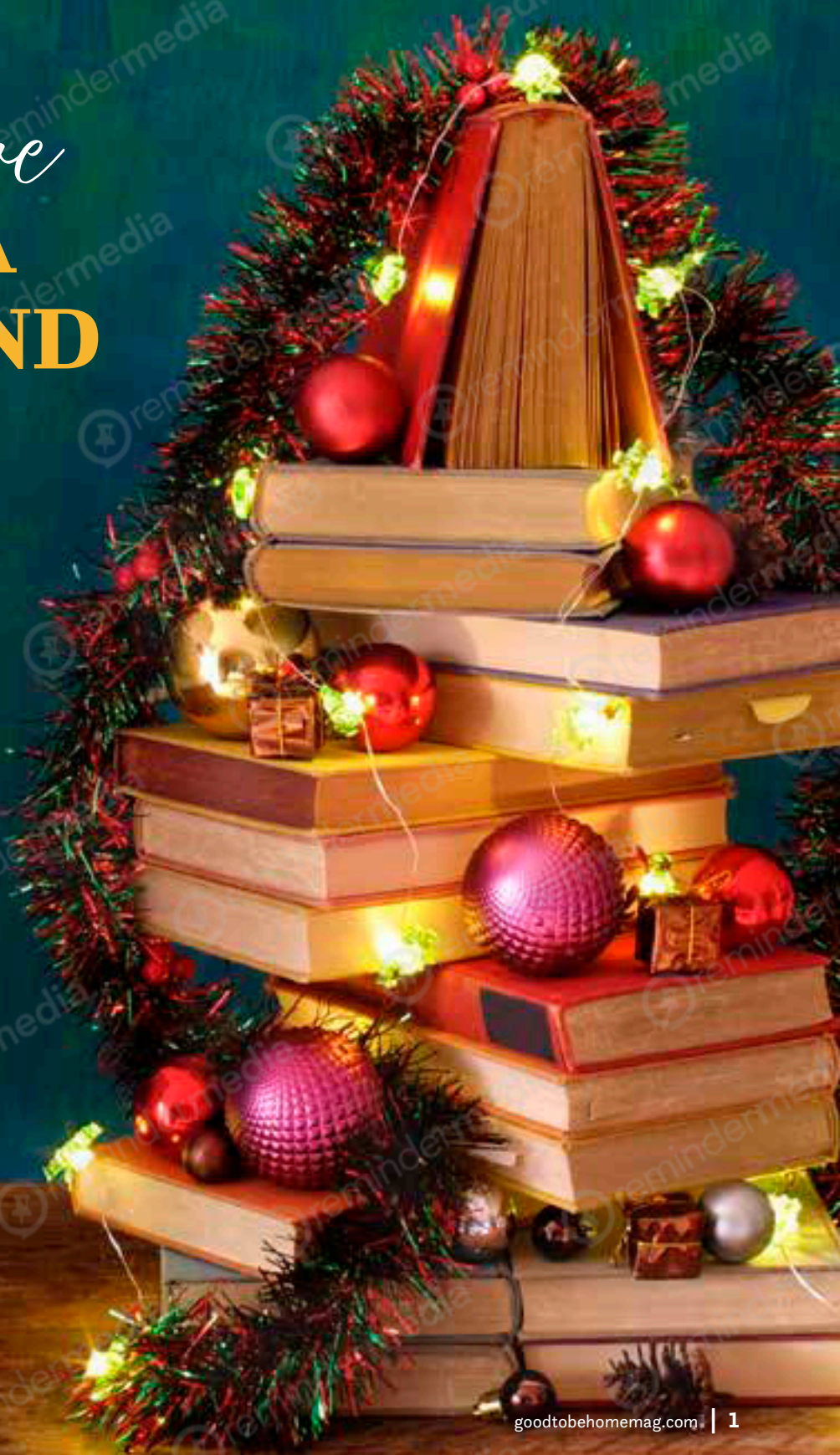
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A TREE afternative WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

written by: NATHAN SMITH

You don't always need a Douglas fir or Scotch pine to have a beautiful Christmas tree in your home. If you lack space or simply want to avoid the tasks of putting it up, watering it, and taking it down, consider repurposing books as your decorating focal point this season. Whether the books are free-standing or hanging from a wall, the setup is easy and will bring holiday cheer to any room in your home.



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issue 10



written by:
MATTHEW BRADY

up on THE TREETOP

During the holidays, everyone loves seeing twinkling lights on homes and trees. And, while decking the indoor tree with lights has always been the primary focus, more and more people are lighting up their outdoor trees as well.

But this can be a tricky and potentially dangerous endeavor, especially if you attempt to decorate a tree that’s taller than your house. Tyler Altenburger, the arborist manager at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, understands this challenge. Every year for the holidays, he and his team install over a half-million outdoor lights on approximately 150 outdoor trees, some reaching ninety feet high.

Here are some of the safety measures he recommends for making your yard’s tall trees festive.

Sidestep the stepladder

Your go-to tool for this task may be your trusty ladder. Not so fast, says Altenburger. “We actually don’t use ladders as much as people think,” he admits. “The unsteadiness of ladders is a major reason for that.”

Altenburger notes that when his team does utilize ladders, they opt for orchard tripods, which have two legs on one side and a single leg on the opposite side. “They make it easier to get around trees, and they’re a bit more stable than your typical four-footed type,” he explains.

If you opt to use a standard ladder, he recommends a fiberglass version, which he says is worth the higher cost because, being nonconductive, it’s safer to use around standard home power sources compared to aluminum. And always use caution: follow the instructions on the ladder, face the steps, and have someone spot you at the foot of the ladder to make sure it doesn’t tip sideways.

Lighting the trees

Since most of Longwood’s trees are decorated yearly, Altenburger’s team uses a time-saving step that residential tree-decorators can also add to their arsenal. “When we remove the lights, we mark the branches with twine so the same limbs get wrapped every year,” he shares. “For really large trees, though, two climbers go through the tree and start eyeballing which limbs should get lit, and sometimes a person on the ground helps. Then we’ll come back with a full team and start lighting.”

Speaking of lighting, Altenburger suggests wrapping from outside in and from the treetop to the bottom. “Start with the female plug at the end of a branch tip, and work your way in toward the trunk; this way, the male plug ends up at the trunk, where you can then run an extension cord with outlets placed every five to eight feet or so. You’ll have all the power coming from the center and a cleaner display,” he says.

If ascending a tree isn’t feasible, a tried-and-true trick may do the job: “My parents and I used to simply drape lights on trees using a long pipe with a stick attached to the end as a little hook. That worked great,” he says.

Keep them lit

Once your trees are wrapped in lights, you need to make sure the elements don’t short-circuit them. However, Altenburger warns that wrapping the ends in tape can actually do more

damage because it tends to seal in moisture. A simple solution? He recommends using childproof outlet caps to prevent blowing fuses.

Stay grounded

All things considered, your best bet may be to seek the help of a professional. “For tall trees, I’d strongly suggest hiring someone who’s trained in climbing unless you can safely reach the top by ladder,” Altenburger advises.

