

BEST GEAR OF THE YEAR

Dec 2009 - Jan 2010 | Volume 18 | Number 11

Men's Journal

**Powder for
Everyone!**

**Backcountry
Skiing for All
Skill Levels**

**Killing
Secrets
of a Navy
SEAL
Sniper**

**My
Father,
the Con
Man**

**Steve Nash's
New MJ
Column**

**How
Alec
Baldwin
Finally Got It Right**

**Great
Holiday
Gifts for
Men**

**60 Original
& Affordable
Ideas**

	ALL NEW CHEVY EQUINOX	2010 HONDA CR-V	2010 TOYOTA RAV4	2010 FORD ESCAPE HYBRID
HWY. FUEL ECONOMY ¹	32 MPG	28 MPG	28 MPG	31 MPG
MAXIMUM HWY. DRIVING RANGE	600 MILES	428 MILES	445 MILES	468 MILES
5-STAR FRONTAL/ SIDE-IMPACT CRASH SAFETY RATINGS ²	✓ ✓	TO BE TESTED ✓	5-STAR DRIVER, 4-STAR FRONT PASSENGER ✓	✓ ✓
 ONSTAR ³ W/ AUTOMATIC CRASH RESPONSE ⁴	✓ (STANDARD FIRST YEAR)			AVAILABLE SYNC ⁵
POWERTRAIN LIMITED WARRANTY ⁶	100,000-mile 5-year	60,000-mile 5-year	60,000-mile 5-year	60,000-mile 5-year
REAR SEAT LEGROOM	39.9 INCHES	38.5 INCHES	38.3 INCHES	35.6 INCHES
AVAILABLE POWER LIFTGATE	✓			
60-DAY SATISFACTION GUARANTEE ⁷	✓			

GO TO WWW.CHEVY.COM/GUARANTEE FOR LIMITATIONS AND DETAILS.

MAY THE BEST CAR WIN

¹ EPA estimate. ² Side-impact crash test rating is for a model tested with standard head-curtain side-impact air bags (SABs). Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). ³ Visit onstar.com for details and system limitations. ⁴ OnStar acts as a link to existing emergency service providers. ⁵ Requires connection with Bluetooth®-compatible phones. ⁶ Whichever comes first. See dealer for details. ⁷ Return between 30 and 60 days with less than 4,000 miles. Not available with some other offers. Other restrictions apply. Take delivery by 1/4/10. ⁸ MSRP. Tax, title, license, dealer fees, and optional equipment extra. OnStar and the OnStar Emblem are registered trademarks of OnStar LLC. Equinox is a registered trademark and Chevy is a trademark of General Motors. ©2009 General Motors. Buckle up, America!



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2010 LTZ as shown, \$28,790⁸

	2010 CHEVY MALIBU LTZ	2010 TOYOTA CAMRY XLE	2010 HONDA ACCORD EX-L SEDAN	2010 FORD FUSION SEL
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5-STAR FRONTAL/ SIDE-IMPACT CRASH SAFETY RATINGS ²	✓	✓	✓ 5-STAR FRONT SEATING POSITION, 3-STAR REAR SEATING POSITION	✓ 5-STAR FRONT SEATING POSITION, 4-STAR REAR SEATING POSITION
On ONSTAR ³ W/ AUTOMATIC CRASH RESPONSE ⁴	✓ (STANDARD FIRST YEAR)			AVAILABLE SYNC ⁵
TURN-BY-TURN NAVIGATION ⁶	✓ (STANDARD FIRST YEAR WITH ONSTAR)	NAVIGATION EXTRA COST	NAVIGATION EXTRA COST	NAVIGATION EXTRA COST
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60-DAY SATISFACTION GUARANTEE ⁸	✓			

GO TO WWW.CHEVY.COM/GUARANTEE FOR LIMITATIONS AND DETAILS.

MAY THE BEST CAR WIN

¹ EPA estimate. ² Side-impact crash test rating is for a model tested with standard head-curtain side-impact air bags (SABs). Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). ³ Visit onstar.com for details and system limitations. ⁴ OnStar acts as a link to existing emergency service providers. ⁵ Requires connection with Bluetooth®-compatible phones. ⁶ Not available in certain areas. Visit onstar.com for coverage map. ⁷ Whichever comes first. See dealer for details. ⁸ Return between 30 and 60 days with less than 4,000 miles. Not available with some other offers. Other restrictions apply. Take delivery by 1/4/10. ⁹ MSRP. Tax, title, license, dealer fees and optional equipment extra. OnStar and the OnStar Emblem are registered trademarks of OnStar LLC. Chevrolet and Malibu are registered trademarks and Chevy is a trademark of General Motors. ©2009 General Motors. Buckle up, America!



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Chevy Malibu



2010 LTZ as shown, \$27,325⁹

	2010 CHEVY TRAVERSE	2010 HONDA PILOT	2010 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER V6
AVAILABLE SEATING	8	8	7
HWY. FUEL ECONOMY ¹	24 MPG	23 MPG	24 MPG
5-STAR FRONTAL/ SIDE-IMPACT CRASH SAFETY RATINGS ²	✓	✓	5-STAR DRIVER, 4-STAR FRONT PASSENGER
ONSTAR ³ W/ AUTOMATIC CRASH RESPONSE ⁴	✓ (STANDARD FIRST YEAR)		
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60-DAY SATISFACTION GUARANTEE ⁷	✓		

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MAY THE BEST CAR WIN

¹ EPA estimate. ² Side-impact crash test rating is for a model tested with standard head-curtain side-impact air bags (SABs). Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). ³ Visit onstar.com for details and system limitations. ⁴ OnStar acts as a link to existing emergency service providers. ⁵ Whichever comes first. See dealer for details. ⁶ Cargo and load capacity limited by weight and distribution. ⁷ Return between 30 and 60 days with less than 4,000 miles. Not available with some other offers. Other restrictions apply. Take delivery by 1/4/10. ⁸ MSRP. Tax, title, license, dealer fees and optional equipment extra. OnStar and the OnStar Emblem are registered trademarks of OnStar LLC. Traverse is a registered trademark and Chevy is a trademark of General Motors. ©2009 General Motors. Buckle up, America!



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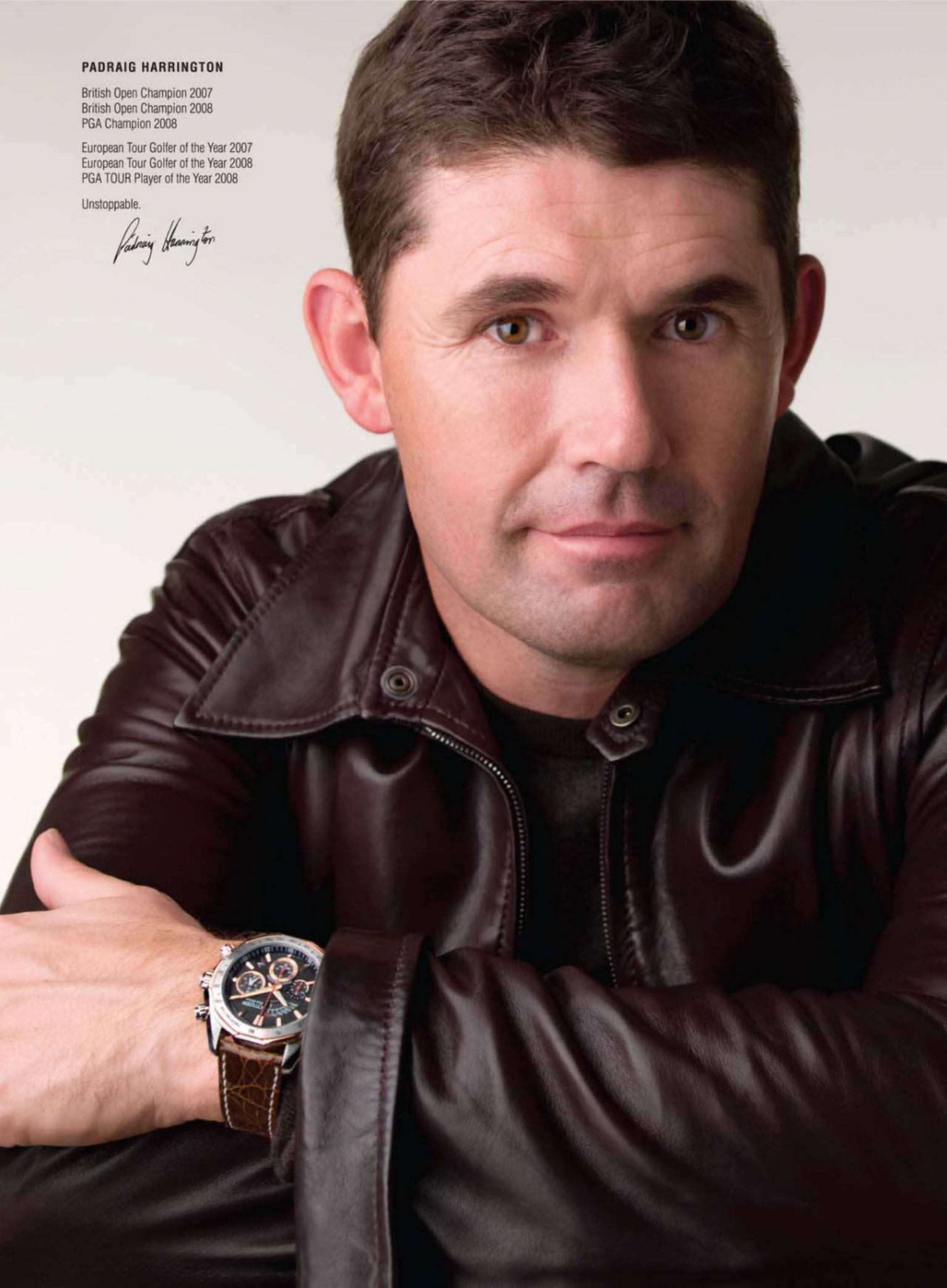
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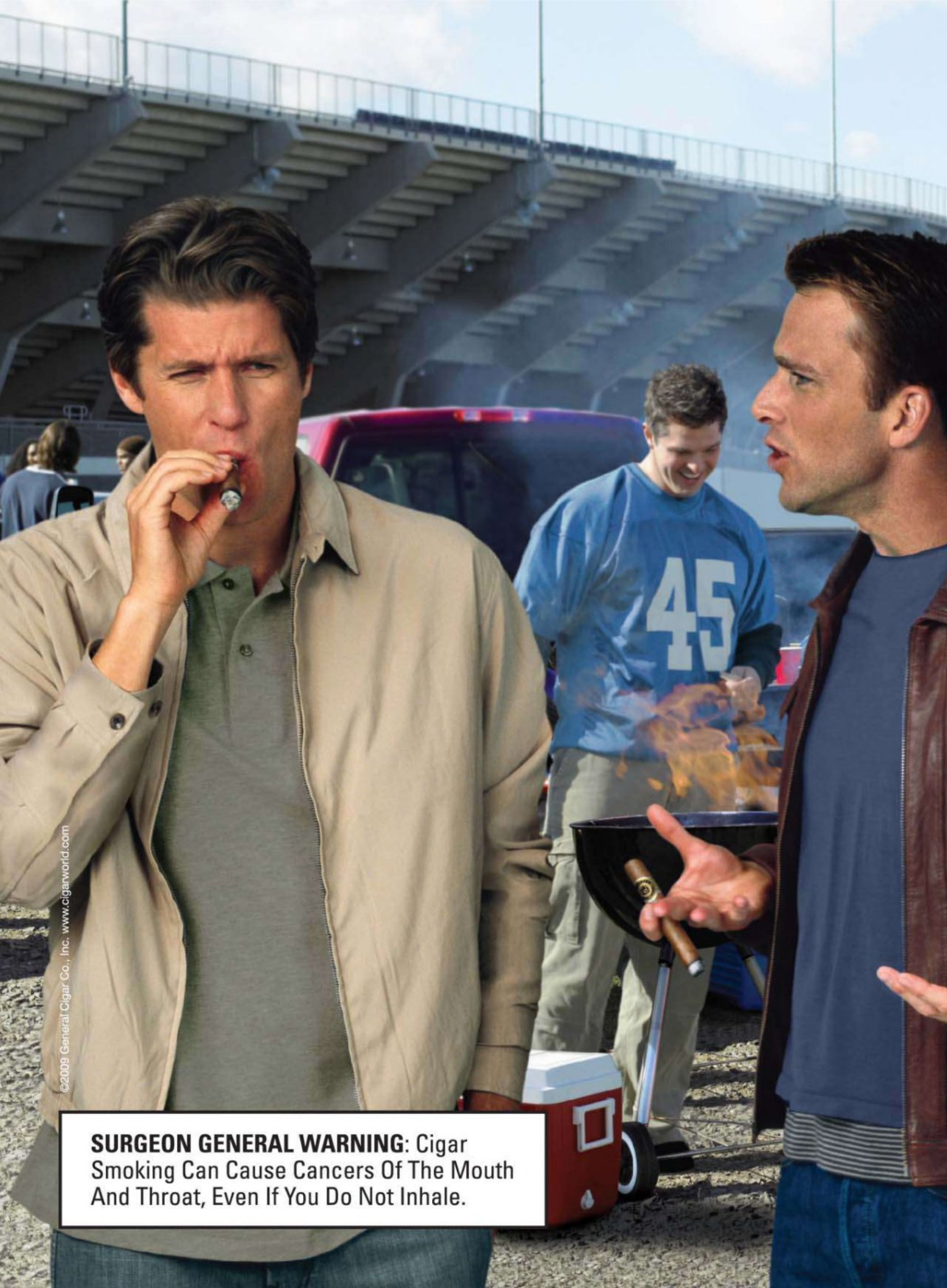
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A suspension bridge links the granite spires of the Mount Nimbus via ferrata route in BC's Purcell Mountains. p. 110

THE BEST of 2009

Despite the economy, this year produced scores of great new ways to invest your leisure time. Our annual list covers the very best places to hike, bike, and paddle; where to stay; and what to drink afterward.

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ON THE COVER

Alec Baldwin, photographed exclusively for *Men's Journal* by **JAKE CHESSUM** on August 20, 2009, in Wainscott, New York. Styled by **PATTI O'BRIEN**. Grooming by **SARAH POTEPA** for Aussie at The Wall Group. Prop styling by **ZAC MITCHELL**. Baldwin wears a suit and shirt by **POLO RALPH LAUREN**.

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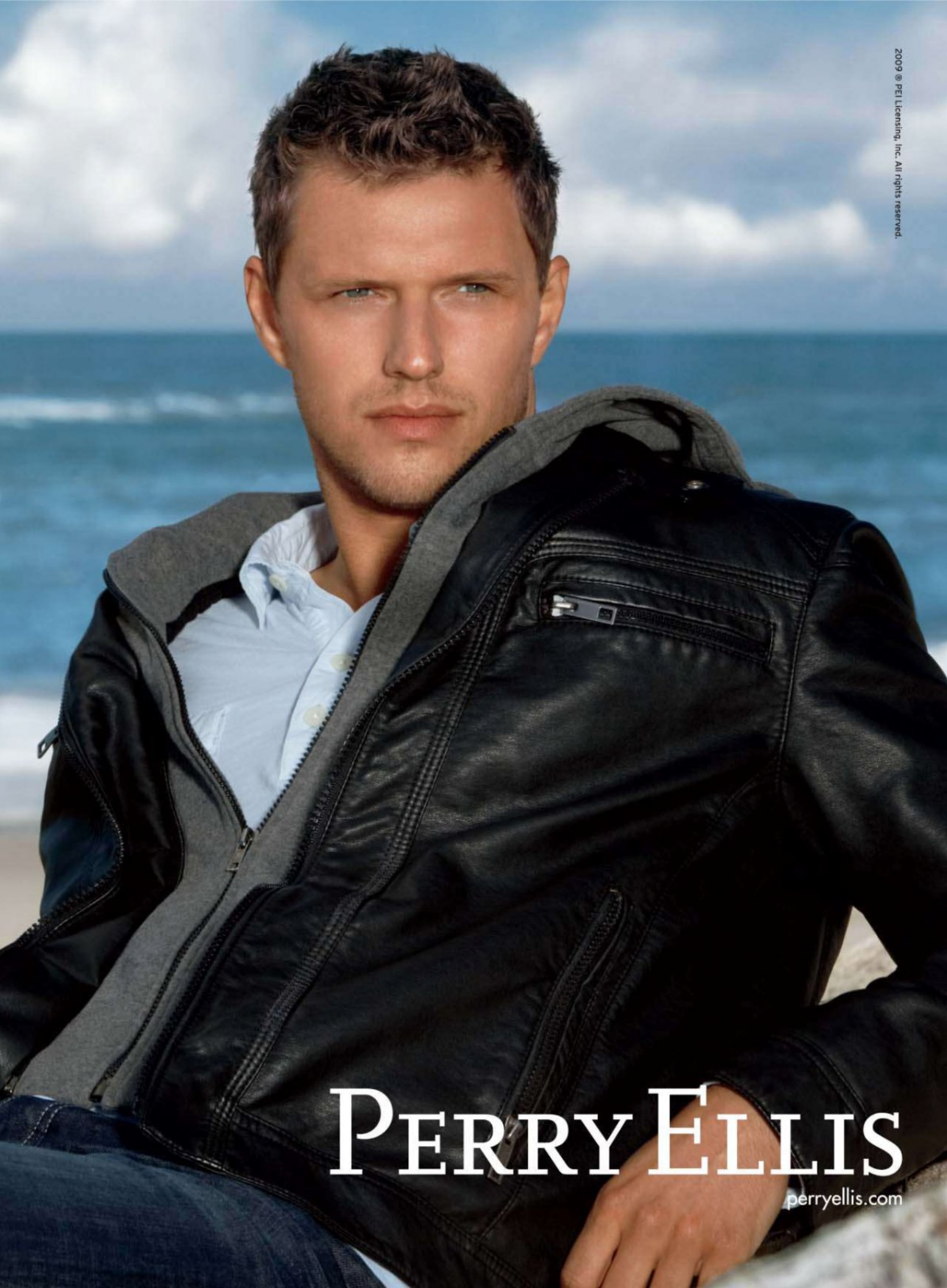
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A man with short, dark, wavy hair and a light beard is sitting on a beach. He is wearing a black leather motorcycle jacket with a grey lining and a light blue button-down shirt underneath. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background shows the ocean with white-capped waves under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The man's right hand is resting on a rock in the foreground.

PERRY ELLIS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Instant Karma

EVEN THOUGH I HAVE WORKED FOR MAGAZINES half my life, I'm never entirely certain which stories will resonate most until they are out, and few articles we ran this year had a more immediate or heartening impact than Paul Solotaroff's "The War's Invisible Wounded."

The October profile of Sgt. Kevin Workman, a formerly unflinching cop and Iraq war vet who now struggles through mornings when he can barely fix his own food, exposed the Department of Defense's insufficient response to traumatic brain injuries, or TBI. Caused by repeated exposure to improvised bomb blasts, it has become the signature wound of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Paul's account is the kind of painful, appalling story that can be hard to get through, but finish it you did, and for some readers, it didn't end there.

Just as the story hit newsstands, the Veterans Administration notified Workman that he'd been radically upgraded from "50 percent disabled" to 100. This was a huge deal, as it tripled his permanent income. The e-mail also informed him that he had a direct deposit coming from his regional VA in Syracuse, New York. It was for \$35,000 in back pay for disability, which he had no idea he was even entitled to. The day he got the news, he was down to his last \$200 and was about to be evicted from his house in Genoa, New York, for failing to secure a mortgage. Wells Fargo, the bank holding his mortgage application, hadn't responded to phone calls or e-mails for months, and the owner of the house was rightfully freaked that a deal would never get done. Then, two days after Workman heard from the VA, a Wells Fargo rep

who'd seen the story showed up on his porch apologizing for the way Workman and his girlfriend, Amy, had been treated. They now have a boiler full of oil for the winter.

It gets better: Workman, who hadn't seen his three young daughters since the day he left for Iraq, was able to spend a week in South Carolina getting to know and hug them. His ex, who'd denied him contact, relented when she read Paul's story. She now permits Workman to call them regularly. With a bit of money to spare, he bought Amy a ring and proposed to her (she said yes).

For all the good this article has done Workman, it needs pointing out that he is but one of thousands of soldiers who have yet to receive care for TBI. And Workman is still far from okay: Four years after his return from Mosul, his migraines, short-term memory loss, and episodes of dementia continue, and he has yet to be seen by a qualified army neurologist; even if he were, the brain damage is so little understood, it's not a given he'd fully recover.

Still, thanks to the VA, his loan officer, and dozens of readers who mailed him donations, Sgt. Workman has a home, his fiancée has a ring, and he's a little closer to his dream: opening a hunting lodge for combat veterans like himself so they can escape their own troubles for a while.

—BRAD WIENERS



TRIBUTE

CHARLES HOUSTON

CHARLES S. HOUSTON, WHO DIED AT 96 THIS FALL, was one of the legendary mountaineers of the 20th century, more famous for the summits he didn't reach than the ones he did. In 1953, following his brush with death after his second attempt on K2, Houston tackled the question of "Why climb?" "It is the chance to be briefly free of the small concerns of our common lives, to strip off the nonessentials, to come down to the core of life itself," he wrote. "Food, shelter, friends — these are the essentials, these plus faith and purpose and a deep and unrelenting determination."

This was the essence of Houston himself, his drive, his humanism, his reservoir of optimism and resilience. When he quit Himalayan climbing at age 40, he turned his energy to the study of the effects of altitude and became the dean of mountain medicine. For 12 years he led the High Altitude Physiology Study on Mount Logan, the highest peak in Canada. I was one of eight guinea pigs recruited for the HAPS season in 1975. We were based at a camp on the wild shores of Kluane Lake in the Yukon Territory.

One day toward the end, some of us took off for a scramble up Sheep Mountain overlooking Kluane Lake. We climbed for hours. We saw blond grizzlies and the transcendent light of the St. Elias ice fields. Then we undid our hours of climbing in 60 joyful minutes of descending on a voluptuously soft and untracked scree slope. At the bottom we flung ourselves into the icy lake. When Charlie drove up, I asked him where he'd go if he had no data to glean, no reports to write. "I'd go that way," he said, gesturing not to the south and west, where the great peaks and all but impassable ice fields of the St. Elias Range lie, but to the north — to the green, round-shouldered wilderness of the Kluane Range. "You could walk for days. There's nothing back there. God's country." He was 62 that summer. The glorious ordeals of his youth in the extreme parts of the world were done, but not what he once called "the lure of unknown regions beyond the rim of experience." —CHIP BROWN



Workman in Iraq (left); with his fiancée, Amy

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY THE CHARLES HOUSTON COLLECTION; JEFF RIEDEL; COURTESY KEVIN WORKMAN

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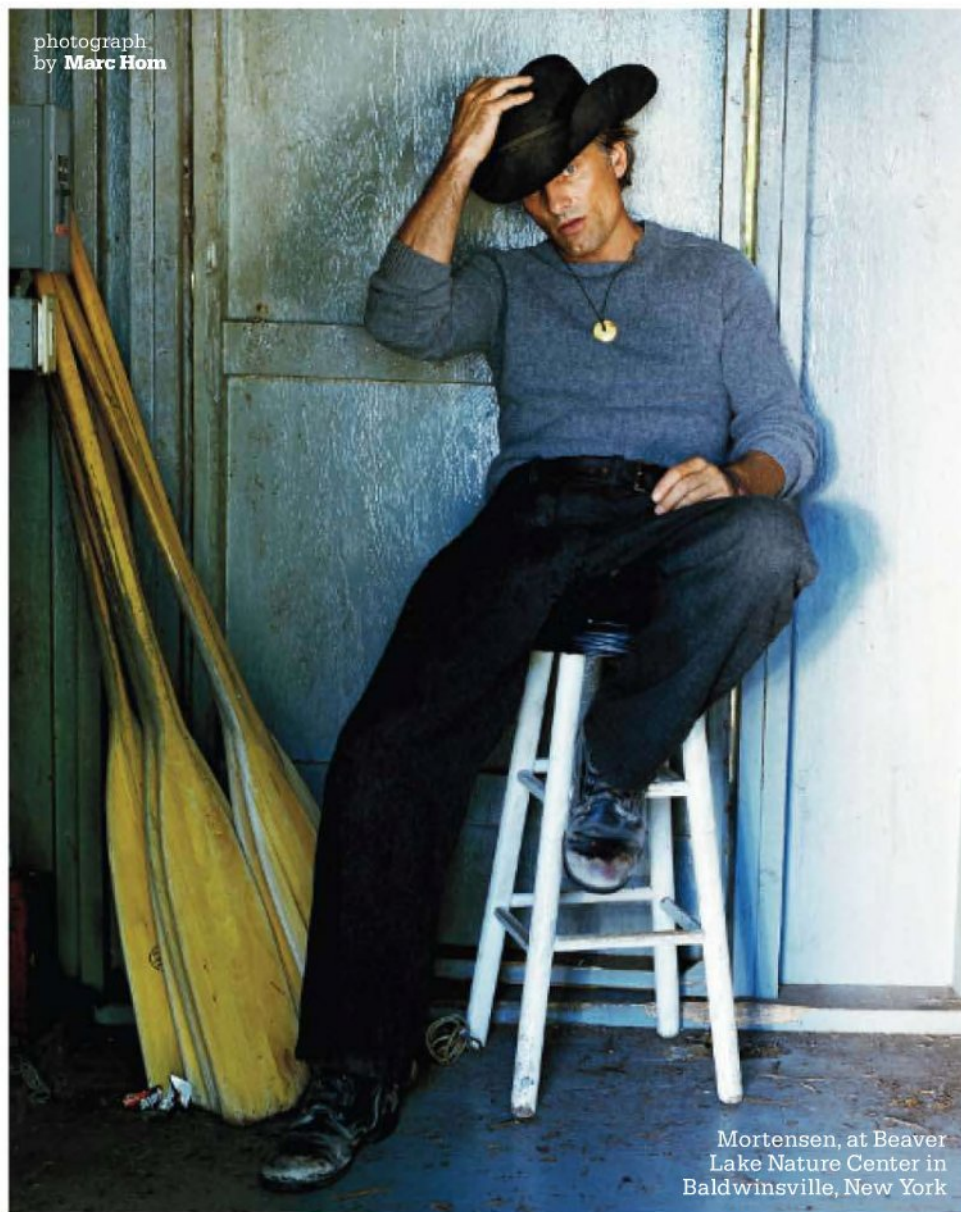
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Mortensen, at Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, New York

I LOVED THIS ARTICLE ON VIGGO MORTENSEN ["A HISTORY OF Defiance," by Dan Mirth, October]. He's been my favorite actor for years, and the one word you can consistently use to describe him is *genuine*. He does not take roles just to keep his name out there — he takes roles he believes in.

—Monica Dobbs, Glens Falls, NY

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THE WALKING WOUNDED
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR

"The War's Invisible Wounded" [by Paul Solotaroff, October]. I am an Iraq vet who was medically discharged from the army in 2006, and I still suffer from some of what Kevin Workman deals with. Your article conveys what the nation needs to know about the real toll of war. With luck it will help some vets un-

derstand that they are not crazy and that there is some help.

—MATTHEW BRAFFORD
Killeen, TX

THE THIRD MAN CONUNDRUM
"THE MYSTERY OF SURVIVAL" [by John Geiger, October] is fascinating. One quibble, though. Geiger says, "The Third Man

requires a willing partner." Perhaps a "successful partner" is more apt. There may have been many who were willing and in the frame of mind to see and work with the Third Man, but who were ultimately unsuccessful. We'll never know.

—MARK RIPPY
Fairbanks, AK

TRYING TO EXPLAIN GOD'S intervention with science would be laughable if it weren't so pitiful. Postmodern man is too afraid to admit that there is a God, because to do so would imply that we have to be accountable to a higher power for our actions. We need to get over ourselves; we're not special enough to make this defense mechanism up ourselves.

—PHILLIP DAVID WILSON
Portland, TN

BEST-BEER-TOWNS BACKLASH

I LOOK FORWARD TO THE October beer edition of *Men's Journal* every year ["America's Best Beers"]. And Christian DeBenedetti and Seth Fletcher once again did well on their picks this year. However, you have gone more than flat in your top five beer towns. How New York made it, let alone Philadelphia and Chicago, is beyond me.

—MATT MUELLER
Minneapolis, MN

TO NOT INCLUDE ANY COLORADO town — such as Fort Collins, Denver, or Boulder — is blasphemy. Just like that Pace Picante Sauce ad: "New York City?!" A top beer town should have not only avid beer-drinking fans but also some of the top breweries in the country within its boundaries.

—DAVID BUTLER
Greeley, CO

PORTLAND IS THE BEER capital of the United States. Get your facts straight.

—SEAN STUTZMAN
Portland, OR

READER ON THE RUN

I HAVE NEVER BEEN MUCH of a runner, but for some reason your article "20 Weeks to Your

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First Marathon" [by Grant Davis, September 2008] stuck with me. So I kept the magazine and read it every now and again until I got tired of reading and started running, using the workout listed in MJ. On October 4, 2009, I lined up for the Portland Marathon. Four hours and 41 minutes later I achieved something I never thought possible: I finished, and without walking.

—SCOTT A. BESEMANN
Portland, OR

IN DEFENSE OF SPORTS WIVES

EW. "A GUIDE TO SPORTS WIVES" [by Matt Taibbi, October] is a stunningly unpleasant, misogynistic article. What was the point? To mock sports wives for seemingly inevitably falling into one of several disgustingly sexist categories?

—SARA ELDRIDGE
Brooklyn, NY

RECIPE RESCUE

AFTER LOOKING AT THE beautiful picture of braised short ribs, elbow macaroni, and baby leeks, I decided to prepare this meal ["How to Cook Like a Man," by Manny Howard, October]. I went to the farmers market in the rain and got the baby leeks. I came home to look up the recipe on mensjournal.com, but...where is it? I found the recipe for the macaroni but nothing for the baby leeks. Before they go bad, please send me the recipe and fire the proofreader. Were you just teasing me?

—PATRICIA TAYLOR
Boxborough, MA

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for noticing our egregious omission. Our fast-and-easy baby leeks recipe is now available at mensjournal.com/elbow-mac-and-cheese.

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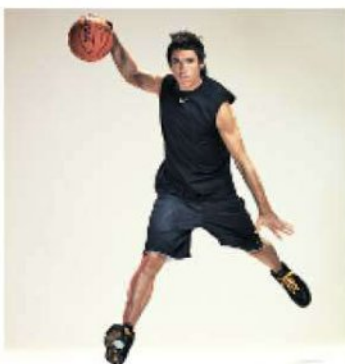
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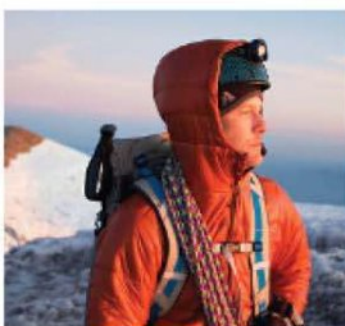
"The Assist: Living Sugar-Free," PAGE 86

This fall, two-time NBA MVP Nash approached *Men's Journal* about writing a column, saying he wanted an outlet for the health and fitness knowledge he's accumulated over years of staying in game-day shape (at 35, he still pushes the ball relentlessly up the court). We're glad he did, especially since the Phoenix Suns guard has become a champion of both health and eco-consciousness, opening two environmentally friendly fitness centers in Canada over the past few years. This month Nash discusses his newest obsession: avoiding all refined sugars. "I've been doing this for about eight months now and haven't been sick once," he says. What else does he have on tap? "The three staples of good health are nutrition, sleep, and exercise," Nash says, adding that within those "there are miles and miles of content that I'm passionate about."

Jake Chessum

"The Spectacular Failure of Alec Baldwin," PAGE 96

After spending more than two weeks planning a photo shoot on Alec Baldwin's boat in the Hamptons, Chessum hit a roadblock. "On the day of the shoot, Alec told me, 'There's no fucking way I'm going out in that boat. It's too hot,'" recalls Chessum, 42. Luckily, Chessum's friend was staying at a nearby summer house. "I suggested that we go to my friend's pool for the shoot. He looked at me, and I could tell he was thinking, 'You scruffy bastard. Your friend doesn't have a pool.'" Baldwin relented, and the photographer, crew, and actor drove to the makeshift set, which was packed with sunbathing grandmothers and unsuspecting kids. "It was totally random but worked out great."



Will Cockrell

"A Mysterious Death at the South Pole," PAGE 146

"I'm considering taking up detective work," says Cockrell, 36, a *Men's Journal* senior editor who, after two years of reporting, believes he's stumbled onto an important clue in a decade-old South Pole mystery. "The weirdest part is that after all the interviews and research, I was handed what I believe to be the most compelling piece of the puzzle just two weeks before the story went to press." After eight years as a climbing and kayak guide in places such as Patagonia and Alaska, then six more as a journalist in London, the San Francisco native moved back to the U.S. in 2007. This month, Cockrell also edited MJ's guide to stocking your own home bar (page 64). "Oddly, both stories are about drinking heroic amounts of alcohol," he says.



NEW THIS MONTH AT MENSJOURNAL.COM

In "The Battle for the Roan Plateau," Bill Gifford reports on Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar (left), who has so far lived up to his white hat, conservationists say, by scrapping a massive clear-cut logging plan for Oregon, nixing a destructive mining practice, and yanking fire-sale leases to oil and gas companies in Utah. But now the former Colorado senator and rancher faces a litmus test in his own backyard. mensjournal.com/salazar

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photograph by **Scott Spiker**

wish you were here

Crater Lake National Park, Oregon

SKIING ALONG THE EDGE OF AMERICA'S DEEPEST LAKE, PHOTOGRAPHER Scott Spiker used a radio remote to snap this self-portrait. "You need skis with edges that can grip the side of a snowy slope really well when you're out here," he says. "It's a sharp drop all the way down to the water, which is almost 2,000 feet deep." The 30-mile trip to circumnavigate the lake can take anywhere from two to four days in the winter months, but a shorter seven-mile cross-country trek from Rim Village to Spiker's viewpoint can be done in just a few hours. "It's the bluest lake I've ever seen," says Spiker. "On nice days you might see a few folks, but after going a mile or two around the lake, you're pretty much on your own." Crater Lake National Park (nps.gov/crla) is about a 140-mile drive southeast of Eugene, Oregon. —DACUS THOMPSON

NOTEBOOK

DEC 2009 / JAN 2010



WHAT'S NEW

WINTER 2009-2010

Shark Utopia

In setting aside 240,000 square miles of ocean, Palau has created the world's first shark sanctuary. See some of the area's 130 species during Fish 'n Fins's live-aboard dive trips (\$130 per day; fishnfins.com).

