

Columbia LIVING

January/February 2022

Romantic Restaurants

A CRAFTSMAN & His 3-String Guitars

Jewelry
Report

At Home in
Elmwood Park

Artist Gina
Wolfe



Abacus planning group, Molly Thomas medicare prescription drug plans

Most Medicare recipients who have a prescription drug plan fail to understand the importance of an annual review. Knowing when to review, what you need to know to review, and how to review will help you to save time and money.

According to New Yorker Magazine, less than 23 percent of Medicare prescription drug plan enrollees take advantage of reviewing plan options each year. Joe Baker, past president of the Medicare Rights Center in New York, reminds us not to “stay in a plan because you’re overwhelmed with the choices.” If it is time for you to review, be sure to know the answers to the following questions:

When?

During the Medicare Open Enrollment period plan, participants have the ability to review their current prescription drug plans with all drug plans. Medicare Open Enrollment runs each year from October 15th to December 7th. During this period, prescription drug plan participants are given the opportunity to review options available for the coming year, with new plans to begin on January 1st.

What?

These standalone prescription drug plans [better known as Medicare Part D] are offered by private insurance companies to Medicare-eligible insureds. Each year these insurance providers and their plans enter and exit the marketplace. Also, insurance providers renegotiate their plans with pharmacy networks. Drug formularies (the lists of covered medicines), the prescription costs and your co-pays can change from year to year as well.

How?

The Medicare website www.medicare.gov offers Medicare insured individuals the ability to review prescription drug plans on their website. On the Medicare website you will be required to input your current prescriptions, the current dosage for each prescription, your pharmacy and your home zip code. The website will show you the best prescription drug plan options for you. From these options you can choose to enroll into the plan that covers your prescriptions, has your desired deductible, co-pays and premium. Premiums can be paid by a monthly coupon book, automatically drafted from a bank account or deducted from your Social Security check if you are receiving benefits. It is important to note that there are knowledgeable independent health insurance agents in your area who can assist with this annual review.



image | Roger Ball Photography

Molly A. Thomas FPQP™ | Columbia, SC

How much?

Prescription drug plan premiums vary by plan. When shopping for a new plan, look at more than the premium alone. Consider that the best and least expensive plan for you is one that has your prescriptions in their formularies in addition to the lowest co-pays and deductible. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services the average monthly premium for such plans is estimated at \$32 a month for 2022. Higher income earners pay more for prescription drug plans. For example, a single person with an income greater than \$88,000 [and married couples with an income greater than \$176,000] will pay higher monthly premiums. These factors change each year depending on plan choice, reported adjusted gross income and filing status. If you have limited income and resources, you may qualify for Extra Help to pay for some of your Part D costs.

With the ever-increasing costs of prescription drugs for some millions of older Americans, an annual review of your Medicare Prescription Drug Plans is a smart financial decision—one that will give both you and your family peace of mind in this costly and complicated health insurance arena.

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Romantic Restaurants

Whether it's your first time celebrating Valentine's Day with your significant other or your fiftieth, nothing says I love you more than booking a table for two at one of Columbia's best restaurants.

By Camdyn Bruce

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They love older homes, but like their creature comforts and updated style. This couple got all that and so much more.

By Katherine Pettit



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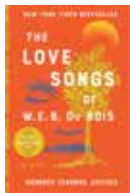
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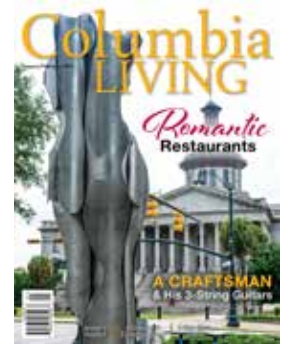
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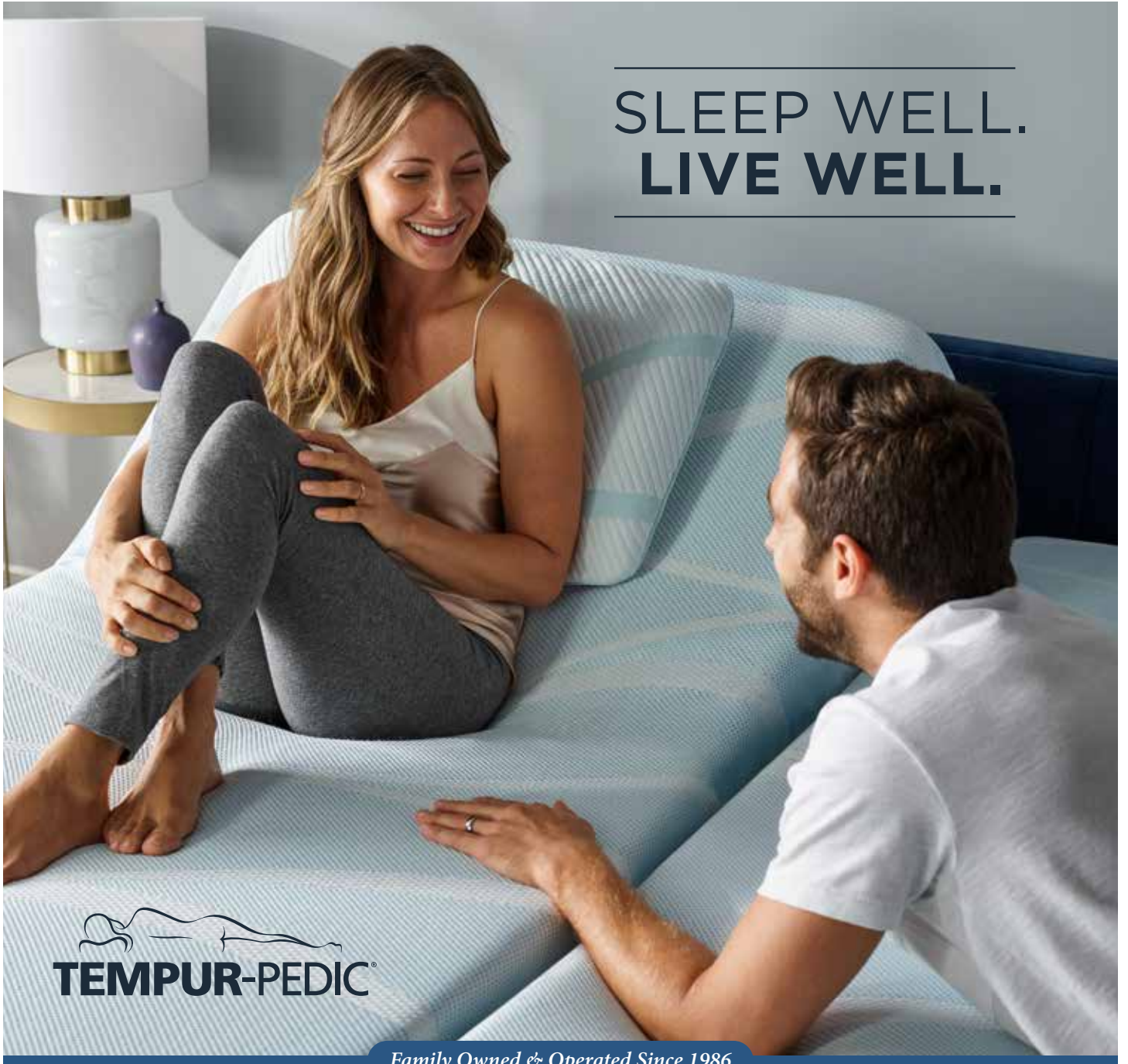
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City of Women by Deedee Morrison
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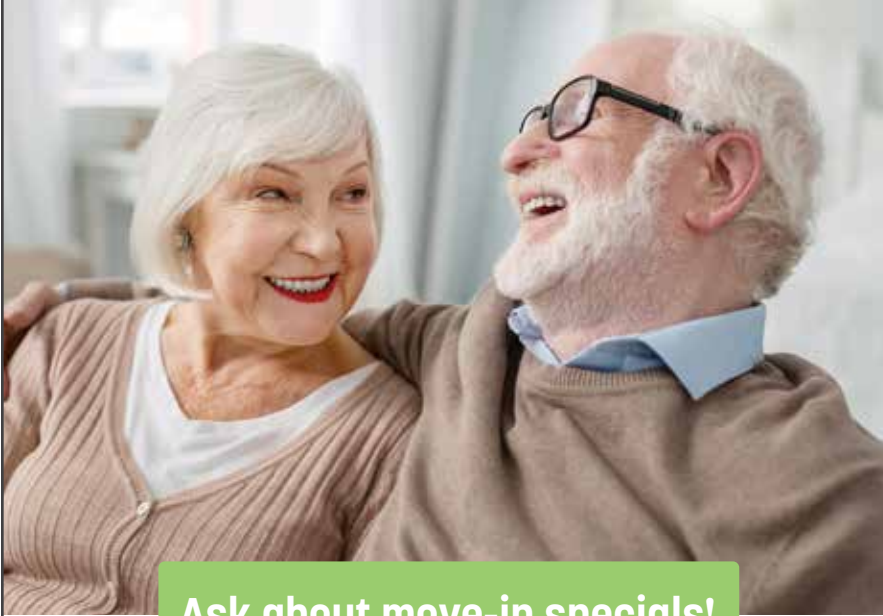
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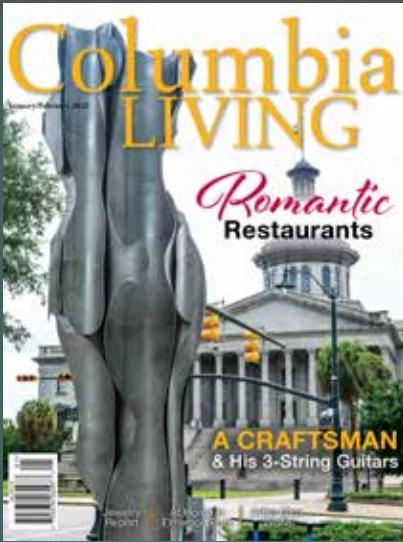
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editor's letter

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the January|February 2022 issue of Columbia Living Magazine.

I tend to think of this one as “The New Year Issue” and have historically found myself contemplating resolutions, change, and progress when developing the tone of this letter. Instead (and much to my surprise), this time around, I was enticed by the spirit of Valentine’s Day. Ah, love.

Specifically, I fell headfirst down a rabbit hole of the history of Valentine’s Day – a search inspired by the work I did on The Jewelry Report (see page 26). Care to join me in my spiral?

First, the legends of how Valentine’s Day came to be are many. But perhaps one of the most alluring is that of Roman Emperor Claudius Gothicus, also known as Claudius the Cruel, versus the simple Christian priest, Valentine.

Army enlistment was down in Rome, and Claudius suspected that men were wary of going off to war and leaving their wives and families behind. His solution was to ban engagement and marriages. No one dared resist the tyrant, except for one – the brave Valentine. Valentine began conducting secret weddings for Roman soldiers and did so until he was found out and jailed around the year 269. While awaiting his execution, he fell in love with the jailer’s blind daughter, cured her blindness, and wrote her a love letter signed “Your Valentine,” cementing his legacy as the Patron Saint of Love.

This issue blazes a local trail on how to best celebrate the love in your life. Our dining guide beginning on page 32, profiles some of the most romantic spots in Columbia – old and new favorites make the list. Or maybe you stay home this Valentine’s Day and cook a romantic dinner at home with the recipes from this issue’s French-themed In the Kitchen.

Whether you’re single or coupled, celebrate Valentine’s Day or not, I hope your new year is filled with love in all its forms.

Enjoy the issue!

Katie Gantt

Managing Editor
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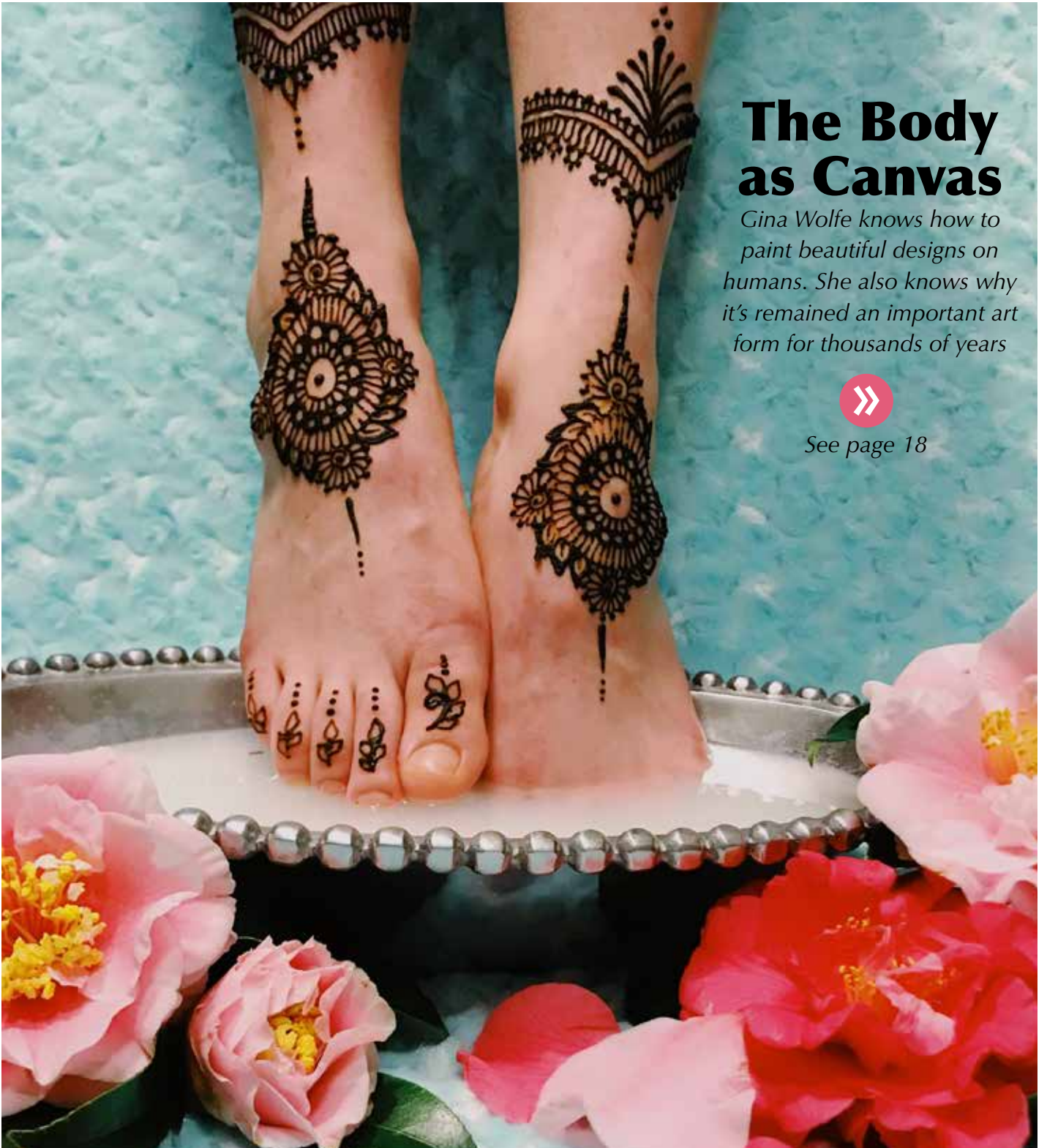
YOUR LOCAL RUNDOWN ON NEWS AND CULTURE