Ultimately, though, people love lighting their own trees. If you do, Longwood’s lead arborist suggests going low. “Everyone’s trying to go bigger,” he concludes. “But there are a lot of good reasons to focus instead on smaller, easier-to-access trees—ornamental trees like dogwoods are more broadly shaped and lower to the ground, so they’re a lot easier access-wise and use fewer lights. Ultimately, it depends on what you want to achieve, but from a safety perspective, smaller and lower is the best way to go.”





Deck the Halls *Sustainably*

written by:
NATHAN SMITH



The final weeks of the year are some of the most joyous thanks to celebrations with friends and family. However, despite the festive cheer we all feel, it's important to consider our celebrations' environmental impact. An analysis from Study Finds found that 43 percent of Americans waste more during the holidays, which adds up to twenty-nine extra pounds of trash per person. That equates to seven million pounds of excess waste. So this year, focus on the green more than the red as you get into the holiday spirit.

Throw eco-friendly parties

How you serve your holiday meals can impact how much waste you produce. When purchasing items for your table setting, consider reusable plates and utensils. If you prefer the convenience of disposable versions, choose biodegradable options like those made from palm leaf, sugarcane, or other plant-based materials. Here are some additional ideas to reduce waste:

- Use cloth napkins and towels
- Ask party guests to bring reusable containers for leftovers
- Keep your recycling bin in clear view during parties
- Avoid buying individual serving beverages
- Store leftovers with reusable food wrap instead of plastic wrap



Rethink your gifts

There’s nothing better than seeing the joy on a loved one’s face as they open a gift you gave them. However, you don’t need to buy new items to please your favorite people. You can create homemade gifts, such as baked goods, candles, or crafts. Another great option is to gift experiences, like concert tickets, dinner at a popular restaurant, or museum or park passes.

Choose sustainable gift wrap

Traditional wrapping paper is generally not the most sustainable option. Rolls of wrapping paper may contain glitter, foil, and other coatings, which aren’t typically recyclable. However, there are plenty of eco-friendly alternatives perfect for wrapping gifts. Fabric is a popular option that not only looks great but also is reusable. You can repurpose paper products from around your home, such as old maps, newspapers, or unused brown paper bags, as alternatives or you can leave the gift unwrapped. For example, give your favorite chef gifts inside a mixing bowl or a loved one with a green thumb gardening supplies inside a planter. Finally, try using compostable twine instead of ribbon.

Go with a real tree

While you might think it is better to put up an artificial tree, that isn’t necessarily true. You can reuse a fake tree for several years,



but they produce a large amount of carbon emissions during production and shipping, can be challenging to recycle, and are not usually biodegradable. However, a real tree may take up to ten years to grow on a farm and will absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere that entire time. Best of all, many areas allow you to recycle trees after the holidays, with some cities creating mulch out of collected trees.

Brighten things up

If you plan to decorate your home with strands of lights, it may be time to upgrade to LED varieties. They consume up to 80 percent less energy than incandescent lights and last up to twenty-five times longer. Search online for a nearby recycling center that can dispose of your old strands of lights. To reduce your energy consumption even further, consider purchasing a timer for your existing lights or lights with a preinstalled timer, or set a reminder for yourself to turn them off before going to bed.

Upgrade your card

Don’t overlook the environmental impact of your yearly holiday cards—more than 1.3 billion cards are sent every year around the holidays in the United States. While some of those may be saved or recycled, many will find their way into trash cans. Rethink how you greet friends and family this time of year, and consider an alternative to sending traditional cards. Environmentally friendly options include:

- Sending e-cards
- Creating a slideshow and sharing it online
- Filming a holiday video and sending it to loved ones
- Using eco-friendly cards, such as those made from recyclable or compostable materials

Reconsider how you celebrate the holidays, and try some sustainable options. It’s the best gift you can give the planet.





a new *vision* for KITCHENS AND BATHS

interview with: MICHAEL WINN

written by: ALEXA BRICKER

photography by: STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG

Kitchen and bathroom remodels are some of the most desired updates for homeowners. Michael Winn, founder and president of Winn Design + Build, certainly knows the value these kinds of renovations can bring. Here he explains how his firm transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary for clients.

Tell us about the Winn Design team and how you all work together on projects: Our business has been in operation for over twenty years. We're a full-service design-and-build firm, and we have a team of architects, kitchen and bath designers, and interior designers in-house. In addition to that, we have field personnel like project managers and carpenters.

We specialize in large, whole-house renovations, major additions, and the occasional custom home. Almost all our projects include kitchen renovations and multiple bathroom renovations.

What does the planning process look like for a typical renovation or remodel? Our clients typically reach out to us for our guidance and experience and to help them with the vision they have for their space. We always begin with what we call a programming meeting. The principal designer—usually a lead architect—sits down with the client to interview them. We ask them to provide us with their idea books, either from Houzz or Pinterest, and we'll review them and then pull additional images that we curated. The main purpose of these meetings is to gauge what a successful project would look like for that client.





In the past few years, supply-chain issues have wreaked havoc on the construction industry. Have delays in materials affected the way you plan for new projects?

Sure they have. It's probably less than more specialized firms, though, because we may spend six to eight months in preconstruction, so we have a little bit more of a runway to work with. We're having conversations with clients early on about lead times—primarily on windows and doors, cabinetry, and appliances, the three big areas of delay right now. In the case of cabinets, for example, our preferred cabinet manufacturer, Rutt, currently has a lead time of twenty-nine weeks. We're in the business of managing expectations, so it's all about being up front and having conversations early so there are no misunderstandings.

What are some of the most important considerations during a kitchen or bath remodel?

Early on in the process, one of the most important aspects is knowing what existing structural conditions we're dealing with, such as the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical, because that will inform the process moving forward. Building something new is almost always easier.

If the bathroom or kitchen layout is changing, plumbing is a big one. We don't always have a full understanding of what's in the walls. We'll do some deconstructive investigation, which is a fancy term for making holes, to get as much insight as possible on what's in there. But you have to be prepared for Murphy's Law and to make adjustments as necessary.

Are there any materials or design styles you avoid for kitchen and bath remodels because of the way these spaces are used?

Yes. A good example would be hardwood floors in the kitchen. From



a functionality standpoint, hardwood floors aren't necessarily the best option. In many cases, clients will go into it eyes wide open and make the decision for aesthetic purposes. So it's more of a conversation with the homeowner than avoiding the material or design style they want.

Another good example is the recent trend to have solid-surface backsplashes that wrap up behind the range. This is fantastic from a maintenance standpoint. Whenever I see a backsplash made from brick or stone, I think "What a nightmare that must be to clean!" So when a client has something they love, we talk through the pros and cons of that decision.

How do you handle a situation where a client is passionate about a design detail you don't agree with or that you think won't work well?

Whenever we're looking at any kind of detail, we try to think about how it could potentially cause a problem later on. The reason builders tend to be slow to change is, as a whole, they're very conservative and like to stick to what works. When new products come on the market, we don't always know how



they'll perform, and sometimes they don't end up performing as advertised.

There seems to be a resurgence of dark colors in interior design. What tips do you have for people who want to remodel with trends in mind?