"We all know that Christmas is the real culprit here, the true source of the mania, depression, and clinical hysteria."

—P.J. O'Rourke, from *The Dreaded Feast: Writers on Enduring the Holidays* (\$16), a collection of essays and diatribes — from Mark Twain, Hunter S. Thompson, David Sedaris, Charles Bukowski, and more — that celebrates the Ebenezer Scrooge in each of us.



Pure Agave

With the nights of salt-shot-lime behind you, it's time to start drinking real tequila. You won't find any finer than Casa Dragones's near-perfect 100 percent blue agave joven tequila (a mixture of blanco and extra-añejo), which is unbelievably smooth but has a deep woodiness as textured as a single malt (\$275; casadragones.com).

SHANE TRIBUTE

When Shane McConkey fell to his death last spring, he left behind a wife and daughter, but no trust fund. K2 has added Shane graphics to its pontoon skis, with proceeds going to his family (\$699; k2skis.com).



Going Back to Alive

Join survivor Eduardo Strauch on an Andean expedition to revisit the site of the infamous 1972 plane crash that was the basis of the book and film *Alive*. Don't worry, lunch will be provided (\$3,450; alpineexpeditions.net).



AIR PACK The Float 30 150-liter airbag backpack utilizes an odd avalanche phenomenon: Snow actually pushes you up as gravity pulls you down. Think of it as a flotation device for skiers (\$499; backcountryaccess.com).

Three New Travel Apps



AT&T NAVIGATOR (\$10/month, free to download): AT&T's turn-by-turn software pipes in audio commands, giving timely traffic updates and turning cues just like a GPS. The best part: Tap the "Traffic Optimized" feature for an alternate route to avoid delays.



SKYVOYAGER (\$15): More than 300,000 stars and an image database from NASA fill a comprehensive atlas of the night sky that not only shows you everything you can (and can't) see, but also provides sky charts for 100 years in the past or future.



GEOCACHING (\$10): This hobby of hunting objects with a GPS used to require large, dedicated devices. No longer. Integrated terrain maps, compass connectivity, and an infinite treasure list are all part of this app's package.

RECORD BOOK



Across the Country, Barefoot

Tellman Knudson's feet are getting a tough education in our nation's crumbling infrastructure. In a bid to raise \$100 million for charity (and capture a world record), Knudson is running barefoot across the U.S. We caught up with him near Rothrock State Forest in central Pennsylvania, where his dogs weren't barking as much as you'd think.

ONE WITH THE EARTH

Knudson is more connected to the ground than ever before. "Not only are you aware of every angle your foot is landing on, you're aware of temperature shifts and the granular changes in the texture of the surface — every little tiny piece of sand." His terrain of choice? "New concrete in a clean downtown."

THE DAILY GRIND

It isn't just Knudson's soles that adapt. The absence of shoes affects his whole body, especially the lower calves. "They've become extraordinary shock absorbers. They take all the impact the skeleton took when I wore shoes." But it also adds flexibility, which he says results in a lighter, looser run.

Knudson's left foot, at mile 129

STAYING ON TRACK

With a goal of 3,400 miles in 99 days, Knudson has to average an ambitious 34 miles every day. His first week on the road, he averaged only 14 miles a day — a slow start, but one he planned for, knowing his feet would need time to adjust. Now one month in, he's adding a mile each day on the road and getting back on pace.

WINTER MIGRATION

Predictions of an early winter in the Midwest forced Knudson to change course and cut much farther south to skip scheduled trips through chilly Chicago and Cleveland, where nasty weather could stop him in his tracks. "I can handle the cold — I'm part Norwegian," he says. "But what I can't handle is the extreme wetness, the slush."

CALLUS CARE

Knudson uses Gorilla Glue to patch the constant cracks and cuts. Daily foot massages from his crew chief also help when "the road turns to razors" and he feels like "a really old man, with a really old walker."

PLAYING IN TRAFFIC

"When you're running barefoot, you feel vulnerable," says Knudson, who began running shoeless only five months before departing. "Being out there with giant dump trucks flying by definitely increases your level of awareness. It's just your body on the road." —KARIN KRISHER

Follow Knudson at runtellmanrun.com.

Strait Surfing



On September 9, **Ben Morrison-Jack** and **James Weight** completed the first kitesurf across Bass Strait (between Tasmania and Australia) in just over 11 hours — a record for small craft. The duo cruised at 18 knots over 13-foot swells for the first three hours of the 161-mile journey, but their pace slowed as gusts slackened above King Island. Then Morrison-Jack's right leg went numb. "It was like I had a dead bit of meat hanging off me," he recalls. Forced to swim the last half-mile to Apollo Bay when the wind died altogether, they reached land an hour later than expected. No matter, says Morrison-Jack: "I think it added a bit more intrigue."

—JORDAN REED



Buy This Car, Break a Land-Speed Record



When Steve Fossett disappeared in 2007, he had more than 100 land, air, and water records to his name. But he left a big project unfinished: a jet-car just weeks away

from testing. Its driver deceased, the project was mothballed — a potential speed record sealed in time. Now it's up for sale.

Granted, the car has been around the block. In 1996 it ran 675 mph under the

stewardship of Craig Breedlove but went up on two wheels and veered off course. In 1997 its engine ingested a rock just before Richard Noble's team leaped ahead of the sound barrier. But the car is no lemon. Fossett and chief engineer Eric Ahlstrom

spent a year rebuilding it from the ground up. With a GE J-79 turbojet engine and a thrust to weight ratio of 2:1, the car may be capable of speeds of 800, 900, or even 1,000 mph (asking price is about \$4 million; project100.com). —MARTIN MULKEEN





Hiking the
Teton back-
country near
Jackson Hole,
Wyoming

ACCESSIBLE BACKCOUNTRY FOR EVERYONE

Better equipment, newly expanded terrain, more guide services, and greater access options make finding powder near major resorts easier than ever. *by* MARC PERUZZI

IT'S SKIING'S CRUELEST IRONY: THE FAT-SKI REVOLUTION made it easy for the masses to discover the joy of powder, but with everyone tearing it up the morning after a big storm, resort trails get tracked out in an hour. Fortunately there's recourse: Think outside the ropes. "The backcountry used to be an option only for hardcore skiers," says Chris Davenport, who skis off piste for a living. "But thanks to advances in technology and safety, almost anyone can do it."

For one thing, most manufacturers are producing equipment that works as well inbounds as it does in the out-of-bounds deep stuff, meaning there's no need to break the bank on new gear to leave the groomers. On top of that, many resorts and outfitters now offer safe transportation to the backcountry via snowcat or snowmobile — as well as helicopter — plus guides to help you navigate the terrain. So if you're more of an intermediate ■ than an expert ◆◆ skier or snowboarder, this is the year to make it happen.

HIKE IN...38 | HIRE A GUIDE...40 | SNOWCAT...40 | GUIDE YOURSELF...42 | HELI AND HIKE...44 | SNOWMOBILE...48

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HIKE TO THE BOWLS

To get a taste of the backcountry while still inside the resort, take a little trek to a run the lifts don't serve.

TOP CHOICE
ASPEN HIGHLANDS, CO
THE HIKE
HIGHLAND BOWL
DIFFICULTY ♦♦

WAY UP ABOVE THE GLITZ and the ritz of Aspen sits one of North America's powder-skiing treasures — the hike-to terrain of Highland Bowl. The

line of trekkers — as many as 100 if the snow is good — kicking steps up the bootpack at 12,000 feet may seem like a Masochists Anonymous field trip, but the international accents mixed with the rhythmic breathing of charging locals should tell you something: This is gonna be worth it. Since the Bowl is avalanche controlled, you don't need any

2010
POWDER
GUIDE



Exploring the gladed terrain of Aspen Highlands



EXPERT ADVICE: "My favorite lines in the Bowl are the G-Zones — steep north-facing glades on skier's right," says **CHRIS DAVENPORT**, Aspen local and star of seven Warren Miller films. "They hold the best snow, even a week after a storm. But on a powder day, head for Ozone. It's steep and wide-open — great for big powder turns."

ESSENTIAL GEAR



The **K2 HardSide** features a gentle tip rocker and a 98mm waist for ample flotation in resort powder, but because it still has guts and a 21-meter turn radius, it's fun on the groomers, too. Most important, though, is how lightweight it is for hiking. \$875; k2skis.com

specialized gear or beacons to head out. The moderately difficult hike (you'll be breathing pretty hard if you're not used to the altitude) takes half an hour at a good clip, but the payoff is 270 acres of wrap-around bowl that, thanks to its elevation and northern exposure, traps cold, fluffy snow. Better yet, because there's no lift, there aren't enough skiers to bump it up. In midwinter that means you'll find either chalky, steep snow or over-the-head dust. \$96; aspen.snowmass.com



RUNNER-UP

TAOS SKI VALLEY, NM

THE HIKE
KACHINA PEAK

DIFFICULTY ♦♦

TUCKED INTO THE Sangre de Cristo mountains, Taos rises 12,481 feet above the desert and receives the lightest, driest snow in the U.S. And while the mountain is almost always crowd-free, which guarantees powder turns days after a storm, this season's snow should be particularly good thanks to a weak El Niño in the Pacific. To take proper advantage, trek 10 minutes up Highline Ridge for steep shots separated by dense forest. Once that's tracked up, hike 50 minutes to the summit. \$69; skitaos.org

This Season's Best Ski Videos



Any powder skier worth the flakes in his beard must watch **SWIFT, SILENT, DEEP** (\$25; swiftsilentsdeep.com). This true story documents backcountry skiing's rise from illegal cult to mainstream passion through the eyes of the ultra-local rebel ski bums known as the Jackson Hole Air Force. In any other year, it would easily be the best film on skiing, but it just so happens that this year **THE EDGE OF NEVER** (\$30; theedgeofnever.com) was also released. It follows the intergenerational story of the late extreme skier Trevor Petersen and his son Kye, who travels to Chamonix to attempt to ski the same line that killed his dad. Both films are full-on documentaries that celebrate the push beyond the gates while speaking to the soul of the sport. But if what you need is more ski porn than story line, check out **FLAKES**, the latest from Powderwhore Productions (\$27; powderwhore.com), and then go full jack with **IN DEEP** (\$28; skimovie.com), the most recent release from Matchstick Productions, featuring Swedish skier Henrik Windstedt throwing an impossible backflip while skiing the backcountry of Haines, Alaska.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY K2 SKIS; MICHAEL PRIMICCO; COURTESY CHRISTIAN PONDELLA/RED BULL PHOTOFILES; SCOTT MARKWITZ; MAP: ALAN KIRKICH

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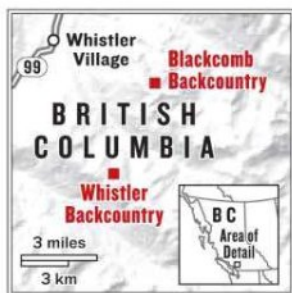
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TOP CHOICE
WHISTLER
BLACKCOMB, BC
THE OUTFITTER
WHISTLER ALPINE
GUIDES BUREAU
DIFFICULTY ■

SEVERAL NORTH AMERICAN resorts have taken a cue from their European counterparts and instituted guiding operations that lead intermediate skiers and boarders beyond the gates with a large margin of safety. "They get to ski stuff they'd never see — or would probably die trying to see — without a professional showing them where to go," says Rob McCurdy, whose Whistler Alpine Guides Bureau offers daily seasonal tours of the continent's best terrain. If you crave powder turns, the guides can take you and a group of four to five friends to glades off the backside of Whistler Mountain. If



you want to learn the ins and outs of ski mountaineering, the pros can teach you how to hike in on skins and work with a rope team to ascend, then rip big turns down 800 to 1,200 vertical feet of wide-open, glaciated Blackcomb Mountain. And if your goal is



EXPERT ADVICE: "Midwinter or later is the best time to come to Whistler and ski with us," says **ROB MCCURDY**, who has owned the Whistler Alpine Guides Bureau since 2000. "By then, a lot of the crevasses are bridged in with heavy snow, so we can tour out beyond the gate in Blackcomb Glacier and hit the biggest lines."

RUNNER-UP JACKSON HOLE, WY
THE OUTFITTER JACKSON HOLE ALPINE GUIDES
DIFFICULTY ◆

IT'S BEEN 10 YEARS SINCE JACKSON HOLE OPENED its gates, quadrupling the size of the ski area for those with the skill to harvest it. For everyone else, pros from the resort-based Alpine Guides will gladly show you around. A typical day involves a ride up the tram, an avalanche-beacon practice session, route discussions, and then tons of powder. All that nets you a whopping 12,000 vertical feet of skiing in the cold and sheltered snow of the resort's surrounding canyons. \$625; jacksonhole.com

to become more skilled in the backcountry, the outfit offers the Beyond the Boundaries clinic (\$370; *equipment included*), which is two days of learning how to use beacons and probes, dig avalanche pits to make sure snowpack is stable, and rescue your buddies in the event of a burial. *from* \$210; whistlerguides.com

ESSENTIAL GEAR



For tackling the backcountry — even with guides — it's smart to buy and learn how to use a shovel, avalanche probe, and Avalung (a device that funnels your CO₂ behind you in case of a burial). **Black Diamond's Bandit Avalung kit** has you covered. \$260; blackdiamondequipment.com

2010
POWDER
GUIDE



Exiting a snowcat to enjoy 1,200 acres of powder near Monarch Mountain

RIDE A SNOWCAT

Afraid of flying? You and a large group of friends can still reach fresh powder via these school buses on treads.

TOP CHOICE
MONARCH
MOUNTAIN, CO
THE OUTFITTER
MONARCH
SNOWCAT TOURS
DIFFICULTY ■

ONCE JUST GROOMING MACHINES, snowcats are now used by a number of U.S. resorts for the sole purpose of hauling skiers and snowboarders into the backcountry. Although the terrain accessed by these rigs isn't extreme by a long shot, for skiers who have never ventured



onto snow that isn't compacted by thousands of skiers, a day spent floating powder turns just outside the resort's gates isn't a bad introduction. Monarch, a small ski resort that sits

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ESSENTIAL GEAR



Your everyday slippery-soled boots are terrible when you're hiking out on a rocky spine or scrambling in and out of a snowcat. Part alpine touring boot and part beefy resort boot, the **Garmont Shaman** features sticky rubber soles like a hiking shoe but the downhill performance of a race boot. \$735; garmontusa.com

on Monarch Pass a few hours southwest of Denver, happens to get the best snow of any resort offering these excursions — it averages 350 inches each year. The day begins at the rental center, where you can pick up a pair of powder boards (all-mountain skis won't provide enough float in this powder). Then, after a ride up the lifts at the resort and a warm-up run on Monarch's new inbounds hike-to terrain,

you, 11 other guests, and two guides jump into the cat. After turning on your beacons (they provide avalanche gear and show you how to use it), you'll blast up to 20 runs down as much as 1,400 vertical feet of open terrain and glades. And since only one cat runs on 1,200 acres, there's always good snow to be found. \$250 (lunch included); skimonarch.com



EXPERT ADVICE: "If you can pull it off, it's better if you book the whole cat with skiers of your level so you never get slowed down," says six-year Monarch guide and ski patroller **CHAD HIXON**. "My buddies from college get together every year here. Cat skiing is about little reunions and untracked powder."

RUNNER-UP

KIRKWOOD, CA

**THE OUTFITTER
EXPEDITION KIRKWOOD,
POWDER CAT TOURS**

DIFFICULTY ♦

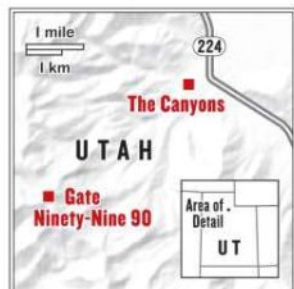
KIRKWOOD IS LEADING the backcountry push among California resorts, boasting the state's only resort-based cat-skiing operation. Here, groups of 11 get four runs apiece in the Martin Point (steep, with trees) or Red Cliffs (mellower, with open bowls) zone, led by guides who will supply avy gear. *from \$150; kirkwood.com*

TAKE YOURSELF OUT OF BOUNDS

More than 20 U.S. ski resorts open their gates. With an avalanche safety degree in hand, you can take advantage.

**TOP CHOICE
THE CANYONS RESORT, UT
THE OUTFITTER
N/A
DIFFICULTY** ♦♦

MOST SKI AREAS THAT adjoin public lands managed by the Forest Service are now allowing permanently open access to the backcountry — with warning signs: YOU'RE ENTERING UNCONTROLLED AND UNPATROLLED TERRAIN. But if you plan your trip right and hit up the Utah Avalanche Center for one of its three-day level-one classes



(*\$225; utahavalanchecenter.org*), you should be prepared enough to leave the resort without a guide. And since Utah's Wasatch Range is blessed with upward of 500 inches of snow a year, the Canyons is the perfect place to start exploring on your



EXPERT ADVICE: "Make sure that when you push out of the gate, you're headed east or west," says **DAVID MELLON**, a product designer at Black Diamond Equipment in Salt Lake City who personally creates much of the equipment used by backcountry skiers. "If you're not, you'll end up far from the resort and have to hike out."

RUNNER-UP CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN, WA

THE OUTFITTER N/A

DIFFICULTY ♦

THANKS TO AMPLE SNOWFALLS AND GENERALLY STABLE snowpacks, Crystal's backcountry, like the Canyons, is safer than average. New this year, the resort has teamed up with nearby International Mountain Guides to offer avalanche-safety clinics (mountainguides.com), making your experience even safer. The hike-to skiing in the (avalanche-controlled) North and South Backcountry zones offers everything from tight tree skiing to wide-open faces, while the terrain of Silver Basin and Three Way serves up chutes and glades. \$60; skicrystal.com

own (the frequent snowfall helps keep the snowpack from rotting from below and forming hard slabs that become sliding avalanches). Pick a sunny day for your first time in the backcountry — there will still be plenty of powder and you'll be able to see obstacles and avoid getting hurt. Most of the out-of-bounds hike-to terrain is accessed through the resort's Ninety-Nine 90 gate. After a five-minute trek, there's a wide range of options to choose from: chutes, trees, and even small cliff drops. All of it feeds you back into the resort — just in time for happy hour. \$81; thecanyons.com

ESSENTIAL GEAR



If you're heading out to the backcountry a lot, a beacon is a must. The digital **Tracker avalanche transceiver** has big arrows that light up, leading you to a buried buddy fast. \$290; backcountryaccess.com

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Blend heli-skiing with ski touring to maximize your powder turns — without going broke.

TOP CHOICE
CANADIAN ROCKIES
THE OUTFITTER
MICA HELI, BC
DIFFICULTY ♦

HELI-SKIING HAS ALWAYS been the powder skier's ultimate plunder, but the downside is the price. To access similar (big, untracked) terrain on touring gear, you typically

have to mount a full expedition complete with 50-pound packs and winter tents. Enter heli-touring, a combination of the two. Nowhere is this trend better exemplified than with Mica Heli; in three seasons of heli-touring it hasn't experienced a single down day. The helicopter flies you to the top of your first run, then your legs do the rest, knocking off multiple laps in bowls or repeatedly working



EXPERT ADVICE: "We do traditional heli-skiing, but the heli-touring is a better deal — and not just because it's cheaper," says full-mountain guide and Mica Heli president **PAUL NORRIE**. "It's a cooler experience because we always take heli-touring clients to places we haven't been before, which gives them a chance to ski first descents."

a ridgeline or glade. But with the big approach taken out of the equation, you're fresh enough to get in a lot of skiing. Snow quality going south? The heli is on call for a quick drop into a new zone for still more vertical. Finally had it? Retreat to the Mica Lodge for a well-deserved hot tub. \$700; *micaheli.com*



RUNNER-UP SAN JUANS, CO

THE OUTFITTER
SILVERTON GUIDES AT SILVERTON MOUNTAIN
DIFFICULTY ♦

AT NORTH AMERICA'S ORIGINAL "BACKCOUNTRY SKI area," the Silverton Guides started renting a helicopter to control avalanches in its permit area but then figured, "What the hell? We've got guides and a helicopter. Let's use them." This season, backcountry skiers at Silverton can boost their access with one ride up on the helicopter for \$160, or two lifts and guided touring for \$320. The terrain includes peaks above 13,000 feet and, depending on the strength of your group (four to eight skiers), descents of everything from gnarly chutes to gentle, immense faces. *silvertonmountain.com*

2010
POWDER
GUIDE



Relaxing on the deck of the Mica Lodge after a long day of heli-touring



What Fuels Travis Rice

Pro snowboarder Travis Rice, star of the new shred flick *Neverland*, had just spent 26 days camping and boarding in Glacier Bay National Park when he took our call. One thing he's learned from all his time trekking and riding in the cold: Make sure you have plenty of calorie-dense, easy-to-eat food. Here's what he packs.

- "We get **MREs** from an army buddy. The food quality isn't that great, but they're 4,000 calories. You just add water, and this little heat bag cooks it raging hot."
- "**Grapes** are great because they give you the healthy sugar you need, and when they freeze, they still taste good."
- "I carry **green tea** in a thermos. Its caffeine is subtle, so it gives me energy without a crash."

YOU



TREE-GRUB BRÛLÉE.

IN?



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Renan Ozturk | Patagonia, Argentina | Crimptastic Hybrid Jacket | Photo: Tim Kemple



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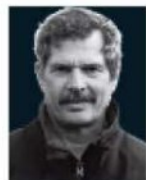
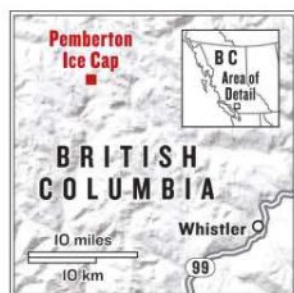
SNOWMOBILE UP

These machines are the ultimate high-speed lifts, allowing skiers to get up to 30 runs a day.

TOP CHOICE
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ICE CAP, BRITISH
COLUMBIA
THE OUTFITTER
TOTALLY AWESOME
ADVENTURES
DIFFICULTY ■

TWENTY MILES NORTH OF Whistler Blackcomb lies the Pemberton Ice Cap, a glacier 10 times bigger and not nearly as crowded as the famous resort — the busiest days see fewer than 100 visitors, meaning post-storm powder lasts two weeks instead of two hours. Aptly named Totally Awesome Adventures runs guided snowmobile trips to the glacier, where expert groups can tackle harrowing chutes, 50-degree pitches, and 10 to 12 epic, 2,000-foot descents in a day, while intermediates will hit fewer runs on gentler

slopes. Everyone scores treeless BC powder, waist deep or deeper depending on the last dump. All you need to bring is your best powder skis or snowboard, a helmet, and a backcountry pack appointed with your favorite snacks. Bringing a crew of friends with similar abilities doesn't hurt either; TAA works only with private groups so that no one gets slowed down by beginners or left in the dust by pros. \$380; totallyawesomeadventures.com —STEVE MAZZUCCHI



EXPERT ADVICE: "If you're skiing Whistler, book a weeklong trip to make sure there are some sunny days," says veteran TAA guide **RAY MASON**. "On the sunniest one, come see us, since we can go out only on the nice days. And if you snowboard, I recommend that because it's easier to carry a board on the sled than skis."



Scoping a line in the British Columbia backcountry

RUNNER-UP LICK CREEK SUMMIT, IDAHO
THE OUTFITTER PAYETTE POWDER GUIDES
DIFFICULTY ■

TWO HOURS NORTH OF BOISE YOU'LL FIND THE BACKCOUNTRY paradise known as the Lick Creek Summit. Departing from a couple of spacious yurts — where you'll sleep on a multi-day trip — Payette Powder Guides takes groups of two to six by snowmobile to whatever level of terrain you desire, from mellow intermediate glades to 8,900-foot Sawtooth Peak. "The Blackwell forest fire ravaged the area in 1994, leaving us open ski slopes with just enough trees to provide some definition and hold lots of snow," says PPG co-owner Marty Rood. After several runs, you can enjoy a beer on the sundeck of your yurt or recover from a day of 3,000-foot descents in the sauna. *day trips from \$175, multiday trips from \$495; payettepowderguides.com* —S.M.

Yes, New England Has Backcountry Too

Long before western resorts opened up their gates, eastern skiers were hiking into the much safer (just bring your compass) backcountry. While the terrain's not as sexy as the West's, there are still powder stashes to be found.

THE RESORT:
JAY PEAK, VT

THE TERRAIN:
THE DIP AND BIG JAY

Two great options: The Dip (far skier's right of Stateside) is a short but steep gladed run that dumps you on the road (a shuttle can take you back). More advanced skiers seeking longer runs should hike from the summit of Jay Peak Resort along the ridgeline to Big Jay. jaypeakresort.com

THE RESORT:
CANNON MOUNTAIN, NH

THE TERRAIN: **MITTERSILL AND TUCKER BROOK**

Adjoining Cannon, the abandoned Mittersill ski area still has remnants of old cut runs that can be skied and traversed right back to the Cannon base. For a longer outing, the Tucker Brook Trail (far skier's left of Mittersill) spits you out at a trailhead where you can hitch a ride back. cannonmt.com

THE RESORT:
WHITEFACE, NY

THE TERRAIN: **THE SLIDES**

Whiteface sports the biggest vertical in the East, and some of the gnarliest sidecountry lines are in the Slides. Due to avalanche danger, this hike-to-area was recently off-limits, but now ski patrol opens the terrain when conditions allow. Expect a couple of mandatory small airs and tight turns as you make your way down. whiteface.com

THE RESORT:
SUGARBUSH, VT

THE TERRAIN: **THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN**

The resort bought a snowcat with a cabin on it for some fancy midmountain dinner deal. Then it saw the machine's real value: Now, on powder days, 12 skiers can load into the cat and head up for first tracks. It's not the backcountry, but with nobody else out there, it feels like it. \$75; sugarbush.com



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GUIDE YOURSELF WITH GOOGLE EARTH

Before packing for your next vacation, check resorts' claims, find back roads, and track down hidden attractions...all from your own desktop. *by* MICHAEL BEHAR



BLAZE TRAIL

Finding spots that are invisible from the trail, such as this remote hot spring in Yellowstone, is one advantage to having a satellite do your legwork.



PLAN ROUTES

Before road trips, search the Google Earth Community for interesting stops along the way, like Sacajawea's grave site in Wyoming.

TEST CLAIMS

Is your Mexican resort "steps from the beach" as advertised or actually a few blocks away? A brief flyover will expose any resort's lies.



AT ITS CORE, GOOGLE EARTH IS A 3-D digital atlas that lets you scrutinize our shimmering blue orb at every angle and every scale, down to a linear distance of less than 10 feet. So before departing on a recent two-week kitesurfing expedition to Cuba, I used the software to scan vast stretches of desolate coastline abutting cerulean-blue shallows. The sheer number of potential unknown spots was enticing enough that five buddies and I planned our trip purely on what a bunch of satellites spied from space. All told, we drove 1,300 miles through a wild and undiscovered kitesurfing Shangri-la so magnificent that I now understand how haole surf pioneers felt when they stumbled onto the North Shore for the first time. But you don't

need to be traveling that far to make use of the technology — Google Earth can spice up domestic road trips, too. As I was heading to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, I used a layer feature to track down Sacajawea's little-known grave site, tucked into the corner of an overgrown cemetery on a road near the Wind River Range. The best part is you don't have to be a coder or cartographer to tap your inner explorer. The first step is to download the Google Earth software (earth.google.com), which uses its own browser that you access from your desktop. Noodle with it for a few minutes and you'll soon be doing Supermanlike laps around the globe. Then take an hour or so to learn the Layers, Ruler, and Placemarks features — the expedition essentials you'll need to master before actually leaving your desk.

LAYERS: GET INFO ON ANY PLACE

1 Layers give you relevant information geotagged to a specific location. You can watch animated swell forecasts in real time, or view geotagged video and photos from other users (which is how I found Sacajawea's grave site). There are layers for nude beaches (if that's your thing) and ones that deconstruct kayaking routes. Anyone can create layers, which are saved as .kmz and .kml files. (The best spot to find user-generated layers is at the Google Earth Community's website, bbs.keyhole.com.) When imported,

they'll appear in your Places list. Don't confuse this with Layers (uppercase), a menu reserved exclusively for Google and its official content partners. The Scatterometer Climatology of Ocean Winds layer identifies the windiest spots in monthly increments. During March, it showed a windblown beach at Cayo Sabinal in Cuba. Sure enough, Sabinal was getting blasted when we showed up. After I got back, I built a file that catalogs kite spots, detailed with waypoints and photos so others can re-create my trip.

RULER: MEASURE ANY DISTANCE

2 Consider this scenario: Google Earth shows a magnificent break peeling left near an isolated beach in Nicaragua, and you're pretty sure nobody has ever surfed it because getting there demands a slog through a roadless rain forest. Ruler, which calculates crow-fly measurements in straight-line segments, tells how far you'll have to portage your longboard and indicates the cardinal heading to keep you walking in the right direction. Personally, I prefer the Path option: A mouse click lets you drop different points, so no matter how much you meander, there's an accurate tally of distance. Path helped me plot the scramble route in Yellowstone that followed a dry creek bed, visible in satellite images, to a cluster of hot springs four miles from the nearest trail. I also was able to pinpoint the perfect campsite that was impossible to see on the ground, in an adjacent meadow surrounded by thick lodgepole forest.



21°40'58.81"N;
77°12'32.66"W

2.86 MILES

21°39'29.21"N;
77°10'33.73"W

PLACEMARKS: MARK YOUR TERRITORY

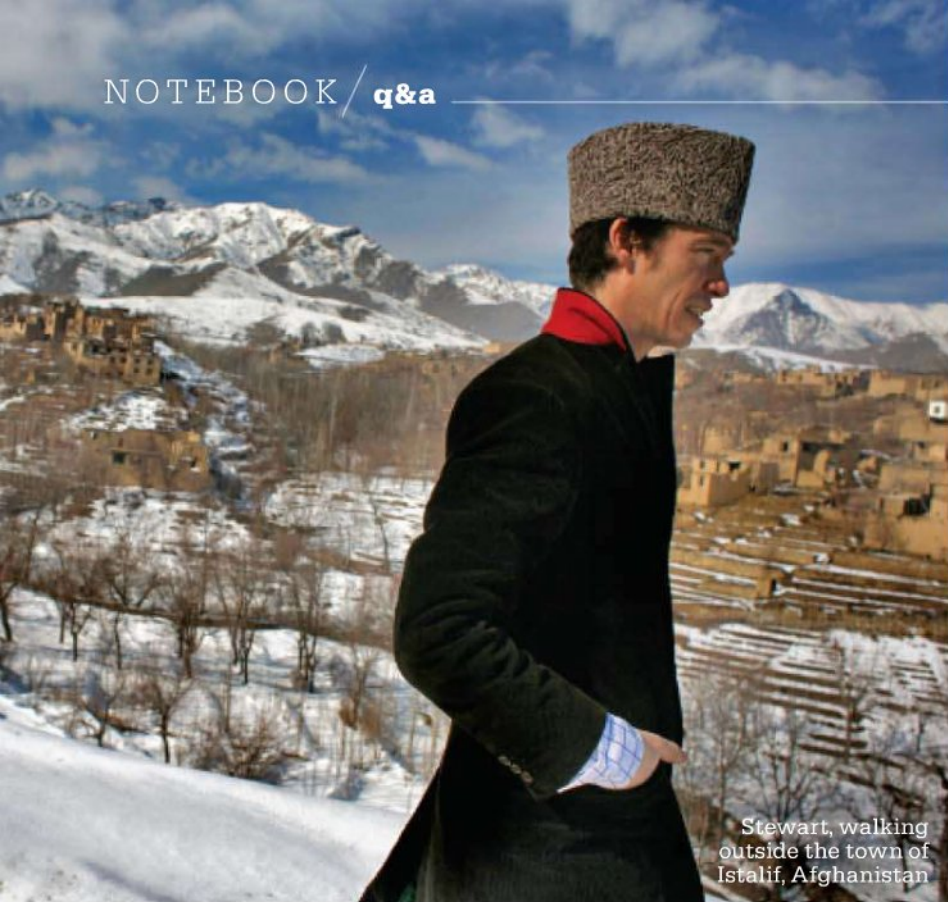
3 Placemarks are the digital equivalent of sticking a pushpin in a map (the icon is, in fact, a pin). These marks store longitude and latitude data, elevation, and even notes. Before heading to Cuba, I used Placemarks to flag beach turnoffs and potential promising surf breaks and lagoons. For an analog backup, I jotted the waypoints directly onto a driving map, which became handy in Cuba for homing in on our targets. When we were near one of our waypoints, I compared the coordinates on my Suunto X10 (a wristwatch navigator that fooled customs agents – GPS devices are a big no-no in

Cuba) with those I'd recorded on our map. At times we lost hope after driving for hours through mangrove backwaters – then a fork in the road would appear, exactly where we'd observed it on Google Earth, and lead us to yet another sugary beach. When I'm bored at work, I scan the globe looking for my next dream vacation, then store the Placemarks in a menu folder titled "Someday." I recently fingered a remote coast in Mozambique that gets nuked by winds all summer – it's now on my shortlist of future kitesurf expeditions. Pretty damn cool for a desktop app that doesn't cost a dime.

A PARTNER IN CRIME

The perfect companion to Google Earth is Garmin's Oregon 550t. With ExpertGPS software (\$60; expertgps.com), all Placemarks and personalized routes are transferrable to and from Google Earth; plus it has a 3.2-megapixel camera that geotags photos for uploading to layers (\$600; garmin.com).





Stewart, walking outside the town of Istalif, Afghanistan

OUR MAN IN KABUL

British former soldier Rory Stewart sees a path to success in Afghanistan, and it doesn't involve more troops.