The Body as Canvas

Gina Wolfe knows how to paint beautiful designs on humans. She also knows why it's remained an important art form for thousands of years



See page 18



Reviews: Movies & Music

DENISE K. JAMES ON NEW FILMS AND MUSIC



The Shrink Next Door

4 Stars

Apple TV | Starring Paul Rudd and Will Farrell

Before I sat down to watch “The Shrink Next Door,” I saw that People Magazine voted Paul Rudd the Sexist Man Alive for 2021. Not that I was disagreeing with the sentiment – Paul Rudd was attractive back in 1995 when my age group discovered him in the movie “Clueless” — but since I was unaware he’d recently returned to the limelight, it seemed a rather odd pick. Then I started Apple TV’s newest show, starring none other than Rudd and an indistinguishable (at first) Will Farrell. I can’t say enough about these two actors and how they completely ace their roles – but there’s a lot more to say about the show than that.

Let me preface by saying that if you’ve ever been in therapy, this series might scare you. Or, heck, even if you haven’t been in therapy, but you’ve felt manipulated by someone you trusted. Because, ladies and gentlemen, this show is about how the more you trust and love someone, the more they can manipulate you — especially if you’re not a person of great inner strength, like our poor friend Marty, played with startling honesty by Farrell. Nearing 40 in the early 1980s with recently deceased parents, a new business to run, a recent breakup (by a woman who, surprise, took advantage of his nature) and a slew of other midlife questions that had me shouting “BEEN THERE” at the television screen, Marty turns to therapy, as many of us do — namely, a therapist recommended by his sister. Dr. Ike Herschkopf seems like a dream come true at first: he’s witty, laid-back, fun and understands what Marty is going through, or appears to. But as the plot thickens, it also darkens.

Y’all, I cannot recall a show that has made me feel such a strong rainbow of emotions. I’m not certain if it’s the superb acting, the fact that I relate, or some combination of both, but I’ve laughed, cried, shouted and cheered during these first six episodes more than I expected to. As Marty sinks deeper into what is best described as mind control, we find ourselves frantic, hoping he’ll somehow claw himself out. There are moments he almost does! But Dr. Ike has his bag of tricks, and for the audience, it’s infuriating to watch Marty fall for them like a 5-year-old watching a magic show — to the point where his original support system, even his sister, has disappeared, and his entire life revolves around one person.

Based on a true and frightening story, “The Shrink Next Door” might make you suspicious of other people. Not only is the show that well-crafted, the fact that something this sinister actually happened is, well, unsettling. But friends, don’t let it harden your heart! Instead, let this show help you sharpen your intuition. After all, you’re the one with all the answers for yourself. Everyone else, even your therapist, is just waiting for you to say them out loud. 🌀

The Lumineers

BRIGHTSIDE

Dualtone/Decca Records

South Carolinians love the folk movement, and The Lumineers are no exception. So whether you’re driving home from work or cleaning the house, turn on this new album, “BRIGHTSIDE,” and feel the lyrical emotions wash over you like saltwater. Check out “A.M.” or “Big Shot” for moody perfection, or title track “BRIGHTSIDE” for a more rockin’ track that feels like being home in the Met.



Alicia Keys

KEYS

RCA

I’ve always loved Alicia Keys for her throwback vibes, and this new album, “KEYS” reiterates my feelings. Whether we’re listening to “Best of Me,” reveling in beat-soaked soul while we dress for an evening on Main Street, or “LALA,” another tune perfect for nights with that special someone, you’re not going to be disappointed by Mrs. Keys’ latest efforts. And if you miss the R&B of yesteryear, this album is your jam.



The Shrink Next Door/Apple +; The Lumineers/Lumineers; Alicia Keys/Alicia Keys Instagram



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Winter Reads

Curl up with these books suggestions from the Richland Library

“The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois”

by Honoree Fanonne Jeffers

Don't be daunted by the size of this tome! Clocking in at over 800 pages, every page of this beautifully written, ambitious multi-generational saga will keep you captivated. The story follows Ailey, the youngest family member from her childhood through adulthood. It alternates with her family's story, starting with her Native American ancestors in Georgia through the present day. Ailey grows up in the city but spends her summers with her mother's family in a small Georgia town and struggles to find her own identity while reconciling the two present worlds she experiences personally and the past experiences of her family. *Love Songs* is filled with trauma and triumph, family quarrels and family love, strong women, and compelling storylines.

—Megan Mathis, Research and Readers' Advisory, Richland Library Main

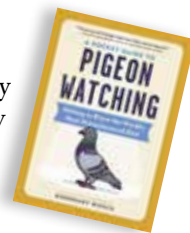


“A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching”

By Rosemary Mosco

Ever look at a flock of city pigeons and wonder why sometimes there's a brown one? Part history and part field guide, this book will help you look beyond the pigeon's “rats with wings” reputations and see a noble bird, valued for centuries for its wayfinding abilities (and sometimes for its edibility!) Learn about the pigeon's common feather patterns, social structures, and habitat through charming illustrations, and remember that even the most urbanized concrete canyon is a part of the natural world.

—Sara McBride, Research and Readers' Advisory, Richland Library Main



“The Teller of Secrets”

by Bisi Adjapon

Due to publish November 16, 2021

This dazzling debut from Nigerian author Bisi Adjapon explores gender inequality and self-discovery through the eyes of Esi, a girl growing up in 1970s Ghana. Smart and feisty, Esi observes the impossible expectations placed upon women in her society as she grows up in a house full of sisters and aunties ruled by an iron-fisted patriarch. She notes the various indignities with a razor-sharp wit, bringing a solid dose of humor to the story, while the visceral descriptions of Ghanaian life woven into the clean, clear writing bring it to life. As Esi learns to walk the tightrope of balancing her desires with the weight of cultural expectations, she grows into a self-possessed young woman that readers will be sad to bid farewell.

—Sarah Cameron Research & Readers' Advisory, Richland Library Main



“The Maltese Falcon”

by Dashiell Hammett

The Maltese Falcon, first published in 1929, holds up well for a novel published over 90 years ago. The book is definitely a product of its time, with stereotypical female and gay characters, but it is an iconic example of the hard-boiled crime novel and is a fun and engaging read. If you're only familiar with the 1941 film noir starring Humphrey Bogart give the story a read (Spade is taller and blonder in the book), and if you haven't read the book or watched the film, this is your chance!

—Chantal Wilson, Research & Readers' Advisory, Richland Library Main



“Late Bloomers: The Power of Patience in a World Obsessed with Early Achievement”

By Rich Karlgaard,

According to Rich Karlgaard, American culture's obsession with high achievement in youth, embodied in figures such as Mark Zuckerberg, makes little allowance for the promise and potential of late bloomers.

Karlgaard, himself a late bloomer, struggled to find his path in his twenties but became a successful author and the publisher of *Forbes* magazine. He cites many cases of remarkable people, among them Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling and investment guru Ken Fisher, who found their true calling only after going through a period of aimlessness and false starts in young adulthood.

—Bland Lawson, Business & Careers Librarian, Richland Library Main



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The Science of Henna

The art form is mixed and varied, with artists from Hindi, Jewish, Romani, Christian, and Muslim areas, plus many who no longer exist adding to the mix

By KATHERINE PETTIT

Think of it as painting on a person. Henna is derived from the plant *Lawsonia inermis* and, in its purest form, turns a rich mahogany color on skin, hair, and nails. It is not a tattoo because it doesn't break the skin and isn't permanent, but if you're careful, you can enjoy its lush presence on your body for about two weeks.

For Gina Wolfe, it's been dancing around her consciousness since she was a small child. "I used to draw on my hand all the time," she said. "My mother would ask me why I wasn't using the paper she gave me, but I was more fascinated by creating art on my body."

Gina grew up in Chapin.



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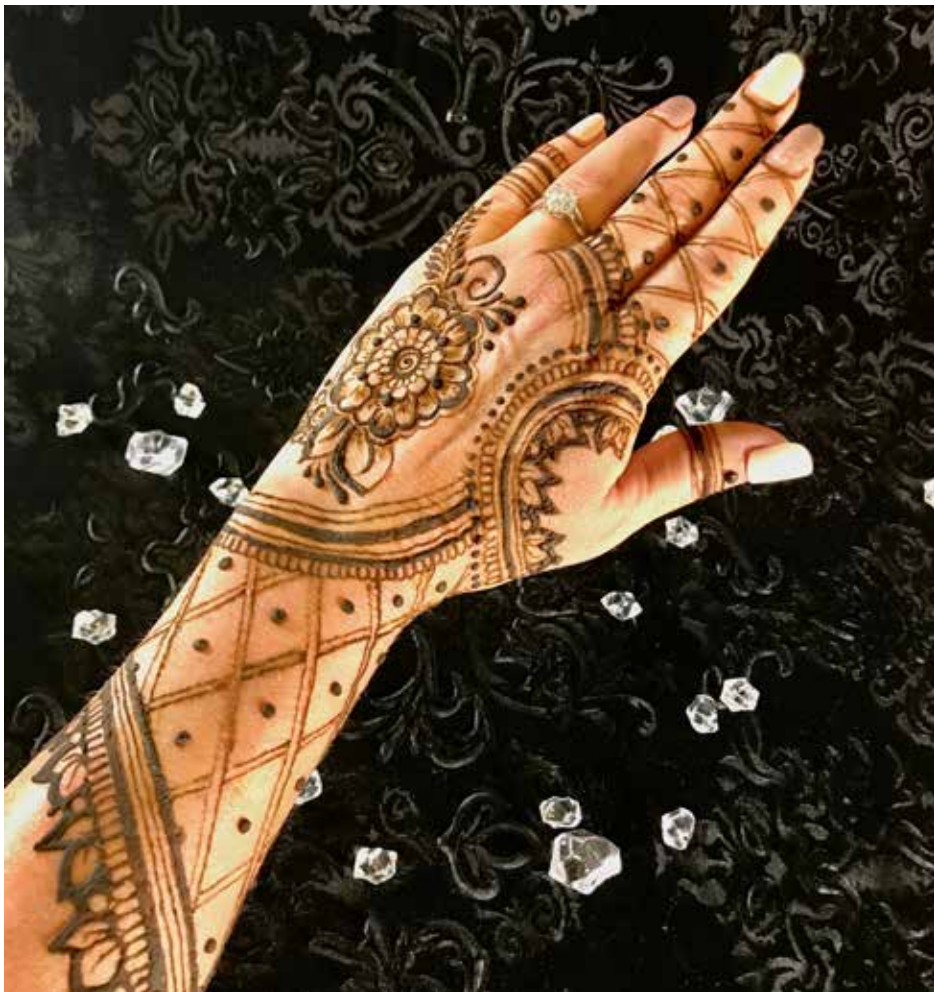


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She continued her interest in art, but it wasn't until she began to take her son to festivals, and he fell in love with the henna artists who would decorate his hands or feet and sometimes his back that she began to discover everything she could do about the art.

"My son had ADHD, and he found the touch on his skin to be very soothing," Gina explained. "He really loved having designs drawn on his back, sitting still and relaxing into the moment. Eventually, an artist friend suggested that I should learn to do this myself so that I could apply henna at home."

In retrospect, she realized it was (and is) a form of touch therapy that leaves an imprint to enjoy for a brief time. "I began to attend conferences and research all I could about its history, purposes, and designs," she said.

Everything she learned simply enticed her to study more. She was an avid student, with mentors in Toronto and Washington, D.C. Her son's friends

would ask for designs, and then their parents, and soon she had a business which she called ZIBĀ, a Persian word which means the beautiful inner light of the soul or radiance of life, according to Gina. A quick search reveals that Zibā is found in the bible as the name of a servant in the book of Samuel. It also has other meanings and is used as a girl's name, but here, just think beauty, and you'll get the inspiration.