We're seeing a lot of people gravitate toward warmer colors. White kitchens will always be popular. However, getting away from those softer palettes and into darker ones is definitely coming back. We get clients who are worried about going too trendy with their kitchen or bath and that it will eventually look outdated. I always advise homeowners who will be in their home for ten years or more to think about what they want, not what the next owner would want. You're doing this for yourself.

Are there any other trends for kitchens and baths that you're seeing people gravitate toward?

Many people have a renewed interest in electric ranges. There are bad associations with electric cooktops. The old electric-resistance coils were a nightmare, but modern inductions are



quite great. We're also seeing a lot of statement-making ranges with other appliances hidden behind cabinet doors.

For the bathroom, we do electric-radiant heat in all our primary baths. It's something I have in my own bathroom, and it's one of those things that, once you have it, you'll never go back. Americans also tend to be more reserved when talking about toilets, but we're seeing a lot of interest in wall-mounted smart toilets that have been popular in places like Europe

and Southeast Asia for decades. Kohler has a lot of interesting products with remote electric valves. We have been using them for ADA-compliant bathrooms because you can turn on the water remotely and ensure it's at a safe temperature.

How much value can smart technology, such as the smart faucets you mentioned, add to a home?

Is it always worth the investment? One of the very first questions we ask a client is how long they plan to stay in



their home. We are looking for clients who are undertaking a project for themselves and plan to be there for quite a while. In those cases, the ROI for installing mechanical systems that are efficient is higher than if you were flipping the house.

What are you most excited about for the future of the architecture and design spaces?

I'm always looking forward to innovative products and technology. It's both exciting and scary, for some of the reasons I mentioned

before. We are always excited to bring in new products, but in the back of our minds we have to think about what problems they could cause. I would only use new products from a big-name brand. That being said, I don't think every single thing in your home needs to have a Wi-Fi connection.

For more info, visit winndesign.com

Festive Holiday *Party Tips*

written by: LAUREN KIM

IF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH CLASSIC HOLIDAY MOVIES, YOU PROBABLY REMEMBER THAT THE GRINCH NEARLY RUINED WHOVILLE'S JOLLY ATMOSPHERE AND EBENEZER SCROOGE DAMPENED OTHERS' JOYFUL MOOD. IF YOU ARE ATTENDING A HOLIDAY GET-TOGETHER, FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES SO YOU CAN BE A CHEERY HOLIDAY HOST OR GUEST, NOT A GRINCH OR A SCROOGE.

Party Host

Your job as host is to plan and throw a party your guests will enjoy. These steps can help make your party a success.

Get the party started

You first need to let your guests know who is invited and other important details, such as what, where, and when. "Whether it is a text invite, a phone call, or an engraved invitation, the nature of that invite sets the tone for the event," says Daniel Post Senning, copresident of the Emily Post Institute. The holidays can be busy, so get your invites out early before your guests' calendars fill up.

Put out a spread

Food and drink are often the center of a holiday party, so put some thought into your menu. Depending on whether your get-together will be formal or casual, you could plan a three-course meal or simply put out a collection of finger foods. It's up to you—your guests might even appreciate just having a selection of decadent desserts.

Get into the spirit

'Tis the season, so you'll want to add holiday flair to your festivities. You don't have to be too fancy; you can keep the decor simple with sprigs of evergreen, garlands of paper snowflakes, and strings of lights. A playlist of holiday tunes will add a lively vibe.

Exchanging gifts

Presents are a holiday tradition, so let your guests know if your party will include a gift exchange. You could host a white elephant game, in which everyone anonymously brings a wrapped present and who gets what is partially left to chance. Or you could hold a secret Santa exchange and pair up guests to give and receive gifts. These games can be enjoyable icebreakers—partygoers will have a blast trying to figure out who brought which gifts.



Be a good host

As the host, your role is to make sure everyone enjoys the party. Talk with your guests during your event and say goodbye when they leave, Senning says. These suggestions could help increase your party’s fun factor:

- Provide seasonal props, such as confetti, fun eyewear, long holiday scarves, and oversized faux snowflakes, that your guests can pose with for photos.
- Think of a theme for your party. For example, you could ask everyone to bring homemade cookies to swap or wear an ugly holiday sweater.
- Plan party games and activities, such as a holiday-themed bingo game or decorating gingerbread houses.



Party Guest

As a guest, there are also things to keep in mind to help foster a better party.

RSVP, and mind your manners

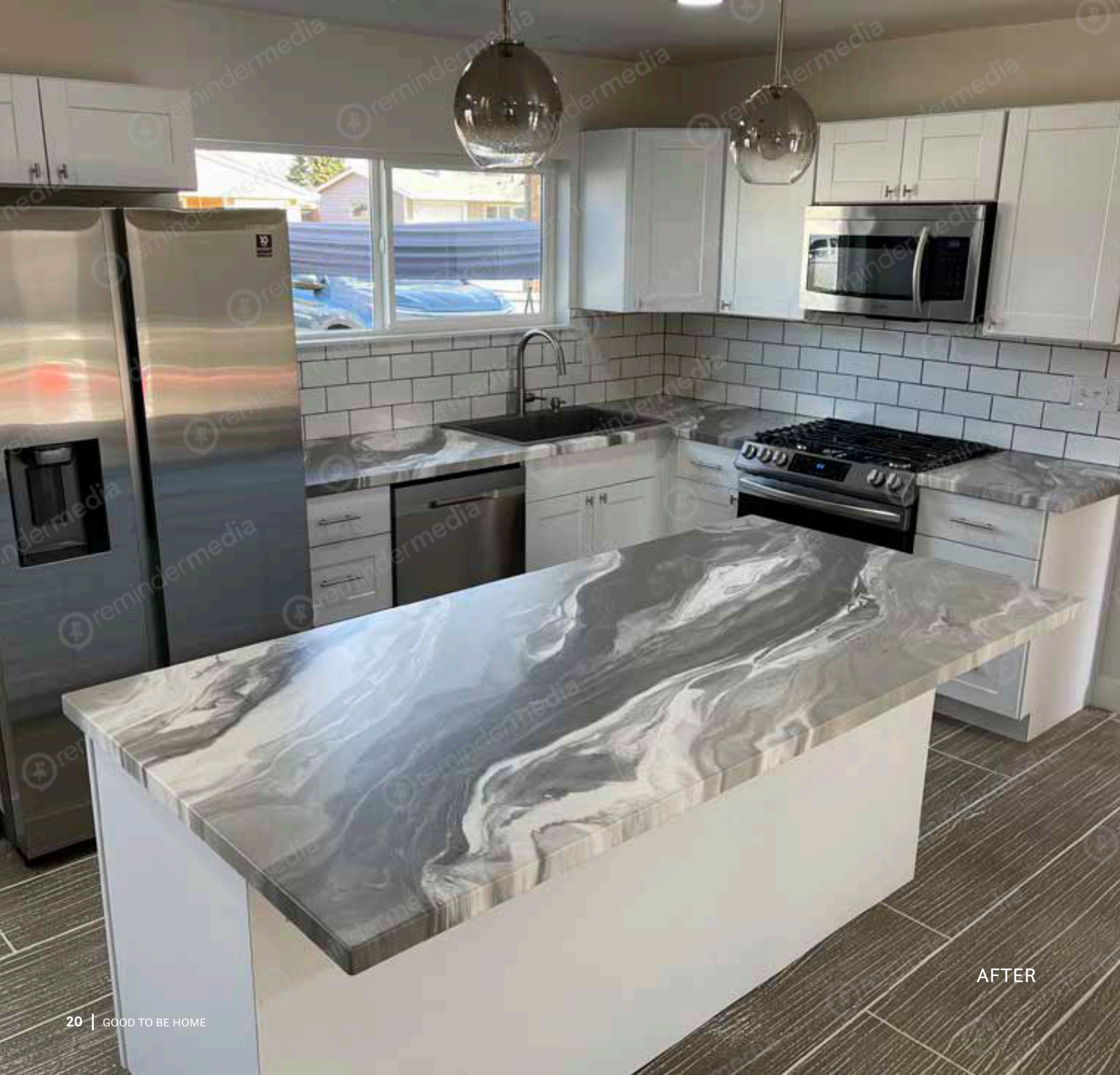
Make sure you respond to the invitation. “The most common mistake people make is not responding,” Senning says. “Sometimes people have difficulties saying no.” If you don’t accept or decline an invite, your host won’t have an accurate head count to plan the party. You should also arrive on time, actively participate, and be polite to other guests.