IN 2002, WHILE WALKING THE width of Afghanistan (as part of a broader 6,000-mile trek across Asia), Rory Stewart drank tea and conversed with local headmen, slept on mud floors, and got shot at — eventually turning his trek into *The Places in Between*, a spare, lyrical account that became a bestseller. In 2003 he was appointed deputy governor of two provinces in southern Iraq, an experience that led to *The Prince of the Marshes*. Since then, Stewart became CEO of a charity preserving traditional Afghan architecture and landed a plum professorship at Harvard. But as the 36-year-old former tutor of Princes Harry and William prepares to run for a seat in parliament, it's his radical thinking on U.S. policy in Afghanistan that has Americans taking notice.

MJ: You've said that President Obama has become "boxed in" on Afghanistan. What alternative solution would you suggest?

RS: America needs to be respectful but also a bit more detached. To imagine that it has the military power to stabilize a country like Afghanistan once and for all, or to transform its economy, or to create an effective, legiti-

mate state, is a mistake. The U.S. needs to be more honest about its own limitations. One of the things that's great about America is that kind of can-do attitude. But in relation to Afghanistan, there's a certain understanding that, to some extent, no, you can't.

But what can we do other than escalate?

Acknowledge the relationship of the United States to a country that is as poor and fragile as Afghanistan is after a 30-year war. It's a bit like being with a person who's been through a traumatic situation — you have to lower your expectations of how quickly they can change. You don't want to pump in more and more troops and money, which is equivalent to rapid electroshock therapy. What you want is a patient, long-term relationship. In order to sustain that, I suspect we need to have much fewer troops.

Won't people see that as a surrender?

You don't have a moral obligation to do what you can't do. We try to do what we can, but almost certainly the best scenario we can hope for is some kind of political settlement, where instead of a civil war or partition, the Taliban share power.

What do you think of Richard Holbrooke?
I'm an enormous admirer, even though we disagree on everything, especially Afghanistan policy. He's somebody I'd like to be more like — he's blunt and bold, and he doesn't let anybody get away with anything. I'm just not at all confident he's gonna pull this one off. I think this may be, sadly, one of the times he's wrong.

You're often compared to T.E. Lawrence or Byron. Who was the bigger influence?

I was actually more interested in reading biographies of Lawrence than anything written by him. He was a great man, but not a great writer. Byron definitely had an influence on me, but a negative one: One reason I decided to walk across Asia was that Byron didn't. It annoyed me that he was always climbing on a bus, focusing on monuments instead of talking to people.

Any tips to pass on to fellow travelers?

Number one, always wear two pairs of socks. Number two, excessive politeness is always the answer. Number three, to ward off a pack of angry dogs, it's not necessary to pick up a stone. All you have to do is *pretend* — just stoop and touch the ground.

If your aim is to have a lasting influence on Afghanistan, why run for parliament?

If my main objective were to influence Afghanistan, I could remain at Harvard. There I'm lucky enough to talk to really influential people and play some role in the debate. I'm becoming a member of parliament because I believe in it and want to represent a real constituency. It's England's largest, stretching from the Scottish border down to the Yorkshire Dales. For somebody who likes walking, it's a dream constituency.

Would you walk Afghanistan again today?

I would be tempted, because I'd want to show that Afghan communities remain incredibly hospitable, that they're able to run their own security. It would be possible, but maybe not the same route — I might have to skirt some areas of war — but I could do it, and that suggests something about the gap between the way the media reports Afghanistan and what life is actually like.

So is visiting Afghanistan realistic?

Sure it is. Up in the Wakhan Corridor, the tongue of land in the northeast, you can go on great two-week treks, and that's pretty safe — the Aga Khan Development Network has trained local guides there. Recently I've been ski touring with skins on my skis in the Hindu Kush; sometimes I even go by myself. Grab your skins and head to Afghanistan — that would be my advice.

—INTERVIEWED BY ROB BUCHANAN

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Strahan's ability to get to Tom Brady set up the Giants' Super Bowl XLII win.

THE ART OF THE SACK

For Michael Strahan, the NFL's single-season sacks leader, burying a quarterback in the turf was always about more than brute strength. It was really about the mental domination of the opposing lineman. *by* BOB SMILEY

ON THE SNAP YOU PUSH OFF WITH YOUR outside foot, take two steps, and drive your helmet into the defender's chest, forcing him to stagger backward. Six more steps and the quarterback is on the ground, as you whisper in his ear, *I'm gonna be here all day...*

Michael Strahan made it all look easy, though one quick glance at his hands reveals it wasn't so. His right pinkie twists inward like a question mark; several knuckles remain swollen two years after his last game. For roughly 60 plays a game, the star New York

Giants defensive end did battle with a lineman 80 pounds heavier than he was, who did anything he could get away with, from chop blocks to eye gouging, to stop him. On the off chance he fought through, there was no guarantee the quarterback — or the ball — would still be there, but being denied only made him hungrier. Strahan was talented. And fast. And strong. But so were lots of guys. Here's what allowed the current Fox analyst to tally 141.5 sacks and a single-season record (22.5) that still stands.

I. LEARN YOUR OPPONENT'S TELLS

During the season, "I'd watch four to five hours of film a day at work," Strahan says. "Then another two to three at home." The intense study was all to pick up on opponents' poker-like tells, from the linemen who would always look in the direction they were blocking to a certain quarterback who, to this day, subconsciously claps his hands right before he calls for the snap. But Strahan's best parlor trick was knowing what play the hated Eagles would run based solely on Pro Bowl lineman Jon Runyan's foot.

"If Runyan's foot was straight and his heel was up a little bit, he was coming out on a straight-ahead run block," Strahan explains. "If his heel was high, he was dropping back for a pass. If he had his heel on the ground turned in, he's pushing off to go down inside. And if he had his heel up, turned out, he's coming out to reach block."

Once Strahan internalized that knowledge, Runyan was a beaten man. Against the Eagles in 2001, Strahan broke through to sack Donovan McNabb three and a half times in the first half alone — each time lifting McNabb up a few feet before slamming him to the turf. "There's really no better feeling than hitting another man and hearing the breath leave his body," Strahan reminisces. "It's just phenomenal to hear that *uhhhhh...*"

2. CONFUSE THE HELL OUT OF HIM

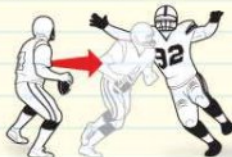


To Strahan, today's best defensive ends, the Vikings' Jared Allen and the Titans' Kyle Vanden Bosch, show up with a plan of attack. Strahan's plan was to begin every game with four bull rushes straight into the lineman's chest. "I had no thought of the sack. I was just setting the guy up," he says. "Guys fear power a lot more than speed. If I run around you, you say, 'He's just faster.' If I run through you, you go, 'Oh, my God.'"

After establishing his dominance, Strahan started playing chess. "The fifth time I come up to you, I make it all look the same," Strahan says. "When these guys are afraid to get pushed back, they squat, sitting down on their weight and sticking their arms out. That's when I can chop his hands, grab the outside shoulder, and go around."

That's just the beginning. "By rush number 10 or 11, I'll come up, fake bull rush, and take one step outside," Strahan explains. "You lean outside, then I club you and come back inside. Now I've hit you over, outside, and inside — you're done. You have no idea what's happening." It was all too much for Patriots lineman Nick Kaczur in Super Bowl XLII, who by the third quarter was so baffled, Strahan says, "he didn't know what to expect."

3. AIM FOR WHERE THE QB WILL BE



Just beating a lineman won't get you on *SportsCenter*. You still need to run down the passer. From Strahan's left-side position, right-handed quarterbacks — almost all of them — could always see him coming, giving him even less room for error. "I always had to keep the passer on my inside shoulder," Strahan says. "You don't want to get too aggressive and cut the angle too hard, or he could step back and get around you. And you don't want to come too deep, or he'd step into the pocket."

But this assumes a quarterback always throws from the spot where he's standing, which, unless he's Drew Bledsoe, he rarely does. "One quarterback might feel pressure and always step up into the pocket," Strahan says. "So when I get around the corner on that guy, I've got to make sure I can tighten the angle and come down two or three yards closer to the line of scrimmage." Ultimately, you're not aiming for where the quarterback is, but for where you think he'll end up.

4. WRAP HIM UP AND BRING HIM DOWN



There is nothing Strahan hated more than losing a sack because the quarterback tossed the ball out of bounds: "That makes me want to get up and choke the quarterback right there on the field." Instead, you need to treat him like a rodeo cowboy treats a steer: "Clamp his arm. Strip the ball. Bring him to the ground."

Late in the third quarter of Super Bowl XLII, as the undefeated Patriots drove to the Giants' 25-yard line, Strahan got a perfect jump on a third-down snap and went from the line of scrimmage to crushing Tom Brady in less than five seconds. As fast as it happened, Strahan still vividly remembers the voice in his head yelling: "Tom, do not throw the ball! I got you. I got you!" He got him, and a Super Bowl ring shortly thereafter.

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photograph by
A. J. Mueller

BRYAN NESBITT

The 40-year-old designer-turned-general manager of Cadillac says he prefers indulging in experiences over cluttering his life with “things.” Just ask his wife.

EVERY DESIGNER DREAMS OF SCULPTING AN ICONIC SUPERCAR, but Bryan Nesbitt's greatest successes thus far have been inexpensive four-doors that deliver high design to a mass market — cars like the Chrysler PT Cruiser, which he designed with Bob Lutz, and the Chevy Malibu. “Front-wheel-drive cars don’t inherently have proportions that instantly drive appeal,” Nesbitt says, yet his 2008 Malibu reinvented a staid Chevy as a crisp, muscular sedan that won North American Car of the Year honors. Now that Nesbitt is behind the wheel at Cadillac, we’re keen to see if the man who made the Malibu sexy can take GM’s top brand to places it’s never been before.

Concept

▼ The **Saab Aero-X** is one of the greatest projects that I ever participated in. We put a lot of energy into visually articulating a story and vision, and we had the luxury of time to execute it. Concept cars end up being the purest expression of the brand.



Jeans

Jeans are a priority. I have my **G-Star** or **7 for All Mankind** night jeans and then **Hugo Boss** for work. My wife lets me know when I get too metrosexual.



Household item

▲ We have the **Michael Graves ironing board** from Target. I love that everything has a design standard now. There’s an expectation that it’s got to function well, but, gosh, can’t you make it *look* better?

Sanctuary

◀ I’m starting to believe the only sanctuary we have left as men is the car. Which is why I really like cars with great interiors and a high level of comfort. Mine’s the **Cadillac CTS-V**. The car ends up being a stress reliever for me, an environment where I can think.

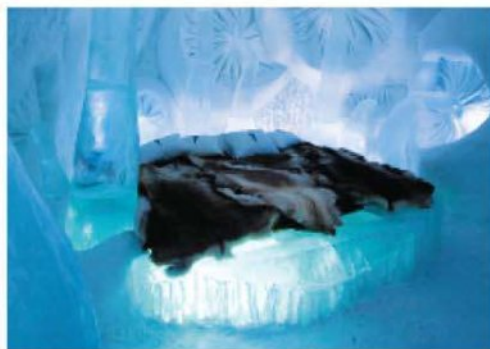


Snack

▲ I’m a huge licorice guy, and I’ve been on a quest to find the best. A buddy from Australia gave me some **Kookaburra**. It’s soft and has the best taste, especially if you like strawberry.

Service

Whoever invented **dry cleaning**, my hat is off. I dry-clean everything, even my jeans. I find it a huge complement to the busy lifestyle. Mine has a 24-hour code so I can drop off anytime.



Hotel

▲ The **Icehotel** in Jukkasjärvi, Sweden. Every year they get artists to go in and redesign the rooms and figure out how to light and carve the ice. It’s got a crystal beauty to it, yet it’s all natural.



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Tool

▲ We got **baby wipes** when we had kids, and they just proliferated. I started using wipes for everything — Armor All wipes for cars, glass wipes for TVs and the Mac. Then there are the household wipes, like Clorox's. I got seduced by baby wipes and never looked back.



Product placement

▲ John Hughes's films influenced me forever. All the personas I wanted to be — the guy who got the girl, the guy who had everything — were always in BMWs, especially the 318, like the one in *Pretty in Pink*. I wanted that car so bad. That's why I aspired to a BMW — I had no choice.

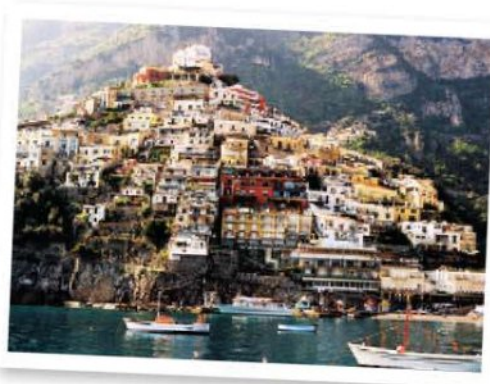


Classic car

▲ My father collected Corvettes, and I think the '63 split-window 'Vette is the all-time best, one of the great pinnacles of American design. I'd love to get one, but I'd want to hang it on the wall.

Vacation spot

► My wife and I have tried to find the world's most romantic place, and Italy's **Amalfi Coast** rates pretty high. It's got this aggressive topography, with vertical mountains down to the waves and these beautiful tiers of dwellings with a whole palette of color in between.



Chair

▼ I love the **Marc Newson Lockheed Lounge**. It's masculine and has a great mechanical beauty to it, which is the same reason that I like cars so much. It was a one-off and sold for a million dollars at auction, I think.



Book

Men Are Like Waffles — Women Are Like Spaghetti, by Bill and Pam Farrel. It validates that men compartmentalize things and keep a box with nothing in it — we need that stress relief. I get accused of being there too often. Of course, women judge relationships daily, even if you've been married 20 years.



Food

▲ Food is actually not a real priority for me; I can pretty much live off of **PowerBars** and be happy.



Bike

▼ I'm dedicated to my old **Cannondale hardtail**. I started mountain biking before suspension bikes and never ended up getting a full suspension.



Room

◀ We love staying at eclectic hotels, such as San Luis Obispo's Madonna Inn. They have themed rooms like the **Caveman room**, where everything is big slabs of stone, with a toilet just sitting there and a shower faucet hanging out of the wall. It's kitschy and a lot of fun.

Guilty pleasure

Video games, especially driving ones like *Midnight Club: L.A.* No one in my family likes cars but me. So I have to be selfish about it when I play — it's just me.



Workout

▲ My big splurge was a **Precor EFX5 elliptical machine**. It's a very good low-impact system, much better than a treadmill. I get on it every other night.

Road

I miss the **autobahn**. In Frankfurt the bankers all race to work in the morning. Everyone's paying attention; it's not, "I'm sipping coffee at 120 mph." They arrive, disengage, and then have an espresso.

Person

▼ I told **my wife** that she was my favorite thing. Then we got into a huge debate over me objectifying her. "I am not a thing!" she said. But I love her to death.



WIFE: MICHAEL PINOCO; COAST: THOMAS LINKE/AF/REXUS; ELLIPTICAL: COURTESY PRECOR; WIFE: COURTESY BRYAN NESBITT; ROOM: COURTESY TOM MEINHOLO/MADONNA INN; CAR: COURTESY GM CORPORATION; C. 1978; BIKE: COURTESY CANNONDALE; FOOD: COURTESY POWERBAR; CHAIR: COURTESY KATY MARC NEWSON LTD.; FILM: COURTESY PARAMOUNT

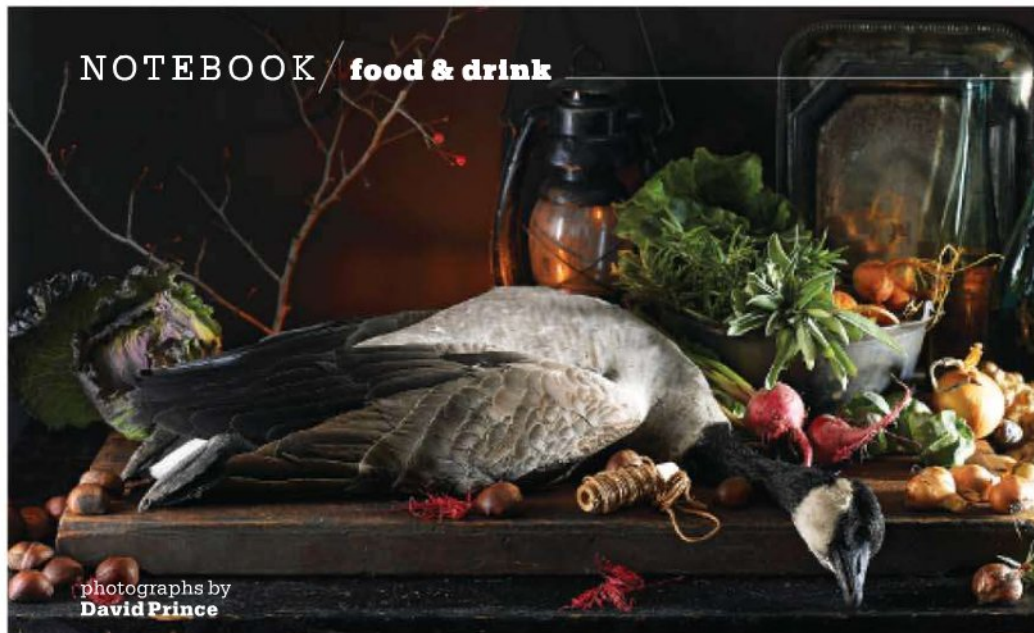


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GOOSE, COOKED

An urban nuisance, a golf course menace — but when prepared correctly, delicious.

UNLESS YOU'VE had Canada goose or venison fresh from the wild, you haven't eaten properly," says John Manikowski, author of *Wild Fish & Game Cookbook*. Although it's the traditional Dickensian Christmas dish, goose is now nearly forgotten as an entrée, mostly due to overhunting and habitat loss, which led to the bird's near-extinction in the 1960s. "It's one of the lost foods of our society," mourns executive chef Paul J. Lynch of FireLake restaurant in Minneapolis, who roasts a Canada goose from a nearby game farm

for his family each Christmas. (USDA regulations prohibit restaurants from serving wild game of unknown origins.) "It's so rich, so tender, so deeply satisfying, it's silky. You feel you're serving something special."

With protection and reintroduction programs, the Canada goose's population has exploded. But as an entrée, the commonplace Canada is exotic. The biggest hurdle in cooking a holiday goose is actually getting your hands on one.

There are a variety of great Canada substitutes, ranging from the simple corn-fed white geese sold by South Dakota's

Schiltz Goose Farms (from \$39; roastgoose.com) up to a more flavor-rich boutique-raised African Brown goose from Heritage Foods USA (from \$167; heritagefoodsusa.com). But if you want a true Canada, there's a cheaper route: "You can shoot it yourself," says Manikowski. Hunting the plentiful geese in the wild is actually helpful — last year, nearly 3 million were felled, and that doesn't even count the geese eradicated per U.S. Fish & Wildlife permit to cull overpopulation.

Although its ducklike flavor stands alone, goose also pairs well — Lynch serves his with a second protein (though not a comparatively flavorless turkey) to bookend the holiday banquet. "In deep winter it's a great complement to a ham or standing roast. It's not a meat that will be lost to the side dishes." —ELAINE GLUSAC



Christmas Bird

Paul J. Lynch's recipe for an Asian-accented holiday goose

INGREDIENTS: 1 goose, 4 tsp peppercorns, 2 tsp thyme, 4 bay leaves, 12 cloves, 2 tsp Chinese five spice, 2 tbsp salt, 2 tbsp brown sugar, 2 oz Cointreau, 2 cloves crushed garlic

METHOD: Grind spices and sugar and stir in Cointreau. Rinse and dry goose's cavity; remove loose fat and wing tips. Rub half the spice blend over the goose, half (with the garlic) inside the cavity. Wrap tightly in a plastic bag and refrigerate; after 24 hours, remove from bag, pat dry, and place on rack in refrigerator to dry for 24 hours. Before roasting, bring to room temp, pat dry, and prick the skin all over (to release fat during cooking). Place goose breast-up on roasting rack at 250 degrees. Every 30 minutes, rotate, re-prick skin, and turn the oven up 25 degrees. After 2 hours, remove pan to drain fat; return to oven breast-down. After 30 minutes, increase to 375, turn breast-up, and roast until the skin is crisp and the meat tender. Let goose rest one to three hours, carve, and serve warm.

A Gift of Class

This holiday, escape the dreaded tie or sweater you'll never wear by asking for a present that will expand your culinary knowledge — like these four great cooking classes that also make great gifts:

BUTCHERING AND SAUSAGE MAKING

There's something primal — and fundamental — about taking apart a whole animal and reducing it to its constituent steaks, roasts, and racks. Take it a step further and learn to grind the beast into sausage meat, then stuff, season, and cure links at San Francisco's 18 Reasons community center (\$60 for a two-day class; 18reasons.org).

MEXICAN COOKING

In San Miguel de Allende, a cobblestoned colonial city in Mexico's Sierra Madre, you can perfect your homemade tortillas and mole sauces in a luxe 18th-century hacienda at the Sazón cooking school. Adventurous chefs will have their way with indigenous ingredients such as *huitlacoche*, a corn fungus, and nopales, a type of cactus (\$45 for a 2.5-hour class; sazon.com).

CAMP CUISINE

There's no reason you can't eat as well in the backcountry as you do in your own kitchen. With a few off-piste tips and tricks from Boulder's Culinary School of the Rockies, the ingredients for marinated steaks, sausage-egg scramble, and layered tarts will be in your pack — and an integral part of your hunt for the perfect powder (\$75 for an evening class; culinaryschoolrockies.com).

WINEMAKING

What exactly creates the distinctive flavor of your favorite bottle? It could be the hillside, the grapes, the aging, or the magic touch of the vintner. New York's City Winery takes you through each step of the process, from bud break and harvest to barrel and blending, sending you home with a custom-blended case (\$700 for a five-week class; citywinery.com). —SARAH ROSE



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Jeff Harris

IS ORGANIC BETTER?

Organic labels on wine don't guarantee better quality — or even best eco-practices.

NOW THAT *organic* has become a magic word, many high-end wineries are spending a fortune to convert their operations. Some eagerly splash the word all over their labels, but others hardly bother to tell anyone. Understanding the reason top winemakers are conflicted about the organic hype can help you pick wines that are better for the Earth without compromising on taste.

There are four main claims you'll see on bottles: 100 Percent Organic Wine, Made From Organically Grown Grapes, Sustainably Farmed Wine, and Biodynamic Wine. The federal government regulates use of the word *organic*, so any wine labeled as organic, the most stringent of these qualifi-

cations, has grapes grown without chemical pesticides or fertilizers and turned into wine without nonorganic additives.

"Made from organically grown grapes" means what you'd think: Grapes from organic farms have been turned into wine by means that the government doesn't consider entirely organic.

As for the claims of sustainability and biodynamic farming, the federal government doesn't regulate either of these concepts. But nonprofit certification bodies are trying to ensure that wineries claiming a high degree of sustainability use low-footprint measures like composting, solar power, and recycled materials. Biodynamic agriculture tends also to include quasi-mystical stuff like planning harvests around

lunar cycles and even using various homeopathic preparations to harness the Earth's natural "energy."

But scores of high-end producers have great environmental practices — Napa's **Charles Krug Winery** is a terrific example — without bothering with any of these designations. For them, going organic isn't a fad. For starters, they depend absolutely on the environmental health of their topsoil, so they have every incentive to preserve its fertility. Then there's the little matter of quality: Chemical pesticides can get into the grape juice and screw up the fermentation yeast. Many serious artisanal winemakers feel they get the best product by emulating old-world European operations that were, by default, largely organic. This means avoiding chemicals as well as the modern use of Bentonite clay and organic egg whites to "fine" the finished wine, meaning to remove any sediment that might cloud the juice.

However, there is one additive that winemakers have been using since Roman times: sulfur. Because the Department of Agriculture classifies sulfur as a nonorganic preservative, you can make wine the way they did back in Charlemagne's day, and you still can't claim it's organic. As such, many wineries that are otherwise eco-conscious don't rate as "organic."

Ironically, some wineries actually *avoid* using the organic label, worried that consumers might be turned off and perceive the wine as low-quality hippie juice. The moral of the story: Don't fear words like *organic* and *biodynamic*. They're now seen on some excellent wines, such as **Amity pinot noir** and **Quivira Wine Creek Ranch zinfandel**. But if you care about good wine, don't buy exclusively organic or you'll miss out on some terrific Earth-friendly vintages. So long as you stick to handcrafted, small-batch artisanal wines of high quality like **Sequoia Grove** or **Fort Ross pinot noir**, you'll keep your drinking green. —DANIEL DUANE

Parker's Picks

In his new pocket bible, *Parker's Wine Bargains*, renowned *Wine Advocate* author **ROBERT M. PARKER JR.** reviews thousands of quality bottles at or under \$25. Here, he gives his four favorites:



KENDALL-JACKSON 2007 VINTNER'S RESERVE CHARDONNAY
(\$17; 90 points)

Made entirely from estate fruit, it's 92 percent barrel-fermented and aged eight months. It has notes of melon, honeysuckle, and lemon oil along with remarkable flavor and texture.



MARIETTA CELLARS NON-VINTAGE OLD VINE RED #49 (\$12; 89 points)

Full-bodied and dense with silky tannins and a lush texture, this blend of zinfandel, petite sirah, carignane, cabernet sauvignon, and syrah is the quintessential bistro/brasserie/trattoria red.



GUIGAL 2005 COTES DU RHONE (\$14; 89 points)

This blend of syrah, grenache, and mourvèdre is a head turner. Full-bodied, with sweet notes of berry fruit and some pepper, the wine is dense, chewy, ripe, and a surprisingly big mouthful.



DOMAINE DE POUY 2008 COTES DE GASCOGNE
(\$10; 87 points)

This white blend of ugni blanc and colombard smells of clover, herbs, grasses, lime, and pineapple. A delicacy, an efficacy of ripe acidity, and an invigorating intimation of peach fuzz and salt in the finish all make this year's cuvée especially appealing.



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THE ELEGANT HOME BAR

At the end of a really long day — or any day, really — it's okay to spend more time mixing yourself a drink than making dinner. *by* WAYNE CURTIS

photographs by Jeff Harris



THE "I JUST GOT HOME FROM WORK" DRINK

FITTY-FITTY COCKTAIL

A simple variation on the vintage martini

1-1/2 oz gin • 1-1/2 oz dry vermouth • dash orange bitters

Stir over ice and serve up in a martini glass.

—ALEX DAY,
Franklin Mortgage & Investment Co. bar, Philadelphia

IF THERE'S A DARK SIDE TO TODAY'S cocktail-lounge renaissance, it's the cultish devotion to obscure products, elaborate techniques, and showy drinks crafted in the high temples. Don't get me wrong: These drinks are good, and often great. But all this high-priest necromancy can make the craft of mixology seem out of reach to mugs like you and me. After all, some of the greatest drinks are the simplest drinks. But know this: You can't learn by leaning on the bar and watching great bartenders at work. You need to take up the jigger and shaker yourself — and you need the right tools. The Perfect Home Bar should be like one of those pre-liability-era home chemistry kits — containing just enough equipment and dangerous chemicals to allow satisfying and fun experimentation, but not enough to cause explosions that result in lost fingers.

TIP

The Bonzer Barspoon (\$13; cocktailkingdom.com) *pinch-hits as a muddler and puts down a layer of liquor — called "a float" — on top of your drink.*

Five Rules to Drink By

RULE 1

Have a go-to. Every man should know how to make three drinks very, very well. Master the classic martini and the old-fashioned, then pick one that suits your style.

RULE 2

Don't show off. The only things that should ever be on display in your home bar are a few of your best bottles, a bitters or two, and a vintage cocktail shaker. Keep the rest hidden away.

RULE 3

Set the mood. Mel Tormé singing "A Shine on Your Shoes" in the background makes every drink taste better.

RULE 4

Take control. Don't ask guests what they'd like to drink; pitch them the great pre-Prohibition cocktail you've already batched up. Enthusiasm will sway the most determined skeptic.

RULE 5

Never forget the garnish. The simple aesthetics and aromatics of a nicely peeled twist of lemon can turn a simple cocktail into an occasion.

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STOCKING UP

All the booze, bitters, and garnish you need

1. RUM

Drink rum for merriment. Admiral Rodney (\$50) is ideal for sipping straight, coming at you from every direction — caramel, citrus, vanilla, and a hint of the barrel. Float a teaspoon atop a mojito for extra kick.

2. DIGESTIF

Every bar needs something to settle the stomach after a good feed. Zwack (\$24) is a slightly sweet Hungarian bitter liqueur made from a complex amalgam of herbs, best consumed neat. It also bridges the gender gap — women tend to like it as much as men.

3. VODKA

Vodka is all about versatility, which is why it's the most popular spirit sold in the U.S. And why guests will often request it. Tito's Handmade (\$25) blends the clarity of a mountain stream with a nice, slightly viscous consistency that eludes lesser vodkas.



8



4. SCOTCH

Scotch will be your biggest investment (figure on \$50 or more), but a classic single malt is essen-

tial for moments of quiet celebration. Lagavulin (\$50) is a classic Islay scotch, full of that typical

smoky flavor. Remember: Scotch is a loner that generally prefers only the company of ice.

TIP

Vermouth is wine. Keep opened bottles in the fridge, and always replace them if they're not finished within a month.

5. TEQUILA

Always stock tequila for margaritas, but just check to be sure the label says 100 percent agave. I like Casa Noble Reposado (\$45-\$50), made from all blue agave, then aged for a year in French white oak. That ritual of lime and salt to knock it down? Suitable for the cheap stuff, but this deserves more respect.

6. BOURBON

If drinking had a food pyramid, bourbon would be its base — great on the rocks and plays well with others. Woodford Reserve (\$37) always hits the spot, putting every taste bud on high alert with the first sip, then comforting them with a lingering sweetness.

7. GIN

Forget gin's arranged marriage to tonic and lime. Hendrick's (\$30) recaptures the fun of early London gins, layered with complicated botanicals and flavors, like cucumber and rose. Try a classic Hendrick's martini and you'll forsake the vodka version forever.

With a Dash of...

8. MIXERS

Buy the 10-ounce bottles of tonic, club soda, and ginger ale so you open one fresh every time. Try one of the new, intensely flavored mixers like Fever-Tree's outstanding tonic or ginger beer.

9. BITTERS

Bitters are concentrated infusions of barks, herbs, and roots, and just a few drops will elevate a simple drink into a refined cocktail. Angostura has earned its longevity through quality.

10. ORANGE LIQUEUR

Essential in margaritas and cosmopolitans, Cointreau and Grand Marnier are common examples. We like a smooth, rum-based liqueur called Rhum Clément Créole Shrub.



THE "I'M HUNGOVER" DRINK

BULL SHOT

A gentle slap in the face for your taste buds

5 oz beef bouillon • 1 oz vodka • dash lemon juice • 1/4 tsp celery salt • Worcestershire sauce, to taste • Tabasco, to taste

Shake over ice. Strain into ice-filled highball glass. Garnish with black pepper and lime.

—JOHN MYERS, *the Corner Room, Portland, Maine*

For the Fridge

CITRUS: Stock fresh lemons, limes, and oranges, and look for fruits with thin, smooth skins.

VERMOUTH:

A longtime partner to gin in the martini, a dollop or two of vermouth can soften a sharp drink with a gentle mustiness. Stock one sweet (usually red,

usually Italian) and one dry (white, French). Dolin vermouths stand head and shoulders above grocery-store varieties.

MINT: For mojitos and juleps, store fresh spearmint (not peppermint) in a Ziploc bag with a dampened paper towel, and it will keep for up to a week.

OLIVES: Have a jar of marble-size pimento-stuffed olives on hand for martinis.

SIMPLE SYRUP:

Granulated sugar dissolves imperfectly in cold drinks, leaving a sludge on the bottom. Simple syrup, on the other hand, will dilute evenly.

MYTH Vodka needs to be stored in the freezer. The chill simply helps numb the taste buds, which makes any liquor go down easier.

Make the Lighter Choice This Holiday Season

The final few weeks of the year are a time of joy and celebration. Dining out with friends, nightly holiday parties and family get-togethers can easily turn into an endless gauntlet of caloric intake. Just because season opener, Thanksgiving, pays homage to gastronomic excess doesn't mean you should give in to strapping on the obligatory holiday poundage. Here are a couple of lighter choices that just might get you into the New Year in fighting shape.



Stay Hydrated

We're talking H₂O. Staying hydrated is important to keeping your metabolism ticking along at a normal rate. Sometimes the body mistakes thirst for hunger, and when you eat to satisfy your need for fluids, you're packing on unnecessary weight.

Make it Count

Cold weather that precludes outdoor activities combined with hectic holiday schedules will no doubt impact your workout routines. To counter-balance this scenario, make small increases to your normal exercise routine. Adding another set when lifting weights or spending 10 minutes longer on the stationary bike will pay dividends.



Keep a Curfew

The earlier in the day food is eaten, the more likely the body will burn those calories during the course of the day. Eating before going to bed will deposit those late night calories straight into your fat reserves. Eat a healthy dinner so that you don't get late night cravings and try eating the fat and carbohydrate rich foods earlier in the day.

Don't Deny Yourself

There's no need to take the "Eat, Drink and Be Merry" out of the holiday equation. If you indulge in moderation during your celebratory outings and cut back on the calories when it comes to everyday meals, this trade-off will work in your favor.



Per 12 oz., MGD64 contains 64 cal., 2.4g carbs, < 1g protein, 0.0g fat.



Presented by:

THE ESSENTIALS

Because it turns out making a great drink is an exact science.



◀ COCKTAIL SHAKER

Pros prefer a two-part Boston shaker (often just a shaker and a pint glass), but I suggest a three-piece. Avoid rubber seals, a cheap fix for lazy engineering. \$22; crateandbarrel.com

▶ GUIDANCE

David Embury's 1948 classic, *The Fine Art of Mixing Drinks*, is opinionated and erudite (a cocktail "should stimulate the mind as well as the appetite," he writes), for a graduate education. \$30; cocktailkingdom.com



◀ ICE TRAYS

Tovolo trays produce huge 1-1/4-square-inch cubes, which melt slower and dilute your drink with the appropriate languor. Keep cocktail ice sealed up so it won't pick up food tastes. \$14; amazon.com



▶ JIGGER

Pros use the Oxo double jigger for its quarter-ounce measure, which most jiggers lack. Don't get cocky and eyeball — you're not seeking strong, but balanced. Keep your crayon inside the lines. \$8; oxo.com



Glassware

Bigger is not better. Two small cocktails that stay cold to the final sip are preferable to one large drink that's warm and watery at the bottom. The perfect shape and weight are entirely subjective, but just three simple styles will take you everywhere you need to go.