Spend time with Gina, and you'll also catch her enthusiasm for the art. She teaches classes on the history of henna, henna mixology, and design, and she is as passionate about what it is not as what it is. "Learning the history is fun, such as the fact that it's historically a woman's art, a form of connection to other women when we share the act of giving and receiving henna," she shares. "It's been happening since before written history, which I find amazing."

Don't even think of asking her to apply a black dye on your skin. "I use 100% natural organic henna," she said. "The black ink isn't the same thing. If it stains black, it is a chemical compound that's toxic and very harmful to the skin and body. It's actually illegal in the United States but can still be found on some shelves."

There is a dark blue color from the jagua plant that is natural and acceptable. Gina suggests asking henna artists if they mix the paste themselves. She uses only five ingredients in her henna paste: organic henna powder, hand-squeezed lemon juice, pure cane sugar, therapeutic grade



Designs can be as diverse as the people who wear them but generally can be classified into eight major divisions: Moroccan/African, Indian, Arabic, Indo-Arab, Pakistani, Western Contemporary, Khaleeji (Persian-Gulf), and Indo-Western Fusion. The most ancient origins are found in Africa. Scientists believe it originated in Africa and then spread from there into modern-day Bulgaria, across to Malaysia, and down into Australia. The art form is mixed and varied, with artists from Hindi, Jewish, Romani, Christian, and Muslim areas, plus many who no longer exist adding to the mix. "It is truly a multi-cultural art," she says.

Zibahenna.com

essential oils, and water.

The oils chosen depend on the purpose of the design. Essential oils may include cardamom, Frankincense, jasmine, or lavender, among others. The mood is tranquil or celebratory, or often a bit of both.

The ZIBĀ website offers ideas for when and how to indulge, and Gina is emphatic that anyone can wear a henna design. Brides and their attendants often enjoy a get-together with celebratory henna designs traditionally used for wedding adornment. Soon-to-be new mothers can have beautiful belly art (often using lavender as the essential oil) to help prepare for the new arrival. Individuals choose designs for special occasions, including simply wanting to do something fun, beautiful, and meaningful for themselves


or to surprise a loved one. Her studio can be a sacred space and a joyful one.

And although men have used henna for thousands of years to decorate their bodies or dye their beards, today's male customer often comes in and requests a design to help them decide if they really want to have a permanent tattoo.

From a scientific perspective, medical research is discovering more possibilities for henna, researching applications for cancer, diabetes, intestinal problems, and bacterial infections, among others.

For Gina, the process is artful and mindful and incredibly satisfying as she draws swirls, paisley, symbols, and flowers. Her personal favorite designs come from the Khaleeji (Persian-Gulf) tradition.

"I like the incorporation of negative space, in which the spaces between the designs become part of the design."

In fact, she is enthusiastic about every aspect and element that helps to create the finished product. It's a labor of love that brings joy to all who experience it. 

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A Millwood Avenue mural created Cedric Umoja, Karl Zurfluh, and Brandon Donahue

A Creative Force

Lee Snelgrove, executive director of One Columbia, has been at the forefront of the effort to increase the visibility of Columbia’s creative talent since 2012. Now, One Columbia will be able to expand its contributions by its designation as local arts agency by Columbia City Council

By WARREN M. HUGHES

Photo: ONE COLUMBIA

Crossing Columbia these days, whether walking down Main Street, traveling by bus, or driving along an avenue, people are wonderfully struck by vibrant murals, sidewalk art, and bus poetry, all works of dynamic local artists, yet thanks largely to the leadership of one individual --- Lee Snelgrove, local mover and shaker in the capital city’s art scene.

Snelgrove, executive director of One Columbia, is a creative force of his own, now achieving new momentum through the backing of Columbia City Council, ensuring even more energy and synergy with the organization’s designation as “local arts agency.”

Nationally, there are 4,500 local arts agencies that promote, support, and develop the arts at the local level, ensuring a vital presence for such programs in communities and making them more widely



Comet Art Bus by Laurie McIntosh



Lee Snelgrove

»**BIRTHPLACE:** Spartanburg, S.C.

»**FAMILY:** Wife, Doreen Tuohy; Son Fred; Parents Robin and Mike Snelgrove; brother Sam Snelgrove.

»**EDUCATION:** University of South Carolina Honors College, B.A., Philosophy, Minor Russian Languages and Literature, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland

»**CURRENT POSITION:** Executive Director, One Columbia for Arts and Culture

»**RECOGNITION:** Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, Free Times Power List 2016-2021, Columbia Business Monthly Most Influential List 2018, Experience Columbia SC Ambassador 2021

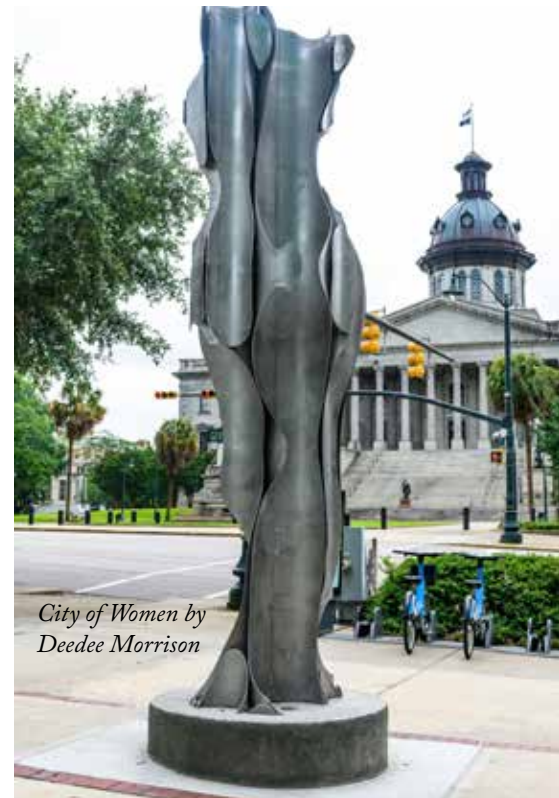
»**FAVORITE QUOTE:** "My life amounts to no more than one drop in a limitless ocean. Yet what is any ocean, but a multitude of drops?"

- David Mitchell, Cloud Atlas

southern drawl



Columbia's poet laureate, Ed Madden, installing rain poetry



City of Women by Deedee Morrison

available to all residents.

One Columbia for Arts and Culture has been at the forefront of the effort to increase the visibility of Columbia's creative talent. Of Snelgrove's contributions, Columbia City Council Member Howard E. Duvall, Jr., says, "He has done a wonderful job with One Columbia coordinating many of the public art projects around the city. I sometimes think One Columbia should be called One Snelgrove. Lee has had very little staff to help with building the arts and culture in the Midlands."

Now, One Columbia will be able to expand its contributions by its designation as "local arts agency" by Columbia City Council. In doing so, Duvall says City Council is following up on a recommendation from a comprehensive city-wide arts plan called Amplify, launched in 2018 with wide civic and corporate support. "We will follow up this first step with a resolution," he explained. "In addition, the city will look for increased funding for One Columbia to allow for the staffing required by the new responsibilities." The designation will allow One Columbia to seek additional funding from public and private sources like the National Endowment for the Arts. These funds will be granted to local organizations.

In the study's report, Mayor Steve

Benjamin noted, "The arts play a huge role in attracting visitors to our city and are also essential to the health and well-being of our citizens. Our incredible museums, historic sites, theatres, libraries, dance, and music organizations help make Columbia one of the best places to live. Arts and culture are a vital part of the economic growth, vibrancy, and livability of Columbia."

Since 2012, One Columbia, under Snelgrove's leadership, has been a dynamic force in making the work of local artists more visible and accessible. As a result, Columbia residents and visitors have enjoyed more outdoor festivals and events and have seen a dramatic rise in new public art projects. They have also benefited from innovative collaborations between the public and private sectors to bring more art to more people.

A congenial and persuasive dynamo, Snelgrove brought a sense of civic responsibility when deciding to make the capital city his home. The son of a civil engineer, Snelgrove initially considered a technical career at an out-of-state institution, but he chafed at the limitations of the prescribed curriculum there and instead chose UofSC's prestigious Honors College, allowing allow him to chart a different course. Becoming a permanent resident, he made a personal commitment

to do his part on behalf of the community. That he has done as a one-man show in his own right as a city advocate. As part of his DNA, Snelgrove brings both left-brain and right-brain aptitudes to any task with an analytical and methodical approach to promotion and a creative appreciation for artistic expression.

"It has been a privilege to work with so many artists and arts administrators to increase the prominence of this city's cultural community," Snelgrove said. "Columbia has a wealth of talent. I'm so happy to have been a part of recognizing and celebrating the people that make this city great."

USC English Professor and Columbia's Poet Laureate Ed Madden says Snelgrove is not only a leader with vision, he is also someone who does the work, gets his hands dirty with chalk and paint, delivers the sound equipment, and sets up the tables. "He is an incredible collaborator and believes deeply that everyone should have access to the arts," he said.

Through One Columbia, sponsored visible art was a huge mood booster during the pandemic. Now that COVID-19 is being contained, Snelgrove is looking forward to renewed vigor across the arts spectrum from events to exhibits through the city's designation of the organization as local arts agency. 🍷

Well Styled

jewelry | guitars

Handmade

As technically correct as his instruments are, Kirk Fry has never considered himself to be a luthier, the proper name for a maker of guitars



See page 28



CELEBRATE *Love*

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(Opposite) Lagos 18K yellow gold and black ceramic Caviar link bracelet, \$1,750; Mikimoto 18K white gold Akoya cultured pearl and diamond ring, \$2,200; Roberto Coin 18K yellow gold Diamonds-by-the Inch necklace, from \$1,340. (This Page) Hearts On Fire 18K white gold Fulfillment diamond earrings, \$5,490; Roberto Coin 18K rose gold Palazzo Ducale black & white diamond pendant, \$1,590; Lagos Sterling silver Caviar Spark diamond circle necklace, \$650. All at Sylvan's Jewelers.



A Craftsman & His 3-String Guitars

One-of-a-kind instruments that integrate painting, woodworking and an artist's refined eye for detail

By RAY OWEN » Photos by BRANDON WILLIAMS

Kirk Fry came to guitar making through the backdoor, being a lifelong artist, turned craftsman. After a friend asked him to take his woodworking class to fill up the seats, Fry discovered a passion for woodworking that has carried him forward.

His creations may seem a strange thing: a 3-string guitar, an instrument of 19th century Cuban origin first used by Afro-Cuban musicians. But like all guitars, each string can sound all 12 notes in a musical octave.

What's different about Fry's instruments are their remarkable designs, incorporating household objects such as yardsticks and mouse traps, with semi-exotic and locally harvested woods, with themed pieces like his "Frankenstrat" guitar, crafted as a tribute to guitarist Eddie Van Halen.

According to Fry: "I probably made three guitars and was going to take a big break, then Van Halen died. I remembered a



guitar he created and named for the Frankenstein character. He cobbled this thing together, painting it by masking with electrical tape. It had so many interesting features, it was just too hard to resist, so I did a little acoustic-electric version.”

Other guitars have come about by reimagining ordinary objects. “The first one I made was out of a yardstick I’ve had for 20 years,” he recalls. “I build it into the body of this guitar and that was the first conceptual one I made, so that was fun. Some are just ‘mountaineer’ or folksy. I’ve also made a snake-theme and a skull-theme guitar.”

“I was looking for something in a drawer and there was a mousetrap,” he continues. “I decided to make a guitar that had mousetraps with a Swiss cheese sound hole. The sound hole is a very important graphic feature – it’s like the heart of these guitars. The volume knob and tone knobs are mice that are carved out of walnuts – that’s how a lot of the ideas for these things come together.”

Ever mindful of good craftsmanship, Fry gets satisfaction out of putting something together that works, so that when you stand back and look at it, the design is balanced with the quality high enough to where it’s visually appealing and feels right.

“I like to refine things,” he acknowledges. “There’s probably way more time in these guitars than I’d like to admit. If you turn them over on the back and the sides, there’s fine woodworking. They’ve got a nice, comfortable carved neck, which is a little step up from what’s typical. And like with anything I make, there’s a lot of research involved.”

His instruments have acoustic pickups, devices that convert string vibrations into electrical signals for use with an amplifier. “You can hear them without an amp,” he explains. “Some are louder than

WELL STYLED guitars



others, of course the smaller bodies don't have as much volume."

As technically correct as his instruments are, Fry has never considered himself to be a luthier, the proper name for a maker of guitars. "I'm more of a woodworker and I learn as I go," he admits. "I usually have an idea then go on YouTube to figure out the technique."

A graphic designer originally from Wheeling, West Virginia, Fry moved to Winston-Salem in 1989. "I started drawing when I was three years old," he says. "I went to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh back in the 1970s. My first job was art director at TV station, and I moved on to agency work from there."

Always a lover of music, Fry played violin in school, then in his late 30s, he picked up a mandolin and started playing. But he came to the realization that he

wasn't cut out to be a musician – he was just more dedicated to visual arts.

"My creative value was coming up with ideas at the start of projects," he says. "I now run a graphic design company called the Mill Creative Manufacturing. I'm kind of a one-man show with my wife helping me with the business and account services side."

"I have the drive for making things with my hands. If I don't have a project in the shop, I lay in bed thinking about what I'm going to do next. With guitars, I'm able to combine so many things I've done over the years, integrating painting and carving in the construction. That's how I ended up getting hooked on making them."

Fry's been in a couple of shows in Winston-Salem, exhibiting at Sawtooth Center for Visual Art last summer, and at




the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in a sideshow of work inspired by Freeman Vines, a North Carolina-based artist, guitar maker, and one-time blues musician who makes sculpture out of old wood.