Thank your host

It’s thoughtful to bring a small gift for your host, such as mulling spices for holiday beverages, winter-themed drink coasters, or holiday-scented soap. Also, be sure to thank them when you leave or follow up soon after to do so.

Offer to help clean up

Parties are fun, but the cleanup afterward is not. Give your friend or family member who hosted the get-together a hand and help put things away, or offer to take out the trash and recycling after the party winds down.



Easy Epoxy Upgrades



interview with: TIM KRUMLAND

written by: RACHEL STEVENS

photos provided by: LEGGARI PRODUCTS

Do you dream of having beautiful, shiny floors or countertops without the cost of replacing them? Epoxy resin is a long-lasting, easy-to-care-for, and customizable product you can pour on your existing surfaces to achieve a luxurious look. Tim Krumland, cofounder of Leggari Products, discusses how his company makes these upgrades achievable for even the most novice of DIYers.

How long have you been in business, and why are you passionate about the epoxy resin industry?

Tylor (my cofounder) and I have been in the epoxy industry for about eleven years. We think it's incredible that a product that was once only considered a bland industrial coating is now a high-end piece of art on someone's floor or countertop.

Why should someone upgrade their floor or countertops to an epoxy resin surface? Epoxy resin is one of the only ways to create an authentic, one-of-a-kind countertop or floor and maintain a durable surface. It's also highly cost-effective, typically just one-tenth the price of some granite countertops.



Is epoxy resin a long-lasting product, or will it need touch-ups? Like most things in life, how you treat your counters is how they will treat you, especially for the long term. Depending on the final surface chosen, such as urethane, they may not need much upkeep. For instance, if you buy a black car versus a white car, it's now common knowledge that you'll spend more time keeping that darker color clean. Countertops are similar; for instance, if you choose a matte topcoat over a gloss topcoat, you won't see scratches as much, if at all. We also offer even more durable additives for high-traffic situations, like commercial countertops.

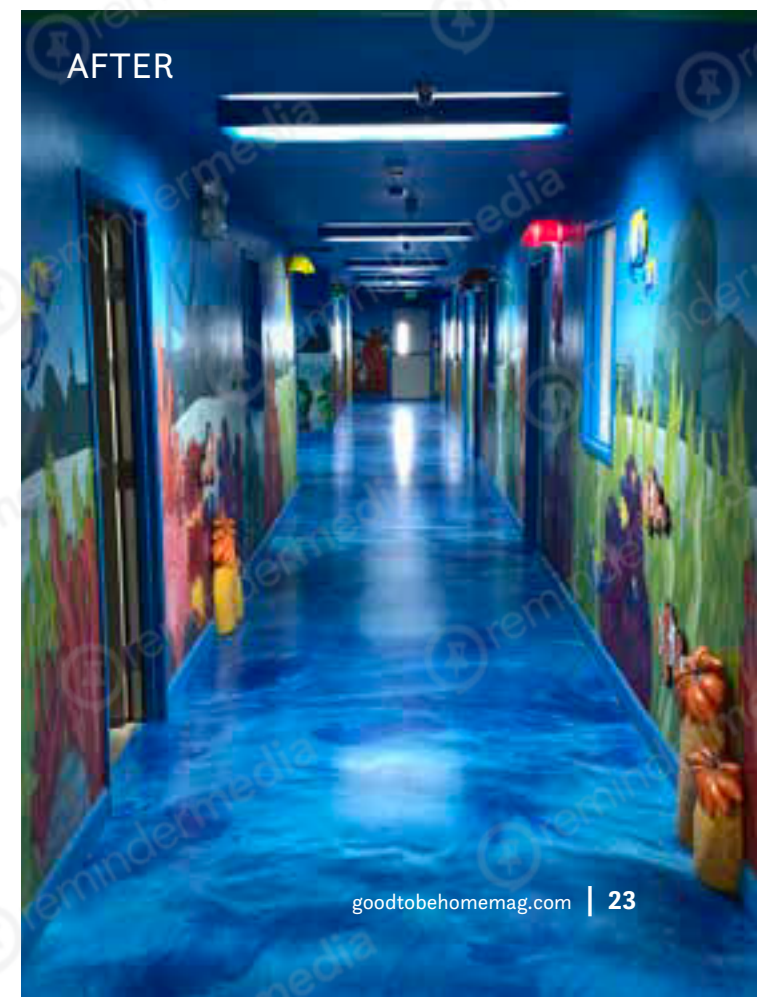
What areas of the home do you most often get project requests for? Our most common orders are those for customers coating their garage floors, basements, and main floors, depending on if they're concrete. Kitchen countertops are also very high on the list.

Can someone with no experience do this upgrade themselves? Absolutely! We started the company with one simple goal in mind: to help the average person install epoxy successfully through video tutorials. One of our trademarked slogans is "Simplifying the Industry." The coating industry has become very intimidating and overcomplicated for consumers, and we're here to fill that need. We believe in selling the highest-quality products to our customers. Until we started Leggari, most people didn't have access to this product quality or the step-by-step tutorials to install it.