HIGHBALL

For tall drinks like mojitos and gin and tonics; should hold about 15 ounces. The Otis by Crate and Barrel is a fine melding of form and function. \$5; crateandbarrel.com



ROCKS

Simon Pearce's hand-blown Ascutney whiskey glass feels great in the hand. Avoid double-rocks size and you'll never end up with a watery drink. \$55; simonpearce.com



MARTINI

Hold the stem, not the bowl, and keep your clammy fingers off the ice-cold drink. Riedel's Vinum glasses are perfectly proportioned. \$50 for two; riedelwebstore.com



TIP

For parties, set up a do-it-yourself mojito bar with chunks of tropical fruit and varied rums, freeing you up to socialize.

THE "A FEW FRIENDS ARE DROPPING BY" DRINK

JASPER'S JAMAICAN PUNCH

An easy-to-batch drink served by bartender Jasper LaFranc of Jamaica's Bay Roc Hotel in the 1970s

1-1/2 oz dark rum • 1-1/2 oz secret mix (see below) • 1-1/2 cups crushed ice
Blend for 10 seconds; pour into highball glass.
Garnish with orange slice and cherry.

Jasper's secret mix (make in advance)

1 cup lime juice • 1 cup sugar • Angostura bitters, 8 to 10 dashes or to taste • freshly grated nutmeg, 1/4 tsp or to taste
Stir and let steep in the fridge for 2 hours.

—STEPHEN REMSBERG, esteemed rum collector

Your First Assignment

RIGHT NOW: GO TO YOUR LIQUOR CABINET and select one bottle — a darker spirit, like a bourbon or an aged rum. Pour a couple of fingers into a rocks glass. Add one ice cube. Sip.

What do you taste? Think back to when you first watched football as a kid. You saw a mass of large men running crazily into one another. Then you gradually came to understand how each of those men had a specific role, and that how well they worked together determined the team's success. So it is with spirits. In bourbon you're tasting corn, a bit of the barrel, charred wood. You're also tasting the passage of time. Listen to what it tells you.

Now you can think about mixing in something else. Good cocktails are built upon the essence of the spirit, respectfully adding other elements (bitters, fruit, mixers) that accent rather than hide. There's a name for those who think the purpose of a cocktail is to mask the taste of liquor: schoolboys.

A real cocktail — the sort that men drink — embraces the whole spirit. Now go make one.

MYTH: Gin gets bruised from shaking. It doesn't. But generally it's better to stir rather than shake unless you're making a cocktail with citrus or egg white. Shaking introduces bubbles, which clouds a drink that wants to be crystal clear — like the martini.

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PC World Claim: PC World's tests included thirteen major cities with more than twenty tests per city from all regions of the country during a two-month period from March to April 2009. In all, 5,443 individual tests from 283 testing locations were conducted for each provider's nationwide 3G service. Testing was one minute in duration, and network performance can be highly variable from neighborhood to neighborhood. The thirteen cities included Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Denver, New Orleans, New York City, Orlando, Phoenix, Portland, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco and Seattle. Sprint won for reliability in Boston, Chicago, Denver, Portland, San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle. Sprint tied for reliability in Orlando. **America's Most Dependable 3G Network Claim:** "Dependable" based on independent third-party drive tests for 3G data on connection success, session reliability and signal strength for the top 50 most populous markets (including Puerto Rico) from January '08 through May '09. **4G:** 4G is currently available in limited areas and on select plans and devices; check sprint.com/4G for Sprint 4G coverage/device information. **Offers:** May require up to a \$36 activation fee/line, credit approval and deposit. Up to a \$200 early termination fee/line applies. **Phone Offer:** \$149.99 (two-year price) - \$100 (mail-in rebate) = \$49.99 (final price); activation required at the time of purchase for both phones on the same account in one sales transaction. Taxes excluded. No cash back. **Mail-in Rebate:** Requires purchase by 1/9/10 and activation by 1/23/10. Line must be active 30 consecutive days. Allow 10 to 14 weeks for rebate. **Upgrade:** Existing customers in good standing with service on the same device for more than 22 consecutive months currently activated on a service plan of \$34.99 or higher may be eligible. See in-store rebate form or sprint.com/upgrade for details. Pricing, offer terms, fees and features may vary for existing customers not eligible for upgrade. **Everything Data Plan:** Includes 1,500 shared Anytime Minutes per month (for calling landline, indirect, etc.). Additional Anytime Minutes: Up to \$0.40/min. Nights: Mon.-Thurs. 7pm-7am; Weekends: Fri. 7pm-Mon. 7am. Partial minutes charged as full minutes. **Any Mobile, Anytime (AMA):** Applies when directly dialing/receiving standard voice calls between domestic wireless numbers as determined when the call is placed using independent third-party and Sprint databases. Standard roaming rates and restrictions apply. Only available with select Sprint plans and while on the Nationwide Sprint or Nextel National Networks (excludes calls to voicemail, 411 and other indirect methods). **Messaging:** Includes text, picture and video for domestic messages sent or received. International messages are \$0.20/message sent or received. SMS voice messages may incur an additional data charge of \$0.03/KB. Texts to third parties to participate in promotions or other may result in additional charges. International messages are not included. **Data:** Premium content and downloads (games, ringtones, songs, certain channels, etc.) are additional charge. **Usage Limitation:** Sprint may terminate service if (1) more than 800 minutes, (2) a majority of minutes or (3) a majority of kilobytes in a given month are used while roaming. **3G:** Not all services or devices are 3G and coverage may default to a separate network when 3G is unavailable. **Other Terms:** Coverage not available everywhere. The Nationwide Sprint Network reaches over 275 million people. The 3G Sprint Mobile Broadband Network reaches over 253 million people. Offers not available in all markets/retail locations or for all phones/networks. Pricing, offer terms, fees and features may vary for existing customers not eligible for upgrade. Other restrictions apply. See store or sprint.com for details. ©2009 Sprint. Sprint and the logo are trademarks of Sprint. Other marks are the property of their respective owners.





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Although extinct there 20 years ago, more than 60 white rhinos now reside in Swaziland.

SAVING AFRICA'S BIG GAME

For decades, newsman CHRIS MATTHEWS has traveled to the tiny African kingdom of Swaziland, where once locally extinct species are now flourishing.

CALL ME PHAKAMA DUBE. That's my Swazi name, bestowed on me 40 years ago as one of the first Peace Corps volunteers in the beautiful African kingdom of Swaziland. The name means "Jump up! Zebra" — appropriate, as my most vivid encounter with Swazi wildlife involved a deadly black mamba that left me jumpy, to say the least.

I was driving my British-made Ford Escort through the Grand Valley, an arid stretch of lowveld in the country's southern district. It was late in the afternoon, so hot you could see the heat waves rising up from the dirt road.

Sweating and numbed by the heat, I barely noticed a black line across half of the roadway ahead. Suddenly I could see it was alive, heading at a sharp angle toward me. Before I could change course, the snake was at my open window, its full length springing up and in at me!

The reason I tell this story (and will again, no doubt many times, before I

end up where that black mamba clearly wanted to send me) is that at that exact moment of sheer terror, I was as sure as I have been of anything in my life that the black mamba was twisting around in the backseat of my Escort, ready to strike.

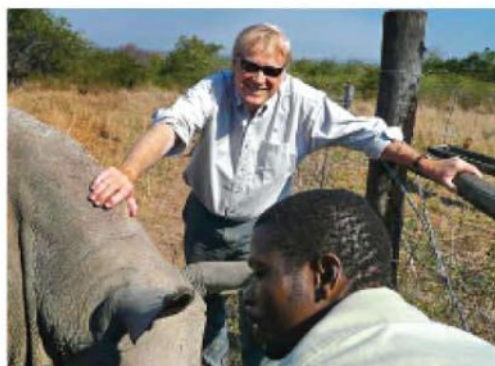
Of course, the mamba wasn't there at all. In my panic I flinched, jerking the wheel to the left and skidding to a stop. My friend Gary Rowse, who saw the whole comical scene from

the car behind me, assured me my car had blown the mamba back on its tail. That was my unceremonious introduction to the wildlife of Swaziland, a tiny, mountainous country tucked between Mozambique and South Africa, and I've been devoted ever since.

I had never heard of the place before being assigned there in the summer of 1968. If anyone had heard anything about Swaziland then, it most likely involved its head of state, King Sobhuza II, the "world's longest-reigning monarch," and his 70 wives. But I would soon learn something often overlooked about King Sobhuza, who ruled from 1921 to 1982: He was passionately dedicated to guarding his country's wildlife heritage.

Wildlife plays a vital role in Swazi culture and ceremony, from the many clans named after animals (Mamba is a common family name) to the royal family itself: The king's title is *Ngwenyama*, or "great lion," while the queen is *Ndlovukazi*, or "great elephant." Sadly, by the early 1960s both elephant and lion — along with most of the big game that once roamed Swaziland — had been hunted to extinction. One district official poignantly told us that he feared his people would soon only be able to show visitors pictures of the animals that had once been such an integral part of their lives.

Our small group of Peace Corps volunteers arrived shortly after the kingdom regained independence from the British.



FROM TOP: JULIA BAILEY/LAF/REXUS; COURTESY CHRIS MATTHEWS



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I was given the title of trade development adviser for the Shiselweni district, charged by the Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Mines with the serious responsibility of “developing the district economically.” I spent the next two years crisscrossing the country on a Suzuki 120 motorbike, teaching business to local Swazi merchants, organizing week-long business schools, and eventually putting together a national industrial exhibition visited by King Sobhuza himself. I admit, in my more wistful hours I saw myself as a bourgeois Che Guevara, selling free enterprise to Africa rather than revolution. I was lucky to come to know Africa at a time of *uhuru*, of rising national hope, but as an American, I was also savoring the soft, fading afterglow of British empire. It was a time when a young man could hitchhike up through East Africa to Kilimanjaro and back through Victoria Falls in the night, have breakfast in sidewalk cafes and bask in the sun of the Costa del Sol, and still catch bullfights in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique.

As I drove that motorbike around rural Swaziland, I never ceased to be amazed by

what a spectacular country it is, from its steeply mountainous highveld (which gave the country the nickname “the Switzerland of Africa”) to a lowveld of dry bushland that reminded me of an old Tarzan movie. It was on one of these roaming drives that I first explored the country’s wildlife sanctuaries. My pal John Catanese and I somehow convinced the ranger at the gate to let us in. But when we found ourselves staring down the horn of a rhino, we made a desperate U-turn.

AT THE BASE CAMP, WE STOOD FACE-TO-FACE WITH DOZENS OF WHITE-RHINOCEROS SKULLS.

There are reasons, we discovered, why game parks and motorbikes don’t mix.

I RETURNED TO SWAZILAND IN 1982 for King Sobhuza’s funeral, and a year later brought my wife, Kathleen, then a TV news anchor, to see this distant land that had become such a part of me. What impressed me most was how well Swaziland’s wildlife had recovered. Some devastated species were actually flourishing. Much of the

credit for the stunning turnaround goes to King Mswati III. Although rightfully criticized for prohibiting political dissent and long ignoring the scourge of AIDS, he has carried on his predecessor’s strong dedication to guarding his country’s wildlife heritage. But even more credit, I later learned, is due to a man named Ted Reilly.

I first met Reilly on a 1994 trip to cover the election of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. To get footage of the “real Africa,” I

went to Hlane, Swaziland’s second game park, and walked into Reilly’s base camp — where we stood face-to-face with dozens of white-rhinoceros skulls, the ghostly re-

sults of the Rhino War of 1988–1992 that served as Reilly’s justification for equipping his park rangers with semiautomatic rifles.

Reilly, still a powerful barrel of a man today at 71, has spent a lifetime fighting the poachers and corruption that are the relentless enemies of Africa’s wildlife. His father, Mickey, came to southern Africa to fight in the Boer War at the turn of the last century; as Ted puts it, he then “walked over the mountains into Swaziland possessing only the clothes he was

Welcome to Kendall

FROM THE BEST LAND COMES

wearing." Mickey Reilly mined tin in Mlilwane, eventually buying the land around it for farming — land filled with wildlife, including elephant and lion. But by the 1960s, the herds were gone. Recognizing that drastic action was necessary, Ted converted the family farm into Mlilwane game preserve, restoring habitats, begging animals from the king's private hunting stock, and bringing back 22 animal species that had become locally extinct. Seeing this success, King Sobhuza asked Reilly to establish Hlane game park in 1967, and a third, Mkhaya, in 1979.

But the true turning point was the Rhino War, when poachers killed as many as three endangered rhinos per day. As in other African countries, arrests were undercut by corrupt officials who let poachers get off with light or no sentences. With no deterrent, law enforcement by the rangers became futile, and the rhinoceros was nearly wiped out.

Then the king stepped in. "What will the world think of Swaziland," he asked, "if we can't protect our rangers for doing their national duty and saving Swaziland's rhinos?" Thanks to King Mswati, his country today has the best antipoaching legislation in the world: You don't get bail or even a fine — if caught, you get sent to prison for a long stretch. As a sign at Mkhaya spells out: "Be warned:

Swaziland game laws have teeth. Wildlife trade is a non-bailable offense resulting in 5–15 years in jail without the option of a fine."

The Rhino War came to an abrupt end. Since December 1992, not a single rhino has been poached in Swaziland. Today, Big Game Parks of Swaziland, reporting directly to the king, manages game reserves with a focus on the Big Five (elephant, lion, rhino, leopard, and Cape buffalo). This ends up protecting wide habitats — Mlilwane alone boasts wildebeest, zebra, blesbok, impala, warthog, oribi, grey rhebok, suni, blue duiker, and roan antelope. Swaziland itself has 120 mammal species, in excess of 500 bird species, at least 40 amphibian species, and more than 100 species of reptiles, including — I know from experience — the black mamba.

As someone who fell in love with Swaziland and has returned to share its beauty with my family, I admire the tireless work of men like Ted Reilly, who had the foresight to protect the land for future generations before it's too late. Reilly, for his part, gives all the credit to King Mswati: "If it were not for the support of the king, whose personal commitments to nature conservation are unmatched by any other head of state, Swaziland would have no game left to protect, and most tourists would simply pass Swaziland by."

See Swaziland

WHAT TO DO Swaziland's elevation range makes for diverse ecosystems, with 2,600 species of flowering plant. Although it doesn't have the rhino, lion, or elephant of other parks, Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary is the best bet for a short trip, with a wide variety of wildlife (giraffe, zebra, crocodile, hippo, etc.) in 17 square miles near the capital of Mbabane. See more remote areas of the park by booking a guided overnight mountain-bike or horseback trip (from \$138; biggameparks.org).

WHERE TO STAY Matthews's favorite Swazi hotel is the Ematjeni Guesthouse. Minutes from Mlilwane, it offers five bedrooms with breathtaking views of Sibebe Rock, the largest granite outcrop on Earth (\$70 to \$110; ematjeniswaziland.com).

SAFETY Swaziland is a very friendly country, with little crime, malaria, or animal attacks. But the tragedy of the AIDS epidemic here cannot be overstated: More than one in three Swazis are HIV-positive, and life expectancy has plunged below 32 years.

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Bright orange paint, massive knobby tires, and a suspension designed for getting big air off sand dunes: The Ford F-150 SVT Raptor is built from every little boy's dreams.

I SWERVE OFF ROUTE 78 IN CALIFORNIA, somewhere in the armpit of the Arizona-Mexico border, and steer straight for a corduroy mess of motocross whoops adjacent to the Glamis sand dunes. The Ford pickup cheerfully bounds across the terrain, its 35-inch tires cycling up and down like Jonny Moseley's legs on a mogul run. While the horizon frantically oscillates between dirt and sky beyond the edge of the hood, the springs never bottom out, and the skid plates under the front bumper never smack the sand. This is a playground meant for purpose-built dirt bikes and dune buggies, yet I'm behind the wheel of a 5,863-pound truck that anyone can drive right off a dealer's lot.

That's the strange genius of the F-150 SVT Raptor. SVT stands for Special Vehicle Team, and the Ford's performance skunk works endowed the Raptor with 11.2 inches of suspension travel up front and more than a foot at the rear. The fenders are seven inches wider than a stock F-150's to accommodate those fat tires. Fox Racing Shox, a company far better at building suspension parts than spelling, provides long-travel shock absorbers that might have been stolen off an unlimited-class Baja dune buggy. Add it all up, and you've got a truck that sees Priuses as speed bumps.

Which is why I've taken the Raptor to Glamis (despite the Ford PR guy's request that I stick to the roads). This isn't a vehicle for narrow, technical forest trails. (Hell, it barely fits in parking garages; I could hear its antenna high-fiving every overhead beam as an attendant brought it to me.) This is a truck for the wide-open West, and Glamis is about the most lawless place you'll find north of Mexico, its speed limit delineated by the Bureau of Land Management as "no faster than is safe for conditions." The Raptor's top speed is 100 mph, so there's my real answer.

When I first arrived, I stopped at the edge of the hardpack to prepare the Raptor for some proper sand slinging. There's a button on the console marked OFF-ROAD MODE that supposedly tweaks throttle response and shifting for tearing across Mother Nature's face. But what kind of off-roading are we talking about? Blasting through the dunes requires aggressive throttle response and shift points, while rock crawling calls for slow-and-steady inputs. That's why Land Rover's Terrain Response System asks you to specify whether you're on the Rubicon Trail or crossing the Sahara Desert. No such options here, so I just manually select four-wheel drive, deactivate the stability control, and lock the rear differential. Hi-ho Silver, away!

I quickly find that the Raptor has more balls than I do. On a weekend this place would be crawling with 4x4s and ATVs, but on a Tuesday afternoon, I'm the only soul in sight. With the ambient temperature at 105 degrees, driving into a sand bowl and getting trapped would make for a drier version of *Open Water*. At one point,



I stop the truck while facing downhill and get out to survey the scene. The sand is so fine that I sink in up to my knees, and as I try to extricate myself, my flip-flops are sucked off my feet. How am I driving across a surface that I can't even walk on? Bravo, Ford.

That said, the Raptor isn't the second coming of Bigfoot. I avoid the steepest hills because true dune climbing demands major horsepower — sand propelled rearward equals forward motion — and the Raptor has fewer ponies on tap than the excessive body decals would lead you to believe. It comes with a garden-variety 5.4-liter, 320-horsepower V-8 from the regular F-150, coupled to a six-speed automatic transmission with gear ratios chosen for fuel economy instead of acceleration. There's a Grand Canyon gap between first and second gears and another gulf between second and third, so the Raptor, which needs all the power its engine can muster, keeps falling out of its sweet spot.

Ford isn't going to build a special transmission for a limited-production truck like the Raptor, since using common parts is what lets them sell it for a surprisingly reasonable \$38,995. The good news: If prospective Raptor owners looking to summit Mount Ararat can wait until early next year, Ford will gladly let them pay an extra \$3,000 for a version with the new 6.2-liter, 400-horsepower V-8.

But outright power isn't really the point here. The Raptor is designed to blast across the desert at highway speeds, and that it does. In fact, it may as well have been named Tigger, because Ford's off-roader simply bounces its way through the world, oblivious to its own outlandishness. A major car manufacturer building a production truck for desert racers is like Microsoft developing a version of Office specifically optimized for astronauts — I'm not sure why they did it, but it sure is cool that they did. ■

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THE LOW POST / MATT TAIBBI

Why Sports Are for Losers

There is a dirty truth that professional sports keeps hidden from fans, i.e., guys like you and me who spend winter after winter wondering, What if? And that truth is: Watching sports sucks.

IF YOU ACTUALLY PAY ATTENTION to your life as a sports fan, you'll probably notice, as I have lately, that you spend most of your time trying to cope with the disappointment and shame of (a) desperately seeking an escape from the reality of your day-to-day life through the fantasy of sports, but finding instead that (b) in 99 cases out of 100, you're spending the off-season nursing agonizing memories of crushing defeats. "Why couldn't the wind have pushed that field goal a little to the left?" or, "If only Fernando Freaking Rodney hadn't hung that one slider, the Tigers might still be playing!"

The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, who, depending on your point of view, was either the funniest human being of all time or the most relentlessly depressing motherfucker who ever lived, perfectly described the awful dynamic of sports misery well over a century before Bill Buckner. Schopenhauer believed that the essential calculus of existence was skewed toward pain and misery. He constantly chided human beings for their baseless, ultimately self-defeating optimism, which leads ostensibly rational people to voluntarily sign themselves up for the pain of misplaced expectation in addition to the pain they're already getting in huge doses, just by virtue of being citizens of the perpetual misery factory called Earth.

Happiness and pleasure are the temporary absence of the horrible norm, he insisted. We revel in those moments, but they are fleeting, temporary, and, as it happens, seldom comparable in duration, intensity, or scope to the miserable. If you want an idea of how the pleasure-pain ratio plays out, Schopenhauer said, "compare the feelings of an animal engaged in eating another with those of the animal being eaten."

It's hard to think of a better description of a business in which each year, only one team out of 30 or 32 actually wins, while fans of every other team put their hearts and souls into rooting for months at a time, only, when all is said and done, to go home feeling like they've had their livers sliced out with a band saw. Losing is a terrible agony, comparable to the experience of that proverbial Serengeti antelope that finds itself being eaten by the yawning and merciless predator that nature has chosen to win — usually the Yankees, incidentally, whose fans experience a merely routine, relief-like pleasure in victory. ("Man, it would have sucked to come up short with our payroll!")

If you're a sports fan, the system is set up so that you always lose. In the end, that's actually what they're selling you: loss and pain.



But you don't know that, not at first. Because they get you when you're a kid. When you're stupid. When you don't even know what pain is yet.

Here's how they got me: When I was five years old, my father took me to a World Series game. It turned out to be the greatest baseball game in the history of the sport. No lie, I was really there. Game six, the 1975 World Series, I was sitting in the bleachers, just a few rows above where Bernie Carbo's home run landed. I remember my father spilling a thermos of hot chocolate on my little blue snow jacket when Pudge Fisk hit his famous homer.

This was heaven — the five-year-old version of being dunked in a vat of pure liquid cocaine and getting a 47-hour blow job from Anna Kournikova. My father could have been Adolf Hitler and Jeff Dahmer put together, could have spent the next five years bringing my mother home human heads in a burlap bag to serve for dinner, and he still would have been okay in my book for having taken me to that game. Years later I would be surprised to learn that the Red Sox ended up actually losing that World Series. Someone forgot to tell me that part. It didn't matter: I wouldn't have believed it anyway.

From that point forward, associating as I did sports with extreme happiness, I learned all the worker-elf mechanisms of fandom; learned to study statistics, even the obscure ones (I particularly remember

TAIBBI: ROBERT MAGNONE

the 406 total bases Jim Rice racked up in 1978); learned to fortify the fan experience with knowledge and expectations. Then that one year, 1978, the Sox finished the regular season in a tie with the Yankees and there was that one-game playoff scheduled at Fenway Park. My father, a reporter, promised to take me to the Red Sox clubhouse to meet Pudge and Jimmy Rice and Fred Lynn if the Red Sox won. Life was awesome! I was going to get another blow job from Anna Kournikova, and this one was going to last forever!

I remember watching that piddly-ass fly ball by Bucky Dent flutter into the nets above the Green Monster — weakly, like a badminton shuttlecock hit the wrong way by a Special Olympian whose coaches still cheered him on for trying hard — and understanding for the first time what life was all about. I felt like I'd had an Amana refrigerator covered in battery acid shoved up my ass. I'd close my eyes, open them two seconds later, try to think about something else. No dice; I'm still seeing that shuttlecock drop in the net, accompanied by that sharp pain in my side.

A month passes. Mom tucks me in at night, tells me some story not involving Bucky Dent, something about crows and pear blossoms and goodness winning out in the world. I'm not listening; I'm thinking about Don Zimmer leaving Mike (86 mph) Torrez in the game too long. I sleep poorly, wake up, hear the wind whistling through my second-floor window, and see Bucky Dent still trotting around the bases with that surprised look on his face. As in, Geez, Matt, do you believe it was me who hit that thing? I'm still as stunned as you are! I was just trying to get the ball in play! Oh, and did you sleep well, you little bitch?

It would be almost 30 years before I understood that while Pudge was the high that set me on the road to being a junkie, Bucky Dent was the reason I stayed one. The pro sports leagues, they can't sell you the winning feeling every year. They can't even promise you'll experience it once a decade, or even in your lifetime — hello, Detroit Lions and Chicago Cubs fans.

What they can promise you is pain and disappointment, and lots of it, lots of watching other cities pick Michael Jordan instead of Sam Bowie, lots of watching other places get Kobe and Shaq, while you get to pin your hopes on a plugger like Emeka Okafor or a discombobulated package of half-skills like Yi Jianlian, who once a month for the next eight years will have "breakout games" of 14 points and six rebounds.

For most sports fans, this is probably your life, and what gets you coming back is the promise that if you keep watching, Yi and Brook Lopez might throw you a win or two over a real team once in a while and that Great Botulinum-Laced Hunting Knife of Eternal Loserdom just might get pulled out of your thorax for a few days. That's why they sell the pain so hard.

That's why, Mets fans, they want to get those images of beer-fattened Phillies fans roaring and gloating into the cameras in front of you as much as possible. That's why you're still going to see tapes of Luis Castillo dropping that pop-up at least 400 more times before spring training begins. That's why every day on the way home from work for the next four months you'll hear Mike Fran-

cesa bleating about how Jerry Manuel can't make a real outfielder out of Daniel Murphy — "He can't do it, Mets fans, he just can't do it!"

And you need this why? Because the sharper the pain, the more intense your desire for even a temporary reprieve will be, and come April you'll be tuning in again for that almost-daily chance at having it all go away for a few hours. Meanwhile, between innings, your local TV network will be selling you lots of shit, including a vast array of very fattening foods that by an amazing coincidence have the curious property of temporarily allaying psychic pain by flooding your bloodstream with temporarily stupefying endorphin-inducing fats and oils.

People who pay attention to these things have long understood that in the non-sports entertainment world, the major media networks want to make viewers feel like shit by constantly bombarding them with images of people who look perfect and have lots of money and no shortage of sexual opportunities. You watch *The Hills* or *Gossip Girl* long enough, you'll buy almost any product they shove at you in the commercial break that promises to make you look, sound, or smell less like your actual inadequate self and more like the preening, carefree spokesmodels you follow on the show.

Men laugh at women for buying *Cosmo* and *Marie Claire* and all those other magazines full of pictures of impossibly thin models with perfectly fitting clothes and \$1,800 handbags, wondering why the other sex has such a bottomless appetite for self-abasement. Then those same men spend 340 nights a year following, with racing pulses and gritted teeth, sports teams doomed to disappoint them in 98 percent of cases. What we don't realize until it's too late is that we are watching the same show. They're selling us disappointment, and we can't get enough of it. Just so long as there's a next year to think about. ■



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FIGHTING TO KEEP FIT

As a fresh approach to cross-training or a gateway to a new lifelong passion, the martial arts can help you become a better all-around athlete. *by* DAVID FERRIS

IN SPORTS, THERE'S ALWAYS SOME RULE OR ANOTHER THAT forces you to play nice. Good thing, too, because without foul lines, refs, umpires, and conventions of fair play, more of us would resort to violence. Ask any hockey player. Sometimes you just want to smash your opponent in the face. But although I'm a personal trainer who has tried almost everything — I've climbed two of the seven summits, surfed Baja, and raced in the Borneo Eco-Challenge — until recently I had never explored the disciplines that actually require you to punch or kick your opponent upside the head: the

martial arts. When I did, spending a few days each on five schools of self-defense, I found them to be not only a great outlet for less-sportsmanlike aggression, but also a terrific way to train for my other favorite sports. Turns out, muay Thai can make you a better tennis player, while Krav Maga can provide you the endurance you need to run a marathon. In fact, no matter your sport of choice, chances are there's a martial art that will supply the perfect cross-training. So with winter here, I'm taking my workouts inside the dojo. The following are five ways you can too.

MUAY THAI KICKBOXING

A fast-paced workout that's sure to improve an athlete's power

What it is: Muay Thai began in Indochina as a way to give an edge to soldiers fighting with clubs and spears. The "art of eight limbs" deploys not just feet and fists but also elbows and knees, a combination that has made it the most dangerous discipline on two feet.

What it's like: A muay Thai class cuts right to the action. After 10 minutes of jumping rope, I stood on my toes and shadowboxed to develop jabs, crosses, and shin blocks. Then I drilled my knees into a heavy bag until my abs and hip flexors caught on fire. The most satisfying part was figuring out the signature roundhouse kick from Bunkerd Faphimai, a 5-foot-2 former Thai champion. Eventually, I learned how to plant the standing foot at the proper 45-degree angle and whip the shoulder, hip, and arm in such harmony that I kicked the bag with a whack reminiscent of a perfect golf swing.

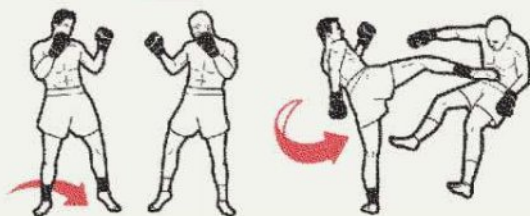
Best for: Busy optimizers who want to learn how to throw a punch

Achieves harmony with: Twisting sports (golf, paddling, baseball) for the power it provides, and sports requiring lightness of foot (tennis, basketball) or strong kicking (soccer)

Only workout I'll ever need? Yes, if done three or more times a week

ROUNDHOUSE KICK

Step at an angle onto the ball of your left foot. Generate a powerful right-leg kick by rotating the hips and whipping the right hand downward.



KRAV MAGA

Circuit training that will boost endurance

What it is: Krav Maga got its start in the 1930s on the streets of Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, where a wrestling and boxing champion named Imi Lichtenfeld trained Jews to defend themselves from fascist gangs.

What it's like: I learned the techniques in an alley behind the Academy of Self Defense in Santa Clara, California. Class started with fast-paced calisthenics, plyometrics, and push-ups followed by punching and kicking drills that spiked my heart rate. Then student-on-student clinics taught me to break choke holds, bear hugs, or assaults by multiple hoodlums. Afterward I could tell that my muscles and lungs had snapped to attention and that if a miscreant jumped me in the studio parking lot, I'd rip his throat out.

Best for: The cardio junkie

Achieves harmony with: Marathons and triathlons; endurance will improve with the art form's fast-paced interval and strength training. However, it's unlikely you'll develop the flexibility or refined sense of wellness of a more structured system.

Only workout I'll ever need? Yes, if done three or more times a week

FRONT KICK



Point your knee toward your target, then thrust your hips forward as you swing your foot into your opponent's groin or abdomen.

KARATE

For coordination

What it is: Whether imported by U.S. soldiers from post-WWII Japan (karate) or the Korean War (tae kwon do), or popularized through Bruce Lee films (kung fu), these disciplines all share an armory of exacting kicks, punches, and blocks perfected through years of repetition and employed against either empty air or an opponent who knows exactly the same moves.

What it's like: I found these forms of martial arts terribly confusing at first, but I did have brief moments of power. I followed along awkwardly as the members of my first karate class did drills that included five strikes, four kicks, eight blocks, and then a complicated attack called the trigger salute, which involves six different precision punches and jabs. A session later, my hips burned as I held a squat and performed blocks that originated from my diaphragm.

At tae kwon do I met Master Kim, who lectured me on how true martial arts build a man's character whether he wins or loses. Then he took me to the mat and poked at pressure points so precisely that my molars ached.

Best for: Those who want a technical workout that takes concentration

Achieves harmony with: Volleyball, basketball, and other sports that follow a target. The focus on breath, core awareness, posture, and balance creates a finely tuned body sense. Deep squats and lunges build leg strength and hip flexibility.

Only workout I'll ever need? Probably not, unless you commit to practicing on your own after class.

STRAIGHT PUNCH



Start in a lunge position, with fists palm-up and pressed into the waist. Punch with the left arm, rotating the palm to face down on impact.

BRAZILIAN JIJITSU

As much an exercise for the mind as it is for the body

What it is: Popularized by the Ultimate Fighting Championship, Brazilian jujitsu, or BJJ, first emerged in the early 20th century when a Japanese jujitsu master moved to the northern city of B  lem and passed the art form's tenets on to five brothers, the Gracies. They then devised new techniques that emphasize gaining leverage on your opponent, allowing a smaller, weaker fighter to pin a larger and stronger opponent. Experts in wrestling and kickboxing recognized the power and efficiency of this new style firsthand when Gracie descendant Royce Gracie won three of the first four Ultimate Fighting Championship tournaments and secured BJJ's reputation as the single most effective fighting technique.

What it's like: I witnessed how potent BJJ is when Eduardo Fraga, a black-belt instructor five inches shorter than me, tumbled me like a load of denim and held me in a *mata le  o*, a headlock that nearly made me pass out.

If that doesn't sound easy, it's because it's not. After only a few minutes of practice, I appreciated how long it would take to master this chess match of leverage

and counter-leverage. I breathed hard and felt a demanding anaerobic workout for my shoulders, back, glutes, biceps, and forearms as I gripped and squeezed an opponent during the five-minute sparring rounds.

Best for: Greco-Roman wrestling fans, roughhousers, puzzle masters

Achieves harmony with: Surfing and swimming. It loosens the shoulders and hips for paddling, and sparring intervals prepare the lungs of aerobic athletes. Contortionism isn't bad for your sex life either.

Only workout I'll ever need? Maybe, if your instructor leavens your sparring with high-tempo cardio. BJJ will add muscle, maybe not as much as intense weight training, but the kind of functional gorilla strength you actually need to power through sports.

UNDERARM HOOK



As your opponent takes a big left-handed swing at you, reach under his punching arm and step between his feet with your right foot.

Wrap your left arm under your attacker's right arm and hug him tightly, clasping your hands around the middle of his back.