This craftsman has certainly found a niche, and no one's doing exactly what he's doing which really makes his work stand out. "I try to come up with something new and then there's the overall aesthetic of it," he says. "Once I get there, you can't help but have something that's different from what other people have done."

"I'm just looking for people to play them. I've had a few musicians pick them up and play them pretty easily. They're tuned in the G chord, which is pretty common. At first, they wonder what it is and are kind of surprised by the instrument. In any case, they seem to have fun."

His next piece is going to be a four-string tenor guitar, tuned like a mandolin, the theme based on Winston-Salem. "I'm still trying to work out the details," he says. "The metal work around the sound hole will have 'WS,' centered almost like a basket weave. It's just a graphic that I've had for a while."

"So far, that's really the only Winston-Salem part of it, but that could change. Right now, the design is kind of old-timey looking and it's going to be mahogany and white oak, which will be a nice contrast for the woods. I may age this one."

"My pieces might be around for a long, long time," he reflects. "That's the thing about creating something built to last. Years from now, people will still talk about them and maybe I'll be remembered for some of the objects I've made." 



Romantic Restaurants

Our Valentine's Day Dining Guide

February 14th is quickly approaching, and if this date doesn't strike you as significant, then you're probably either single or about to be. That's right, people, Valentine's Day is right around the corner, love is in the air, and it's time to show that special someone how much you care about them. Whether it's your first-time celebrating Valentine's Day with your significant other or your fiftieth, nothing says I love you more than booking a table for two at a nice restaurant. If you're looking for a spot this year that's really going to woo that special someone, here is a list of some of the most romantic restaurants in Columbia that will make it a night to remember.



Photo: DIVINO ROSSO

By CAMDYN BRUCE

Halls Chophouse

1221 Main St | 803-563-5066 |
hallschophouse.com

Nothing quite says I love you like a perfectly cooked steak dinner, and with fresh cuts cooked at 1600 degrees, every bite is flavorful and succulent at Halls Chophouse. Halls will be serving their regular menu with staples like their petite filet mignon and their dry-aged ribeye this Valentine's Day, and manager Ryan Jones said he wouldn't be surprised if they added some special items to celebrate the occasion. "We typically have live lobster in house on that weekend, a catch of the day or some sort of seafood option, and then I wouldn't be surprised if we play around with a little Wagyu and some of the bigger cuts of steak," said Jones. This Valentine's Day, Halls will be open for dining from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and reservations are highly recommended. With valet parking, live music, and great ambiance and service, Halls offers a classy experience you don't want to miss out on. However, if you're pressed for time or can't dine in for whatever reason, Halls is also offering carry out this Valentine's Day.

Tazza Kitchen

4840 Forest Dr | 803-782-0760 |
tazzakitchen.com

A mix of Naples, Italy, and Tijuana, Mexico, this unique New American fusion restaurant will be open from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. this Valentine's Day. While known for its brick oven crab cakes, Tazza's menu offers a little something for everybody with several types of tacos, brick oven pizzas, salads, steaks, sandwiches, and desserts. Not to mention that Tazza also offers a unique cocktail menu with drinks like the Katy Perry, given its name for the use of pear brandy. Lastly, with a patio area that has a fireplace, outdoor dining can be a cozy experience if the weather permits. Fancy wining and dining isn't the way to everyone's heart, and if you're looking for something a bit more comfortable and casual this year, Tazza Kitchen is the place for you.



Located in the showroom of an old Ford dealership built in 1919, DiVino Rosso gives off a fun, romantic vibe.



Chophouse of Chapin is located right next to Deca Dessert Bar, so it's the perfect spot for a couple to get a nice romantic dinner then cap the night off with delicious cakes and pies.

Koa Thai

1001 Senate St | 803-569-6881 |

kaothaicola.com

Everyone thinks of steaks or Italian food when they think of Valentine's dinner, but perhaps you're looking for something different this year. If you're in this camp and looking for something a little outside the box but also classy, then Koa Thai is a great way to shake things up. Offering authentic modern Thai cuisine like their signature Pad Thai and several curry dishes like their Lychee Duck Curry, you won't find another place like it in Columbia. Finally, with an excellent atmosphere and great service, you won't regret that you came. Open from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. add a little spice to your taste buds and your relationship by choosing Kao Thai this Valentine's Day.

Di Vino Rosso

807 Gervais St. | 803-550-9699 |

divinorossosc.com

Located in the showroom of an old Ford dealership built in 1919, this place gives off a fun and romantic vibe. Open from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., this upscale Italian restaurant is perfect for anyone looking to recreate the iconic spaghetti scene from *Lady and the Tramp*. In addition to their regular menu, they'll also have some specials that they plan to run that night. However, with fresh, never frozen ingredients, what specials run on that night is a mystery. If you're looking for some clarity or something specific to hang your hat on, co-owner Brad Spehl always recommends the crispy Pork Osso Buco. "Our Osso Buco is pretty crazy great," said Spehl. "I get a lot of people that ask me what I would get if I was going there, I get the Osso Buco every time I eat there." There will also be champagne and live piano music that night, so don't miss out on an opportunity to wine and dine your valentine at Di Vino Rosso.

Cowboy Brazilian Steakhouse

1508 Main St | 803-728-0887 |

cowboybraziliansteakhouse.com

If you're really hungry and looking for a lot of food this Valentine's Day, then Cowboy Brazilian Steakhouse is your



With rooftop seating available and flowers on the table to set the mood, it's safe to say that Black Rooster has a certain je ne sais quoi.

premier destination. As a Brazilian steak house, this place has a little flair, and on Valentine's Day, they plan to offer an inclusive package with two rodizio (all you can eat) dinners, a bottle of wine, and a dessert for a set price. Dining here is also a unique interactive experience as food is cooked "Churrascaria" style, meaning the meats are grilled on giant skewers and carved tableside. If your significant others' love language is food, then treat them to a feast this year, Brazilian Cowboy style.

The Melting Pot

1410 Colonial Life Blvd W Unit 130

| 803-731-8500 | meltingpot.com/

columbia-sc

If you are looking for a cozy vibe and a meal that is on the lighter side, then the melting pot is a good date spot. Known for its gourmet fondues and exquisite desserts, they plan to offer a five-course prix fixe menu for two this Valentine's Day. With fondue pots heated at the table, The



If you're looking for something a little outside of the box but still classy, Koa Thai is a great way to shake things up.

Melting Pot offers an intimate experience that allows couples to bond. Reservations will be available to book online starting on January 14th and will fill up fast, so book now if a night at the Melting Pot is something that interests you.

Inakaya Watanabe

655 St Andrews Rd | 803-750-9392 |

[facebook.com/InakayaWatanabe](https://www.facebook.com/InakayaWatanabe)

If your partner's favorite food is sushi, take them here, and they just might ask you to marry them. Open from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis, Inakaya will be offering a Valentine's special that night, consisting of a soup, a salad, five types of sushi rolls, and a dessert. Even if you're not a fan of sushi, Inakaya still has lots of options and traditional Japanese flavors offering dinners for two called boats which offer entree choices of teriyaki chicken/beef, Inakaya fried chicken, or gyoza (fried pork dumplings).

Additionally, all boats come with a side of miso soup, ginger salad, shrimp, vegetable tempura with tempura sauce, and pineapple.

Black Rooster

201 Meeting St | 803-724-2853 |

blackroostersc.com

Black Rooster will be open from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., offering their regular menu with dishes like Steak Frites, Salmon Wellington, and their signature Royale burger with cheese done French Onion style. With rooftop seating available and flowers on the table to set the mood, it's safe to say that Black Rooster has a certain je ne sais quoi. Reservations are highly recommended, so if you and your partner have a taste for French/Frenchish food, make sure to book in advance.

Chophouse of Chapin

301 Columbia Ave | 803-723-2351 |

chophouseofchapin.com

Open for dinner from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., this steakhouse will be offering a three-course prix fixe savory menu for around \$75 dollars. The first course will consist of a small plate/appetizer, the second course is a soup or a salad, and the third course will be an entree. In addition, there will be specialty cocktails and desserts run that night, and half-priced bottles of wine from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. that day, so book a reservation now if you don't want to miss out. Lastly, Chophouse of Chapin is located right next to Deca Desert Bar, so it's in the perfect spot for a couple to get a nice romantic dinner and then cap the night off with some delicious cakes and pies.



With valet parking, live music, ambiance and great service, Halls offers an upscale dining experience. Reservations are highly recommended, especially for Valentine's Day.

Bourbon

1214 Main St | 803-403-1404 |

bourboncolumbia.com

This one is for all our singles and couples who just don't want to deal with the schmaltziness of Valentine's Day. If you fall into either camp and are still reading this article, you get a gold star, and here's your consolation prize. From 4:30 p.m. to midnight, Bourbon will open and offer their regular menu this Valentine's Day. So, if you're just looking for a good meal without the mushy lovey-dovey displays, go to Bourbon, choose something from their extensive list of whiskeys and enjoy some Cajun shrimp and grits.

The Robinson Room

1621 Main St | (803) 714-3375 |

thegrandonmain.com/

therobinsonroom

What's a Valentine's Day without chocolate, am I right? For all those with a sweet tooth, The Robinson Room has got you covered, offering Valentine's specials from February 11th to the 14th. The special is a prix fixe menu offering a dessert and two signature cocktails for 50 dollars or two desserts and a bottle of wine for 60 dollars. This place is a sugar lover's paradise with staples like their chocolate orange (chocolate mousse in the shape of an orange) and rice pudding made with homemade toffee. In addition to their regular menu, The Robinson Room plans to run some unique desserts on Valentine's Day, and rumor has they may be featuring a heart-shaped cheesecake. Lastly, located in the Grand on Main, it's a good date spot for couples who want to bowl a few rounds before grabbing some dessert.

Honey River Catering

701 Gervais Street Ste 150 #164 |

828-301-2328 | honeyrivercatering.com

If you want to go above and beyond to impress your partner this year, Honey River Catering plans to offer meal preps this Valentine's Day that you can cook at home. While the menu is still in flux, co-owner Kristian Niemi says it's likely to be a three-course meal for two. "It will be a three-course dinner for two, and guests will have the option of adding wines to it," said Niemi. Honey River Catering is the perfect choice if you want to show your love and surprise your person with a homemade meal that you cooked. It's also an excellent option for couples who want to bond by cooking together. If you're interested, keep an eye on their website and make sure to order their Valentine's Day package. 💕

A large tree with vibrant red autumn foliage is the central focus, partially obscuring a house in the background. The house has a white facade and a dark roofline. The sky is clear and blue. The overall scene is bright and colorful, capturing the peak of fall foliage.

UNEXPECTED PLEASURES

They love older homes, but like their creature comforts and updated style. This couple got all that and so much more.

By KATHERINE PETTIT » Photos JAY BROWNE





Light-filled and with high ceilings, the master bedroom was added on, including the creature comforts 1920s Columbians couldn't have imagined.

Built in 1910 and renovated at various times by different owners, this home in historic Elmwood Park ticked all their house boxes. Debi Schadel and her life partner, Derek Riley, knew almost instantly that this was the house for them.

“Derek and I had renovated our last home in Old Shandon ourselves, and we didn’t want to go through that process again,” Debi said. “We wanted another older home because the materials and attention to detail are topnotch. We didn’t want to have to get down to the studs and

redo electric and plumbing.

Lucky for us, the friends who sold us the home had done all that and more.”

Former owners Tim Gardner, proprietor of Lula Drake Wine Parlour, and his wife, Lorie, CEO of Mad Monkey, had upgraded the necessities while leaving the bones intact. What was left for Debi and Derek were cosmetics, even as they made the pleasant adjustment to living in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Columbia.

“We got the great bones of an older home, but with modern windows that matched the aesthetic of the neighbor-

hood,” she said. Another plus was what Debi called “a perfect blend of social front porches and private back yards.” It’s a great neighborhood for gathering, and even though it’s only a few blocks from Main Street, it feels tucked away and neighborly. They had been house hunting for four years but knew it would be their home in five minutes. They moved into the house in July 2017. “We decided so quickly, and we were lucky to have some great neighbors,” she said. “The year we moved in, we hosted a block party because we already had seen six new homeowners move in.”



“We enjoy monthly neighborhood porch parties and family-friendly street parties,” she said. It’s also a perfect location for stepping out to favorite haunts, including Vino Garage’s outdoor patio and The NOMA Warehouse with its live bands. “Have you had the pizza at Il Focolare?” Debi asked. “Also, a nice fire in the backyard of The War Mouth is a great way to spend a weeknight.”

It’s a super location to venture out from, but the home invites a lot of staying in time as well. Debi is co-founder of Flock and Rally, an integrated communications

and marketing agency and native of upstate New York, while Derek is a business analyst with OLH Inc., a road design and construction consulting firm. He’s a Columbia native who earned a Civil Engineering degree at Georgia Tech and returned home soon after.

“I knew I wanted to get away from the cold, and I visited a bunch of southern cities,” Debi said.

“Everyone I met in Columbia was so welcoming and showed how much they truly loved living here. At the time, I was going to commit to six months, but 25+

years later, I’m still here.”

And they are both loving having projects they can tackle, one room at a time. So far, they’ve renovated a half bath and the dining room. They have a plan but intend to take it slow.

The front porch is inviting. The entry foyer offers a stairway, and to the right, the parlor.

Cozy and comfortable, the entry and parlor showcase some of the couple’s extensive artwork. An Anna Redwine painting from if ART Gallery is the first thing you see upon entering.



The kitchen is the width of the house with a seating area to stay close to the cook. The island is striking and positioned at an angle to take in nearby rooms.

There's a wraparound sofa and one of two gas fireplaces. "I feel at home and at peace here," she said.