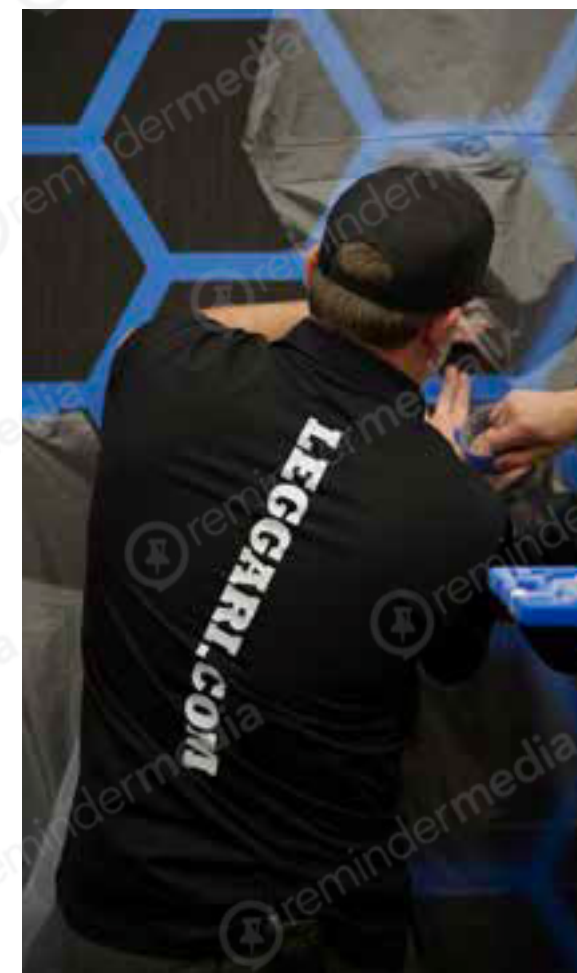
How long does an epoxy project take to complete? As with most home projects, the prep work takes the most time. The actual work involved to pour a successful countertop or floor is very fast (often less than a day, sometimes just a couple of hours); the dry time makes it seem longer because you're just waiting. Epoxy takes about twenty-four hours to set up and up to seven days to fully cure. Like concrete, you can't walk on it before it's fully cured.



BEFORE



AFTER



What are a few of your most popular products? Do you sell them globally? We sell all our products globally. Some of our most popular products are our complete kits. We have always sold a lot of countertop kits, but our metallic epoxy floor kits, flake floor kits, and hardwood overlay kits have become increasingly popular.

Have you seen an increase in demand for epoxy home upgrades during the pandemic? Yes. The pandemic was a major catalyst for increased sales. However, the DIY market had been growing steadily for years already, so attributing all increases to the pandemic wouldn't be fair. In general, I believe YouTube has created a whole new world of options where people are empowered to take their home-renovation projects into their own hands. And why not? I, for one, am part of a generation that is trying to avoid spending exorbitant amounts of money on traditional products, and this is one way to do that.

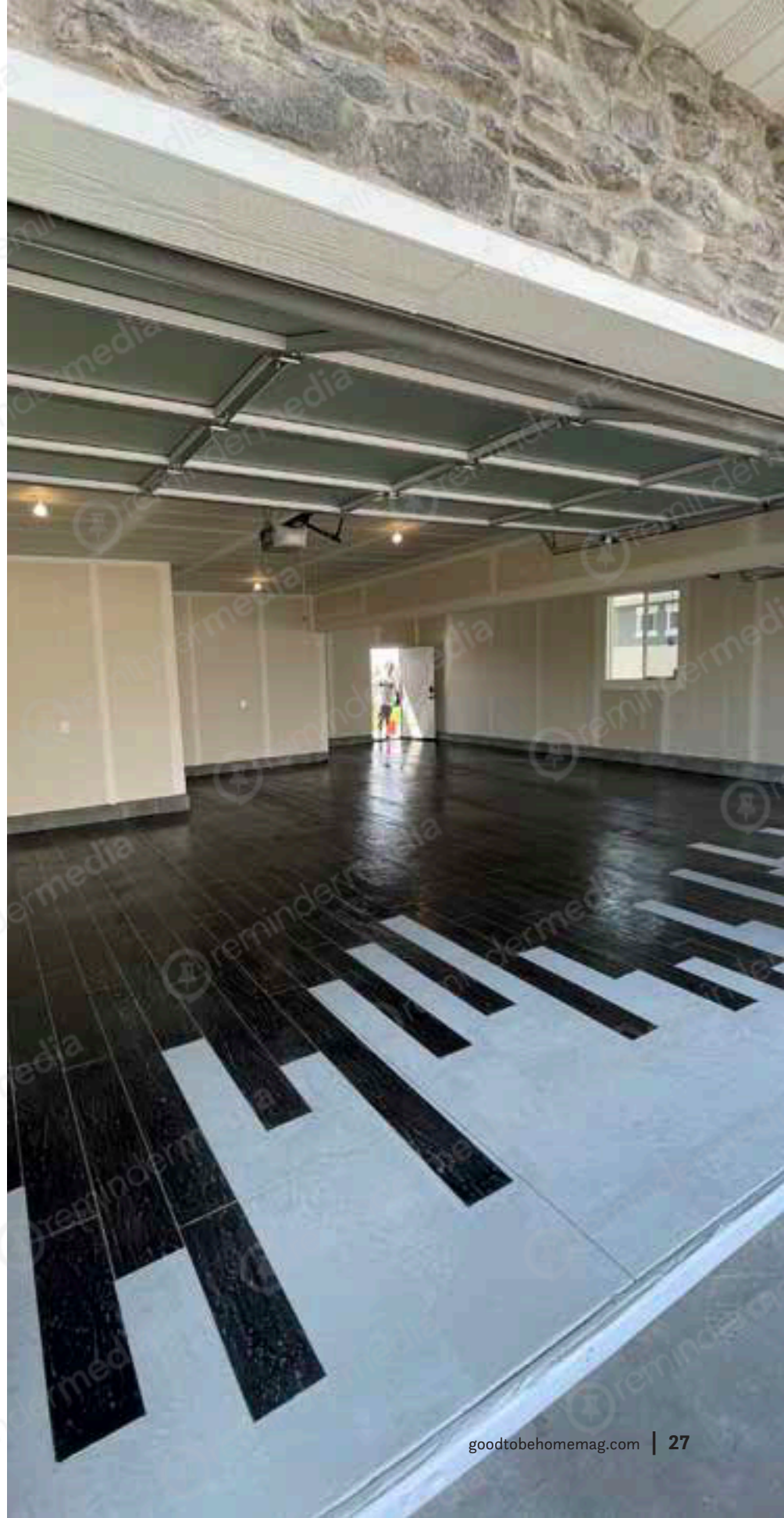
Is epoxy safe? What kind of special equipment or safety measures do you use during a project? This is one of the most common questions we get. Yes, it is safe, although I couldn't have always said that. Epoxy has been around for about eighty years, and in the beginning it probably wasn't far from what they tried to dip Roger Rabbit into. The resin industry is one industry that has benefited immensely from the green movement; every year, we are pushed to go greener and greener. That has motivated us to innovate products that are now very low- to zero-VOCs (the stuff that's bad for you to breathe in and be around), which means we went from products that could contribute to cancer back in the '40s to closer to what you might see your lunch meat packaged in. You'd be amazed at how many things in your life are resin-based.

You may also be surprised at how many standard countertops are even more unhealthy than epoxy. As a perspective, some granite, concrete, and marble countertops are cesspools for bacteria and can even hold some radioactive minerals in them. This is not something people pay much attention to. Some granite products should not be sold to anyone for any reason and are incredibly hazardous, yet we see no public pushback to get rid of these things because they have become commonplace. Once it's set up, epoxy has no residue or outgassing of anything hazardous over time and is completely sealed, meaning it's tough for bacteria to grow on its surface. This makes it one of the best options for countertops, and floors, for that matter.