Take a big step to the left and duck under your opponent's right arm, ending up on his right side. Grasp his waist and pull him toward you.

Extend your left leg to trip him. Press the bottom of your foot against his left heel and sweep him backward. As you both fall, twist so you're on top.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

As the name implies, a combination of techniques that will test your skills — and your ability to take pain

What it is: In ancient Greece, boxers and wrestlers faced each other in the ring with few rules, egged on by bloodthirsty crowds in a sport known as *pankration*. Sound familiar? Today's

mixed martial arts draw from so many traditions that combining them requires a long and steep learning curve.

What it's like: In my first MMA session, I lay on my back while a guy

named Dean knelt on me and jabbed at my face with boxing gloves. It's a good thing I had already learned a few Brazilian jujitsu moves, because I was able to counter with the hip bump sweep, thrusting my hips high to throw Dean off. I then sat up and twisted in such a way that he flipped over, allowing me to return the pummeling.

For anyone who hasn't had experience in other martial arts, it's important to find instructors with a deep background in a number of the arts. The best will divide class time between standing moves and grappling on the mat, and teach transitions between the two.

Best for: Martial arts veterans and athletic overachievers

Achieves harmony with: Any sport. A well-designed MMA program encompasses enough movements to create strength, agility, balance, and flexibility and will set your metabolism to "high."

Only workout I'll ever need? Yes.

LOW ANKLE PICK



When an attacker swings at you with his right hand, all his weight is in his left leg. Duck in toward that leg at a 45-degree angle.

Sandwich his lower left leg between your right shoulder and your right temple. Cradle his heel in your cupped hands.

Press your shoulder against the inside of his leg and draw your hands in. Once he falls, scramble into an attack position.

Health & Fitness for Your Dog

Providing proper health and nutrition for your dog is a full-time job, especially during the winter months. Further, you'll find that paying attention to your dog's health will positively affect your own. After all, a walk for him is a walk for you. Follow this guide to keep you and your best bud happy and healthy all winter long.

Brought to you by **Eukanuba®**
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STEP 1.

Know Your Dog

All breeds are unique and require different regimens to stay healthy. Identify your animal and do the research. Ask the right questions – is he high energy? Does he like to run in wide-open spaces or does he stay close to you? Knowing your dog will help you learn what he needs to stay healthy.



STEP 2.

Watch the Calories

Winter months often see an increase in treats. If you find yourself being overly generous, make sure to cut back on his food accordingly. Most foods given as treats are calorically dense and can double your dog's calorie intake. Avoid fatty or rich foods as these are likely to upset your dog's stomach and may end up in a trip to the emergency room.



STEP 3.

Take Holiday Caution

Certain pet dangers are more common around the holidays. Make sure that your dog does not have access to chocolates, poinsettias or electrical/extension cords. Xylitol, an artificial sweetener found in many gums and some candies, is highly toxic. If you think your dog has ingested a xylitol-sweetened product, you should take him to the veterinarian immediately.



DR. JONATHAN SHUMAN



Dr. Shuman is a graduate of the Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine and completed his advanced studies at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Here is his tip for keeping your dog healthy during the winter:

"The key to your dog's health is the appropriate amount of a nutritionally balanced diet. Home-cooked diets are difficult to balance and should not be used without consulting a veterinarian. Dogs that are fed a high quality pet food do not need table food supplementation. Make sure your pet food has been approved by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) feeding trial. Also, if your dog spends most of his time outside, he will actually need more calories in the winter to stay warm, so you should increase his food intake by 10-15% in the colder months."



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The Breeds

Here are some common breeds and the exercise level they need during the winter.



Yorkshire Terrier



English Bulldog



German Shepherd



Small dog under 20 lbs



An adaptable dog, the Yorkshire Terrier does not require a large amount of exercise, but does benefit from it. Regular long walks are a must and give him a chance to run around off leash a bit from time to time.

Medium dog 21-50 lbs



Though it once tirelessly baited bulls for hours on end, the English Bulldog has evolved into a low energy dog requiring very little exercise. A couple trips around the block every day is sufficient.

Large dog over 50 lbs



You need a big back yard. The German Shepherd requires a moderate to high level of exercise, so give him long walks and play lots of fetch. He'll be calm indoors but let him run around when he goes outside.

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Living Sugar-Free

Our new columnist quit the white stuff, and it changed everything.

LAST WINTER I WAS TALKING WITH A friend about what I needed to do to stay healthy out on the court. (At 35 it's not getting any easier.) When the topic of nutrition came up, he urged me to go see his naturopath, Dr. Suneil Jain, here in Arizona. Now, I have tons of people looking after my well-being — coaches, doctors, trainers, my wife — so I'm always skeptical about seeking new advice. But I'm glad I went.

Jain pushes a whole-foods diet, one that consists of lots of raw fruits and vegetables. Okay, but I'm not giving up my steak dinner. Then Jain started talking about how important it is to cut sugar out of your diet. *What?* My first thought was that that would be impossible, but he made a convincing case. Jain told me that the average American eats about 92 grams of sugar a day, when the human body needs only about eight grams for energy, an amount that should always be satisfied through natural sugars from fresh fruits, vegetables, and grains. Refined sugars, he told me, impair your immune system. In fact, one teaspoon of refined sugar suppresses our white blood cells for up to six hours, making it a lot easier to catch a cold. I really can't afford colds during the season, so that's all I needed to hear: I cut out refined sugars cold turkey. No M&M's at the movies, no energy bars, no Gatorade — I even had to be more careful when going to Jamba Juice, because sometimes they use sugar-filled juice from concentrate. After a few months, I stopped craving sugar entirely.

The difference was instantaneous: I slept better, I recovered from workouts more easily, and I had more energy. When we started training camp in September, we were doing two-a-days — four or five hours on the court — and I never got sore. Even more telling is the fact that this summer I traveled all over the world for my foundation, bringing team sports to war-ravaged countries. I was missing out on sleep and still training the whole time, but I never got sick. I've got to think it's because sugar wasn't wearing me down.

No doubt, this lifestyle is not easy — sugar gets sneaked into just about everything, so I have to pack my own food. But it doesn't bother me, because the way I feel is so worth it.



PSYCHOLOGY

Beating Fear

In his new book, *Extreme Fear*, author Jeff Wise offers advice on keeping it together when danger or uncertainty looms.

Fear is a good buzz. Intense fear causes our brains to release chemicals that mimic the effects of marijuana and amphetamines. Time seems to slow down, and pain vanishes; we can run faster and lift heavier weights — those tales of panicked people lifting cars with their bare hands are true.

Anger trumps fear... If you're tense before the big game, try thinking about how much you hate your opponents. Famed University of British Columbia psychologist Stanley Rachman once treated a phobic patient who could leave his house only when he was mad at his wife. As soon as he calmed down, he had to hurry home.

...and so does sex. If you're terrified of public speaking, try tapping the soothing powers of oxytocin, the hormone of affection and bonding. A recent study in the journal *Biological Psychology* found that subjects who had just had sex were calmer when speaking before strangers. The catch: Sex had to be "penetrative."

Fear is contagious. In fact, in the grip of fear, the human body emits a pheromone that subconsciously activates the fear system of those nearby. But there's good news: Bravery is also contagious. Another study by Rachman found that soldiers in combat feel less fear when they see comrades behaving courageously.

Web Exclusive

Our editors pick the 10 best advancements in workouts, exercise gear, and more. mensjournal.com/mb2009

INNOVATION

Birth-Control Shot for Men

AFTER MORE THAN 20 YEARS of trial and error and millions of dollars spent researching male contraception, California endocrinologist Dr. Kent Holtorf has discovered a shot that can do away with her (and your) "I forgot to take my pill" dread. Holtorf's find came six years ago by accident when, while treating men for low levels of testosterone, he realized that a weekly shot of the hormone wasn't just reinvigorating his patients; it was also tricking their pituitary glands into halting sperm production. Holtorf began administering the treatment to healthy men and found the shot to be 99 percent effective. But there are still a number of downsides: Only a handful of doctors are providing testosterone shots as a form of birth control; the shots are new, so we won't know long-term health effects for at least 10 years; they're pricey (\$150 per shot) and not covered by insurance; and you need to visit the doctor's office each week to be injected, since over-the-counter treatments remain many years off. Still, there are huge benefits. "Fertility returns within two months," says Holtorf. And, unlike the pill, which increases the risk of heart disease in women, testosterone treatments in men actually lower the risk of both heart disease and prostate cancer. —DARREN REIDY

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Read the Patient Information about LEVITRA before you start taking it and again each time you get a refill. There may be new information. You may also find it helpful to share this information with your partner. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor. You and your doctor should talk about LEVITRA when you start taking it and at regular checkups. If you do not understand the information, or have questions, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

WHAT IMPORTANT INFORMATION SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT LEVITRA?
LEVITRA can cause your blood pressure to drop suddenly to an unsafe level if it is taken with certain other medicines. With a sudden drop in blood pressure, you could get dizzy, faint, or have a heart attack or stroke.

Do not take LEVITRA if you:

- take any medicines called "nitrates."
- use recreational drugs called "poppers" like amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate. (See "Who Should Not Take LEVITRA?")

Tell all your healthcare providers that you take LEVITRA. If you need emergency medical care for a heart problem, it will be important for your healthcare provider to know when you last took LEVITRA.

WHAT IS LEVITRA?

LEVITRA is a prescription medicine taken by mouth for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED) in men.

ED is a condition where the penis does not harden and expand when a man is sexually excited, or when he cannot keep an erection. A man who has trouble getting or keeping an erection should see his doctor for help if the condition bothers him. LEVITRA may help a man with ED get and keep an erection when he is sexually excited.

LEVITRA does not:

- cure ED
- increase a man's sexual desire
- protect a man or his partner from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Speak to your doctor about ways to guard against sexually transmitted diseases.
- serve as a male form of birth control

LEVITRA is only for men with ED. LEVITRA is not for women or children. LEVITRA must be used only under a doctor's care.

HOW DOES LEVITRA WORK?

When a man is sexually stimulated, his body's normal physical response is to increase blood flow to his penis. This results in an erection. LEVITRA helps increase blood flow to the penis and may help men with ED get and keep an erection satisfactory for sexual activity. Once a man has completed sexual activity, blood flow to his penis decreases, and his erection goes away.

WHO CAN TAKE LEVITRA?

Talk to your doctor to decide if LEVITRA is right for you.

LEVITRA has been shown to be effective in men over the age of 18 years who have erectile dysfunction, including men with diabetes or who have undergone prostatectomy.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE LEVITRA?

Do not take LEVITRA if you:

- take any medicines called "nitrates" (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?"). Nitrates are commonly used to treat angina. Angina is a symptom of heart disease and can cause pain in your chest, jaw, or down your arm.

Medicines called nitrates include nitroglycerin that is found in tablets, sprays, ointments, pastes, or patches. Nitrates can also be found in other medicines such as isosorbide dinitrate or isosorbide mononitrate. Some recreational drugs called "poppers" also contain nitrates, such as amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate. Do not use LEVITRA if you are using these drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if any of your medicines are nitrates.

- you have been told by your healthcare provider to not have sexual activity because of health problems. Sexual activity can put an extra strain on your heart, especially if your heart is already weak from a heart attack or heart disease.

- are allergic to LEVITRA or any of its ingredients. The active ingredient in LEVITRA is called vardenafil. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE TAKING LEVITRA?
Before taking LEVITRA, tell your doctor about all your medical problems, including if you:

- have heart problems such as angina, heart failure, irregular heartbeats, or have had a heart attack. Ask your doctor if it is safe for you to have sexual activity.
- have low blood pressure or have high blood pressure that is not controlled
- have had a stroke
- have had a seizure
- or any family members have a rare heart condition known as prolongation of the QT interval (long QT syndrome)
- have liver problems
- have kidney problems and require dialysis
- have retinitis pigmentosa, a rare genetic (runs in families) eye disease
- have ever had severe vision loss, or if you have an eye condition called non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION)
- have stomach ulcers
- have a bleeding problem
- have a deformed penis shape or Peyronie's disease
- have had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- have blood cell problems such as sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma, or leukemia

CAN OTHER MEDICATIONS AFFECT LEVITRA?

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LEVITRA and other medicines may affect each other. Always check with your doctor before starting or stopping any medicines. Especially tell your doctor if you take any of the following:

- medicines called nitrates (See "What important information should you know about LEVITRA?")
- medicines called alpha-blockers. These include Hytrin® (terazosin HCl), Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl), Cardura® (doxazosin mesylate), Minipress® (prazosin HCl) or Uroxatral® (alfuzosin HCl). Alpha-blockers are sometimes prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure. In some patients the use of PDE5 inhibitor drugs, including LEVITRA, with alpha-blockers can lower blood pressure significantly leading to fainting. You should contact the prescribing physician if alpha-blockers or other drugs that lower blood pressure are prescribed by another healthcare provider.
- medicines that treat abnormal heartbeat. These include quinidine, procainamide, amiodarone and sotalol.
- ritonavir (Norvir®) or indinavir sulfate (Crixivan®) saquinavir (Fortavase® or Invirase®) or atazanavir (Reyataz®)

Patient Information LEVITRA® (Luh-VEE-Trah) (vardenafil HCl) Tablets

12/08

- ketoconazole or itraconazole (such as Nizoral® or Sporanox®)
- erythromycin or clarithromycin
- other medicines or treatments for ED

HOW SHOULD YOU TAKE LEVITRA?

Take LEVITRA exactly as your doctor prescribes. LEVITRA comes in different doses (2.5 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg). For most men, the recommended starting dose is 10 mg. **Take LEVITRA no more than once a day.** Doses should be taken at least 24 hours apart. Some men can only take a low dose of LEVITRA because of medical conditions or medicines they take. Your doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for you.

- If you are older than 65 or have liver problems, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you have prostate problems or high blood pressure, for which you take medicines called alpha-blockers, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of LEVITRA.
- If you are taking certain other medicines your doctor may prescribe a lower starting dose and limit you to one dose of LEVITRA in a 72-hour (3 days) period.

Take 1 LEVITRA tablet about 1 hour (60 minutes) before sexual activity. Some form of sexual stimulation is needed for an erection to happen with LEVITRA. LEVITRA may be taken with or without meals.

Do not change your dose of LEVITRA without talking to your doctor. Your doctor may lower your dose or raise your dose, depending on how your body reacts to LEVITRA.

If you take too much LEVITRA, call your doctor or emergency room right away.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LEVITRA?

The most common side effects with LEVITRA are headache, flushing, stuffy or runny nose, indigestion, upset stomach, or dizziness. These side effects usually go away after a few hours. Call your doctor if you get a side effect that bothers you or one that will not go away.

LEVITRA may uncommonly cause:

- an erection that won't go away (priapism), if you get an erection that lasts more than 4 hours, get medical help right away. Priapism must be treated as soon as possible or lasting damage can happen to your penis including the inability to have erections.
- color vision changes, such as seeing a blue tinge to objects or having difficulty telling the difference between the colors blue and green.

In rare instances, men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including LEVITRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision in one or both eyes. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines, to other factors such as high blood pressure or diabetes, or to a combination of these. If you experience sudden decrease or loss of vision, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA, and call a doctor right away.

Sudden loss or decrease in hearing, sometimes with ringing in the ears and dizziness, has been rarely reported in people taking PDE5 inhibitors, including LEVITRA. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to the PDE5 inhibitors, to other diseases or medications, to other factors, or to a combination of factors. If you experience these symptoms, stop taking LEVITRA and contact a doctor right away.

These are not all the side effects of LEVITRA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD LEVITRA BE STORED?

- Store LEVITRA at room temperature between 59° and 86° F (15° to 30° C).
- Keep LEVITRA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEVITRA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions other than those described in patient information leaflets. Do not use LEVITRA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give LEVITRA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about LEVITRA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about LEVITRA that is written for health professionals.

For more information you can also visit www.LEVITRA.com, or call 1-866-LEVITRA.

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF LEVITRA?

Active ingredient: vardenafil hydrochloride
Inactive ingredients: microcrystalline cellulose, croscopolone, colloidal silicon dioxide, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, polyethylene glycol, titanium dioxide, yellow ferric oxide, and red ferric oxide.

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12/08

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SAVE YOUR SKIN FROM WINTER

Summer is simple: All you really need is sunscreen. But the dry, harsh winter months demand products that soothe several ailments. Here are the essentials.

MOLTON BROWN NURTURE DESERT BLOOM ULTRABALM

What it does: Repairs and soothes chapped lips

Key ingredient: *Myrothamnus flabellifolia*, or resurrection plant, which grows in the desert areas of South Africa

Why it works: This one is still a bit of a mystery. While there are tons of positive testimonials for the product, little is actually known about *Myrothamnus flabellifolia*. The thing we do know, says New York chemist Ian Ginsberg, is "it's commonly smoked in Africa to kill pain."

\$30; moltonbrown.com

MALIN + GOETZ CILANTRO HAIR CONDITIONER

What it does: Conditions and styles dry hair

Key ingredients: Panthenol and cilantro

Why it works: "Hair becomes dry and brittle in the winter, but panthenol helps to thicken the hair shaft, attracting water to the scalp," says Dr. David Colbert, a dermatologist in New York City. "The cilantro has two antioxidants that protect against scalp damage, too." **\$22; malinandgoetz.com**

REVOLUTION ORGANICS ALL- OVER BODY BALM

What it does: Wards off face-freeze

Key ingredient: Cacao butter

Why it works: "Cacao butter is a classic moisturizing barrier in the petrolatum family," says New York dermatologist Dr. David Biro. "It stops moisture from freezing on your face and frost-biting you. Any balm will do, but this one theoretically wards off aging." **\$28; revolutionorganics.com**

C.O. BIGELOW PEACH NUT OIL LIQUID SOAP

What it does: Cleans and doubles as shaving cream

Key ingredient: Peach nut oil

Why it works: "Most shave creams can be harsh," says Dr. Colbert. "But peach nut oil is gentle — which is important for skin that's been exposed to winter's elements — and very hydrating. I especially like it after skiing." **\$15; bathandbodyworks.com**

KORRES NATURAL PRODUCTS RUSCUS & CHESTNUT MEN'S CREAM SPF 15

What it does: Moisturizes and protects your face from the sun while smoothing wrinkles

Key ingredient: Sweet chestnut

Why it works: The product has SPF to keep away sun damage. But the best part about this is that "the sweet chestnut contains antioxidants that help fight sun-induced wrinkles," says Dr. Colbert. **\$33; sephora.com**

MISSION ATHLETE ENGINEERED ANTI-FRICTION CREAM

What it does: Fights body chafing caused by winter boots and jacket zippers

Key ingredient: Silicone

Why it works: "Silicone enhances the skin's natural barrier to help prevent chafing," says Dr. Biro. "Plus, the way it's chemically structured, it feels silky and non-greasy when you put it on your skin, as opposed to heavier traditional barriers like Vaseline." **\$13; mission skincare.com**

— ELLEN TIEN



photograph by Travis Rathbone

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THE PROSTATE THREAT

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer afflicting American men, and yet early detection can cause more harm than good.

DOCTORS HAVE LONG RECOGNIZED problems in how we diagnose prostate cancer, but those concerns turned urgent this October when researchers at the University of California-San Francisco and the University of Texas published a new analysis of large-population studies — one from the U.S., one from Europe — evaluating the effectiveness of widespread prostate-cancer screening. As PSA blood tests and rubber-gloved rectal probes have become routine indignities of middle age, there have been far more diagnoses but, as the U.S. study revealed, no meaningful reduction in deaths. This means that thousands are subjecting themselves to treatments that often cause impotence and loss of bladder control — without improving their chance of survival.



The prostate, a walnut-shape gland flush against the pelvis and encircling the urethra, produces part of your seminal fluid, the milky stuff that transports and nourishes your sperm. Since the advent of routine screening in 1986, about one in six American men have been diagnosed with cancer of this reproductive tissue. And it can be devastating. "Prostate cancer is a slow, painful death," says Dr. Matthew Cooperberg, professor of urology at UCSF Medical School. "It causes fractures as it eats away at the bones, you can't pee, there's bleeding in the urine that can clot off the bladder."

However, a large number of prostate cancers grow so slowly that the most likely cause of death for its sufferers is heart disease, simply because heart disease is the number one cause of death for men in general.

So where does that leave us? Get the screens? Skip 'em and wait for better screens and diagnostic tools? Here is what a few leading specialists recommend:

- Get the PSA test, but primarily to establish a baseline. "What I tell people is, get screened, but don't assume that a diagnosis will lead to treatment," says Dr. Peter Carroll, chairman of the UCSF department of urology.
- If a biopsy does turn up cancer, don't seek treatment until you've employed a tumor-risk analysis tool like the UCSF-CAPRA score.
- In the likely event that a tumor looks to be slow-growing, Carroll and others suggest delaying treatment in favor of "active surveillance," involving a PSA blood test every three to four months, a prostate ultrasound every six to nine months, and an annual prostate biopsy.
- Stay cool. Risk-analysis charts recently published in *Know Your Chances: Understanding Health Statistics*, written by three professors from Dartmouth Medical School, suggest that any 40-year-old's chances of dying from prostate cancer in the next decade are less than one in 1,000. —DANIEL DUANE

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Advice from our in-house doc

STAYING FLU FREE

Q I recently heard about something called NOXO that's supposed to help protect you from the flu when sprayed in the air around you. Could this work?

A It's pretty unlikely — and pretty impractical. For this stuff to work, you'd need to constantly spray it around you so that each vapor of spray destroyed each flu particle flying through the air. And while NOXO has natural oils (like tea tree oil) that may have some antiviral properties, there's little evidence to prove this is the case. I certainly wouldn't rely on it to prevent the flu. Instead, you should wash your hands as much as possible (or use hand sanitizer) and, obviously, keep them out of your eyes and mouth. But your best defense is still the flu vaccine (and the H1N1 vaccine). They're both safe, and everyone who can get one should get one.

THE OPTIMUM HEART RATE

Q I'm a 50-year-old cross-country skier, and when I hit the trails, my heart rate averages about 118 beats per minute. When I told a friend about it, he called me a slacker. Am I?

A In the summer, I race bikes against friends in their mid-60s who can still get their tickers up to 180 for rides well over an hour long. And we're riding up hills, into headwinds, and sprinting to beat each other to the finish. So I would guess you can do better than 118, depending on your level of fitness and your goals. Most people need to maintain a heart rate of about 60 percent of their maximum effort for at least half an hour to see the true benefits of a cardiovascular workout. If you're in very good shape, you should be able to maintain an even faster heart rate for a longer amount of time. To figure out your max heart rate, strap on a good monitor, like the RS100 from Polar (\$120; polarusa.com), warm up for 10 minutes, then run, bike, or ski uphill as hard as you can until you can

go no longer. At that point, look at your monitor; you'll see your highest heart rate. For the first week, skiing at 60 percent will hurt, but by pushing yourself, you'll eventually be able to go faster and will obviously have a fitter heart and lungs.

TONIC ANXIETY

Q I've been taking Propecia for 13 years and just heard it can make some men infertile. Now that I'm ready to have kids, should I be worried?

A There's some cause for concern. Propecia's active ingredient, finasteride, allows the body to grow hair by preventing testosterone from being converted into dihydrotestosterone. The problem is that lack of dihydrotestosterone may cause sexual side effects. For one thing, some men complain they have trouble getting an erection. Studies also show a decrease in amount of semen and sexual desire in men. One thing you can do is switch

to Rogaine, which uses minoxidil to stimulate hair follicles without risk of losing your mojo. Or you can look at it this way: If your wife wants to have kids with you, chances are she loves you enough at this point that she won't care if you're bald.

SOOTHING "HOT FEET"

Q I use a spin bike in the winter but have developed what my doctor calls a "hot foot": The bottom of my foot burns to the point that I can't even walk. What can I do for this besides pop Advil?

A This is a very common problem that I've suffered from a few times too, but don't worry: The fix is easy. What's bothering you is squeezed nerves in the bottom of your foot. Wearing thin socks and using an orthotic, like the Tri-Comfort from Dr. Scholl's (\$11; drscholls.com), in your shoe should help relieve some of the pressure. I'm guessing your real dilemma, however, is that you're like a lot of cyclists and tend to press straight down on the pedal when you ride. Developing a circular pedal stroke — one in which you push the pedal forward and then pull it backward, not down — will take a ton of weight off your hurting dogs and most likely get rid of your issue.

UNDER THE SPELL OF WINNING

Q I'll admit it: I choke in big games. Can hypnotherapy help me win?

A Look into my eyes...and believe me when I tell you that hypnotherapy really can help you come through when the game is on the line — if, that is, you're a member of roughly half the population that's receptive to being hypnotized at all. In fact, studies by Stanford, Ball State, and Washington State universities confirm that hypnotherapy promotes clutch performance. To hypnotize an athlete, the therapist has them concentrate deeply on something (the ticking watch rocking back and forth in front of someone's face isn't just something you see in the movies) to induce a very relaxed state (similar to daydreaming), then repeats ideas — "stay positive" — that seep into the subconscious. But therapists can't bend your mind to make you better at your sport. What they do is "reprogram" your behavior to suppress the negative thoughts that can inhibit your ability to win. To find a therapist, go to Natboard.com. It can't hurt, so you may as well give it a try.

E-mail your questions for Dr. Bob Arnot to dr.bob@mensjournal.com.

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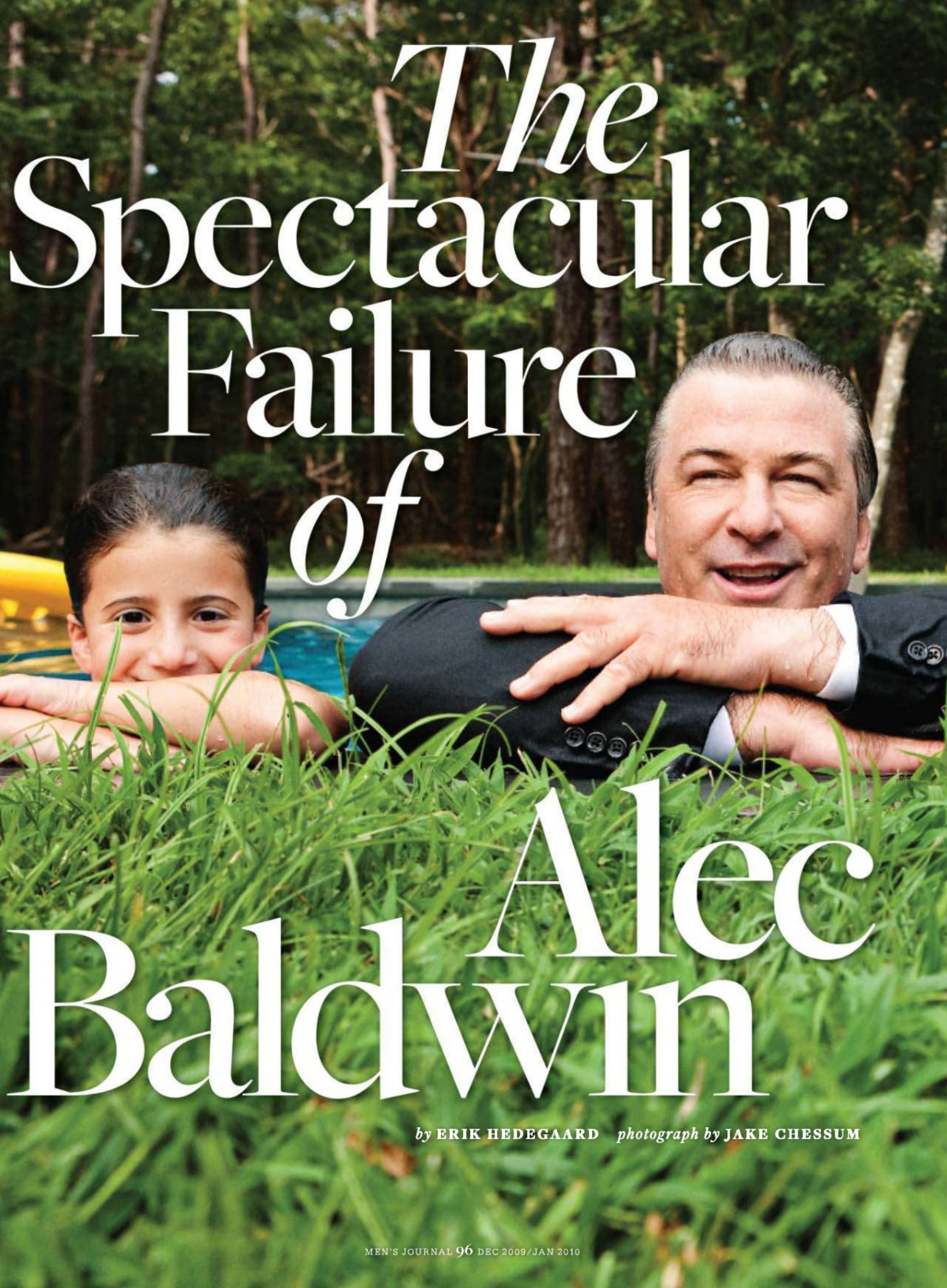
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TOURISM
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A photograph of Alec Baldwin and a young girl lying on their stomachs in a field of tall green grass. Alec Baldwin is on the right, wearing a dark suit, with his arms crossed over his head and a slight smile. The girl is on the left, wearing a blue top, looking directly at the camera. In the background, there are trees and a swimming pool.

The Spectacular Failure *of*

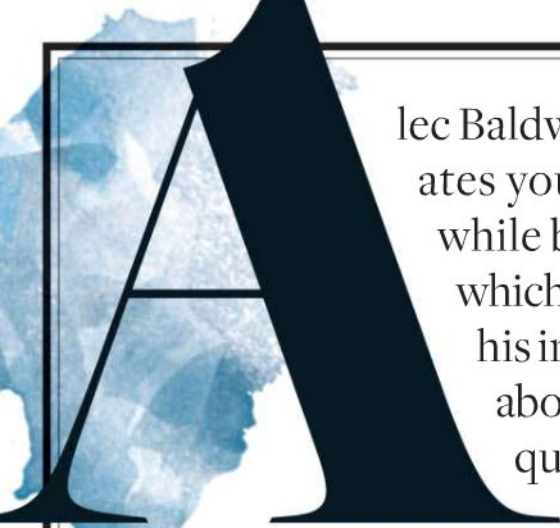
Alec Baldwin

by ERIK HEDEGAARD photograph by JAKE CHESUM



EVERYBODY INTO THE POOL! Baldwin, photographed August 20 on Long Island, New York, with some neighborhood kids (no, not his own)

He's the greatest comedic actor on television today. He has Oscar and Tony nominations and two Emmys to his name. And he just can't figure out where it all went wrong.



lec Baldwin wants you to know how much he appreciates your chuckles and laughs. As you may recall, a while back he left his daughter an angry voice mail, which found its way onto the internet and besmirched his image worldwide. In the aftermath, he thought about killing himself, but didn't, and thought about quitting his hit NBC show *30 Rock*, but didn't. So he's still here, among us. Most of the time,

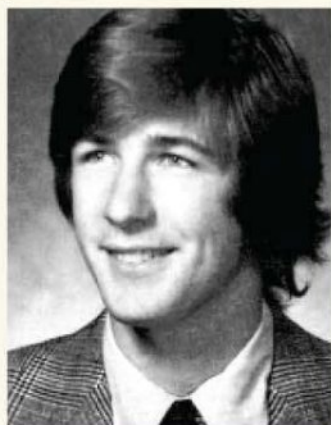
he's either out on Long Island, where he maintains his primary residence, or tooling around Manhattan, to be nearer *30 Rock*'s set in Queens. In both locales people come up to him. Sometimes they yell snarky things like, "Go call your daughter!" Increasingly, though, they've been favoring him with chuckles and laughs and stuff like, "That's a funny show you're on." He appreciates that. It's gratifying. It makes him hopeful.

"If people wake up and go, 'You know something? He left that message for his daughter, and I thought he was a selfish, horrible man, but, damn, that show is funny,' if they are in the mood to forgive — never forget, but forgive — then you move on and survive," he says one misty day in East Hampton, with hurricane weather on the horizon, looking a little wind-beaten himself. "It means I'm funny enough for people to overlook something they don't care for."

And it's true: The way he plays *30 Rock*'s ego-inflated, right-wing exec Jack Donaghy opposite Tina Fey's perpetually nonplussed TV writer Liz Lemon, he does make you want to forgive him his past transgressions. The voice mail, to begin with, but also movie choices that in toto have tended to favor the wretchedly bad (*The Marrying Man*, *The Getaway*, *The Shadow*, etc.) over the leading-man good (*The Hunt for Red October*, *Miami Blues*) and the supporting-actor brilliant (his scorching speech in *Glengarry Glen Ross* and his Oscar-nominated role in *The Cooler*). The jury hasn't convened yet for his next movie — *It's Complicated*, a middle-aged love-triangle rom-com co-starring Meryl Streep and Steve Martin — but early word is, it could be one of his good ones. Baldwin's take: "The only reason I did it was because of the chance to work with Meryl. Meryl!"

Good or bad, though, *It's Complicated* might be Baldwin's last movie ever, because he says he's had it with the whole acting deal. Hopefully, he'll continue to occasionally host *Saturday Night Live*, as he's done 14 times in the past 20 years, more than anyone other than Martin, showing off his comic brilliance in the Schweddy Balls skit, in the amorous-scoutmaster skit, and in all the rest of them, actually. But once *30 Rock*'s multiple-E Emmy-winning run is over in a couple of years or so, that's pretty much it for him, he says. Finito, kaput. Even now, his bedtime reading consists of books like *Tears in the Darkness*, about the Bataan Death March, instead of scripts. "I don't have any interest in acting anymore," he says rather grandly. "Movies are a part of my past. It's been 30 years. I'm not young, but I have time to do something else."

Of course, he's made noises about quitting before. But he certainly sounds serious this time, and he probably should be, given how he feels



NO CLASS CLOWN In 1976 (left), his senior year of high school in Massapequa, New York, where he played football and was freshman class president; on a Malibu beach with daughter Ireland



PREVIOUS SPREAD: BALDWIN WEARS A SUIT AND SHIRT BY POLO LAUREN. FROM TOP: SETH POPPEL/VEARBOOK LIBRARY; KIXONLINE.COM

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about his own body of work. "I'll say this to you, and it's a difficult thing to say, but I believe it: I consider my entire movie career a complete failure. I'll tell you why. The goal of moviemaking is to star in a film where your performance drives the film, and the film is either a soaring critical or commercial success, and I never had that."