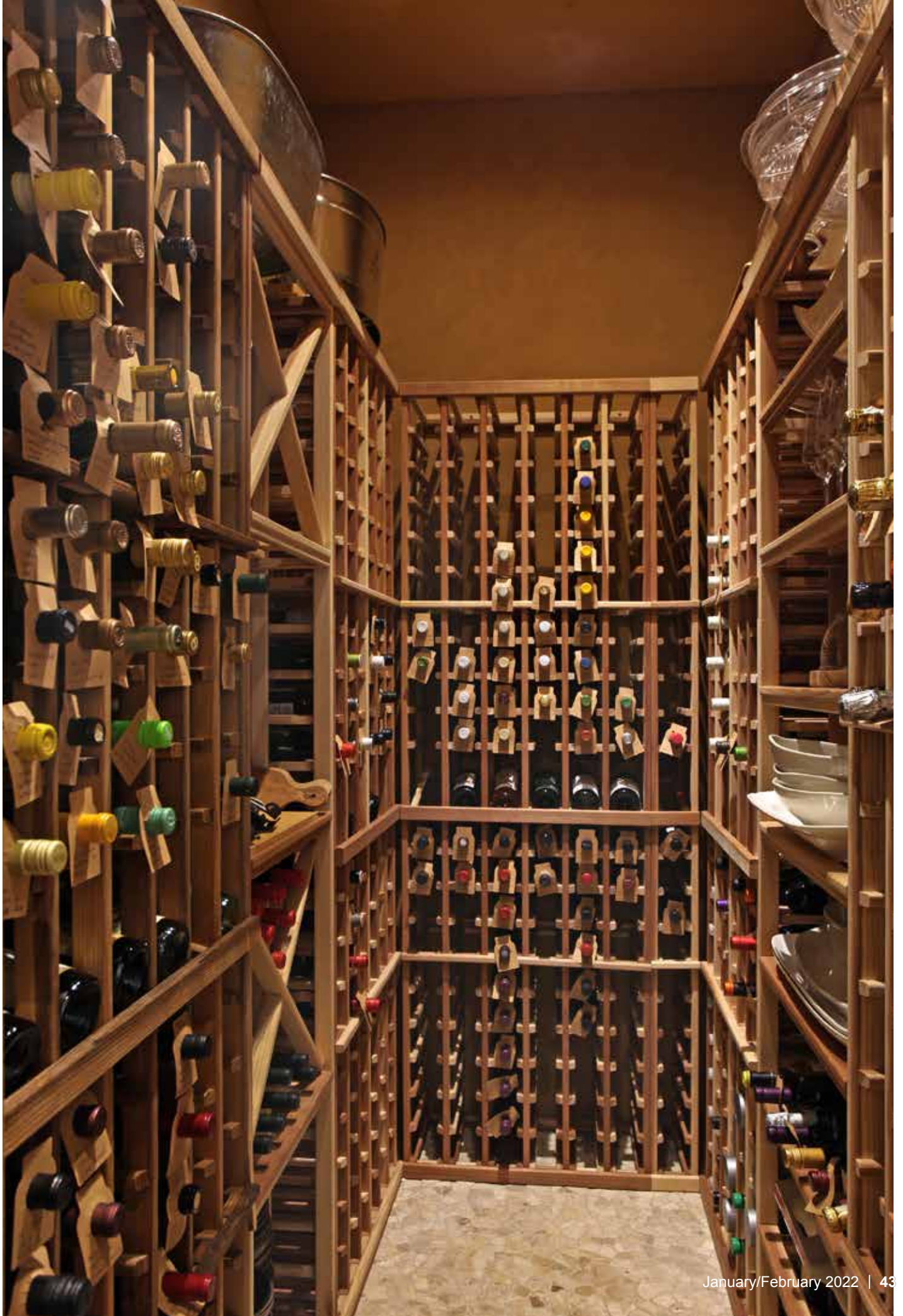
A doorway leads to the dining room, with high wainscoting and a nook for Derek's turntable and 900+ record albums. The former owners took the walls down to the studs, and in addition to new plumbing and electric, they added a hard-wired speaker system throughout the entire house – the better to enjoy all those vintage LPs. The mid-century walnut dining table can expand to seat eight. "I used to refinish furniture, and this is one of the pieces I did," Debi said.

To the left is a small TV room with a half bath which she has renovated. "I tried all sorts of wallpaper companies but really fell in love with Timorous Beasties, a small Scottish company," she said. More art adorns the walls, including a piece by Tyrone Geter. "I thought I would miss an open floor plan, but the distinct spaces in the house create different vignettes for us to enjoy."

Just beyond the dining room is the kitchen. It's the width of the house with a seating area to stay close to the cook. The island is striking and positioned at an angle to take in nearby rooms. The Lacanche



*Homeowners
Derek Riley and
Debi Schadel*





After trying all sorts of wallpaper companies, Debi fell in love with Timorous Beasties, a small Scottish company.



stove is the centerpiece – one-half gas and one-half electric. It’s massive and beautifully versatile.

There’s a door to an outside kitchen and dining area, but first, the wine cellar beckoned. “I never thought we could fill up a 500-bottle wine cellar,” Debi said. “We probably have the biggest private \$15 bottle collection in Columbia!”

A short hallway leads past the wine cellar and storage (including a temperature-controlled attic in the newer section)

to the master bedroom. Light-filled and with high ceilings, the room was added on, including the creature comforts 1920s Columbians couldn’t imagine. To the right are the dressing area and bathroom (she loves the added touches installed by the last owners, including cut-off timers on the bathroom moisture exhaust fans).

A bedroom door leads to the pool, fountain, and lush greenery. It’s very private and peaceful. Debi enjoys having the ability to awake and be ten steps from a dip

in the pool or perhaps a morning coffee in the hot tub. The outdoor fireplace and seating area are richly inviting, and the outdoor kitchen leads back into the indoor kitchen seating area. These are just a few of her favorite things.

“Jennifer Denslow of Fine Gardening created our raised shade garden behind the outdoor kitchen, and we are so pleased with it,” Debi said. “She did a fabulous job of understanding what I could and could not care for. After just one winter, every-



thing came back twofold.”

Upstairs are two more bedrooms and a full bath, plus another master suite with an en-suite bath and a door to the upstairs porch overlooking the street and mature treetops. They enjoy sitting out there – especially during a rainstorm.

What else has brought them unexpected pleasure? An outdoor fire after a dip in the pool and easy access to the outdoor grill and kitchen, among many other spots. Debi says the previous owners took such

care in designing this home’s renovations and additions that they are simply hoping to maintain what’s been done and invite others over to enjoy it.

Their five-year plan, in order, includes finishing the side yard/hot tub area to allow a separation of their utilities from the lounge area; modernizing the kitchen with new tile and countertops and maybe a banquette; and renovating the upstairs rooms.

All things will come slowly and with careful planning and creativity.

There are two more inhabitants of the home who love roaming the neighborhood. Cats Alex and Sadie have made their own friends and visit them during the daytime hours.

“Since moving here, we’ve recognized that the thoughtful features of a well-designed home and yard can really affect our mood and help us relax,” Debi said. “It’s surprising how many more catfans I have been inspired to purchase!” 🐾

<http://historicelmwoodpark.org/>

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Food + Drink

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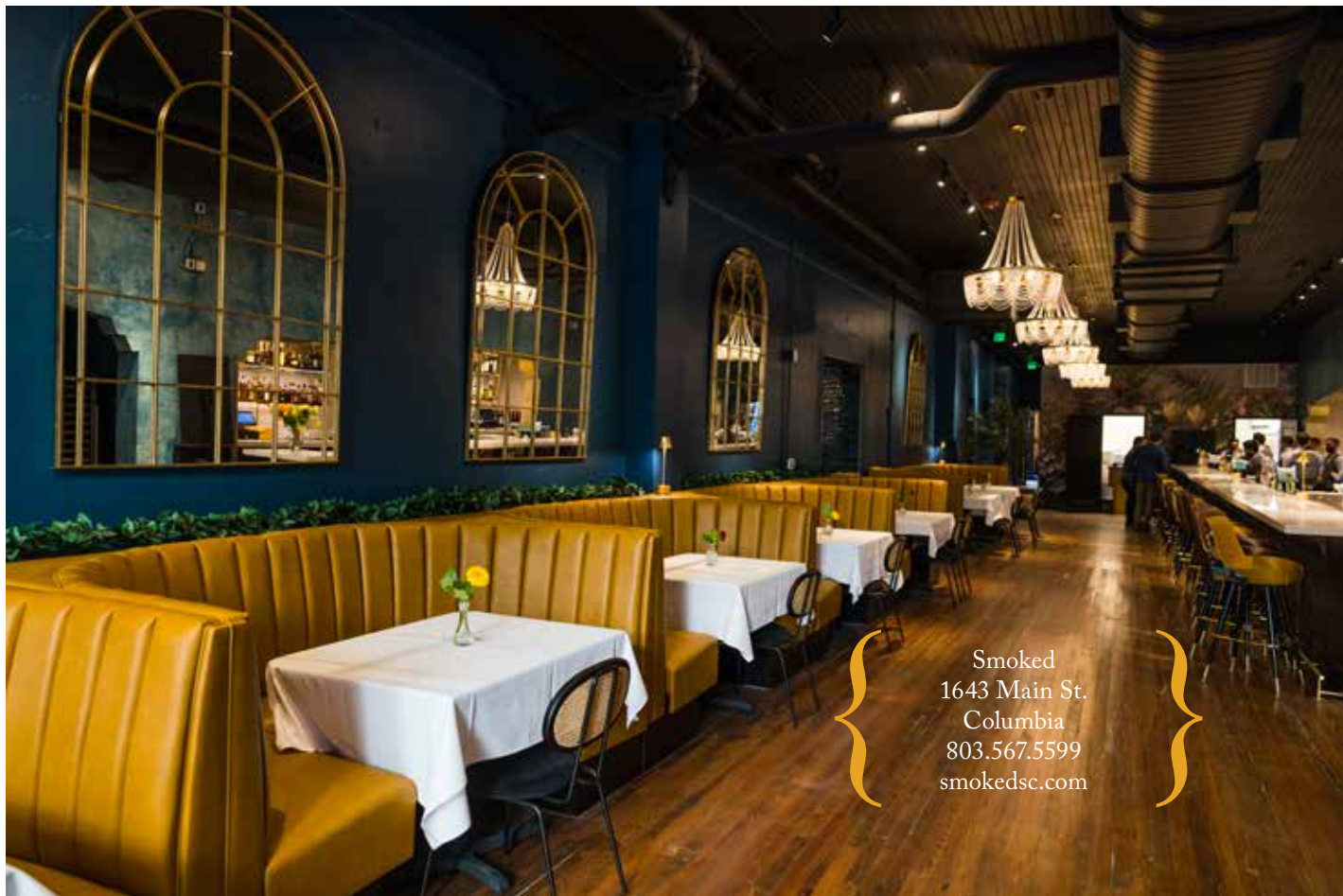


Photo: SMOKED

Versatile Dining

A visit to Smoked can vary depending on what you're in the mood for





Smoked
1643 Main St.
Columbia
803.567.5599
smokedsc.com

A Family Affair

Smoked opened for business in November after an intensive renovation to three adjoined historic buildings that now house the restaurant

By MEREDITH GRACE HAWCROFT



Sibling duo Greg and Sarah Middleton are the innovators behind one of the newest and most unique fine dining establishments in downtown Columbia. Located on Main Street, their restaurant Smoked features fresh ingredients and bold, unexpected flavor combinations through their oyster dishes, smoked meats, and house-crafted libations, including specialty cocktail creations and beer from the micro-brewery located within the restaurant.

Smoked opened for business in November 2021 after an intensive renovation to three adjoined historic buildings that now house the restaurant. Sarah and Greg acquired the buildings several years ago, uncertain what they'd use them for but aware of their incredible potential.

One day, Greg and Sarah were sitting in their parent's backyard discussing the property when Sarah proposed turning it into an oyster restaurant. Greg, however, desired more than oysters. As he glanced

at the pork butt they were roasting, inspiration struck, and the concept of Smoked was born.

The siblings already had experience in the restaurant industry; their father, Scott Middleton, owns three restaurants on Main Street himself. That knowledge of the Columbia restaurant scene appears to have provided the Middletons a running start. Despite being open for just a few weeks, Smoked is garnering a positive reputation. Many nights find the restau-



Their signature drink is a smoked old-fashioned.



rant filled with an energetic crowd eager to sample the menu.

Although guests are often initially surprised by the pairing of oysters and smoked meat, they find that the two items combine to create a unique and complementary flavor experience.

Sarah describes the in-house 1,200 square foot micro-brewery, part of their new brand Peak Drift Brewing Co., as the cherry on top of all the other exciting elements offered at the restaurant. The brewery is set in the restaurant's center and is completely encased in glass, allowing patrons to watch head brewer Ashley Kinard Short at work. Ashley and the rest of the bar team arrive at Smoked early every morning to begin brewing craft beers and preparing custom cocktail syrups and garnishes made from locally sourced fruits and vegetables.

Their signature drink is a smoked old-fashioned made with Old Forester 100 proof bourbon, Angostura, and brandied cherry, all served in a smoked glass with hickory, applewood, cherry, and pecan smoke options.

For Smoked's owners, it was important for patrons to experience a range of options and have a versatile dining experience.

"As someone who is gluten intolerant," Sarah said, "I wanted to work with our chefs when developing this menu to ensure that we could have vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free options, and more. No matter what your diet restrictions or diet preferences are, there's something on this menu that you're going to be excited about."