Your company has YouTube videos with millions of views. Why do you think they're so popular? Our years of coating and design experience qualify us to teach the DIYer how to easily create designs on their own. As far as the number of views we get, we also think there's a therapeutic aspect to what we do: ASMR, if you will. There seems to be a sense of accomplishment for the person watching when a project happens before your eyes.

Would you tell us about your favorite project? I think one of my favorite projects was for a basketball half-court at our office. The basketball court was created using our hardwood overlay system, where we made what looked like curved wood planks and featured an old-school twenty-foot Seattle SuperSonics logo. We play on that basketball court every day as a company, and it has given me even more encouragement that we have the best products in the world.

For more info, visit leggari.com



HOLIDAY PREP

countdown

written by: LAUREN KIM

Are you having guests over for Thanksgiving or another holiday meal? This handy guide will help you get your home prepped and your turkey, sides, and desserts on the table with as little stress as possible.

FOUR WEEKS *ahead*

You'll find that hosting the holiday will be easier if you start planning at least a month before the big day. The more you can get done in advance, the less you'll need to do when the get-together is near. Start with these tasks:

- Draw up your guest list, and send out invites.
- Plan your menu, and write your shopping list.
- Research where to order your meal if you prefer a prepared holiday spread.
- Assemble your decor, cutlery, plates, and napkins.
- Make and freeze your cookie and pie dough.

THREE WEEKS *ahead*

If you are hosting a potluck for your holiday meal, reach out to your guests to determine who will be bringing the main dish, side dishes, and desserts. Give your home's kitchen, entertaining areas, and guest bedroom and bathroom a deep clean.



TWO WEEKS *ahead*

Shop for nonperishables and frozen foods, such as canned vegetables, jarred condiments, pasta, rice, frozen rolls, coffee, tea, and other beverages. Make room in your fridge and freezer for the main meal, and ensure that you have containers for leftovers.

ONE WEEK *ahead*

Buy your turkey if you'll be purchasing a frozen one, and defrost it in your refrigerator. A four-to-twelve-pound turkey will need one to three days to thaw out, and a twelve-to sixteen-pound turkey will require at least four days.

FIVE DAYS *before*

Defrost your pie and cookie dough in the fridge.

THREE DAYS *before*

Buy perishable foods, such as fresh vegetables and fruit, herbs, eggs, and milk. Make your cranberry sauce, and prepare homemade stock for sides like stuffing and gravy. Store them in the refrigerator until the day of the get-together.

TWO DAYS *before*

If you'll be preparing a fresh turkey, purchase it today. Prepare casserole dishes. Bake pies and cookies. Buy ice for beverages. Do a light cleaning of your house.

ONE DAY *before*

Chop fresh celery, onions, and other vegetables for your stuffing and side dishes, and store them in the refrigerator. Prepare appetizers like deviled eggs and cheese balls. Cube and toast bread for stuffing, and store at room temperature. Chill your drinks, set your dining table, and ensure your home is ready for entertaining.

DAY OF GET-TOGETHER

Roast your turkey—you'll need about one hour for every four pounds. Make your potatoes, gravy, and stuffing. Heat up your casserole dishes. Set out your meal, and enjoy!

baking down memory lane

recipes and photos by:
EMMA DUCKWORTH



Reprinted with permission from *Simply Sweet Nostalgic Bakes* by
Emma Duckworth, Page Street Publishing Co. 2021. Photo credit: Emma Duckworth

Baking is an integral part of the holiday season. From cookies and pies to crumbles and cakes, there's something oh so sweet about mixing together the perfect seasonal treats, watching them bake, and digging in. That's exactly the sentiment Emma Duckworth channels in her cookbook *Simply Sweet Nostalgic Bakes*.

chocolate peanut butter molten lava cakes / YIELDS 6 SERVINGS

Ingredients:

½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature, plus extra for buttering the molds	2 large eggs, room temperature	¼ teaspoon salt
	2 egg yolks, room temperature	½ cup smooth peanut butter
Cocoa powder, for dusting	¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar	Heavy cream, to serve
1 cup finely chopped 70% dark chocolate	½ cup sifted all-purpose flour	

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Generously butter six 6-ounce ceramic ramekins, and dust them with cocoa powder, knocking any excess out. Place the ramekins on a baking sheet and set aside until needed.
2. Melt the chocolate and butter in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water, ensuring the bottom of the bowl does not come into contact with the water. Stir until combined. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly. Alternatively, melt in a microwave in 15-second bursts.
3. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the eggs, the egg yolks and sugar on medium speed for 5 minutes, or until thickened and pale. Fold in the melted chocolate, flour and salt.
4. Spoon two-thirds of the mixture equally between the ramekins. Then divide the peanut butter into the center of each ramekin and spoon the remaining chocolate mixture on top. Bake for 12 to 13 minutes, or until just set on the outside but the centers still have a wobble. Remove from the oven and let the cakes stand in the ramekins for 1 minute. Gently run a knife around the edges of the cakes to loosen. Invert the ramekins onto a dessert plate, and let them sit for 10 seconds or so. Tap the top of the ramekin with a spoon to loosen the cake, gently remove the ramekin to reveal the cake underneath, dust with cocoa powder and then top with cream to serve. These can be stored in the refrigerator wrapped tightly in plastic wrap for up to 3 days, but they will lose that gooey consistency in the center.

Notes: Each oven is different, and whether you use metal dariole molds or ceramic ramekins will alter the cook time. Cook times can vary between 9 to 13 minutes. I suggest testing one lava cake to get the perfect timing that suits your oven.

Alternative fillings to peanut butter can be caramel sauce, chocolate hazelnut spread or jam.

espresso millionaire

shortbread bars

YIELDS 16 BARS

Ingredients:

For the Shortbread	1 teaspoon vanilla extract	½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar	For the Chocolate Layer
1¾ cups all-purpose flour	½ teaspoon salt		1¾ cups coarsely chopped 70% dark chocolate
¾ cup unsalted butter, room temperature		½ cup golden syrup	2 tablespoons unsalted butter
⅓ cup granulated sugar	For the Espresso Caramel	2 teaspoons espresso powder	⅓ cup chopped white chocolate, for feathering
1 large egg yolk	2 (14-ounce) cans condensed milk	½ teaspoon salt	
	1 cup unsalted butter		

Instructions:

1.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 x 9–inch baking pan and line with parchment paper. Allow the parchment paper to hang over the sides to make it easier to lift the shortbread out once cooked.
2.

To make the shortbread base, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, add the flour, butter, sugar, egg yolk, vanilla and salt and beat on medium speed until combined and a dough starts to form. Tip the dough into the prepared pan and using your hands, press the mixture into the pan until totally level. Using the base of a measuring cup or glass might help to level at the end. Prick the base all over with the tines of a fork. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden. Remove the pan from the oven and allow it to cool completely.
3.

To make the caramel layer, in a medium saucepan over low heat, add the condensed milk, butter, brown sugar, golden syrup, espresso powder and salt and heat until the sugar has dissolved and the butter has melted, about 5 minutes. Increase the heat, and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring continuously so that it doesn't catch. The caramel will thicken to a soft fudge consistency and turn golden brown. This can take about 5 minutes. Pour the caramel onto the cooled shortbread base, level with an offset spatula and leave to set for 1 hour in the fridge.
4.