But what about *The Hunt for Red October*, the 1990 action flick featuring him in his first big-budget, weight-carrying role? He scoffs. "That was a huge success. But it wasn't because of me. It was because of Tom Clancy's book. And now, the movies I've been in, I never give them a moment's thought. Every movie I've ever been in, I just avoid."

He tosses his hands, whisking away 30 years of toil as easily as that, as if it's that easy, as if he really is that cavalier.

HE TALKS. HE TALKS NON-stop. His big meaty face reddens with the effort of speech, but that does not slow him down. He has an agenda. His agenda might not be your agenda, but that doesn't matter. He will grease the path of his agenda, as is his custom, with as many of his bright movie-star smiles as it takes.

Right this moment, he's shuffling into an East Hampton noshing spot, a little stooped but looking pretty solid for the age of 51. He's still boldly handsome, too, although the cleft chin has receded into the flesh somewhat. He finds a seat, shucks off his windbreaker, rubs his hands together briskly, orders a double espresso with steamed milk on the side, and says to the waiter, his gravelly voice rising for the occasion, "Can I annoy you and ask for something a little different? I'd like some scrambled eggs with salmon scrambled in. No onion. And some of that asparagus on the side." He follows that with a flash of those path-greasing, ultrawhite movie-star teeth.

The waiter ponders him. Then: "I expected that from you. It's not annoying at all, sir, just typical...."

It's a slightly odd, slightly presumptuous thing to say, but Baldwin doesn't even blink. He knows it's typical, the waiter knows it's typical, everyone within earshot knows it's typical, Baldwin's always been a salmon-and-asparagus-eggs kind of guy, what else is there to say? Plus, he's got his agenda to stick to.

First up is a critical analysis of the court system as it pertains to fathers' rights in child-custody battles, which he wrote about at length in his book *A Promise to Ourselves*, an examination of Parental Alienation Syndrome, as visited upon him by his ex-wife, Kim Basinger, and a lengthy exercise in trying to explain the root causes of that ill-fated phone call to daughter Ireland, now 14. His eyes blaze. "The judges have no idea what they're doing and make it up as they go," he thunders. "They have this idea of 'the best interest of the child.' Well, that's one of the greatest, most cynical plots ever hatched on people, because they know you'll give yourself cancer and spend your last dime and chew



30 ROCK STAR With Tracy Morgan and other cast members at the 2007 Emmys (above); filming with Salma Hayek, who played his girlfriend on the show

through a wall of concrete to get to your child. And they abuse that. These judges are the most filthy, awful cowards."

Next up: his ex-wife's divorce attorneys. He once called one of them a "300-pound homunculus whose face looks like a cross between a bulldog and a clenched fist." Today he continues in like manner and concludes by saying, proudly, "My lawyer said something interesting to me. He said, 'I've never seen a case where the opposing counsel hated the litigant as much as they hate you.' It's because I give it to them every chance I get. I think they're horrible people. I completely urinate on them."

Then comes a detour into *30 Rock*. When he was first approached about it in 2005, he nearly turned it down. At the time, his aspirations still lay elsewhere,

his main fear being that the show would bomb. "When you're an actor who falls from the movie tree to go to TV full-time and the program doesn't work, that can be very, very catastrophic," he says. Producer Lorne Michaels, a friend of Baldwin's from his *SNL* appearances, leaned on Baldwin, and he eventually caved. Since then, he's won two Golden Globes, four Screen Actors Guild awards, and, just this year, a second Emmy. It seems that Baldwin has finally found the perfect home. And he does say, "Joining *30 Rock* was one of the best decisions I've ever made." But now, if he can be taken at his word, he's about to leave it all behind, maybe to become a politician or a talk-radio host, or perhaps just to travel, maybe take in the distant Cameroons in a fair-weather fez.

He sighs, back on his agenda. "I just feel like the kind of work I would love to have done would have been more like when Leo did *The Aviator*. I love Leo. I adore him and envy him. I remember being there with him and thinking that he has everything. He has youth, he has

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- Dr. Steve Gautreau, California

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talent, he has opportunity, he has everything in the business, and I saw him, and I thought, What a great gift to have that convergence of all your abilities and the opportunity to work with Marty Scorsese, and the scripts, and the budgets, and everything.”

And what about Baldwin? Has he ever experienced a similar convergence? “If it happened, I slept through it,” he says blithely. “When they paged me in the Hollywood Hotel, I was in the bathroom having a cigarette.”

So that’s where Baldwin stands at the moment, stuck in the past but still looking to the future. And standing there, he’s constantly letting it be known that while lots of things are on his agenda, that agenda most certainly does not include introspection, self-analysis, or any similar sort of nonsense aimed at trying to get to the root of his so-called failure. The internal man will not be examined.

“Look, he’s a very good friend and a very loyal guy, and I know him to do so many quiet acts of kindness, but often you can’t beat him to getting in his own way,” says Lorne Michaels. “I mean, he is such a good guy. But he does everything he can to fool people about it. And then he’s just not comfortable talking about himself. He really does try to keep that part of himself a secret.”

And, almost up until the end, he does.

GROWING UP IN THE ’60S AND ’70S, WHAT HE MOST wanted to be was a politician. This was in blue-collar Massapequa, New York, where his father, named Alec as well, taught high school history and coached football and riflery, and his mother, Carol, stayed at home to raise two girls and four boys who’d all grow up to be actors. Younger brother Billy once called it an “Irish-Catholic rowdy, rambunctious upbringing,” one in which Alec was considered the equalizer in any sibling disputes with neighborhood toughs. For the most part, though, Alec stayed out of trouble. “Everyone in my neighborhood would smoke pot in the woods, and then someone would say, ‘Jeff’s parents went on vacation; let’s go rob their house,’ and I’d say, ‘I have to go home,’” he recalls. “I thought about nothing but the future. My family had no money, and I knew I had to make it. Other kids, their parents could get them in the fire department or on the Long Island Railroad as a conductor.” Not Alec’s.

On a third-grade report card, a teacher wrote: “Will become famous

or the president of the United States — one or the other.” By the age of 10, he was gluing himself to television’s nightly *Huntley-Brinkley Report*, intent on deciphering France’s role in the Vietnam conflict. After Bobby Kennedy was assassinated, Alec trekked into Manhattan, to St. Patrick’s Cathedral, to attend the funeral mass. His first year in high school, at a time when he went by the nickname Xander, he ran for president of his class and won. All of this made his father very happy, and he idolized his father. The two spent countless evenings together, reading capsule movie reviews in the *New York Times* and watching the films on TV. Sometimes his father would talk to him about why they didn’t have much money: He wasn’t playing proper school board politics and was suffering the repercussions. Alec was the only one who took an interest. “My brothers were out in the driveway playing Wiffle Ball,” he says. “They didn’t give a shit about my father’s fortunes.”

After high school, he attended George Washington University, where everybody, including him, wanted to become a lawyer and, one day, president of the United States. His junior year, after running for president of his class and losing by three votes in an election that clearly still nags at him, he tossed his plans aside for the lark of attending New York’s famed Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute. His dad was fine with it; his mom, he says, “freaked out and screamed for days about what an idiot I was. Now she has very few complaints. Very few.”

Within a year, he was working on a New York-based soap opera called *The Doctors*. In 1983, he moved to Los Angeles for a short-lived TV series, which led to a recurring role on CBS’s prime-time hit *Knots Landing*. Movies came next; in 1988, he landed plum roles in five big ones, including *Beetle Juice*, *Working Girl*, and *Married to the Mob*. Pretty soon, he was being called “a young Burt Lancaster,” “a working-class Cary Grant,” and “the next Kevin Costner.” He had a leading man’s face (ruggedly handsome), body (ruggedly thick), voice (ruggedly direct), and hair (rugs of it, everywhere), and in 1989, he was given a bona fide opportunity to become a leading man in *The Hunt for Red October*. Grossing \$200 million, the movie was a smash, as was Baldwin. But he passed on the sequel, *Patriot Games*, to play Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire* on Broadway. Around the same time, he signed on to make Neil Simon’s *The Marrying Man*, got a good look at co-star Kim Basinger, started a tumultuous, hot-and-heavy relationship, and eventually married her. The movie came out in 1991. The reviews were scathing. And from there, in various ways, it all just went to hell.

ALEC BALDWIN, BIT PLAYER

Though he’s had his share of strong leads, Baldwin has a special gift for delivering transcendent performances in smaller roles.



GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS, 1992

Screen Time: 7:13 We never learn his name, but according to his character, a scare-tactic motivational speaker, names don’t matter. What matters is that he made \$970,000 last year, and you’re what? A good father? Fuck you. Few people could pull off such a memorably brutal dress-down of a room full of more seasoned actors. **Best Line:** “Third prize is you’re fired.”



ALONG CAME POLLY, 2003

Screen Time: 4:02 Stan Indursky, a boss with a knack for well-intended inappropriateness, invites himself to take a whiz with his favorite employee (Ben Stiller). The result? The funniest bathroom scene ever. And a chance for Baldwin to show his chops at physical comedy. **Best Line:** “I heard about your honeymoon. Just terrible. I knew that girl was a slut the second I met her.”



THE AVIATOR, 2004

Screen Time: 10:23 As airline entrepreneur Juan Trippe, he plays Howard Hughes’s ruthless nemesis who goes for the jugular when the aviator’s insanity grows to urinating levels. More power hungry than aviation crazed, Baldwin is the perfect foil. **Best Line:** “I’d like to know everything there is to know about Mr. Hughes. I’d like you to attend to that for me. Thoroughly.”



THE DEPARTED, 2006

Screen Time: 8:55 As Capt. George Ellerby, he’s an over-caffeinated cop on a mission to bring down a mobster. Amid a testosterone-stuffed cast, Baldwin stands out by delivering rapid-fire, tough-guy-tinged funny lines. **Best Line:** “You wanna have a smoke? You don’t smoke, do you? Right. What are you, one of those fitness freaks? Huh? Go fuck yourself.” —MARTIN MULKEEN



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ONE THING TO KNOW about Baldwin is that the Baldwin you get today may not be the Baldwin you get tomorrow. He's changeable like that. One minute he's furious at you for suggesting a meeting at a restaurant he considers subpar, going so far as to say he might not meet you at all; the next, he hardly knows it was you who did the suggesting. Similarly, one day he says he has no desire to ever enter politics. A week or two later, it seems like it's the only thing he wants to do. Over time, however, a few immutables do slip out, evolving a more complete picture of the man.

He's got such a way with insults that he could probably teach an upper-level college course on them. One example. Of the *National Enquirer's* Mike Walker, who seems to have it in for Baldwin: "That guy is a goat-footed queen and a wheezing whore!" He's got a million more.

In his spare time, Baldwin sometimes relaxes by boating — he has a 25-foot speedboat moored at the East Hampton Marina — and sometimes by showing up for East Hampton's annual Artists Vs. Writers Charity Softball Game, where he is a frequent whiffer and says things like, "Acting doesn't help with softball. Acting is all about bullshitting people into believing something, and out here that's impossible." He likes to play tennis, toss a football, ski. In the evening, he enjoys takeout, especially Mexican. If it's a Sunday, he might watch *60 Minutes*. He might smoke a cigar, but probably not. Afterward, he'll attempt to go to sleep. Sometimes it takes a while. "I have terrible insomnia," he says. "Horrible."

A practicing Catholic, he goes to church every week and twice a year shows up for confession, or, as they call it now, reconciliation, though his stays are brief, because, as he says, "I really don't have that much bad to confess."

After his dad died of cancer in 1983, Baldwin drank a lot, drugged a lot, played a lot of the video game *Galaga*, and just in general, he says, "partied my brains out." He was in his mid-20s. He stopped after two years, just before he turned 27, and he kicked his addictions for good.

He used to put down Hollywood all the time. He once said, "There's a lot more money to be made on Wall Street. If you want real power, go to Washington. If you want sex, go into the fashion business. But if you want the whole poison cocktail in one glass, then go to Hollywood." Now he says, "What I've learned is, nobody wants to hear you saying, 'This place sucks, and you're all phonies.' That's not the way to go." In other words, he still puts down Hollywood all the time.

In an ideal world, how often would he have sex?

He barks, happily, "Every morning!"

Every morning?

"Every morning. At the end of the day, I'm exhausted and want to lay comatose, watch *The Rachel Maddow Show*, and read a book. But in the morning, it helps you get your mind right. You just blow out all your synapses and no matter what happens the rest of the day, nothing bothers you."



"IT'S A DIFFICULT THING TO SAY: I CONSIDER MY ENTIRE CAREER A COMPLETE FAILURE."

AFTER BALDWIN CRANKED OUT STINKER AFTER stinker in the '90s, he started to become a kind of public nuisance. Of his early years, he once said, "I was Mr. Telephone Thrower. The holes where I put my fist in the wall dictated where we hung pictures. I was a total madman.... My whole life was agony." But the same could also be said of his middle years, as well as some of his most recent. He punches out a paparazzo on his front lawn on the day he and Basinger bring newborn Ireland home from the hospital. An active PETA supporter, he challenges a Manhattan horse-carriage driver to a fistfight. He quips that Clinton foe Henry Hyde and family should be "stoned to death." Some of it is harmless and hardly worth mentioning; some of it is otherwise.

But here's the thing about Baldwin: Did he not once have the chance to be a leading man in the movies, and did he not, of his own accord, turn away from that opportunity? Has he not delivered solid, even remarkable, performances in major films? Has he not demonstrated time and again that he has comic chops galore? But then he goes ahead and feels compelled to call his entire movie career a complete failure, setting up the pronouncement with various dramatic pauses and introductory clauses, selling his failure with gobs of actorly relish and mustard, when it's quite clear to one and all that he's no failure.

A favorite reason for this lack of hugeness is: "I am not a good actor." He trots that one out all the time, patently false though it is.

One afternoon on the Queens set of *30 Rock*, though, Baldwin is in his dressing room, lounging about on a comfy chair, feet up on a coffee table, a pillow clutched to his chest. He is at his leisure here, with pals nearby — Tina Fey, Tracy Morgan, and the (continued on page 174)

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HAVE MORE FLAVOR THAN OTHERS.**



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THE BEST

of
2009



So it wasn't such a great year for Michael Jordan's vanquished rivals (see p. 112). But for the rest of us, a slew of newly saved spots to hike, bike, and paddle (p. 114), and the fact that our new dream car is a hybrid (p. 109), definitely took the edge off a turbulent 2009.

photographs by **Jen Judge**



BEST LUXURY BASE CAMP

AMANGIRI RESORT

TRADE TROPICAL BEACHES AND PALM TREES FOR KILLER VIEWS OF THE CANYONLANDS — AFTER HIKING IN THEM ALL DAY.

Planning a vacation always presents the same dilemma: big mountain adventure or beachfront relaxation? Amangiri, the latest offering from Singapore-based hotelier Amanresorts, has done away with the debate by dropping high style into its most unlikely setting: the canyonlands of Utah. With Lake Powell, Glen Canyon, Grand Staircase-Escalante, and Paria Canyon on your doorstep, you'll have access to gorge hiking that rivals

Zion, mountain biking to equal Moab, and fly-fishing as good as Montana's Gallatin. And it's all within minutes of the minimalist 34-room lodge, a bunker reimagined with muscular planes of concrete and glass that underscore the flowing undulations of its surrounding cliffs. Explore America's most iconic desert by day, then take it all in from the most comfortable bed you've ever slept in. \$800; amanresorts.com

DAVE HAHN

HE JUST BAGGED EVEREST FOR THE 11TH TIME — MORE THAN ANY OTHER NON-SHERPA — AND YOU CAN ROPE UP WITH HIM NEXT SEASON.



May 23 wasn't exactly a banner day on Everest. The summit ridge had been a howling whiteout since dawn, and most climbers had already bailed on their bids. The weather was so dodgy that

when mountain guide Dave Hahn reached the summit, after a 48-hour speed ascent from base camp, he stayed for only a couple of minutes. "Had I been guiding that day, I'm not sure I would have gone for it," says Hahn. It was the record-breaking 11th time he had stood on top of the world, and he

didn't even get a snapshot to show for it. "It was a little stressful," he says.

Understatement is Dave Hahn's M.O. In two decades of guiding, the 48-year-old has led Rainier more than 260 times, gotten 19 McKinley expeditions to the top and a record 26 on Vinson Massif, and tagged the summit of Everest three times in a single year (at press time there were still spots on this spring's trips, which run about \$74K). "If I were just climbing them, it would get pretty dull," admits Hahn. "But not when I'm guiding. There's a whole new group of clients on every trip." He guides almost exclusively for his pal Peter Whittaker's Rainier Mountaineering Inc. rmguides.com

SIGN UP FOR A CLIMB WITH DAVE HAHN

MOUNT RAINIER, WASHINGTON

RMI offers four- to six-day summit climbs and expedition seminars from January to September. Book early; Hahn's trips fill up. \$926 to \$1,865; rmi.com

MOUNT MCKINLEY, ALASKA

McKinley isn't on Hahn's usual roster, but he will lead a custom expedition with eight climbers and four guides this June. At press time, there was still availability on this trip. \$7,400

VINSON MASSIF, ANTARCTICA

Hahn guides the 16,067-foot summit this January, but as with all remote, big-mountain ascents, RMI vets prospective clients. Be prepared to share your climbing résumé. \$35,000



MJ ITINERARY

DAY ONE

After the staff speeds you 13 miles north from the airport in Page, Arizona, order a mai tai from the hot tub and relish the fact that you're looking out at a billboard-size fin of milky sandstone.

DAY TWO

The next morning, boot up for the five-hour Studhorse Mesa hike, which breaches the canyon wall by way of a via ferrata route of iron cables and ladders, then winds through boulder fields and slot canyons. Head back to duck the midday sun and have lunch at the Dining Room, then borrow a mountain bike and spin around on the aprons of slickrock out back.

DAY THREE

At dawn, take a private 40-minute charter flight to the Grand Canyon for a naturalist-guided hike. If the views from the rim don't astound you, the return flight will, as the pilot cruises low over the deep corduroy of red rock and burning sand. Back at Amangiri, hit the spa, where a Thai-massage therapist will stretch you into the submission to the sporadic clatter of rockfall. For dinner, start with the scallops in brown butter sauce, then order the lamb cutlets medium rare and a bottle of vognier from Sutcliffe Vineyards in nearby Cortez, Colorado, which produces surprisingly tasty blends.

BEST WINTER BREW

Left Hand Smoke-jumper Porter



Next to your dog, smoked beers are the ultimate fireside companion. The best we've tried this year is this briny, coffee-black 9.2 percent Imperial Porter that calls bacon to mind. Plus, some proceeds are donated to a scholarship for the children of smokejumpers killed in action. lefthandbrewing.com

BEST REASON TO BUY A HYBRID

THE FISKER KARMA

PRODUCTION ON THE WORLD'S SEXIEST GREENMOBILE BEGAN THIS MONTH — PUT YOUR ORDER IN NOW.



POWER: 403 hp
0-60: 6 seconds
RANGE: 50 miles
(300 with fuel)

It's been a mad race for start-up car companies to create plug-in hybrids and full-electric cars, and someone just crossed the finish line in style. Fisker Automotive has set up shop in a recently closed GM plant and officially began production of its beautiful four-door Karma this December; it will soon roll out the great-looking plug-in. It signals a revolution, as other start-ups like Tesla, Th!nk, and EV Innovations are right on Fisker's heels, and established players are hard at work, with Nissan introducing the electric LEAF, GM working on the plug-in hybrid Volt, and Ford planning an electric Transit Connect van. The technology isn't perfect yet, but the fact that plug-in hybrid and full-electric cars are even plausible — and can look this good — is a revelation. \$87,900; fiskerautomotive.com



BEST CLIMBING TRIP FOR MORTALS

MOUNT NIMBUS, BC

FINALLY, NORTH AMERICA HAS A VIA FERRATA TO RIVAL THE IRON WAYS OF THE ALPS.

The new cable- and ladder-assisted climb to Nimbus's needle-like summit is North America's first world-class via ferrata, with hundreds of feet of hand-and-foot scrambling and panoramic views of glacier-draped peaks. During the three-day Canadian Mountain Holidays trip, you'll access the remote Bobbie Burns lodge from Banff via van shuttle and jet helicopter, followed the next morning by another quick heli-lift to the base of the peak. Tethered to safety cables, clamber past overhangs and tiptoe across tiny ledges along Nimbus's sawtooth western ridge. Just below the summit is the route's climax: a spindly 200-foot-long suspension bridge with butt-clenching half-mile views to the valley floor. \$2,300; canadianmountainholidays.com

➔ THREE MORE VIA FERRATAS CLOSE TO HOME

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Whistler Blackcomb ski resort, just north of Vancouver, provides a summertime scrambling route with European élan. Don crampons to cross the Whistler Glacier, and then scramble 800 feet to a breathtaking summit. \$120; whistlerblackcomb.com

QUEBEC

The Via Ferrata du Diable in Quebec's Mont-Tremblant National Park, a 1.5-hour drive north of Montreal, traverses granite cliffs for up to five hours via steel rungs, swinging plank footways, and a spine-tingling tightrope walk. from \$32; sepaq.com

KENTUCKY

The via ferrata in Campton, Kentucky, about 50 miles southeast of Lexington, spiders half a mile across sandstone cliffs. If you're feeling brave, check out the optional black-diamond passage called Lost in Space. \$32 per day; torrentfalls.com

BEST LITERARY DEBUT

WELLS TOWER

CASE IN POINT: THE LAST LINES OF HIS STORY "EVERYTHING RAVAGED, EVERYTHING BURNED"

It didn't make much sense to me then, what Gnut was going through, but after Pila and me had our little twins, and we put a family together, I got an understanding of how terrible love can be. You wish you hated those people, your wife and children, because you know the things the world will do to them, because you have done some of those things yourself. It's crazy-making, yet you cling to them with everything and close your eyes against the rest of it. But still you wake up late at night and lie there listening for the creak and splash of oars, the clank of steel, the sounds of men rowing toward your home.

BEST NEW BOOZE

Sombra



Sombra is the perfect meeting of mind and matter. The mind: Richard Betts, master sommelier, formerly of The Little Nell in Aspen. The matter: the purest organic Oaxacan agave, wild yeast, and a centuries-old technique for a taste light on funk and long on rich, smoky flavor. \$50; sombraoaxaca.com

BEST RECORD BREAKER

ZAC SUNDERLAND

AT 17, HE BECAME THE YOUNGEST TO SAIL AROUND THE WORLD SOLO. HE RECOUNTS HIS SCARIEST MOMENTS.

Unfortunately, just a month after Sunderland returned from his 400-day trip, his record was broken by a British teenager. But having achieved what he did virtually sponsorless, he gets our vote for adventurer of the year. He talked to us from his home in Southern California, where he's finishing up high school.

DAY 112

"I had a scare off of Indonesia. This boat came up to me and started circling in a red zone for piracy. It was only 50 feet away, and that's



not really done in the ocean — usually, you stay two miles away. I altered course, but they would alter course back on mine, essentially to check out my boat. I ended up calling the Australian Coastwatch, and they flew over with their fighter jets. The boat turned around and sped off in the opposite direction."

DAY 148

"The ocean doesn't scare me as long as I'm in control of the situation. What scares me is when stuff breaks. The forestay broke when I was out there, and I spent four days trying to lash it down during a storm in the Indian Ocean. I had this massive sail flogging around and I almost got washed over the side. I was awake for all four days, and I started to hallucinate and get really weak. Then the storm finally died, and I pulled onto an island to get it taken care of."

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BEST EXTREME STUNT

VALERY ROZOV'S VOLCANO BASE JUMP

THE RUSSIAN DAREDEVIL WINGSUITED HIS WAY INTO AN ACTIVE SIBERIAN VOLCANO. ON PURPOSE.

**THE JUMP**

"I jumped from about 500 meters above the crater and about 800 meters away. My regular glide ratio is much higher, so I had to be very careful with the trajectory. My goal was to fly as close as possible to the rim and then into the crater."

**THE DANGER**

"I flew about 25 seconds, then entered the volcano 30 or 40 meters above the rim. In a wingsuit you can fly 200 kilometers per hour, but I slowed down because the crater is not so big, and I was scared of hitting the opposite wall."

**THE APPROACH**

"Once inside, I knew I'd be able to land in the right place. The only danger would be if I had problems with the canopy — twisted lines, for example — and then landed in the active zone of the crater, into one of the baths of boiling acid."

**THE LANDING**

"The landing zone was quite big, but I didn't know what was under the snow — hot water, crevasses. There was a disgusting smell of rotten eggs! And there might have been poisonous gases. I just tried to get out of the crater ASAP."

BEST BUTCHER

TOM MYLAN

"We can tell you everything about your steak: the breed of the cow, the name of the farm, exactly when it was killed, even the name of the guy who killed it," says Tom Mylan. As the start-up butcher at Brooklyn's groundbreaking Marlow & Daughters — the first artisanal whole-animal meatshop in

New York in 30 years — and as the chief visionary behind the Meat Hook butcher shop, which opened last month, also in Brooklyn, Mylan gets credit for kicking off New York City's new carnivorous revolution. He isn't just cutting steaks the old-fashioned way, either: He's sourcing the finest



meat. "It's local, it's properly raised, and we have control over the complete supply chain. We know our animals backward and forward."

EXPERT ADVICE: "Don't buy meat from strangers. Buy meat from someone with a name, who can tell you where it comes from, who's accountable."

BEST BAKER

CHAD ROBERTSON

Man cannot live on bread alone, or so they say, but a guy might be tempted to try after eating Chad Robertson's naturally leavened loaves, now ranked among the very finest French country bread on Earth. As a West Texas native and scion of a third-generation boot-and-saddle-making



family, Robertson marries high-plains humility and far

western reserve when he demurs about his secrets, saying, "The way that I make bread is really just dictated by my lifestyle." Which is basically a whole lot of surfing, as he builds his baking schedule around the waves. Look out for his tell-all manual, *Tartine Bread*, due next year from Chronicle Books.

EXPERT ADVICE: "Most important is a long, long, slow rising. That's how you develop flavors. Our bread rises in a cool place for more than 30 hours."

BEST CALL TO ARMS
Shop Class as Soulcraft

A Ph.D. turned motorcycle repairman, Matthew Crawford knows firsthand the danger of surrendering oneself to office work and the vital import of dirtying up that white collar: "Since the standards of craftsmanship issue from the logic of things rather than the art of persuasion," he writes, "practiced submission to them gives the craftsman psychic ground to stand on against fantastic hopes aroused by demagogues."

BEST I TOLD YOU SO

MJ'S HALL OF FAME SPEECH

MATT TAIBBI IS STILL SHAKING HIS HEAD.



In one of the most openly entertaining displays of pathological superstar-complex narcissism yet seen this century, Michael Jordan strode to the lectern and proceeded to extend a giant, oscillating black baguette of a middle finger to everyone who ever crossed him, doubted him, or simply failed to bask with appropriate servility in his mathematically inexpressible greatness. One of the all-time classless speeches, for sure, but undeniably riveting in its utter assholiness.

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**BEST GIFT FROM OBAMA**

THE OWYHEE RIVER VALLEY, IDAHO

THE OMNIBUS BILL SAVED 2 MILLION ACRES OF LAND THIS YEAR — NONE MORE SPECTACULAR THAN THIS PADDLING PLAYGROUND IN SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO.

The deep rhyolite mazes of the Owyhee-Bruneau Canyonlands represent the last great unknown chunk of wild lands in the West. They also form one of the best new protected playgrounds, thanks to the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. The oddly named bill created the greatest sweeping environmental legislation since the '70s, bundling up 160 separate conservation bills and preserving 2 million acres of wilderness. It may

be the biggest triumph yet of a new pro-conservation Congress and Obama administration.

The Owyhee, in particular, is a paddler's paradise. The 517,000 acres of wilderness are the perfect venue for everything from weeklong expeditions down the Owyhee to Class V kayaking flume rides down the narrow, log-jammed walls of the Jarbridge. Take a side trip to the canyon rim; your only company will be the coyotes.



TWO MORE OMNIBUS GIFTS

HIKE

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRAIL, MONTANA, IDAHO, AND WASHINGTON

Stretching 1,200 miles, this newly designated National Scenic Trail is on par with other epics like the Appalachian and Continental Divide trails. It tours some of the wildest terrain in the lower 48, punctuated by soaring glacial peaks and populated by grizzlies.

PADDLE

BEAVER BASIN WILDERNESS, MICHIGAN

Michigan's burly Upper Peninsula is arguably even wilder than Minnesota's Boundary Waters. It encompasses 20 miles of wave-battered cliffs along Lake Superior's Pictured Rocks National Seashore; protection of this 11,739-acre wilderness would make UP adherent Papa Hemingway howl with joy.

BEST TRIBUTE

McConkey's Eagle



Most tributes to the late daredevil skier Shane McConkey were heartfelt but ephemeral — a naked Daffy, a mass BASE jump — so for a more permanent memorial, his Squaw homies installed this steel eagle at the top of his favorite run, KT-22.

BEST ADVENTURE LODGES

SURF RED FROG BUNGALOWS

BOCAS DEL TORO, PANAMA

Our favorite new surf spot is the Caribbean coast of Panama, and the center of the action is **Bocas del Toro**. Check in at the newly opened **Red Frog Bungalows** on the quiet jungle island of Isla Bastimentos, an easy 25-minute boat ride from main island Colón. We love the rustic seclusion and Red Frog's resident surf guide, who, for \$40 a day, took us to spots ranging from a beginner-friendly left to heaving beach-break barrels. \$110 per night; redfrogbungalows.com



DIVE PERLA BONERIANO

BONAIRE, DUTCH ANTILLES

Always on scuba divers' short list, **Bonaire** tops ours because of strict protection of its pristine reefs. It not only celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, but **Perla Boneriano**, a seven-villa eco-minded property within easy walking distance of several great dives, just opened, too. Expect 82-degree water, 100-foot-plus visibility, and more than 50 easy-to-access shore dives along the western coast. \$849 to \$1,474 per week; perlaborneriano.com



KAYAK KENAI FJORDS GLACIER LODGE

AIALIK BAY, ALASKA

Whale breath stinks. But paddling from the 16-cabin **Kenai Fjords Glacier Lodge** — "You can't even see it from the beach," says one paddler — you run the risk of getting a whiff. The lodge, deep inside 700,000 bear-infested acres of **Kenai Fjords National Park**, a couple of hours south of Anchorage, is base camp for kayaking Aialik Bay: Dodge seals and bergy bits along the face of Aialik Glacier — and be ready to move damn fast if it calves. \$995; kenaiglacier.com



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BEST SKI RETREAT**CHIC-CHOCS MOUNTAIN LODGE**

QUEBEC'S REMOTE POWDER-DRENCHED NATURE RESERVE NOW HAS THE PERFECT BASE CAMP.

For the best backcountry powder skiing in the East — think 20 feet of snow a year and no crowds tracking up the lines — you can thank the arctic winds that suck up moisture from Quebec's St. Lawrence estuary and then slam into the imposing 4,000-foot-high wall of the Chic-Choc mountain range on the isolated Gaspé Peninsula. Best of all, you can enjoy it in style, at the new government-run L'Auberge de Montagne des Chic-Chocs. The exclusive 18-room lodge operates on a philosophy of enjoying the wilderness setting Euro-style, replete with multicourse meals, local ingredients, and a respectable wine list. Score a point for bourgeois socialism. \$862 to \$2,149; includes ski or split snowboard rentals; sepaq.com/ct/amc

**BEST TWEET****TOUR DE FEUD**

"Seeing these comments from AC. If I were him, I'd drop this drivel and start thanking his team. w/o them, he doesn't win."

3:17 PM, JULY 27

Lance Armstrong responds to Spanish teammate **Alberto Contador's** post-Tour claim that "the days in the hotel were harder than those on the road."

MJ ITINERARY**DAY ONE**

From Montreal catch a charter flight to **Ste.-Anne-des-Monts**, and then the 18-mile, guests-only snowcat ride up 2,000 feet to the lodge.

DAY TWO

Ski to a heated shelter for lunch and shred the glades right out the front door. Cool down in the evening with a snifter from the scotch bar.

DAY THREE

Strap on avy gear and ride the snowcat for laps down the 35-degree-plus chutes. Party like a Quebecois with fine wine on your last night.

DAY FOUR

Get up early for a contemplative snowshoe tour, then catch up on sleep during the snowcat and shuttle ride back down.

BEST ACT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**THE COVE**

PETER HELLER WAS THERE DURING THE MAKING OF THIS CONTROVERSIAL FILM ABOUT JAPAN'S DOLPHIN MASSACRES.

In October 2007, I accompanied covert-ops filmmakers on a night raid into the secret dolphin-killing cove in Taiji, Japan. We climbed above the cliffs in full camo to film the slaughter. Later, I paddled into the cove with five others to perform a surfers' funeral ceremony for the dolphins. By the time we got there the massacre had already begun. I wore a helmet cam to film the carnage, and, in fact, you will see the footage I shot from my head when you watch *The Cove*.

It made an impact on me like nothing else I've ever witnessed. *The Cove* is evidently having the same effect on the world, as it's garnered 14 international awards. Director Louie Psihoyos says, "It shows that

a couple of people can make a difference." He noted that because of international outrage, while whalers are still killing pilot whales and culling prime dolphins for sale to marine parks, they're releasing the rest of the dolphin pods. The film has also prompted the Japanese government to test all Taiji residents for mercury, levels of which they found to be very high. At a recent screening I asked Psihoyos if he would go back to Japan. "No, I have an arrest warrant," he said. Then he smiled. "You have an arrest warrant too." The film was recently accepted by the Tokyo Film Festival. "You going?" I asked him. "I'm going to try," he answered. "But I don't want to get Polanski'd."

CONTRIBUTORS: Mark Anders, Katie Arnold, Kevin Carranza, Wayne Curtis, Christian DeBenedetti, Ezra Dyer, Daniel Duane, Bill Gifford, Aaron Gulley, Peter Heller, Dougald MacDonald, Brad Melekian, Edward Readicker-Henderson, Doug Schnitzspahn, Matt Taibbi

The times, they are A-Cha-Chinging.