A visit to Smoked can vary depending on what you're in the mood for. You can stop in for a cocktail at the bar and some tapas like the crab and avocado salad. Clumps of crab meat, fresh slices of avocado, toasted almonds, and cured egg yolk



Although guests are often initially surprised by the pairing of oysters and smoked meat, they find the two dishes combine to create a unique and complementary flavor experience.

are served atop local greens and drizzled with house-made green goddess dressing.

For a heartier experience, the house-smoked meats will not disappoint, especially the A5 Japanese Wagyu steak. The chef cooks the 6-ounce center-cut tableside on a 450-degree salt block for an authentic fine dining experience. For those who feel variety is the spice of life, the ribeye steak flight allows guests to sample one ounce each of the wet-aged ribeye, dry-aged ribeye, and the Wagyu. Patrons savor this selection themselves on the tableside salt block.

Smoked's char-grilled oysters are also sure to impress. Bold flavor options include the smoked signature topped with smoked pork, vinegar barbecue, and a molten cheese sauce – made in-house like all of Smoked's sauces. Consider the lemon parmesan oysters served with leek but-

ter, garlic parmesan breadcrumbs, parsley, and lemon for a lighter flavor.

To accompany these main dishes, a variety of sharable sides are available, including golden whipped truffle potatoes, oyster stuffing, creamed jalapeno corn with crab, and honey-glazed carrots.

Although Smoked is just getting its foothold in the Columbia community, the future of the restaurant seems bright under the leadership of Greg and Sarah Middleton. With their commitment to customers and the steadfast goal of creating a fresh, fun fine dining experience, Smoked will undoubtedly continue to experience success in the coming months.

Brunch, lunch, and dinner and bar options are available seven days a week. Visit Smoked's website, smokedsc.com, to learn more and make reservations. 🍷



Starry, Starry Nights in the Kitchen

Recipes and Photos by KIMBERLY BYER

It all started while on an eighth-grade French Club field trip to Le Petit Chateau, a storied French restaurant in Columbia, SC, in the late 1970s. Six elegant small courses were presented across the starry, starry night, from garlicky escargot and frogs' legs to tiny triangles of smelly cheese—most of which made my classmates giggle and some even gag. For me, the exotic tastes and smells awakened my tastebuds, and I secret-

ly swore my allegiance as a French-blue, through-and-through, Francophile forever.

Fast forward through years of Julia Child reruns, Cordon Bleu classes, and Parisian menu-du-jour meals, I am still smitten with French cuisine.

At home, our favorite go-to dinner is “French Night”—a simple board of store-bought cheeses, toasted baguette, and le saucisson served with Dijon mustard and preserves. When friends join, we play

Edith Piaf and serve apéritifs like a Lillet Rosé Tonic, or, for the adventurous, a licorice-scented Pastis.

It's in this café spirit, speaking in our finest French accents, that we're rolling out the rouge carpet with our suggestions for your own “French Night” In the Kitchen, including a charcuterie board for the ages, a state-side version of steak frites with filets covered in a velvety herb sauce, and a classic crème brûlée. À votre santé!

The Ultimate French-Night Charcuterie

A build-your-own board of French cheese, prosciutto, pâté and more

Charcuterie

1 hard cheese (e.g., Comté or aged cheddar)

1 soft cheese (e.g., Camembert, goat or triple creme)

1 blue (Roquefort or Saint Agur) or flavored cheese

Pâté (e.g., Mousse Truffée or Pâté Campagne)

Dry Italian sausage and/or prosciutto or Spanish serrano or ibérico

Seasonal fresh fruit and/or dried fruit

Radishes with coarse salt and European butter

Jam, preserves, chutney and/or honey

Dijon mustard (e.g., Maille or Edmond Fallot)

Cornichons and olives

Nuts (e.g., Spanish marcona almonds, hazelnuts, chestnuts, walnuts, etc.)

Belgium chocolate

Serve with warm bakery baguette(s), sliced or torn (recommend Costco brand which freezes nicely)

Crêpes Suzette

with Grand Marnier sauce and orange marmalade

Makes 8-10 crêpes

Crêpe Batter

4 eggs

1 cup flour

1 large, juicy orange, zest removed and juice squeezed (divided use)

1/2 cup whole milk

1/2 cup water

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

2 tablespoons salted butter, melted + extra butter for cooking (approximately 1/2 teaspoon per crêpe)

Grand Marnier Sauce

6 tablespoons salted butter

1/4 cup sugar

Remaining orange juice and remaining half of the orange zest (from crêpe batter)

1/4 cup Grand Marnier or Dry Curacao (orange liqueur)

Splash of Cognac or Brandy (optional)



For serving

1 teaspoon of orange marmalade or jam per crêpe

Orange zest or peel, and raspberries

1. In a medium-sized bowl, whisk eggs until combined. Slowly add flour and whisk again until flour is incorporated. Continue whisking in half of the orange's zest and 2 tablespoons of the orange juice, milk, water, salt, and butter. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
2. Depending upon the size of your crêpe pan or flat-bottomed, non-stick pan, you'll want enough batter to smoothly cover the bottom — typically 1/4 cup + 1-2 tablespoons.
3. Over medium-high heat, melt 1/2 teaspoon of butter in the pan and ladle in crêpe batter. Roll the pan until the batter covers the entire bottom. Cook for approximately 1 minute, then gently turn the crêpe over using your fingers or a flat spatula. Cook the other side until the batter turns golden and lightly browned (again, approximately 1 minute).
4. Set aside on a plate and repeat process until all of the batter is used. Note: Parchment paper layered between crêpes will make separating easier.
5. To make the sauce, melt butter and sugar in the crêpe pan over medium heat. Add remaining zest and juice and liqueurs carefully (liqueur is flammable).
6. Using two hands, dip both sides of a crêpe into the sauce. Place on a plate and place a teaspoon of orange marmalade in the center. Fold the crêpe in half and in half again, forming a triangle. Repeat with remaining crêpes. Serve warm with remaining sauce.



Filet Frites

with a velvety herbed cream sauce and shoestring French fries

Serves 2; makes 1 cup of sauce

Herbed Cream Sauce

2 tablespoons (high fat) unsalted butter, divided use

2 small shallots (about 2 tablespoons), minced
2 large chicken livers, membranes removed, finely chopped

Several sprigs each fresh thyme, tarragon, and parsley, leaves removed and finely minced

1 cup heavy cream

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

¼ teaspoon kosher salt (or more to taste)

and several grinds of dried peppercorns

A few teaspoons of water

1/2 teaspoon Brandy (optional)

2 six-to-eight-ounce center-cut filet mignons

Frozen bag of shoestring French fries

1. To make Herbed Cream Sauce, sauté shallots in a tablespoon of butter in a medium skillet over low heat until soft and golden, being careful not to let them brown.
2. Add chicken livers and thyme and cook until browned. Remove from heat.
3. In a saucepan, reduce the cream and Dijon over medium heat. Stir until thickened and add remaining tablespoon of butter. Remove from heat.
4. Add tarragon and parsley to shallot and liver mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste. Using a wooden spoon, press the liver mixture into a paste in the pan. Then, stir a few teaspoons of the cream sauce into the liver mixture. Next, using the same wooden spoon, press the mixture through a sieve or mesh colander over a bowl. The goal is to remove the remaining liver pieces and lumps and create a smooth, velvety sauce.
5. Incorporate the cream into the bowl and mix. Add a few teaspoons of water for desired consistency. Add Brandy and adjust seasoning, if needed. Keep warm.
6. Dry filets with a paper towel, then season with coarse salt and a generous amount of freshly ground pepper. Grill on high for two minutes each side or cook as desired until rare or medium-rare in the center. Slice filets on the diagonal into thin strips.
7. Bake French fries according to package directions.
8. To serve, ladle a generous amount of Herbed Butter Sauce over filet and as a bath beneath hot French fries.

Vanilla Bean Crème Brûlée

Enough for 8 ramekins

5 eggs

1/2 cup granulated sugar (raw or white,
plus extra for the brûlée)

3 cups heavy cream

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 vanilla bean

Special equipment: kitchen blow torch

1. Separate egg yolks from egg whites. Reserve egg whites, if desired.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, whisk egg yolks and sugar together. Set aside.
3. Over medium heat in a small saucepan, bring heavy cream and salt to a rolling simmer. Immediately remove from heat and add vanilla extract.
4. With a sharp knife, split vanilla bean lengthwise and scrape vanilla paste from the interior. Add to hot cream.
5. Slowly drizzle hot cream mixture into the egg yolks while constantly stirring by hand. Caution: Incorporating hot cream too fast will cause eggs to curdle and cook.
6. Custard mixture may be refrigerated at this stage for up to 24 hours. Before using, remove foam and/or firm skim layer from the top of the mixture, then pour through a sieve to remove any solids. Whisk again to distribute vanilla bean flecks.
7. When ready to bake: Pre-heat oven to 325°F. Pour custard into ramekins (almost to the top).
8. Place ramekins into a large baking or casserole dish. If using shallow ramekins, use two casserole dishes. Carefully fill dish with very hot water until it reaches 2/3 of the ramekin's height. Bake for 30 minutes.
9. Test custard for doneness by taking a pair of tongs and shaking a ramekin. If there's a slight jiggle in the center of the custard, it's cooked. If there's a wavy motion, bake for 5 more minutes. The custard should not brown or rise. Depending on your oven's heat distribution, this can take up to 15 more minutes of cooking time. Larger individual shallow ramekins take less cooking time than traditional round ramekins. Do not overcook.
10. When done, refrigerate ramekins for a minimum of 4 hours. Custard will firm as it chills.
11. When ready to serve: Remove chilled ramekins. Sprinkle a light layer of sugar (about 1 teaspoon) evenly around edges and into the centers until each custard is covered. Using a kitchen blow torch, heat sugar from a height of 2-3 inches until it melts. Repeat with a second layer of sugar and heat until sugar bubbles and turns golden brown. The sugar will harden as it cools over the next few minutes. Serve warm.

*Tip: ****

Keep an extra can of fuel on hand in case your kitchen blow torch runs low on butane.





Apéritifs x Trois

(Left)

Le Grand Leo

1 ½ ounces Cognac
¾ ounce Byrrh
¼ ounce dry Curaçao (orange liqueur, recommend Pierre Ferrand)
¼ ounce fresh lemon juice
1 dash bitters (optional, recommend Peychaud's Aromatic Cocktail Bitters)
Garnish: thick slice of lemon peel
Shake all ingredients together with ice and strain into a rocks glass. Express lemon peel before using as a garnish.

(Center)

Lillet Rosé Tonic

1 ½ ounces Lillet Rosé
3 ounces tonic water
Ice of choice
Garnish: grapefruit slice + a sprig of thyme
Pour ingredients directly into glass with ice or shake with ice and strain into a coupe or small wine glass. Garnish with grapefruit and thyme.

(Right)

Pastis

1 ounce Ricard
4 ounces ice-cold water
Pour Ricard into a small glass, then add cold water. Pastis will turn milky and pale yellow.

Restaurant Guide



Black Rooster

Ready to Eat?

Use our restaurant listings to find the best eating and drinking in Columbia.

Locations: (BL) Batesburg-Leesville; (C) Chapin; (D) Downtown; (DS) Devine Street; (F) Five Points; (FA) Forest Acres; (I) Irmo; (L) Lexington; (N) Northeast; (R) Rosewood; (V) Vista Area; (W) West Columbia.

American

1801 Grille (V) 700 Lincoln St., Suite 200, 219-1119. Imaginative menu built around fresh ingredients and a brick oven. Lunch and dinner, Mon-Thurs 11:30am-10pm; Fri-Sat 11:30am-11pm (or later); Sun 11:30am-9pm.

Café Strudel (L) 309 S Lake Dr., 490-0895 (W) 300 State St., 794-6634. This 20-year mainstay of the local restaurant scene offers great atmosphere and good food at both locations. Local artwork displayed is available for purchase. Open seven days a week. For menu and hours visit cafestrudel.com.

Cola's Restaurant (V) 1215 Assembly St., 451-0051 The menu is eclectic and evolving. Menu items include lamburger, beef short ribs, shrimp succotash. Dinner, Mon-Thu 5:30pm-10:30pm. Fri-Sat 5:30pm-11pm.

Fancy That Bistro & Catering (D) 1825 St Julian Pl., 779-6110 Home-style breakfast and lunch, just like mom used to make. Fancy That! 7 am to 4 pm every day.

Hwy 55 Burgers Shakes & Fries (L) 1792 S. Lake Drive, 359-9090. Retro-style diner serves up classic burgers, fries, decadent custard-based desserts with a side of colorful nostalgia. Hours: Sun-Thurs, 11 am - 9 pm, Fri-Sat 11 am-10 pm.

Liberty Tap Room & Grill (D) 828 Gervais St., 461-4677 and (I) 1602 Marina Rd., 667-9715 American and ethnic steak, chicken and seafood. Downtown offers a handcrafted brew pub. Lake Murray offers shoreline view and is accessible by boat or car. Open at 11 am daily.

Racks (NE) 108 Columbia NE Dr., Suite G, 569-6512. The place for happy hours in the Northeast, with quick service, no loud music, pool tables, and cold beer.

Hours: Monday-Friday 2 pm-2am, Saturday-Sunday 12 pm - 2 am.

Tombo Grille (FA) 4509 Forest Dr., 782-9665. Forest Acres hotspot serving incredible food, wines, and high-gravity beer. Dinner Mon-Thurs 5:30-9:30pm, Fri-Sat 5:30 10:30pm.

Upper Crust (N) 843 Polo Road, Suite 4, 888-6282. Pizza is the specialty here, but they offer a diverse selection of fresh salads, huge sandwiches and funky quesadillas that will please any palate.