To make the feathered chocolate layer, melt the dark chocolate and butter in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water, ensuring the bottom of the bowl does not come into contact with the water. Once melted and glossy, pour the chocolate mixture over the caramel. Melt the white chocolate in the microwave in 20-second increments, stirring well after each.
5.

Spoon melted white chocolate into a small piping bag and pipe horizontal straight lines about ¼ inch apart over the dark chocolate. Score the lines using a skewer by dragging it up and down the top of the chocolate, perpendicular to the lines that you piped. Chill in the fridge until completely set, at least 1 hour or overnight. Remove from the pan by using the parchment paper. Cut into slices or squares using a sharp, hot knife, wiping between each cut. These shortbread bars can be stored at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 1 week.
- Tip:

This makes an extra-thick layer of caramel. If you prefer a thinner layer, halve the caramel ingredients.





kids' fave neapolitan no-churn ice cream

YIELDS 6 SERVINGS

Ingredients:

1 cup diced fresh strawberries	2 teaspoons vanilla extract	Freeze-dried strawberries (optional)
3 tablespoons strawberry jam	¼ teaspoon salt	Meringue kisses, crushed (optional)
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder	2 cups heavy cream	Dark chocolate, grated (optional)
1 (14-ounce) can condensed milk	2–4 drops natural red food coloring (optional)	

Instructions:

1. Place three equal-sized bowls on your counter. In the first one, place your diced strawberries and jam and mash together. In the second bowl, add the cocoa powder. One bowl will be remaining empty for the moment.
2. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the condensed milk, vanilla and salt for 2 minutes until thickened. Divide the condensed milk mixture equally between the three bowls.
3. In the bowl of the electric stand mixer (no need to wash it), add the cream and beat on medium speed until firm peaks form. Divide the whipped cream between the three bowls, adding ⅓ cup less to the strawberry bowl than the other two, as the strawberries add bulk to the mixture. Gently fold the contents of each bowl separately so that you're left with a strawberry mixture, chocolate mixture and vanilla mixture. Add in a few drops of natural red food coloring to the strawberry mixture if you'd like a more vibrant pink color. The chocolate mixture is the thickest of the three due to the cocoa powder and will hold its shape well. Regarding the vanilla mixture, once combined, if it has lost its firm dollop consistency, add it back into the bowl of the stand mixer and beat again until firm peaks return.
4. In a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan (you can line it with parchment paper if you like), spoon the chocolate mixture first into one-third of the pan. Next, spoon the vanilla mixture into the middle of the pan, and lastly, spoon the strawberry mixture into the final third. Sprinkle with freeze-dried strawberries over the strawberry section, crushed meringue kisses over the vanilla section and grated chocolate over the chocolate section, if using. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for 4 to 6 hours or until solid. Remove 10 to 15 minutes before serving to soften slightly.

Tip: If your mixtures are too runny to be able to dollop next to each other in the loaf pan, cut rectangles of thin cardboard or cardstock, wrap them in plastic wrap and use them as dividers. Pour the mixtures into their slots, then slowly pull the dividers out prior to freezing. Alternatively, layer the three mixtures by spooning the chocolate into the bottom and leveling it out. Then spoon the vanilla on top and level out, followed by the strawberry layer.



CLEVER *seasonal* GADGETS

written by: MATTHEW BRADY

Over the past century, countless products have been created to make our lives easier and better. More than ever, this is also true for holiday-related gadgets. Here are just some examples of ones that can make your holidays run more smoothly.

TREE-SAFETY DEVICES

According to the National Fire Protection Association, Christmas trees are, on average, the source of around 160 fires and millions of dollars in damage each year in the United States. Most homeowners take necessary safety steps, such as keeping their trees away from heat sources and watering them regularly. Technology is here to help as well. Consider these tree-monitoring smart gadgets for added safety.

Tree alarm

The earlier smoke or fire can be detected from a tree, the better—every second counts. In addition to your home’s smoke detectors, a heat-sensing tree alarm can be lifesaving. Safer Alarms’s version, for example, looks like an ornament, so you hang it on your tree like any other decoration. However, it will send a signal to a remote alarm in an emergency, making it a stealth safety blanket for you and your family.

Automated tree-watering system

You never have to think twice about watering your real tree if you use one of these clever contraptions. Just set it, let it do its job of hydrating the tree when needed, and refill when necessary. Much like the tree alarm, many of these systems blend into your holiday decor because they look like gift bags or presents.

HOLIDAY-LIGHT CONVENIENCES

Holiday lights are amazing. But the task of reaching to unplug the tree or dashing outdoors at night to turn off the lights? Not so much. However, by utilizing one of these handy devices, you can make the task as simple as pushing a button.

Indoor outlet extension cord

If, like many people, the outlet for your tree is out of arm’s reach, plugging and unplugging the tree can be a struggle. By using a dedicated tree light extension cord with a foot switch, you can take care of this daily task with just one tap.

Waterproof outdoor/indoor remote control

With outdoor lights, you need to account for the elements as well—you don’t want water or ice soaking your outlet or plug prongs. Save yourself from that situation with a waterproof remote-control system. Simply connect your lights, plug the device into an electrical outlet, and enjoy turning your outside lights on and off from inside your home.

High-tech lights

Finally, consider your choice of lights. Nowadays, you don’t even need to move a muscle to turn them on and off with a smart string of lights that can be activated by your voice or with your smartphone. You’ll pay more, but it may be worth doing so to easily control the colors, brightness, music, and timing of your lights.

Give yourself the gift of convenience this year by stocking up on gadgets that will not only make the season merry and bright but also provide peace of mind to the season.





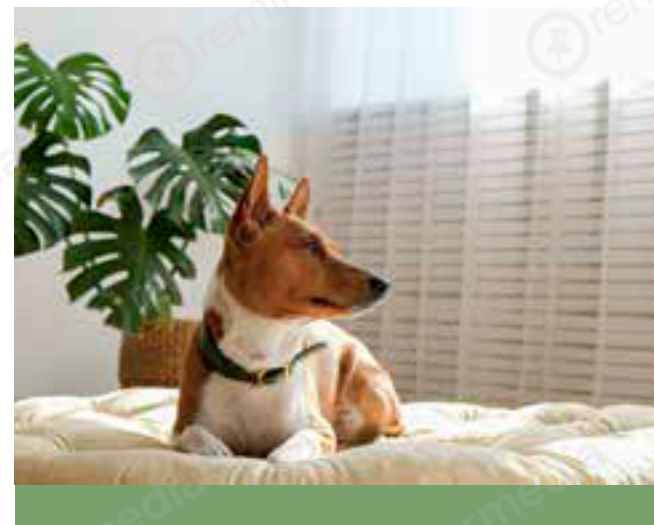
This holiday season, why not give gifts that keep giving? If you shop carefully, you can find home and personal-care products your recipients will love and whose purchase benefits a good cause. Peruse this list of thoughtful treasures that may be enjoyed all year and can make the world a better place.

written by: LAUREN KIM

gifts that HELP THE WORLD

A COUNTERTOP COMPOST BIN

Anyone who is eco-conscious or has a garden will appreciate a compost keeper for their kitchen countertop. Norpro's one-gallon bin includes an odor-preventing filter in the lid, a streamlined design, and a sturdy stainless-steel handle. The ceramic pot can be used to store vegetable and fruit peels, eggshells, coffee grounds, and other biodegradable materials. This container will keep your loved one's table scraps out of sight and odor free so they can add them to their garden or compost pile at their convenience.