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2008



Back in 2008, a four-star flight+hotel vacation to Hawaii cost quite the large handful of change — \$1,545 on average.



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My goodness, I was handsome in 2008!

2009



These days, you can get the same Hawaii four-star flight+hotel vacation for only \$730 on average. Cha-ching is right!



Today, you can get that same Las Vegas four-star flight+hotel vacation for only \$373 on average. So long, high price!



+



Now you can book your trip today, without worrying about a lower price tomorrow, thanks to PriceGuardian — a tool that automatically refunds you the difference if the same Travelocity vacation is booked at a lower price.*



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I'm an even handsomer chap in 2009!

2008 price is the average price of all Flight + Hotel vacation packages booked to Honolulu, Hawaii and Las Vegas on Travelocity during a one-week period in April 2008. 2009 price is the average price of all Flight + Hotel vacation packages booked to Honolulu, Hawaii and Las Vegas on Travelocity during the same one-week period in April 2009. See travelocity.com/guarantee for details on the Travelocity Guarantee. *Important restrictions apply. Refunds of \$10 to \$500 if the exact same Flight + Hotel vacation is booked on Travelocity. See www.travelocity.com/priceguardian for details. ©2009 Travelocity.com LP. All rights reserved. TRAVELOCITY, the Stars Design and The Roaming Gnome are trademarks of Travelocity.com LP. CST #2056372-50.

Here's the Key to Your Suite, Mr. Ovechkin

When you furnish the world's best hockey player with a ritzy New York hotel room and the season's best, um, accessories, you know he's going to put them to good use. Especially when that player is Alex Ovechkin.

interview by **IVAN SOLOTAROFF**

photographs by **ANDERS OVERGAARD**

fashion by **PATTI O'BRIEN**





STYLE

Best Watches

There's nothing dainty about these chunky watches. The leather straps read casual, and the rose and yellow gold say sophistication — a combination fit to impress the boss or the girl.

Watch on him: **TAG HEUER GRAND CARRERA CALIBRE 17**, \$7,900. Watches at bottom, from left to right: **HAMILTON JAZZ MASTER OPEN SECRET**, \$2,195; **BULOVA 65C100**, \$695; **IWC BIG PILOT EDITION ANTOINE DE SAINT EXUPÉRY**, \$28,200; **ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST**, \$16,250.

Shirt, \$275, and vest, \$425, both by **JOHN VARVATOS**; jeans by **JOHN VARVATOS STAR USA**, \$225.

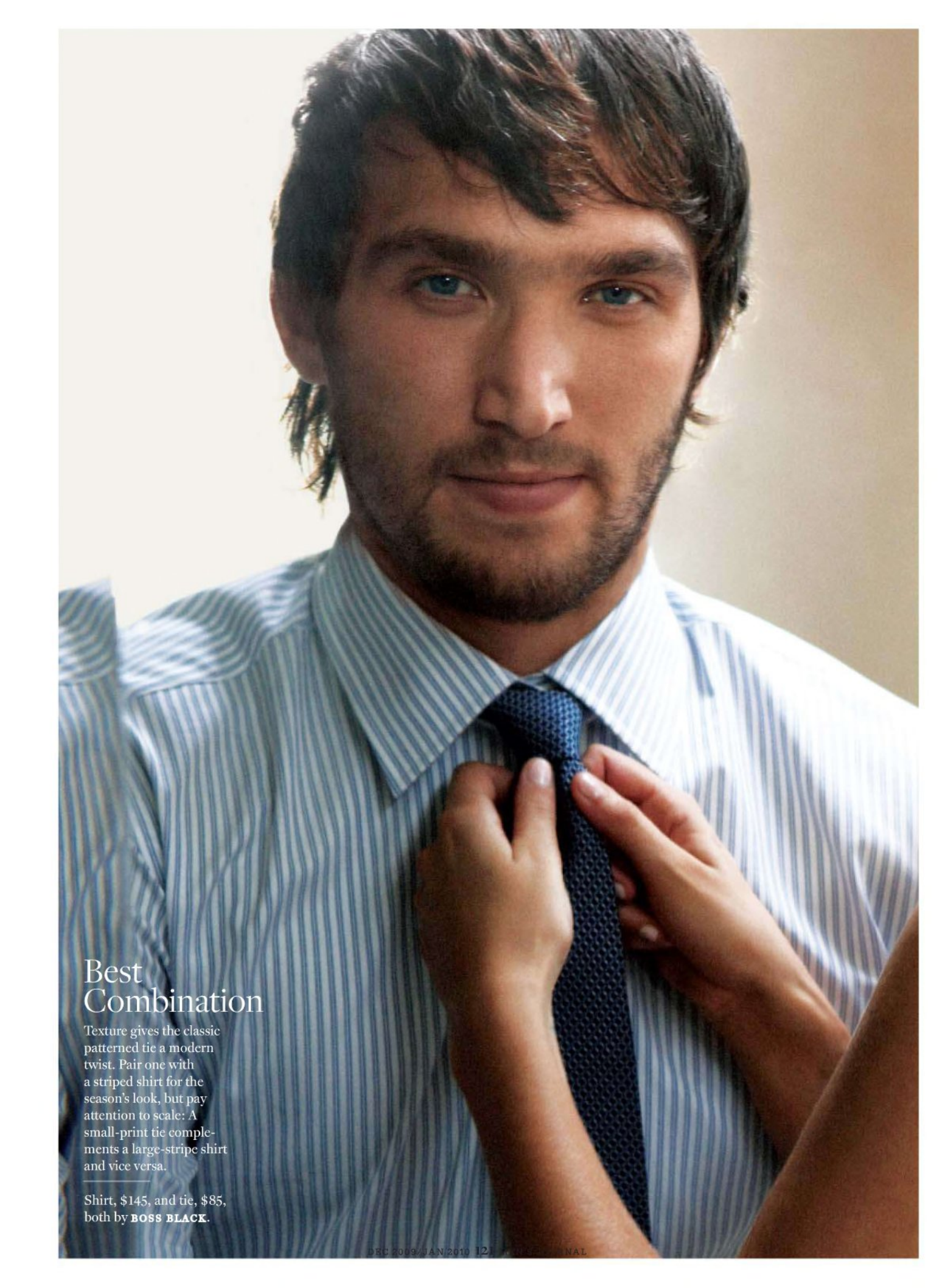
A man and a woman are in a bathroom. The man, on the left, is wearing a dark grey zip-up sweater and dark jeans, holding a magazine. The woman, on the right, is sitting on the edge of a bathtub, covered in white soap suds. The air is filled with many bubbles. In the foreground, there are several leather bags, including a large brown duffel bag and a black bag. The background shows a window with blinds and a sink.

Best Weekend Bags

Soft leather and suede make these lightweight, durable bags easy to stuff full and throw into an overhead compartment or backseat. Perfect, because the more beat up they get, the better they'll look.

Clockwise from top: **SALVATORE FERRAGAMO SUEDE WEEKEND BAG**, \$2,100; **TRAFALGAR THAYER LEATHER DUFFEL**, \$450; **COACH THOMPSON TRAVEL SATCHEL**, \$648; **COLE HAAN LUXE TWO-TONE FRAME DUFFEL**, \$798.

Sweater by **JOHN VARVATOS**, \$798; jeans by **JOHN VARVATOS STAR USA**, \$225; watch by **BREITLING**, \$16,055.

A close-up portrait of a man with dark, wavy hair and a light beard, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a light blue and white vertically striped dress shirt and a dark blue tie with a small, repeating geometric pattern. His hands are visible, adjusting the knot of the tie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Best Combination

Texture gives the classic patterned tie a modern twist. Pair one with a striped shirt for the season's look, but pay attention to scale: A small-print tie complements a large-stripe shirt and vice versa.

Shirt, \$145, and tie, \$85, both by **BOSS BLACK**.

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark gray suit, white shirt, and dark tie, is leaning over a pool table. He is smiling and looking down at a red pool ball on the table. The background shows a city skyline with various skyscrapers, suggesting a high-rise apartment or office setting. The lighting is bright, coming from a large window.

Best Suit

This slim gray suit has stretch, so you have the freedom to move, whether you throw the jacket on with jeans or turn up the elegance with a white shirt and black tie.

Suit by **JOHN VARVATOS**, \$2,195.

Shirt by **JOHN VARVATOS**, \$225; tie by **CALVIN KLEIN**, \$125.
On her: Dress by **RALPH LAUREN BLACK LABEL**, \$798; earrings by **R.J. GRAZIANO**, \$30.



Associate fashion editor: BRYNN CARHART. Women's styling by JOHN OLSON. Hair and makeup by KELLEY QUAN at Kramer + Kramer. Prop styling by CHAD TUCKER for Judy Casey Inc. Production by JESSIE LEVOY. Photo retouching by STATIKDIGITAL.COM. Model: CHEYENNE TOZZI, Elite NY. For more information, see Where to Buy, page 175.

Best Hockey Player

AS DAZZLING AS HE IS ON THE ICE for the Washington Capitals, skating like an Eric Heiden-Scott Hamilton hybrid on breakaways and celebrating goals unabashedly, Alex Ovechkin is just as flashy off it. The 24-year-old Russian, the NHL's reigning (and back-to-back) MVP, has a penchant for club hopping, fast driving, and dating beautiful women, and he will answer our rapid-fire questions however the spirit moves him.

Goals or assists?

Goals.

Stanley Cup or gold medal?

Both.

American or Russian hockey fans?

Russian.

Because they're more knowledgeable?

Because they're Russian.

Moscow or DC?

Moscow in the summer.

Italian suit or jeans and T-shirt?

T-shirt.

Blonde or brunette?

Both.

Jessica Alba or Megan Fox?

[Smiles] Definitely both.

Greatest player of all time?

Mario Lemieux.

Where do you rank?

No comment.

Your rival, Sidney Crosby: dislike him?

I love him.

You send him cards on his birthday?

I send him cards every day.

Your worst injury?

No injuries.

None?

Five broken noses. But I finish the games each time.

Why don't you have an agent?

Selfish. I don't want to pay.

Do you remember your first million-dollar check?

[Big smile] Yes. Yes, I do.

How did it feel?

It felt heavy.

What's the craziest thing you've done off-ice that you will talk about?

Nothing.

Nothing?

Nothing I will talk about.

You once told a pretty Russian journalist that sex before games helps you. True?

Yes, she was pretty.

What does the White House look like when you're driving past it at 180 mph?

I don't know. You have to look straight.

What do you love most about hockey?

Winning.

What bores you more than anything?

This. [Smiles] Most boring thing ever. 

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BEST PLAYBOAT

It took one competition for the newest **JACKSON KAYAK ALLSTAR** to prove itself — the top five men's finalists in the 2009 Freestyle World Championships paddled it. Compared with last year's model, the boat is shorter but faster, smaller but more comfortable, and more agile than ever. It spins quicker and has more pop for big tricks. [\$1,199; jacksonkayak.com]

BEST STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD

As stand-up paddleboarding grows from niche to mainstream, the gear only gets better. Case in point: the new **JOE BARK 14-FOOT EXPEDITION SUP** from the legendary South Bay stand-up shaper, made by Surftech. The sleek silhouette makes quick work of multi-mile trips, yet still feels stable in choppy seas. [\$2,075; surftechsup.com]

The front deck is raised, offering not only better seating ergonomics but also more lift when the kayak is vertical.

The seemingly tiny windscreen actually channels the airflow very well, substantially reducing windblast at highway speeds.

The board's size and contours (thin at the ends) let you catch downwind swells other SUPs can't.

GEAR

of the

YEAR

BEST ADVENTURE MOTORCYCLE

Ewan McGregor struggled at times with his massive 558-pound BMW R 1150 GS while biking around the world in 2004. That's why we prefer its 445-pound little brother, the slightly less refined but more eager to get dirty **BMW F 800 GS**. Its 800cc twin engine cruises smoothly on the interstate yet feels most at home when the road ends, nimbly carrying you away from everyone else. [\$11,395; bmwmotorcycles.com]

An Everest-size pile of new products materializes every year, each one claiming to be the next big thing. The majority are unremarkably satisfactory; a few are laughably pathetic. Rarest of all are the 25 superlative objects on these six pages.

THE BEST 2009

RIDES

GEAR

of the

YEAR

CAMPING

BEST TENT

You can have a tent that's lightweight but cramped, a tent that's roomy but heavy, or a **NEMO LOSI 3P**, which ticks both boxes. It weighs only 5.9 pounds but sleeps three in cavernous comfort thanks to 50 square feet of space and a four-foot ceiling — enough elbow room for eight men to play poker on a rainy night. Dual 13-square-foot vestibules keep your packs dry, and built-in organizer pockets prevent small stuff from being lost. [\$395; nemoequipment.com]

The Losi's fly, poles, and footprint can be used without the tent body as a beach shelter.

BEST TOPO MAPS

If you use paper instead of gadgets, the high indestructible **20SUB3 RUGGED MAP** is a godsend. Choose a 7.5-minute quad from 11 states (or request your own custom topograph), and it's printed onto a tear-resistant, waterproof fabric. Finally, no more ripped and faded creases. [\$20; 20sub3.com]

The Brunton Profile Duo's piezo ignition fires up with just the turn of a knob — no matches required.

A removable pocket on top becomes a small summit pack for out-of-camp scrambles.

BEST STOVE

The **BRUNTON PROFILE DUO RANGE/GRILL COMBO**'s 12,000-BTU burner boils water or simmers alfredo sauce while the grill on the right perfectly sears salmon steaks. Plus, the stove works on propane or butane. [\$138; brunton.com]

BEST BACKPACK

The **MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR INTENTION 75** is the most comfortable pack we've ever worn. Credit the hyper-adjustable suspension system and a two-piece hip belt that puts the padding where it's needed. [\$295; mountainhardwear.com]

BEST LANTERN

Set the **COLEMAN QUAD LANTERN** where you want, and its four removable panels (each with six LEDs) ably illuminate your campsite or tent. Nature calls? Pop a panel off and let it guide the way to some private space. When you return, snap the panel back in, and it automatically recharges via the base's eight D-cell batteries. [\$70; coleman.com]



One new drill for Phil. One less drill for mankind.
Buying pre-owned is the greenest way to buy.

Come to think of it, **eBay**

GEAR

of the

YEAR

CAMPING

**BEST CAMP CHAIR**

A seat with two legs seems as useful as a one-wheeled bike (sorry, unicyclists), but once you snap the struts into place and sit down in the **ALITE MONARCH**, you'll understand its genius. Your legs let you balance at a slight recline, and you can even work a rocking-chair motion — two positions no stiff-backed, director's-style camp chair could ever match. And at just 18 ounces, the Alite goes anywhere. [*\$60; alitedesigns.com*]

Despite a minimalist build, the Monarch chair, with its nylon seat and folding aluminum struts, can support up to 250 pounds.

You can crush the 14-ounce Therm-a-Rest NeoAir pad down to the size of a softball for easy packing.

BEST FLY ROD

Fly-fishing has a bad rap as an expensive sport, but the Sage Flight series lowers the bar for entry. In our testing, the nine-foot **490 FLIGHT** — available in two- or four-piece versions — provided ample power to push line through the winds that blast down the channels of Idaho's Kelly Creek, yet its fast action was tempered enough to allow for delicate presentations of tiny flies in glassy pools. [*from \$280; sageflyfish.com*]

BEST WATER BOTTLE

The 21-ounce **CAMELBAK PODIUM CHILLJACKET** comes as close to the ideal water bottle as we've ever seen. Like the regular Podium bottle, it features the company's incisor-saving bite-and-suck spout as well

as its antibacterial polypropylene liner, which keeps H₂O from tasting plasticky. The ChillJacket adds insulation into the mix, keeping water cold for several hours, making it well-suited for sweaty summer temps. [*\$12; camelbak.com*]



All the tools save the needle-nose pliers are accessible without opening up the Crucial, and you can flip out the blade with one hand.

BEST SLEEPING BAG AND SLEEPING PAD

A bag's insulation does nothing clumped up at your sides, so the 20-degree **BIG AGNES TUMBLE MOUNTAIN** has vertical baffles. Mesh gates hold the 725-fill goose down in place. [*\$290; bigagnes.com*]
The inflatable six-foot-long **THERM-A-REST NEOAIR** sleeping pad further preserves body heat by using a heat-reflective lining on the inside, making it useful down to 35 degrees. [*\$150; thermarest.com*]

BEST MULTITOOL

While many multitools come laden with instruments you'll never use in the field (a nail file?), the five-ounce **GERBER CRUCIAL** is efficiently minimal. The half-serrated 2.25-inch-long blade is strong and blunt-nosed, making it useful for tasks like prying and scraping. Rounding out the tool's functionality are screwdrivers (flat and Phillips), needle-nose pliers with wire cutters, and a carabiner that doubles as a bottle opener. [*\$58; gerbergear.com*]



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Last year's music player at half price
still plays this year's music at full volume.

Come to think of it, **eBay**

GEAR

of the

YEAR

CAMERAS

BEST HELMET CAM

Since arriving in 2004, GoPro's original Hero has earned accolades for being affordable and easy to use. Now the **GOPRO HD HELMET HERO** adds top-notch image quality to its résumé — 1080p high-def resolution, to be exact. Whether mounted to your helmet, dirt bike, or surfboard, the camera's 127-degree lens captures feats and painful falls in stunning clarity. [\$300; goprocamera.com]



The HD Hero's included case is waterproof down to 60 meters and keeps the minimal controls accessible.

The D5000's 2.7-inch LCD in back can fold out and swivel, allowing you to take ground-level and overhead shots without pointing and praying.



BEST DSLR

If you want more photographic power, but you don't want to lose the features that make pocket cams so handy (like video and scene modes), then focus on the **NIKON D5000**. Inside is the 12.3-megapixel sensor from Nikon's pricier D90, endowing the D5000 with great low-light performance and the ability to shoot high-def video (720p at 24 frames per second). And it's all controlled by a newbie-safe user interface that makes the SLR learning curve less steep. [\$850 with kit lens; nikon.com]

You can program the rotating ring around the PowerShot S90's lens to control a particular setting, such as zoom, ISO, or aperture.



BEST CAMERA BACKPACK

The **BOOQ PYTHON BLUR** is a godsend for photographers schlepping an SLR body or two and a coterie of lenses. A compartment on top offers easy access to your main rig, side pockets store your glass (just swing the pack off one shoulder to quickly swap your zoom for a prime), and the back panel opens up to a laptop sleeve. Thankfully, uber-adjustable ergonomic straps help keep the chiro-practor at bay. [\$230; booqbags.com]



Each Python Blur has a unique Terraling ID plaque on the top pocket. If someone finds the bag, they call Booq, then Booq calls you. Fingers crossed you get back more than an empty pack.

BEST POINT-AND-SHOOT

The **CANON S90** isn't just 2009's best point-and-shoot; it's the best point-and-shoot ever made. It boasts the necessary prosumer-level ingredients — optical image stabilization, RAW files, and face detection — plus a lens that has cameraphiles drooling. Not only can the 4x zoom lens open wide (28mm) for sweeping vistas, but its aperture gets as fast as f2. That lets the S90 take crisp indoor and night shots with no flash — the holy grail of pocket cams. [\$430; usa.canon.com]

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This season's shows still look great
on last season's HD TV.

Come to think of it, 

GEAR

of the

YEAR

APPAREL

**BEST ADVENTURE WATCH**

The **SUUNTO ELEMENTUM** is just as capable as the rest of the company's watches, but its true selling point is its craftsmanship: scratch-resistant sapphire glass, a stainless-steel body with just enough heft, and a knurled knob at two o'clock that spins through gratifyingly precise detents. Available in three flavors (Terra, for mountaineering; Ventus, for sailing; and Aqua, for scuba diving), this isn't an adventure watch — it's an adventure timepiece. [*\$1,000; suunto.com*]

BEST RUNNING AND HIKING SHOES

The reengineered 12.6-ounce **ASICS GEL-KINSEI 3** is the rare shoe that felt right the moment we laced it up. Its cushy heel kept us loose as the miles piled on, and the sole, which splits in the forefoot to encourage pushing off near the pinkie toe, gave us an effortlessly consistent stride. [*\$180; asics.com*]

On the trails, the one-pound, 15-ounce **VASQUE BREEZE LOW GTX** made us realize that we don't need heavy, stiff boots for long, hard hikes.

A lightweight, sturdy upper supports the ankle on unstable terrain while the Gore-Tex liner and a gusseted tongue keep feet dry. [*\$130; vasque.com*]

The Moshi battery pack, which sits in a sleeve on your back, lasts up to 8.6 hours on low settings and warms to 100 degrees on high.

A symmetrical lace on the upper of the GEL-Kinsei 3 follows the foot's bone structure for more comfort.

**BEST SUNGLASSES**

The **OAKLEY JAWBONE** isn't the first pair of sunglasses with interchangeable lenses, just the best designed. Flip up the hinged nose pads, swing down the lower half of the frame, then slide in your new glass. Because lenses don't have to squeeze into the frame, there's no distortion. [*from \$195; oakley.com*]



Through Oakley's custom program, you can choose lens types (polarized, photochromatic, prescription, etc.) and frame colors, and even have a phrase etched into the optics.

BEST NEW TECHNOLOGY

Heated jackets have always been heavy, bulky, and expensive. The **ARDICA MOSHI POWER SYSTEM** solved two of those issues by using a flexible 10.4-ounce lithium-ion battery pack to power heating wires layered into Mountain Hardwear's \$240 Refugium jacket (more compatible outerwear is coming). Better still, it can charge gadgets like iPods and GPS units via an integrated USB port (\$50 for the connector kit). [*\$145; ardica.com*]

**BEST HEADLAMP**

There are brighter headlamps, but for the average man-about-forest, the **PETZL TIKKA PLUS²** is plenty illuminating — and more important, exceptionally versatile. It throws a brilliant 50-lumen beam 35

meters up the trail, dials down to a softer glow that lets it last up to 140 hours, and even has a red-light mode for preserving night vision. [*\$40; petzl.com*]





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GEAR

of the

YEAR

BIKES



Felt uses size-specific geometry on the F4 SL, meaning that each size frame is shaped slightly differently so as to be optimally dialed in to the rider.

Shimano's more-than-adequate Ultegra SL components keep the bike's cost down. You can always upgrade later as you improve.

BEST MOUNTAIN BIKE

You'd think that a carbon-fiber mountain bike weighing only 22.4 pounds would be twitchy and fragile — exactly what you don't want when bouncing over roots and slalom-ing trees. Yet the **SANTA CRUZ BLUR XC CARBON** isn't. Thanks to a near-ideal balance of stiffness and shock-absorption (100mm of travel in front, 105mm in back), the bike nimbly handles bony singletrack, accelerates with a pounce, and, against all common sense, is stronger than Santa Cruz's aluminum XC bikes. [from \$3,449; santacruzmtb.com]



Because the frame is so strong, you can install a long-travel 120mm fork on the Blur XC Carbon to make it an all-mountain bike capable of taking bigger hits.

This carbon-fiber upper link on the rear shock shaves off more weight without sacrificing stiffness.

CONTRIBUTORS:

Scott Boulbol, Eugene Buchanan, Steve Mazzucchi, Megan Michelson, Dan Nelson, Marc Peruzzi, Frederick Reimers, Douglas Schnitzspahn

BEST ROAD BIKE

It's going to make a lot of manufacturers mad, but we'll say it: There's no reason to buy a more expensive bike than the **FELT F4 SL**. All of Felt's F-series rides are impressive for carbon bikes, delivering quick response in the heat of competition, but the SL is the flagship. Stiff but supple, its frame geometry makes the bike nimble enough to pass other riders in a tight pack and stable enough to confidently bomb down mountain-canyon roads. That balanced performance will please a wide range of riders, from weekend warriors with big aspirations to competitive racers on a budget. [\$2,999; feltbicycles.com]

SIGHTINGS

A special advertising guide to the products, services and events that connect you with the adventurous, stylish and innovative world around you.



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Heat your core - charge your electronics. This lightly insulated, low profile jacket comes pre-wired for Ardica Heat and Power Technology. Wear alone or under a shell for extraordinary warmth and charge portable electronics on the go. Enjoy up to 8 hours of continuous heat, delivered through intergraded heating panels, power any accessory requiring less than 10 watts and charge anything by a USB cable (included). Ardica personal power system sold separately.

mountainhardwear.com/ardica



The North Face® Crimptastic Jacket

The new insulated Summit Series® Crimptastic Hybrid jacket is a perfect mix between a lightweight down jacket, and a stretchy, fleece soft shell. This jacket has strategically placed Polartec® Power Stretch® soft shell panels under the arms and forearms, with lofty quilted down baffles filling out the body.

\$229

thenorthface.com

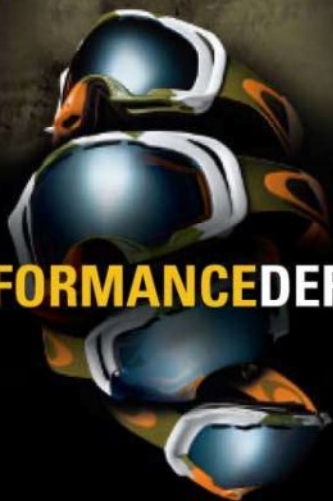


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There is a decision you must make. The world is vast and unstructured. In it, things move seemingly at random. There comes a narrowing, a focusing, as the aperture reduces and reduces. The act, combined with training and skill and vision and, yes, philosophy, leads to a gradual, noiseless ratcheting down and down, like ripples in a pond going backward toward the pebble, closer and closer, smaller and smaller, the chaos dissipating into a tiny center of detailed clarity. And then the trigger.

SCOTT TYLER HAS BEEN OUT OF THE NAVY SEALS FOR TWO years, but you don't simply forget what you did best. And what he did best, other than lead men in high-stakes combat, was aim a high-caliber, long-range rifle at a "target," be that machine, structure, or, most relevantly, a man, and, in Tyler's words, "take it out." That is what snipers do. Their craft — a part of warfare since the emergence of the Kentucky rifle during the American Revolution and in some ways even further back, to whenever the first accurate, long-distance bow shooter or rock thrower appeared — might seem outdated in an era of smart bombs and computer-controlled drones. But that is not the case. In the mountains of Afghanistan and the streets of Iraq, where the sporadically appearing plainclothes enemy might be far away, amid protective rocks, or close-up amid innocent citizens, stealth killing and accurate killing — the sniper's trademarks — are essential.

To shoot a man from a distance is a fascinating, awe-inspiring thing. It is nearly mythic in its godlike bequeathal of power. You are here, and he is there, and the connective and intensely private embrace is one of death. The two parties are linked by the flight of a tiny projectile traveling at supersonic speed, arriving to do its work well before the sound does and a moment after the powder flash and smoke are visible. To see that brief flash and to recognize, if only for a millisecond, that you will be the recipient of the explosive message, after which you will cease to exist, must be among the more horrifying recognitions there is. If the chamber noise is reduced and the blast light dulled (Tyler and the men he directed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Philippines generally used silencers or suppressors on the barrels of their rifles), the impact — a far-off head exploding, an arm abruptly detached, a body suddenly pierced by an invisible drill — occurs in a world without context or reason for the enemy, and is therefore not just terrifying but dispiriting.

"Long-range target interdiction: That's the two-dollar phrase,"

says Tyler, who sometimes speaks so quietly that you find yourself studying his lips. "In a conventional war you're on the battlefield, and if you look over and your buddy's head blows up and then you see another friend go down, it freaks you out. It demoralizes you; it makes you question things. It's a psychological thing. You, as a sniper, try for the highest-ranking person, if you can, to create that chaos. But in an insurgency, as we have now, when the enemy comes out in ones and twos, sometimes right in the cities, without ever being a big force, it's all ambush. So it can be better to have snipers rather than a man on every corner. A sniper team can stay hidden."

Tyler now works when he can as a security consultant — a job that still takes him to hot spots such as Somalia and Iraq. His company, Qaletaq Corps, works with various governments, tracking down terrorists and war criminals, and with private companies, planning logistics for their personnel traveling to volatile regions, sometimes even accompanying them. He was also recently featured in a short-lived reality show on NBC called *The Wanted*. In that show, Tyler and three other specialists tracked down alleged terrorists and killers now living freely in other countries. Instead of a rifle, Tyler carried a passport and a camera. The trouble with the show was it made no final sense. The evildoers had found legal loopholes so they could live openly, and Tyler sure as hell couldn't go to, for instance, Norway, where the first episode occurred, and blast a dude from half a mile away. Though that would have been something.



AT 5-FOOT-11, 185 POUNDS, TYLER IS MODESTLY SIZED, IF muscular, with thick blacksmith hands, dark hair showing flecks of gray, and green eyes, one of which — the left — bears a birthmark that sometimes lends that iris a golden hue. Maybe the defect is actually a gift, because Tyler has 20/20 vision in his right eye but 20/15 in the left.

That's not the only unusual thing about Tyler, 36, a man who likes to meditate and contemplate big philosophical issues, such as the meaning of life. "People expect him to be so macho," says his mother, Kate, a former hippie who made jewelry and traveled about with her son in a lime-green school bus in southern California before settling down with second husband Darrol Rice in Rio Linda. "They expect that of a sniper. But he's so thoughtful, so open to suggestions, so concerned about others. When he was a little boy, he found five dollars on the playground, and he turned it



IN THE FIELD By day in Iraq, Tyler and his SEAL teams would walk the streets, scouting good sniper positions.

in. When he went to sign up for the Marines, I thought we were going to the mall so he could hit me up for comic books."

He was 18 then, in 1991, coming off a restless high school career. (He was kicked out after spending more time surfing than studying, but eventually earned his GED.) He served a tour in Somalia, got out in 1996, and enrolled at the University of California-Berkeley. The elite, famously liberal school wasn't exactly clamoring for a surfer-dropout-turned-G.I. Joe, but Tyler cajoled military officials into writing him letters of recommendation. He settled on chemistry as his major, "because chemistry had kicked my ass" in some early classes there, and he wasn't backing down from it again. After a year he had a 3.8 GPA, but

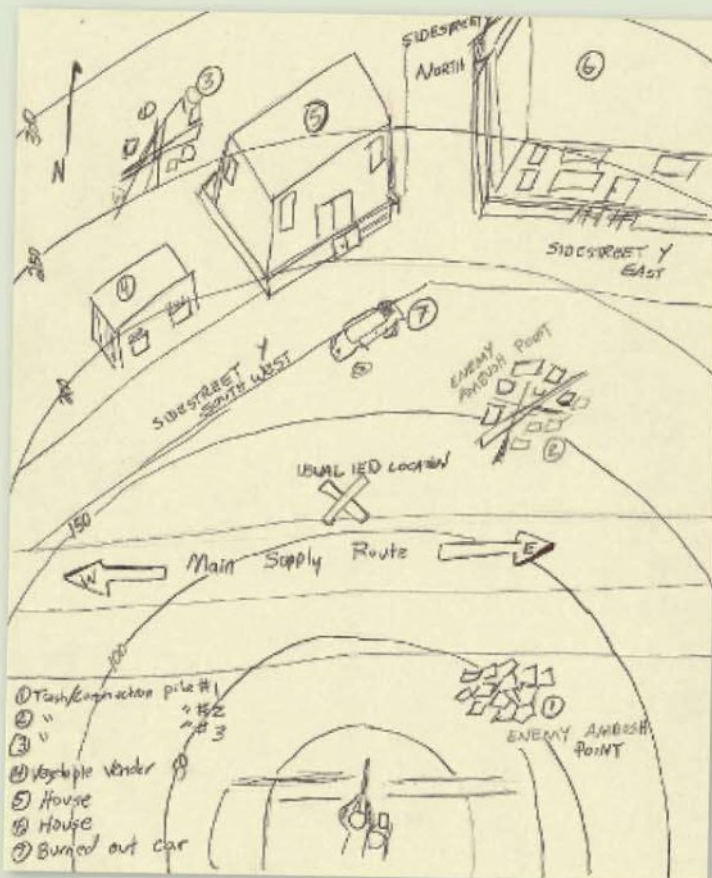
LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR A KILL

SCOTT TYLER BREAKS DOWN HIS APPROACH TO A HYPOTHETICAL MISSION IN IRAQ.

The first thing you need to know is that no two sniper situations are the same. Even at the same location, things change: the sun, wind, people, objects. It's the job of the sniper team — a shooter and spotter — to account for that. What you see here is a modified "range card" I drew, the kind of sketch I would put together on a piece of paper with the spotter's help so we could quickly communicate and engage targets using a common perspective. The card can easily be handed over to a relief team.

This is a typical urban setting in Iraq, a place where IEDs have been set in the past along a military supply route. We're trying to stop the people who are doing it. The arcs indicate the distances in meters from the shooting position. The 1, 2, and 3 indicate rubble or rock that the enemy might use for ambush. You need to scan those places continuously — there could be machine guns, RPGs. The X marks where an IED will most likely be placed. It's a suspicious place, because in previous days people may have built fires there, dumped garbage, hammered, done something to break through the surface of the road. People often will use the same place for bombs once the surface has been breached. They tend to return to places that are familiar to them.

Our cover might be anything from bushes to a building to a trash pile. You want to have a place where you can see well. Ideally, you're prone, but rarely does that happen. Comfort is not the norm. Bad positions are. You may be there for hours or even a day or longer. A member of my team once had to shoot leaning out of a building, with his rifle on metal grillwork. It was the only shot he had. Because the barrel was touching metal, it distorted the harmonics of the whole thing. The bullet path changed because of it, and he missed badly. He didn't get another chance.



his view of life from the chemistry lab was not fulfilling.

He had had a dream: He would continue on to medical school, become a doctor, and rifle hanging in the back of his truck, work on an Indian reservation, where he would save lives while hiking into the roughest terrain. "I wanted to help people," he says. "But I was managing an apartment building and spending 80 to 90 hours a week studying. For what? So I could spend 80 to 90 hours a week studying in med school? I wanted to learn — knowledge for knowledge's sake — but it was all so competitive for no reason, so full of backstabbing, just a meat grinder. I looked out the windows of the lab, and there were the hills. And I knew I wanted to be back around people I liked being around."