Asian

Baan Sawan Thai Bistro (D) 2135 Devine St., 252-8992. Quaint bistro offering traditional Thai seafood, chicken, and beef dishes. Choose from a variety of curry flavors. Dinner Tue-Thu 5:30-9pm, Fri 5:30-10pm, Sat 5:30-9pm.

Basil Thai (D) 702 Cross Hill Rd. Suite 300A, 782-0716. It's been called fresh, sophisticated and creative. Award-winning cuisine with a welcoming feel. Lunch, Mon-Fri 11:30am- 2:30pm, Dinner, Fri & Sat 5pm-11pm, Sun, 12noon-9pm.

Duke's Pad Thai & Noodle Bar (W) 904 Knox Abbott Dr., Cayce, 661-6455. Cozy family-friendly restaurant with a bright neighborhood vibe brings fresh Thai flavors and a customizable noodle bar for dine-in or takeout. Hours: Mon-Thurs, 11 am-9 pm, Fri-Sat, 11 am-10 pm.

Restaurant Guide

M Café (I) 340 Columbiana Dr., 764-0558. Fresh Asian cuisine and Mandarin tearoom. Lunch and dinner, Mon-Fri 11am-10pm, Sat 5-10pm.

Mai Thai Cuisine (WC) 2249 Sunset Blvd., 939-4795. Traditional Thai dishes and a bubble tea bar make this a hidden gem a local favorite.

Miyo's (D) 922 S Main St., 779-6496; (FA) 3250 Forest Dr., Suite B, 743-9996; (I) 1220 Bower Pkwy., Suite E-2, 781-7788; (N) 715 Fashion Dr., 788-8878; (V) 701 Lady St., 255-8878; (L) 5594 Sunset Blvd., Suite D & E, 957-9888. Unique Asian flared foods, sushi, fine teas, and specialty entrees. Hours vary by location.

SakiTumi Grill & Sushi Bar (V) 807 Gervais St., Suite 103, 931-0700. Serving up award-winning sushi with fresh ahi tuna. Grill menu includes steak, chicken, and beef. Dinner, Mon-Wed 4:30-10pm, Thur-Sat 4:30pm-midnight.

Camon Japanese Restaurant (D) 1332 Assembly St., 254-5400. Hibachi-style cooking with seafood, steak and chicken. Dinner, Mon-Sat 5-9:30pm.

Sato Japanese Steak & Seafood (FA) 1999 Beltline Blvd., 782-1064. Authentic Japanese cuisine prepared at your table by the finest chefs. Dinners include appetizer, soup, and salad. Choose from steak, chicken, or seafood. Lunch Tue-Fri 11am-3pm, Dinner 4:30-10pm.

Bakery

Tiffany's Sweets, Eats & Meeting Place (N) 9704 Two Notch Rd., 736-2253. Full-service delicatessen and custom bakery. Specialty is wedding cakes. Mon-Fri 7am-10pm, Sat 8am-10pm.

BBQ

Hudson's Smokehouse (L) 4952 Sunset Blvd., 356-1070. Voted some of the best BBQ in all of Columbia, offering full menu and Southern buffet with all the sides. Lunch and dinner.

Little Pigs (N) 4927 Alpine Rd., 788-8238. Large buffet with everything BBQ and all the sides. Wed. 11am-2pm; Thur.

11am-8:30pm; Fri and Sat. 11am-9pm; Sun. 11am-3pm.

Shealy's (B-L) 340 East Columbia Ave., Batesburg-Leesville, 532-8135. Full menu, plus buffet for Q tasting. Buy the sauce, too. 11am-9pm, closed Wed and Sun.

Deli/Café

DiPrato's (F) 342 Pickens St., 779-0606. New York-style delicatessen serving Mediterranean and Italian cuisine with signature sandwiches, soups, and salads. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sat brunch 10am-1pm, Sun brunch 10am-4pm.

The Gourmet Shop (F) 724 Saluda Ave., 799-3705. A local favorite, serving homemade sandwiches, soups, salads, and desserts. Menu includes turkey pesto, chicken salad, and smoked salmon. Mon-Fri 9am-3:45pm, Sat 9am-4:45pm, Sun 10am-3:45pm.

Le Peep (N) 110 Forum Dr., Suite 7, 550-9685. Great breakfast, brunch, and lunch food. Open 7am-2pm daily.

Momma Rabbit's (L) 5082 Sunset Boulevard, Lexington. 356-1330. Great food

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with a Southern flair has made this family enterprise into a dining destination. Great brunch, fresh food, creative cuisine. Tue-Fri, 11am-3pm, 5:30pm-9pm. Sat, 10am-2pm, 5:30pm-9pm. Sun, 10am-2pm.

Rosewood Market and Deli (R) 2803 Rosewood Dr., 256-6410. Wide variety of menu selections such as coconut shrimp, gumbo, pasta, soups, and salads. Low carb healthy dishes available. Lunch Mon-Sat 11:30am-2:30pm, Sun 10am-2pm, Dinner Mon-Sat 5-7:30pm.

Caribbean

Legacy Caribbean Bar & Grill 215 O'Neil Ct., 708-8481. No-frills Jamaican food serving wings, oxtail, meat curries, and other Caribbean staples in a casual environment.

Pon Di River Caribbean Bar and Bistro 2344 Broad River Rd., 638-4220. Caribbean comfort foods full of delicious island flavors. Dessert

Crêpes et Croissants (D) 1465 Sumter Street, 462-4779. Breakfast, lunch and more, savory and sweet, plus delectables from France. Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm; Sat, 8am-2pm; Sun, 10am-2pm.

Kaminsky's (D) 930 Gervais Street, 550-9979. A great drop-in spot for anyone who loves sweet things. Adult milkshakes and fresh-made desserts among the goodies. Mon-Fri 5pm-midnight; Sat & Sun Noon-midnight; Happy hour Mon-Fri 5-8pm.

Fine Dining

Al's Upstairs (W) 300 Meeting St., 794-7404. Romantic, elegant Italian restaurant overlooking the Columbia skyline. Entrees include fresh fish, steaks, chops, pasta, and lamb. Dinner Mon-Sat 5-10pm.

Columbo's (D) 2100 Bush River Rd. (in the Radisson Hotel), 744-2200. Unique Italian cuisine, prime steaks and a superior wine list served up in a casual intimate atmosphere. Breakfast daily, 6:30-11am, Lunch and Dinner daily 11am-midnight.

Hampton Street Vineyard (D) 1201 Hampton St., 252-0850. Offering an array of cuisines with seafood, pastas, beef, and chicken. Menu changes quarterly. Lunch Mon-Fri 11:30am-2pm, Dinner Mon-Sat 6-10pm.

Motor Supply Bistro (V) 920 Gervais St., 256.6687. Serving up innovative food

with a menu that changes twice daily. Lunch Tue-Sat 11:30am-2:30pm, Sun Brunch 11am-3pm, Dinner Tue-Thurs 5:30-9:30pm, Fri-Sat 5:30-10:30pm, Sun 5:30-9pm.

Ristorante Divino (V) 803 Gervais St., 799-4550. Authentic Northern Italian cuisine, serving homemade pastas, seafood, duck, and beef. Reservations suggested. Dinner, Tues-Sat 5:30-10pm.

Saluda's (F) 751 Saluda Ave., Columbia, 799-9500. Upscale second-story bar and restaurant provides fine dining, fine wine pairings, and a cozy-classy experience overlooking the iconic Five Points fountain. Hours: Sunday-Monday, 5:30-10pm.

Terra (W) 100 State St., 791-3443. Great neighborhood restaurant serving wood-oven pizzas, quail, red drum, steaks, and salads. Dinner, Tue-Sat 5pm-until.

French

Black Rooster (WC) 201 Meeting St., West Columbia, 724-2853. Casual "Fren-chish" restaurant with an amazing rooftop bar overlooking the river. Steak Frites, Mussels, and much more. Call ahead

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seating available for busy nights. Hours: Tues-Sat, 5pm-10pm.

Italian

Alodia's (I) 2736 North Lake Dr., 781-9814. (L) 101 W Main St., 957-1986. Authentic Italian dishes with a romantic flair, including time-honored favorites and updated versions of the classics. Hours: Tues-Thurs, 11am-10pm; Fri & Sat, 11am-11pm; Sun Brunch, 11am-2pm; Sun Dinner, 5-9:30pm.

Il Giorgione Pizzeria & Wine Bar (DS) 2406 Devine St., 521-5063. Experience Italy firsthand at this authentic pizzeria & wine bar. Panini, pizzas, pasta, mozzarella & desserts made in house. Lunch and dinner, Tues-Sat.

Travinia Italian Kitchen (L) 5074 Sunset Blvd., 957-2422; (N) 101 Sparkleberry Crossing Rd., 419-9313. Contemporary Italian cuisine serving fresh pasta, soups, chicken, pizza, veal, and seafood. Lunch and dinner.

The Villa (I) 1704 Bush River Rd., 798-6360. Family-owned and operated since 1977. Traditional favorites, plus salads, pizzas, and paninis. Mon-Thurs 11am-9:30pm; Fri 11am-10:30pm; Sat 4:30-10:30pm.

Villa Tronco (D) 1213 Blanding St., 256-7677. Enjoy casual fine dining in Columbia's oldest Italian restaurant. Old world charm with authentic recipes. Lunch, Mon-Fri 11:00am-3pm, Dinner Mon-Sat 5-10pm.

Hawaiian

Poke Bros. (F) 2009 Greene Street, Suite 102, 764-5567, (L) 5225 Sunset Blvd., 638-1518, (I) 1230 Bower Pkwy., 722-4295. Fresh Hawaiian style seafood and rice bowls brings a healthy, tropical taste in a customizable bowl with an emphasis on both having whole foods and quick meals. Hours vary by location.

Mediterranean

Grecian Gardens (W) 2312 Sunset Blvd., 794-7552. Authentic Greek cuisine including an excellent wine list. Menu selections include chicken, seafood, steaks, Greek pizza, salads, and sandwiches. Lunch and dinner, Mon-Thurs 11am-9pm, Fri 11am-10pm, Sat-Sun 11am-9pm.

Gervais & Vine (V) 620 Gervais St., 799-8463. Spanish-styled Mediterranean wine and tapas bar offering a wide selection of beers, outside seating and a menu with culinary influences from across the region. Dinner, Mon-Thurs 5-10pm, Fri-Sat 5-11pm.

Mexican

La Fogata (C) 105 Amicks Ferry Rd., 932-2475; (I) 11210 Broad River Rd., 542-7273 (W) 2805 Sunset Blvd., West Columbia, 791-8540. Fresh Mexican food served up by genuinely smiling faces, plus a well-appointed salsa bar keep people coming back. Hours: 11 am - 10 pm.

San Jose Mexicano Restaurantes (BL, C, FA, I, L, NE, R) Locations can be found throughout the Midlands. Fresh, authentic Mexican food with all the flourishes, including lunch specials, combination plates and desserts. Hours vary by location. SanJoseMex.com

Seafood

Blue Fin (N) 461 Town Center Pl, Suite 4, 865-7346. An upscale yet casual atmosphere with a full bar. Dishes include seafood, pasta, chicken, soups, and salads. Lunch daily 11am-2:45pm, Dinner Mon-Thurs 3-10pm, Fri-Sat 3-11pm, Sun 3-9:30pm.

Blue Marlin (V) 1200 Lincoln St., 799-3838. Serving dishes with a Cajun and Creole influence. Menu includes seafood, steaks, and chicken. Lunch, Mon-Fri 11:30-2:30, Dinner Mon-Fri 5:30-10pm, Sat-Sun 11:30am-11pm.

Bonefish Grill (FA) 4708 Forest Dr., 787-6200; (I) 1260 Bower Pkwy., 407-1599. Great seafood dishes prepared on a wood-burning grill, all within a relaxed casual atmosphere. Dinner Mon-Thurs 4-10:30pm, Fri-Sat 4-11:30pm, Sun 4-10pm.

Pearlz Oyster Bar (V) 936 Gervais St., 661-7741. Fun, eclectic restaurant serving the freshest seafood in a casual dining atmosphere. Daily 4pm-until.

The Oyster Bar (V) 1123 Park St., 799-4484. Columbia's original oyster bar, serving the freshest Gulf oysters, steamed or raw, soups, and shrimp and grits. Mon-Sat 4-until.

Southern

Mr. Friendly's (F) 2001 Greene St., Suite A, 254-7828. Serving new Southern cuisine including seafood, chicken, beef, and

wild game. Sophisticated and casual atmosphere, extensive wine list and a wide variety of micro-brew beer. Lunch Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm, Dinner Mon-Thurs 5:30-10pm, Fri-Sat 5:30-10:30pm.

Steaks and Seafood

Halls Chophouse (D) 1221 Main St., Columbia, 563-5066. Family-owned high-end dining with a rich interior setting, offering up steaks cooked to perfection and choice seafood dishes. Dinner nightly.

Cowboy Brazilian Steakhouse (D) 1508 Main St., 728-0887. A unique, all-you-can-eat Churrascaria located in the historic Kress Building. Featuring a full salad bar, Brazilian hot dishes and 16 different types of meats sliced at your table. Full bar and wine cellar. Mon-Fri 5-10pm, Sat 4-10pm, Sun Lunch 10-4pm, Dinner 4-9pm. Reservations suggested.

Rusty Anchor (C) 1925 Johnson Marina, 749-1555. Located on Lake Murray. A picturesque and unique lakeside dining experience, specializing in fresh seafood and steak. Outside dining available, full bar. Thurs 5-9pm, Fri-Sat 5-10pm.

Ruth's Chris Steak House (D) 924-A Senate St. (in the Hilton Hotel), 212-6666. USDA prime beef, chops, chicken, and fresh seafood. Reservations recommended. Breakfast, lunch, dinner Sun-Thurs 3-10pm, Fri-Sat 3-11pm. European-style café serving an array of sandwiches, soups, salads, and burgers. Sun 10am-2:30pm.