A STYLISH DOG BED

A pet lover on your gift list will love a dog bed from the Foggy Dog. Made in the US, these comfy cushions come in a variety of sizes, have a durable, upholstery-grade cotton cover in patterns like Upcycled Denim Stripe and Buffalo Check Plaid, and look good just about anywhere. With your order, the Foggy Dog will donate a half pound of food to a rescue shelter.



A HANDCRAFTED ITEM

Skip your local chain store, and gift something handcrafted instead. You can make a craft from upcycled materials, or you can buy a product created by an independent artisan from Etsy. The website has a variety of earth-conscious items, such as woven wall art, colorful pottery, limited-issue prints, and handblown glass vases.

FRAGRANT SOAP

Gift a bar of nourishing natural soap from Hand in Hand Soap, and your purchase will provide a bar of soap and clean water to a child in need. Its soap is 100 percent vegan and 98 percent naturally derived. Its online shop offers beautiful bars of soap in a variety of scents, such as cactus blossom, lavender, and poppy, with healthy ingredients like sunflower seed oil, shea butter, and essential oils.



A LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEAD

Do you have a friend or loved one who adores long showers? You can gift a showerhead that is easy to install, can help conserve two gallons of water per minute, and makes showers feel more luxurious. One good choice is the Kohler Forte showerhead, which has massage sprays, comes in finishes like polished chrome and brushed nickel, and can be installed without any tools.



A COMFORTABLE BEANIE

Help preserve our marine ecosystems with the purchase of an eco-friendly and stylish beanie from the Marine Mammal Center. The center rescues seals and other threatened ocean wildlife and promotes scientific research and education. This smart-looking beanie is crafted from 100 percent merino wool and sports a laser-engraved cork tag made without inks or synthetics.

A NATIONAL PARKS POSTER

Outdoor enthusiasts will love the National Parks of the USA Checklist Poster. Its bold graphics are printed on premium, responsibly sourced paper and will look fabulous on your gift recipient’s wall. You can add colored pens or an eco-friendly rubber stamp with water-based ink so your recipient can mark the destinations they’ve visited. Sales of the poster help fund efforts to preserve public lands for future generations.



A REUSABLE CANVAS TOTE

Anyone who is concerned about the environment will appreciate a reusable canvas tote bag or two for grocery shopping. These sturdy totes can also be used for mini weekend trips or to help organize small items in a closet. Most options are machine washable and can be purchased online from websites like Amazon and Zazzle.



SOMETHING THRIFTED

Help the planet and your local community by purchasing something from a local thrift store. By gifting a secondhand item, you are repurposing something that might have otherwise gone to a landfill. Thrift shops are a perfect place to shop for those on your list who love everything vintage, such as books, clothing, jewelry, and decor.

A SUCCULENT GARDEN

Gift a friend or loved one a lush succulent garden from Lula's Garden online shop, and a person in need will receive six months of safe water. The succulents are grown in family-owned nurseries and are planted in eco-friendly planters. You can choose anything from a single succulent in a small container to a large garden bursting with several varied succulents.

A BUY ONE, DONATE ONE BLANKET

Wrap your loved one in a beautiful Sackcloth & Ashes blanket made from recycled materials, and an individual in emergency housing in your area will also receive a comfortable and warm blanket. Made in Italy from wool and cotton blends, in a process free from dyes, water, and chemicals, Sackcloth & Ashes's blankets come in a variety of styles, from minimalist designs perfect for modern decor to vibrantly hued blankets with unique patterns.





Time-saving Cleaning Tips

written by:
RACHEL STEVENS

Cleaning can be tedious, but it's necessary to help keep your home in good shape. The following steps can help you save time while still cleaning effectively, so you can spend less time scrubbing and more time enjoying your home.

Set a schedule

Cleaning your home without a game plan can lead to cleaning more than you really need to. Set a cleaning schedule so you know what tasks you need to do every day, every week, and every month.

An app like Sweeply can help you track tasks and mark the last time you did them—and it'll give you a gentle reminder when you need to clean a particular room. If you prefer to go a more traditional route, laminate a schedule, and use a dry-erase marker to check off your tasks as you complete them.

Get everyone involved

Once you have a schedule, make sure you include the rest of your household. Assign tasks based on day, area of your home, or level of difficulty. By letting others pitch in, you won't have too many time-consuming tasks to accomplish on your own.

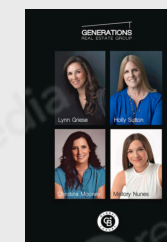
Upgrade your cleaning tools

Take inventory of your cleaning tools, and note anything that needs to be replaced or upgraded. Old vacuums, dusters, and other similar items can become worn down and less effective, which makes even the simplest of tasks require more time and effort. Research high-tech cleaning products, such as a robot vacuum, that can even do your cleaning for you.

*Sending many thanks,
for your continued business and support!*



Referrals to family and friends are always appreciated.



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Front of Tear Out Card 2



**baked peanut
butter and jam
OAT BARS**

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Back of Tear Out Card 2

MAKES 16 BARS

baked peanut butter and jam OAT BARS

ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. golden flax meal
- 3 tbsp. water
- 2 c. gluten-free rolled oats
(not quick cooking)
- 1 c. gluten-free all-purpose flour
- 1 c. coconut sugar
- ¼ c. tapioca flour
(can substitute arrowroot flour)
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1 c. natural crunchy or smooth
peanut butter
- ¾ c. nondairy milk
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract
- ¼ c. favorite jam

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instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line an 8 by 8-inch baking pan with parchment paper by cutting two strips both 8 inches wide and crossing them in the pan to create clean edges. Trim the excess overhang, if needed.
2. Combine the flax meal and water and set aside to thicken, 5 to 10 minutes.
3. In a large mixing bowl, combine the rolled oats, all-purpose flour, coconut sugar, tapioca flour, baking powder, and sea salt.
4. In a large liquid measuring cup or another mixing bowl, combine the peanut butter, nondairy milk, and vanilla with the thickened flax meal mixture until smooth. Add this to the mixing bowl of dry ingredients and fold together until fully combined.
5. Spread the mixture evenly into the baking pan all the way to the edges. Take a dough cutter or knife and lightly score or mark every 2 inches across in each direction, creating the indented lines for 16 square bars. Do not cut through the pan of oat bars at this stage.
6. Dollop about ½ teaspoon of jam on top of each square and gently press it with the back of the teaspoon into the top of each bar.
7. Bake for 25 minutes, until the edges are golden brown and the bars look soft and raised. Cool in the baking pan on a wire rack for 20 minutes before lifting out by the parchment paper edges and placing onto the wire rack. Slice bars where you made the scores.
8. Cool completely before storing leftovers in the fridge. You can warm slightly in the microwave for 30 seconds before eating. Consume within 7 days.

Lynn | Holly | Christina | Mallory

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