Saluda's (F) 751 Saluda Ave., 799-9500. Rich mahogany and white linen tables is what you can expect at this fine dining eatery. Located in the heart of Five Points, featuring Southern cuisine with French and Italian influences. Dinner nightly, 5:30-10pm.

Vegetarian

Good Life Café (D) 1614 Main St., Columbia, 726-2310. Raw, vegan, juice drinks. Downtown: Mon-Sat 7am-8pm; Sun 10am-5pm. West Columbia: Mon-Thurs 7am-10pm; Fri-Sat 7am-11pm; Sun 10am-9pm.

Lambs Bread Returns the King (D) 3600 River Dr., Columbia, 373-7491. Vegan fare in a variety of styles and flavors including southern, Caribbean, and African. Raw options, fresh juices, vegan baked goods. Downtown: Tues-Fri 11 am-7 pm.

A Peace of Soul Vegan Kitchen (D) 2338 Main St., 253-7889. Vegan soul-food served in a bright and fresh dining space. Menu options include their famous fried “chicken” sandwich, “meat” and 2 plates, and house-made juices.

Wine & Ale

Lula Drake Wine Parlour (D) 1635 Main Street, 606-1968. Small plates, cheese options, Iberico ham, and natural wines. Mon-Fri 4pm-midnight. Sat, 11am-midnight. Sat, 11am-4pm, Soda City Saturdays.

Hunter-Gatherer Brewery & Ale House (D) 900 Main St., 748-0540. English-style brew pub with a variety of fresh homemade dishes. Continental fare and regional favorites and handcrafted beer made in-house. Lunch, Tue-Fri 11am-2pm, Dinner, Mon-Sat 4-11pm.

River Rat Brewery (D) 1231 Shop Road, 724-5712. Not an eatery, but a great place to relax in the taproom or outside on the deck. You can even bring your leashed dog. Partake in a taste of our newest offerings, get a growler filled, or purchase some River Rat swag. 🍷

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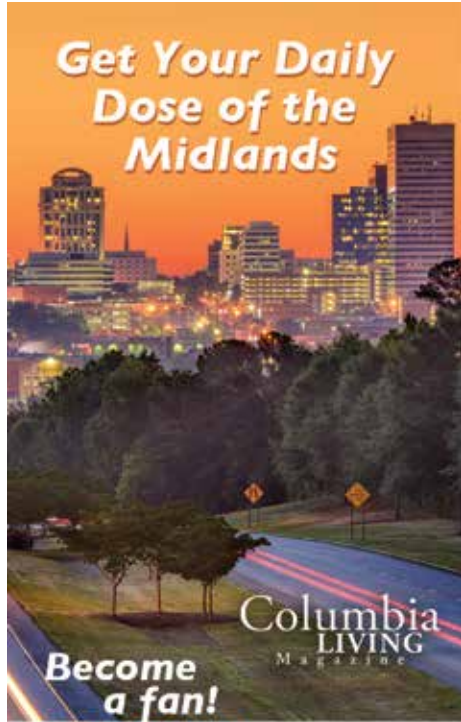
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Old Paris

Though Saint Germain des Pres is, as the crow flies, just half a mile from the Louvre, the neighborhoods couldn't be more different

By KATIE MCELVEEN

I love a resort as much as anyone, but when I'm ready to immerse myself in a different culture, I head for a city where new foods, customs, and experiences await. In Paris, my neighborhood of choice is Saint Germain des Pres,

an ancient quarter on the Left Bank of the Seine River. Though Saint Germain des Pres is, as the crow flies, just half a mile from the Louvre, the neighborhoods couldn't be more different.

Grand boulevards and formal gardens

comprise the area around the Louvre, a massive complex that started life as a 16th-century palace before being transformed into an art museum during the French Revolution.

Saint Germain des Pres, on the oth-



This ancient quarter on the Left Bank of the Seine River is said to be one of the few places in the city that still feels like old Paris.

er hand, resembles a small village where locals purchase their daily baguettes from their favorite baker, dogs frolic in centuries-old fountains, and kids in school uniforms whiz by on scooters.

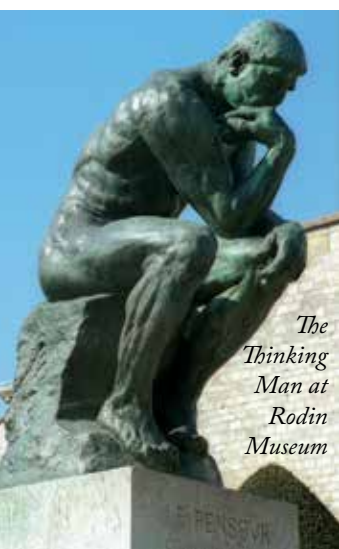
It's exactly why Laurence Tafanel chose this part of the city as the location for Esprit Saint Germain, the 28-room boutique hotel she opened in 2004. Set within two 17th century buildings that took three years to renovate, the hotel, with its residential-style living rooms, small self-serve bar, and dramatic art, resembles one of the chic Parisian apartments that surround it. Rooms, many with their original wooden beams, are done in pale neutrals



Rodin Museum is home to works by Van Gogh, Renoir, Rodin, and others.



The Louvre by night



*The Thinker
Man at
Rodin
Museum*

and have modern bathrooms with showers. A few have balconies; one has a full kitchen. All the rooms were renovated in 2020. “I wanted to create a place where I would like to stay,” she explains. “The open bar encourages guests

to enjoy the living room, just as they would in their own homes.”

But it’s the neighborhood that she adores. “It’s one of the few places in the city that still feels like old Paris,” says Laurence, who grew up around the corner. “You can walk everywhere, and all of the shops are local. Most of our guests cross the river for tours but spend the rest of their time within a few blocks of the hotel.”

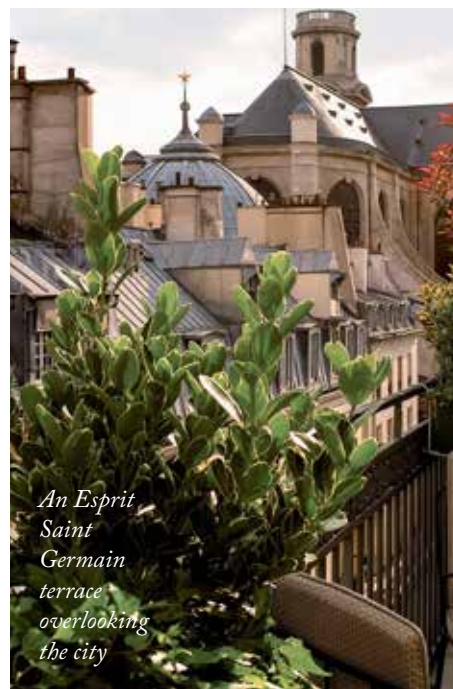
It’s easy to see why. Atelier Rouliere, a bustling restaurant just around the corner, was filled with locals enjoying carafes of wine and traditional bistro fare the night we arrived. Like many proprietors in the neighborhood, Jean-Luc, the chef

and owner, didn’t speak a lot of English, but he was kind and patient, laughing as we stumbled together through his offerings. In the end, our dinner—artichoke salad, grilled veal with mushrooms and, for dessert, almond-crustéd pain perdu—couldn’t have been more delicious; the complimentary glass of dessert wine he delivered made us feel welcome. We had similar experiences at Marco Polo, where the maitre d’ found a table for us during an especially busy night, and at L’Affable, a pretty bistro where the Sunday night special is a dish from the chef’s grandmother’s recipe box.

Culture also comes easily on this



Esprit Saint Germain is a 28-room-boutique hotel that opened in 2004.



An Esprit Saint Germain terrace overlooking the city

side of the river. At the Rodin Museum, I strolled through a mansion filled with works by Van Gogh, Renoir, Rodin, and others. After a leisurely lunch at the museum's outdoor cafe, I explored the sculpture garden, where works such as *The Thinker* are set amid towering plane trees and neat boxwood hedges.

Though it played a key role in the book *The DaVinci Code*, Saint Sulpice church, a 17th-century marvel located directly across the street from Esprit Saint Germain, tends to be blissfully quiet. Within the church's empty Chapel of the Holy Angels, I wandered past the trio of massive Delacroix paintings that

have decorated the space since 1861. The church's 19th-century organ is even more famous than the church that houses it; each Sunday at 10:45 am, a free concert precedes the 11:00 am mass; there's usually also a brief recital after the service.

There's also shopping galore in Saint Germain, from the antique shops, hat makers, candle stores, and clothing boutiques that line the sidewalks near the hotel to the designer ateliers—think Saint Laurent, Celine, and Prada—set on rue de Grenelle. I always make time to visit Citypharma, where I can find French cosmetics at steep discounts, as well as the Bon Marche, an elegant department store that's been open since 1858.

Of course, I do cross the river occasionally. On a drizzly Saturday, I found myself dodging umbrellas as I walked along rue Montorgueil, a vibrant pedestrian-only street that runs perpendicular to the river as it makes its way toward Sacre Coeur. I was on my way to the Secret Wine Door for one of sommelier Erwan Leo's wine and cheese pairing classes. For the next two hours, as our group of eight sipped and nibbled, Erwan taught us not just how to pair, but lots of wine and cheese basics, including the fact that it's considered bad manners in France to cut the point off Brie. Turns out the correct method is to cut on the long side so that everyone gets a taste of the whole cheese, which ripens from the outside in.

I was up early the next morning to meet Thierry Collegia, who would lead me and seven others through monuments, landmarks, and buildings that played a role in the French revolution. As any student can tell you, a history lesson is only as interesting as the person leading it. Thierry, clearly a born storyteller, didn't just get the facts correct but told them in a way that made them both relevant and easy to grasp.

At the end of the day, I'm back in Saint Germain, where, after several visits, I'm comfortable with the odd ordering procedure at the patisserie around the corner, have (finally) memorized the name of the runny cheese I like at the fromagerie and know exactly how to get to my favorite part of Luxembourg Garden. It makes this part of Paris as relaxing as a resort, but with a side of culture. 🍷



Making a Meal

Out of (Almost) Nothing at All

By ANNE WOLF POSTIC

Here we are. It's winter, and we're cold, tired, and still in recovery mode from the fun of the holidays. How were yours, by the way? I do hope they were merry and bright and that you were able to spend time with people you love who were on the same page — or respectful of your page — when it comes to vaccines, masking, dietary choices, the new Adele album, child-rearing, boxers or briefs, and any other hot topics that may have arisen. Actually, isn't it time we canceled hot topics and just talked about something else? Thanks to the internet, which I love and hate, everything is controversial. People are delightfully unique, and I like it that way. Hot topics and the hot takes everyone seems to need to address them are socially isolating, and I'm over them. But I digress.

Eating regular meals at home is a great way to beat the winter blues, and casserole is a last-minute meal hero. You probably have enough things in your house to make one right this second. The quantities I'll mention will make a casse-

role for five or six people but do feel free to reduce the amounts to make a smaller dish. Or...separate it into more than one dish and freeze the rest for a rainy day. You'll be so happy you did!

Start with a casserole dish. Wasn't that easy? It can be any shape you have. Grease it with butter or cooking spray or something else greasy. Next, forage in your kitchen for about eight cups worth of (edible) stuff: leftover meat from taco night, frozen, canned, or fresh vegetables, beans, pine nuts, the chicken fingers your toddler couldn't finish, fruit (apples are good in stuffing, so why not casserole?), really anything you can eat. If pineapple cheese casserole is a thing, which it very much is, nothing is off-limits.

Fill your greased vegetable dish about three-quarters of the way full with the results of your search, all chopped and mixed together. Add enough rice, pasta, or cubes of bread (an excellent way to use up the stale stuff) to fill the dish just below the top. Don't pack the ingredients into the dish. There should be enough space for the liquid in the next

step to surround them.

Heat 1 1/4 cups (or one can) of cream soup. Cream of mushroom is my personal favorite, but any cream soup works. Remove the soup from heat and stir in 1/2 cup of mayonnaise (or sour cream or Greek yogurt or something similar) and 3/4 cup grated cheese. Season with salt, pepper, and any other seasonings you think might go with your dish.

Pour the liquid over ingredients in the casserole dish and top with about a half cup of something crunchy. Potato chip or cracker crumbs work, as do breadcrumbs, corn flakes, tortilla chips, or whatever else you might have lying around. The liquid doesn't have to totally cover the solid ingredients, by the way. A half-inch or so of uncovered solid ingredients will add a nice layer of texture.

Bake the casserole for around 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Turn the oven up to broil and cook for an additional minute or two if you like the top crunchy. I sure do!

Remove the casserole from the oven and let it cool for 10 to 15 minutes, which will also allow it to set, making the whole thing easier to serve.

If you need inspiration for ingredients and seasoning, this is one of those times I love the internet. Just search for the main ingredients you plan to include, followed by "casserole" or even "soup." You aren't looking for a recipe, just some ideas about what might make what you have on hand into a delicious meal.

Will it be beautiful? Most likely not. My hat goes off to those food photographers who manage to make a casserole look pretty. It's challenging and requires skill in selecting background colors and props, getting just the right light and angle, choosing a dish to complement a relatively unattractive meal, and the proverbial "more." Photographing a casserole is more about creating a mood and conveying a feeling than showing off a beautiful dish.

That mood? Warm and inviting. A casserole is comforting, the perfect thing on a cold winter day when you think there's nothing to eat. Add a salad, a few candles, and some pretty napkins...and those leftover bits and pieces from your very own kitchen just became an event. Enjoy! 🍷



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