So he switched his major to cognitive science — "why we think what we think," he says — and began hanging out with professors, "talking and trying to learn from them." One afternoon, Tyler and I visit his favorite professor at Berkeley, a cheerful man named John Matsui, the head of the scholars program in the department of integrative biology. As we sit in the campus coffee shop, Matsui says with something like awe, "I never had a student like Scott before. I knew you were intelligent. I saw that you would never quit. Your story was... different. Coming to school the way you did. Your desire to learn."

Even so, after he graduated in 2000, Tyler had had enough of school, and he felt himself drawn back to the military, but this time in more of a thinking role. He joined the navy to become a SEAL, one

of those supersoldiers trained not only to fight on sea, on land, or in the air, but also to operate more independently. "I wanted to work in as small a unit as possible," he says. "I wanted to take all my determination, intentions, and skill and deliver it as precisely as I could — on the tip of a single bullet."

And that is how a sniper was born.



PART OF BEING A GREAT SNIPER IS HAVING THE ABILITY, the mind-set, to blend in, to disguise oneself, to become part of the landscape, to feel and react like soil, like leaves blowing in the wind. In *The Ultimate Sniper*, a technical guide for advanced snipers that Tyler references again and again, there is a section on Ghillie suits, the camouflage outfits that are designed to resemble the surrounding landscape. "A properly made Ghillie suit so well conceals the wearer that it never fails to impress first-time viewers," writes the author, retired army special forces major John L. Plaster. At sniper school, when an instructor talks about the suits, the point is reinforced when, after a spell, an innocuous part of the ground in front of the recruits slowly rises up and becomes human.

"The most important thing about a Ghillie suit is that you can attach other things to it," says Tyler. "It has loops everywhere, and you gather whatever's in your environment — leaves and grass and



A MAN AND HIS GUN "You have to be in the moment," says Tyler, here using a borrowed rifle to show what he can do. To see a video of him shooting at the range, go to mensjournal.com/sniper.

branches — and tape or string or zip-tie them on. It's a layman's myth that you cover yourself with burlap and you look like Chewbacca and that's that."

Snipers, whenever possible, work as two-man teams — one man spotting with a powerful scope, another shooting. But often even harder than shooting is the act of getting within range. It consists of patience almost beyond belief. There is the high crawl, the elbow crawl, the low crawl, and the sniper crawl. "The sniper crawl is the lowest, slowest movement technique..." Plaster writes, "used when movement must be so slow that there is no visible action to detect. [The sniper] creeps along, only four inches per move, using just fingers and toes to propel himself." With a rifle, of course.

Then come the difficult decisions. "I liked the cut-and-dry, liked it if a guy had a gun and was shooting at our troops, and we shot him," says Tyler. "It's a situation of less ambivalence. Nobody wants to go out and murder someone. You don't shoot just because you can. You have the trigger depressed and there is that final quarter-pound of pressure, and if you make a bad call.... Well, a 'bad kill' can create more insurgents, bad feelings, an international incident. But the biggest thing is, you have to live with it."

Tyler has won two bronze stars for valor. The first one stemmed from a 2003 incident in which his sniper team was providing support for a unit taking down a Taliban stronghold in the Afghanistan mountains. "We got into a combat situation and had to shoot our way through it," says Tyler, reluctant to say more. It's the second bronze star, though, that illustrates how gray the decision making in the field can get. That one came after a 2005 firefight in the Philippines, where he and other U.S. soldiers had been sent to assist the government in hunting down extremists. The document that accompanied that award notes that Tyler "without regard for his

own personal safety...led a two-man element to rescue four injured personnel." The truth is that Tyler came damned close to disobeying orders, since he was supposed to be an "observer," not a combatant. He and another SEAL used two small boats to go up a river, firing all the way, to pull out ambushed and wounded Filipino troops. It was political dynamite, but human grace. Tyler could have been court-martialed as easily as decorated.

"The men had been shot up; they were bleeding out," he says. "I got on the phone with the captain back at the base, and he wanted us to wait. He didn't want to make the call, politically. Then my phone fell in the water. It kind of slipped out of my hand. Even now I don't know if I did it on purpose." Three of the four men he rescued survived, and Scott Tyler's reputation spread.

The men in his platoons revered him, because he was meticulous, because he was loyal and smart, because he followed the rules but still thought philosophically and creatively. "I love the guy like a brother," says Dave Hansen, a 13-year SEAL chief petty officer who served under Tyler in Iraq in 2005. "He constantly thought outside the box. Need something done? Just give him the facts and leave him alone. Because he was so good at so many things, he was always able to get us into combat, which is the point. I mean, there he is, knee-deep in craziness, smoking a lot of dudes, and doing it the right way. Mr. Rice" — Tyler recently changed his name from Rice back to Tyler, his birth name, as a way of reconnecting with his birth dad, but many of his fellow former soldiers still call him that — "he is the kind of guy who's gonna save your ass. Maybe that's what comes through in his art."

Oh yes, the art. Tyler is a sculptor; he learned welding from his birth father and has created some remarkably beautiful and thought-provoking moving sculptures out of stainless steel and stone. We visit a gallery in Stinson Beach where one of his pieces, *Spatial*

Relationships, is on display in the yard, and the slightest breeze sets arms on the heavy, earth-toned metal-and-rock form into improbable, silent, delicate motion. "My art has to do with the positive spaces and negative spaces of a landscape," Tyler explains. "That goes with the art of being a sniper. A person's instinct, your eye, will go from positive space — a tree, a rock — to positive space. Negative space is the space in between. Deer and coyotes have the ability, with their coloring, to stand still in negative space, to hide in plain sight. Our eye notices straight lines, perfect circles, shiny things in the wild because they're out of place. Those are not natural forms or shapes. I like things that blend into the landscape. I find nothing more beautiful than trees and rocks."



SCOTT TYLER WAS IN A STONE HUT IN IRAQ'S AMDAR province, east of Ramadi. This was in 2005, and the wrecked little building, about 10 feet by 12 feet, had been dubbed "the hot dog stand" by members of the SEAL team who occasionally used it for cover in the no-man's-land of destruction. Tyler was with two men from his sniper team, observing the gray ambivalent scene outside, when they noticed a suspicious-looking local man checking out places where the SEALs sometimes set up. The man studied the road the military used regularly. He had on a robe, and it was impossible

to see what he might be carrying underneath. The man looked at the hut. He walked closer and stared into the opening about five feet off the ground, at eye level, the place where the SEALs had built an observation deck out of bricks inside the hot dog stand. The man stared directly at Tyler, from six feet away, into his face.

Tyler was covered with his own handmade camouflage suit, spray-painted different colors "like a chameleon," with a mottled front he had designed "not to look like a human, but to be natural and exist in negative space, to be invisible." He had layers of mosquito netting covering his face, and he had backed into the shadows. The man could not see Tyler, could not even see his green eyes.

"Every hair on my body was standing on end," Tyler says. "He could have tossed a grenade into that opening. But I need to see that he is a threat, absolutely. I need to know. He has to deserve to die."

The man left and 20 minutes later returned with someone else. The first man began to dig a hole in the roadway with a trowel while the other served as a lookout. The first man dropped something into the hole, perhaps a bomb.

"I didn't have a rifle, but I confirmed the target — both of those guys — and I cleared my men hot. It would be a simultaneous shoot. I counted down — 'Three, two, one...' and we took out the mine guy, about 75 meters away, and the lookout guy, about 125 meters away, at the same time. We had to do it precisely so that neither would be alerted. Within seconds a truck came flying (continued on page 174)

A SNIPER'S TOOL KIT

A SNIPER CARRIES MANY ITEMS IN THE FIELD. WE ASKED TYLER TO DESCRIBE THE FIVE MOST ESSENTIAL.



1. RIFLE AND SCOPE. You want one you've shot many times, with a scope you've calibrated using a chronograph, which is like a radar gun and calculates the bullet speed. In the field you'll do calculations to adjust for barometric pressure, temperature, altitude, angle, and even, for longer shots, the Earth's rotation. But in the end it comes down to knowing your weapon. It comes down to feel.

If I were working an urban scenario, like the one in the sketch on page 139, and was expecting the target to be people, I would probably opt for an MK12, also known as the SR25, because it is semiauto,

not bolt-action, and I can quickly engage multiple targets easier if I need to. If I'm on a mission where I have to shoot from a distance and still need something light enough to pack around, then I might opt for a .300 Winchester Magnum.

For the scope, I want glass that captures as much light as possible, especially for dusk and dawn scenarios. And I don't want anything too large that's going to be tough to conceal. Plus, sometimes I need to get into tight spaces. Schmidt & Bender has some of the best glass for rifle scopes — nothing fatigues the eye and body more than looking through a distorted lens.

2. ROUNDS. You don't need many; 30 to 50 would be on the high end. They are heavy, and you shouldn't be missing. I like accurized rounds with open tips, in particular a type called Sierra MatchKing. Open tips fly truer: The center of gravity is shifted slightly toward the rear, and they're teardrop-shaped for less turbulence. They don't lose much speed, hitting the target at more than 1,180 feet per second.

3. BINOCULARS. You have your scope, but it's small. Swarovski has some of the best glass you can get in binoculars.

4. COMPASS AND PAPER MAP. I like the Silva Ranger compass

because it's light and easy to use, and it has a signal mirror built in.

5. SECONDARY WEAPON. If three people are coming around a corner 10 feet from you and all you have is a bolt-action rifle, you are in trouble. I prefer a semiautomatic pistol, a .45 — you can fire three shots in three seconds, and it's light on your body. Some guys wear it on their torso, but I like it strapped to my upper thigh. You'll want a silencer, too. That way you don't have to grab anybody and knife them. The last thing a sniper needs is to have his hide site compromised by a pack of feral dogs or a nosy bad guy or two.



What I Learned from **MY FATHER, THE GRIFTER**

WHEN MY DAD WENT OFF TO WORK, IT WAS NOT TO AN OFFICE. IT WAS TO A **POOL HALL**. OR CRAPS TABLE. HE WAS A GAMBLER AND CON MAN, AND AS SUCH HE HAD A **UNIQUE SENSIBILITY** ABOUT MONEY. IT STILL AWES, CONFOUNDS, AND INFLUENCES ME TO THIS DAY.



MY FATHER DIDN'T BELIEVE IN "THINGS." THERE were no mementos in our house. No things from the past that had been passed down from one generation to the next. No grandfather clock from the old country. No steamer trunk in the attic filled with things musty, faded, creased, fragile as dust. No letters written in spidery brown script. No sepia-toned tintypes. No fresher images of a father and son — my father and me. He never took a photograph of me as a baby, a child, a boy, a teenager. He never saved my things. A baby rattle. A lock of hair. The first Father's Day card I ever gave him, I made it myself. A drawing of a stick figure, "Daddy," and a brown cake with flaming candles. He thanked me with a kiss, and the card vanished. It had served its purpose for a brief moment, and then it became only another thing from the past.

My father didn't believe in things that were a reminder of the past because he had never had things in the past, and, more important, he had never had a past — not a past that mattered, that should be passed on to me, his son. My father said that the past was "baggage." Baggage caused you to miss the next train out, although he never said to where. Baggage held you back. Which was why he always traveled light.

My father didn't believe in institutions either, or,

more precisely, he hated institutions, which was understandable since he spent the first 15 years of his life in a state orphanage and the last five in an assisted-living facility, which he called an "old people's home." But it was nicer than that, with a fireplace in the lobby and plush carpet and wood paneling. The orphanage, however, was something else. He didn't like to talk about it, except to say, "There was none of that molestation crap you hear about today. They fed you, clothed you, sent you to school." When I told him once that I admired him because he was never bitter about his past, he said, "I had no one to be bitter at."

The last time I saw him, in his old people's home, before he died at 95, he said, "I'm going out the same way I came in." Then he pressed three folded-up \$100 bills into my hand, my inheritance. Ten days later he died with \$90 in a dresser drawer: "my pin money," he called it. My father never had life insurance, which he called "blackmail, like a protection racket." Insurance companies, like the Mafia, preyed on people's weaknesses, their fears. My father had no fears, not even of death. When he was 88, his doctor told him he needed a triple bypass, or else he'd be dead in six months. If the operation were a success, the doctor said, "you'll live another six years." My father asked, "What are the

by **PAT JORDAN** illustrations by **ROBERTO PARADA**

odds?" The doctor said, "60/40, your favor." My father said, "I'll take that bet." Just before he went under the knife, my father told me, "I have no regrets. I did everything the way I wanted to."

By that he meant that he never worked for a corporation in an airless office for 40 years, never worked for anyone, really, never cashed a salary check, a stock option, a pension check. He never invested money in the stock market, an annuity, a savings account. He never had a credit card. He believed only in the cash in his hand and in his ability, his wits, to make more money out of that cash, or maybe lose it all, he didn't care, as long as he didn't entrust that money to forces and people beyond his control.

His life was always in his own hands, which he thought was his great advantage when trying to con the "suckers" out of their money. My father was a professional gambler, a grifter, and a con man. He began at 15 as a shill in a traveling carnival. He ran the pea-under-the-pod shell game until he graduated to more serious scams. He separated the "suckers" from their money with marked cards, shaved dice, a past-posted betting slip, this scam and that.

As a child of six, I sat at the kitchen table late in the afternoon and watched my father deal cards to my mother, while he sipped from a cup of espresso with a twisted lemon peel in it. My father had short, pudgy fingers, "like sausage links," my mother would say, but when he dealt cards he flicked them out quicker than the eye could see. Which was the point. It was my mother's job to see if she could catch him dealing from the bottom. She never could. Then he'd switch to dice. He'd fling two across the table, pick them up, then palm them in his puffy hands while substituting another pair, which were shaved.

Finally, after an hour, satisfied, my father would go out to the Venice Athletic Club (a misnomer), near our home in Fairfield, Connecticut, where he played cards and shot craps all night. He'd come back at daylight, when we were waking, and pull out bills from his pockets and drop them on the kitchen table while my mother and I counted them.

My father's life was devoted to the pursuit of money, which is an odd thing to say about a man who was so disdainful of it that when he actually had it he couldn't get rid of it fast enough. He never spent it on himself, though, except every 20 years or so to buy a new navy blazer with brass buttons from J. Press Clothiers in New Haven. My father always dressed shabby Ivy League, like an absent-minded professor, which was part of his con. His cronies even called him "Ivy League."

Mostly he'd just turn over his money to my mother, or buy her jewelry, a mink coat. Or he'd spend it on his cronies, buying them dinner or bailing them out just before the shylock came to their door with a baseball bat. When I was 12, in 1953, I had a brand-new Herb Score model baseball glove, \$29.95, and butter-soft kangaroo-skin baseball spikes, \$39.95, while my teammates made do with \$3.99 gloves from Kresge. Money had no value to my father. It was just his way to keep score, to prove how smart he was in outwitting "the suckers." Once he had it, he gave it away to make others happy. It was a lesson he had learned in the orphanage: You make people happy by giving them what they want. And if you are lucky, they give you back a crust of affection.

For my father, love was to be conned out of people by his wits.

Every Saturday night he'd take my mother and me to the best restaurant in Bridgeport. He'd whisper something to the maitre d' in the frilly shirt and tuxedo, and then, like an NBA point guard, he slipped him a furtive pass off his hip, a folded C-note, which the maitre d' slid into his pocket, leading us to the best table in the house. We'd sit at a banquette in front of a window that looked out on the street so that everyone, inside and out, could see us, my father in his navy blazer and rep tie, my mother wearing her mauve chiffon dress and floppy brimmed hat, a pearl cigarette holder held limply in her hand, and me, a child in short pants. And while we ate, men and women stopped by to pay their respects with a little bow. Club fighters with broken noses and baggy pants, comics with big, darting eyes and their exotic-dancer girlfriends with peroxide-blond hair. Before the men left, they'd always lean close to my father's ear and whisper, "Patsy, who do you like?" And he'd tell them.

They called him Patsy, but that was not his name. He was born Pasquale Michele Giordano, a first-generation Italian-American. His mother, Rose, had gotten knocked up in Italy and was sent in shame to have her baby in America. The moment her son was born, she gave him up. My father saw her only once more, as a boy, when she was on her deathbed. She asked him for forgiveness in Italian and told him she loved him. That was the only thing he would ever know about his mother: Her name was Rose, and she had loved him.

Shortly before I was born, he changed his name to Patrick Michael Jordan, at my mother's insistence, so that their son would be born with an American name, Patrick Michael Jordan Jr. My mother always had this thing about us being a respectable American family. But how could she be respectable married to a gambler and grifter named Pasquale? She hounded my father to get a real job, at the brass shop, even though she knew it was a waste of time. (When I told my friends once that my father was a gambler, my mother was furious. She warned me never to say that again: "Tell them your father works the night shift at the brass shop.") She knew he would do anything for her, for us, except the one thing she wanted.

Sometimes it caused terrible arguments in our kitchen. I would be sitting on the floor, wedged between the refrigerator and the wall, crying, while they savaged each other, until finally my father stormed out, slamming the door. He'd always come back late at night, but those arguments and my father's lifestyle made me fearful as a child. It could all be lost in a moment, on a whim you could never predict.

I remember being startled one day by a real estate agent wandering around the house, asking about heating costs. Terrified, I went to bed, a child of eight, and prayed to God that the Celtics would beat the Knicks by a point and a half so we wouldn't lose the house. A week earlier my father had handed over his winnings to my mother, but now I could hear him downstairs, screaming at her, "Flo, I need that money!" My mother turned it back over to him, maybe \$1,000, but not without keeping some of it on the sly. She put it in a savings account and CDs, so that eventually, when they turned 90, she had enough to ensconce them in that nice old people's home.



AN AMERICAN FAMILY The author in 1987 with his mom, Flo, and dad, Patsy, both by then in their late 70s

IN MANY WAYS, I AM MY FATHER'S SON. ONCE, IN MY 60s, I told my father, in his 90s, that I was not much like him. "How so?" he asked. I said, "I never gamble." He laughed, a dismissive laugh, and said, "You? A freelance writer for 40 years?" He was right. He had taught me how to con people early in my life. I used that knowledge in my late 20s to hustle pool like him. I wore construction clothes at lunchtime. I coned my marks into spotting me the eight and nine in nine ball, and if I lost I always went to the men's room, climbed out a window, and left without paying. A lesson from the old man. "Always check the men's-room window before you play," he said. "Because even if you lose, you're not gonna pay." Years later, when I became a writer, I coned editors into giving me assignments. "You got to find out what they want," he said, "then give it to them. Tell them anything they want to hear to get the assignment, then write it the way you want."

He taught me so many things that became a part of my life, that determined how I lived my life. He taught me that only a fool believes in perfect justice. "There's no such thing as an accident," he said. "You're supposed to know the other guy always runs the stop sign." He taught me that a man never quits no matter how defeated he feels, that a man always has to have the courage of his suffering. And most important, he taught me that "there are only three vices in this world, kid: broads, booze, and gambling, and if you're gonna do it right, pick one and stick to it." I was in my 20s, with a wife and three kids, and there wasn't much room in my life for vice. Years later, however, I had more than a passing acquaintance with one of those, and it wasn't booze or gambling.

But in the one way that really mattered, to me anyway, I was not much like Dad at all. I never had his purity of understanding of the true nature of money. That has always shamed me. I have been burdened, conflicted, cursed, you might say, by my own fearful need to hoard money to forestall that looming disaster always around the bend, the foreclosed house from my youth.

When I was eight years old, all my friends had piggy banks, but not me. Their fathers had bought them so their sons could learn the value of money. Whenever my friends did chores around the house, threw out the garbage for their mothers, their fathers would give them a few coins — pennies, nickels, a dime or two. When those piggy banks were full, my friends would turn them over, unscrew the little rubber plug on that pig's stomach, shake out all those coins, and go downtown to Bridgeport to buy ice-cream sodas and go to the movies. I went with them, but only after I ran home and asked my father for money. He never asked, "How much?" He just reached into his pants pocket, produced some crumpled bills dusted with powder-blue chalk from a pool hall, and gave them all to me. "Buy your friends candy," he said.

But those crumpled bills weren't the same as the coins my friends lovingly saved. Those coins were sacred, cherished. My friends had earned those coins and what they bought. In my house, money was always a gift from the one who had it to the one who needed it. There were no strings attached, except one: It must be appreciated as a sign of love.

One day I got up the nerve to ask my father for a piggy bank. I saw a look on his face, as if I'd hurt him. As if I were telling him that

I wanted to take away the only way he had to show me his love. "Why?" he asked. I said, "So I can have my own money." He just looked away and left the room. I never asked again.

Today, at 68, I have some things my father might or might not approve of. A house in Florida I bought for \$100,000, two cars I bought for less than \$20,000 each, a dozen Haitian paintings I bought for \$100 each. I think he might approve of those things because they are modest things, although I'm not so sure about the paintings. I think he might approve of my savings account, my checking account, my CD, my annuity, all of which are worth \$250,000. He'd approve of the money, just not where I put it — in institutions. I know he would not approve of my mortgage, my car payments, my credit card, my monthly "nut," which I can sometimes cover, but which often overwhelms me. That's a gambler's term — the minimal expense he needs to support his family. My father always kept his "nut" to a minimum — rented apartments, cheap secondhand

cars, no frills. No matter what, he always told me, a man has to meet his "nut."

Like my father, I never was employed by anyone, never got a company salary, company stock options, company pension, company health insurance. I know he liked that. My life, like his, was in my own hands.

One afternoon, in his 80s, Dad took me to a gambling casino in Connecticut. He hated casinos because they were institutions, and mostly because "you can't beat the iron," the casino winning percentage. (And, most important, you couldn't cheat a casino.) But he took me because I'd always wanted to see him shoot craps. He gave his hat and coat

to the girl at the cloakroom, then shot craps for five hours. The other, younger gamblers around the table called him "the old man" at first — "Let's see what ya got, old man" — and then after he started winning, he wasn't an "old man" anymore; he was a winner. He won \$300. When he picked up his coat and hat from the girl, he handed her a folded bill. She unfolded it, looked in disbelief, then called after us, "Thanks, Pop!" I asked him how much he'd tipped her. "A C-note," he said. I said, "Jeez, Dad, couldn't you have just given her a sawbuck?" He glared at me and snapped, "For chrissakes! The girl's stuck in that stuffy room all day. Whatsa matter with you?" Then he gave me the other two C-notes. All my life, I have never seen my father without him slipping me whatever bills he had in his pocket.

I have never been as free and easy doling out bills as my father was, although I tried desperately to emulate him. When I'm flush, I always pay for dinner with my friends. I pay when I'm not flush, too, although it gnaws at me in a way it never did my father. He imposed on me an attitude toward money that was in his nature, not mine. My fear always diminishes my act of giving, which always ruins that act of giving. When friends are coming to dinner and my wife suggests we serve a rib roast, I tell her we can't afford it. Then, ashamed of myself, my father's admonition in my ear — "Whatsa matter with you?" — I tell my wife, "Aw, screw it! Get the rib roast." I am like Pavlov's dog, trapped in a programmed behavior that is not natural to me. My father's inheritance, a curse.

My father never feared the wolf at the door. He always believed that by hook or crook, mostly crook, he could (continued on page 172)

MONEY HAD NO VALUE TO MY DAD. IT WAS JUST HIS WAY TO KEEP SCORE, TO PROVE HOW SMART HE WAS OUTWITTING THE "SUCKERS."



A MYSTERIOUS DEATH AT THE SOUTH POLE



BOTTOM OF THE WORLD The Dome at the Amundsen-Scott base, where Aussie scientist Rodney Marks (above) died in 2000



Mystery of poisoning in Antarctic deepens as suicide is ruled out

Was poisoning first South Pole murder?

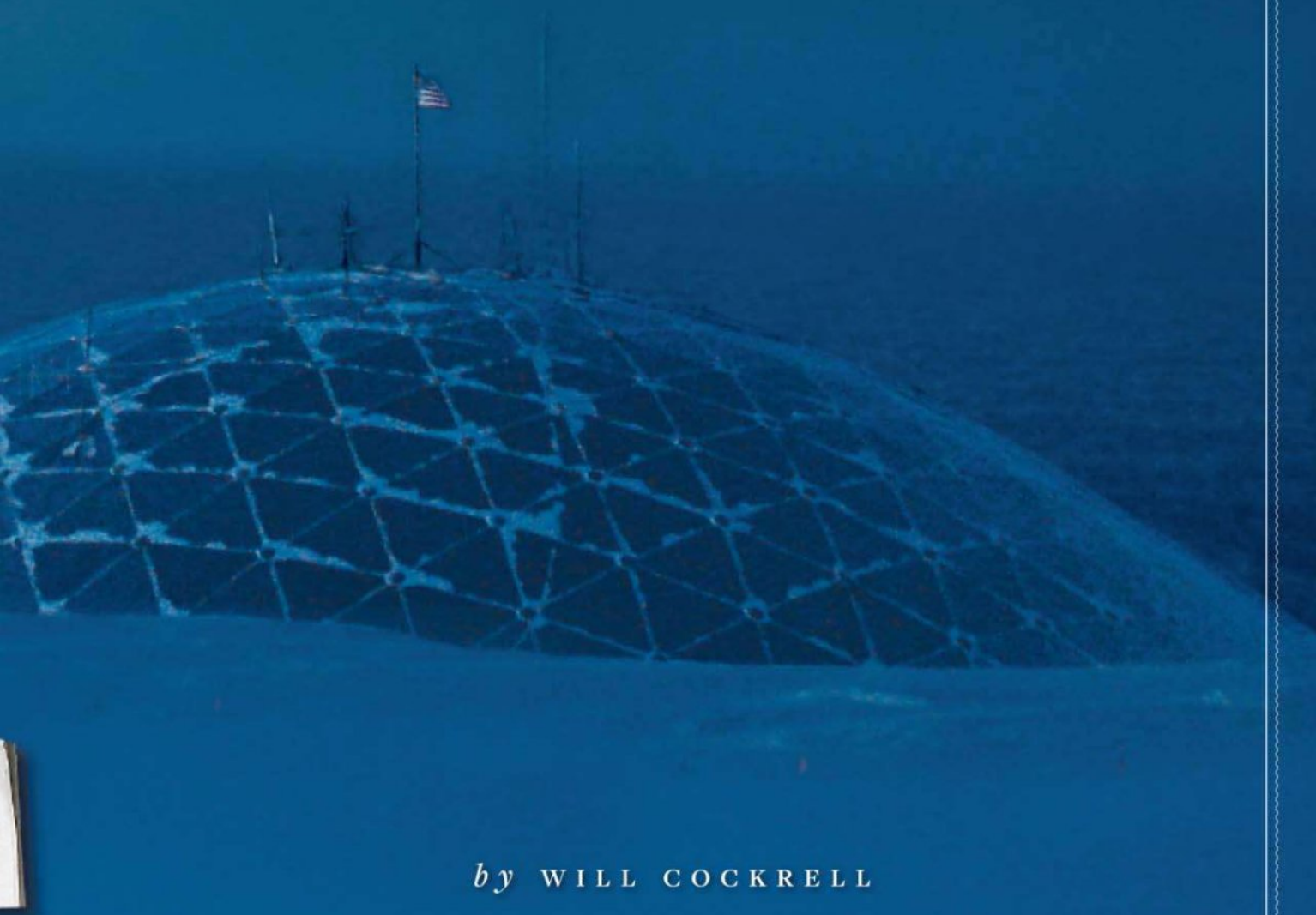
By Paul Chapman

breathed in as a suspect in

FIFTY PEOPLE.

THE MOST REMOTE BASE ON THE
PLANET. NO WAY IN OR OUT FOR EIGHT
MONTHS. THEN ONE OF THEM DIES UNDER
CURIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

A NEW LOOK INTO ONE OF ANTARCTICA'S MOST
ENDURING ENIGMAS.



by WILL COCKRELL

DURING THE 24 HOURS THAT RODNEY MARKS'S LIFE WAS SLIPPING AWAY FROM HIM, HE HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO CONTEMPLATE HIS PREDICAMENT. HE KNEW HE WAS TRAPPED, CUT OFF FROM ADEQUATE MEDICAL ATTENTION, ABOUT AS FAR FROM CIVILIZATION AS ONE CAN GET ON THIS PLANET. HE KNEW THAT DURING THE LONG, DARK WINTERS AT THE SOUTH POLE — WHERE FOR EIGHT MONTHS OF THE YEAR IT'S TOO COLD TO LAND A PLANE — SMALL PROBLEMS BECOME BIG ONES VERY FAST.

As the 32-year-old Australian astrophysicist lay on the old navy gurney in the biomed facility of the Amundsen-Scott base, Marks may have been thinking about the Russian doctor who had to give himself an appendectomy during a South Pole "winterover" in 1961, or of Dr. Jerri Nielsen, who in 1999 diagnosed and treated her own breast cancer with supplies dropped in by parachute. But unlike them, neither Marks nor the base's lone physician had any idea what was wrong with him. He had woken up at 5:30 that morning vomiting blood, and the burn that had started in the pit of his stomach was now radiating throughout his body.

It was already Marks's second visit to the makeshift hospital that day, and he arrived scared, anxious, and wearing sunglasses to protect his unbearably sensitive eyes. There was no one medical condition that the base physician, Dr. Robert Thompson, could think of that would explain what was happening to Marks. The doctor's only link to the outside world was an internet connection and a satellite phone, and both were down at the time — the base's position at the bottom of the planet meant it lost its signal for much of each day. The doctor spent hours clutching for a diagnosis, at one point grabbing hold of alcohol withdrawal and even anxiety as possibilities.

Thompson injected Marks with a sedative, which calmed him enough that he decided to return to his own bed and rest for a while. He lay beside his girlfriend, Sonja, sleepless and afraid, listening to the shifting ice groan beneath him. Then he retched again. More blood. His breathing was now uncontrollably fast. Pain throbbed in his joints, and he began to panic. He made his way back to Biomed, this time stumbling through the dimly lit tunnels, disoriented, as if in fast motion.

By the time he arrived, he was hyperventilating and combative. Thompson gave him another injection — this time Haldol, a powerful antipsychotic — just to regain control of him. As it took effect, Marks lay down again, but this time he began to lose consciousness. He moaned quietly with each exhale and squeezed Sonja's hand lightly. Then his heart stopped.

A stationwide alarm summoned the trauma team, a few trained volunteers whose real jobs could be anything from scientist to mechanic. Darryn Schneider, a fellow physicist and the only other Australian at the base, was the first to arrive. He took over for Sonja, holding the ventilator mask over his good friend's nose and mouth, desperately pumping air into Marks's lungs.

Then, just before six in the evening, as the trauma team scrambled to save him and the rest of the 50-member crew were sitting down to dinner, Marks took a deep, sighing breath into his chest — it was his last. It was May 12, 2000, a full five months before a plane would be able to retrieve his body.

Once it was finally flown to Christchurch, New Zealand, that October, a startling discovery would be made, one that would set off

an eight-year investigation and a bitter tug-of-war between a New Zealand detective and the National Science Foundation, which administers all U.S.-based research at the South Pole. The search for answers as to what killed Rodney Marks would also open a window into the highly peculiar, sometimes dysfunctional, community of people that operates in isolation there for eight months at a time. Ultimately, the NSF would make sweeping changes in how things are run at the South Pole and who it sends there.

At the time of Marks's death, though, there was little reason to anticipate such far-reaching ramifications. The rest of the crew assumed he had suffered a heart attack or aneurysm. The NSF itself even issued a statement within hours, saying he "apparently died of natural causes." But there was nothing natural about the way Rodney Marks died.

ANTARCTICA BELONGS TO NO ONE. SEVEN COUNTRIES officially have territorial claims on the continent, but the U.S. has never recognized any of them. Supported by a 1959 treaty of cooperation, 29 countries have set up scientific research stations there, and an ever-changing population of up to 4,500 scientists and support staff from all corners of the globe call it home for anywhere from four days to 14 months at a time.

Nearly all who come to work in Antarctica will first touch down in McMurdo, the continent's only working township. Resembling a small town in arctic Alaska, it sits at the edge of the ice, where it meets the Southern Ocean. Getting off the plane in Mac Town for the first time is a startling experience. The eight-hour flight from New Zealand aboard one of the cavernous military cargo planes leaves ears ringing and backsides numb. After landing, sensory overload gives way to the blinding absence of color and a Hoth-like landscape: a smoldering volcano in one direction, the Royal Society range and Mount Discovery across McMurdo Sound, ice and snow everywhere.

Nearly a thousand miles from McMurdo, at 90 degrees south, just 100 yards or so from the always slightly moving geographic pole marker, sits the Amundsen-Scott research station, the loneliest habitation on Earth.

Named for the first two explorers to reach the South Pole — separately in 1911 and 1912 — the American base is run by the National Science Foundation. In the mid-'50s, the intensifying Cold War goaded the United States into establishing a presence on the continent, so the navy announced it would build and man a permanent base at the South Pole. It launched Operation Deep Freeze in 1955, primarily as a research endeavor. The Dome, in which Marks lived, replaced the original station in 1975. It comprises three separate two-story structures that sit beneath an 18,000-square-foot, 50-foot-



PREVIOUS SPREAD: DOUG BARNETT/NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION. PORTRAIT: GENE DAVISON. HEADLINES: FROM TOP: THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, GUARDIAN.CO.UK

THE LONELIEST OUTPOST

The Amundsen-Scott base where Rodney Marks was stationed has been replaced by a more modern facility, but here's how the site looked six years after his death in 2000:

1. THE DOME: No longer in use, the 50-foot-high, 18,000-square-foot shell acted as an enormous windbreak for the three buildings inside (photo below), where crew members ate, slept, and played. It housed the bar 90 South (near left, below), once the heart of the base's social life.

2. AST/RO SCIENCE BUILDING: Out of frame in the top shot, the observatory where Marks (in far left photo, next to one of the telescopes) worked sits a kilometer from the Dome. It was during the long walk home one evening that he started to feel sick.

3. BIOMED: The base hospital where Marks died.

4. THE FUEL ARCHES: A storage area for giant fuel bladders, it became a temporary morgue for Marks's body.

5. THE POLE MARKER: The crew buried Marks in the ice near here. A memorial flag remains today.

6. THE NEW BASE: Much larger and better engineered, it became operational in 2004 and officially opened in 2008.



high geodesic shell, which acts as a giant windbreak, sheltering the living quarters from the deadly sting of the elements. The buildings themselves look like red portable sheds stacked on top of one another, each with a thick walk-in-freezer-style door.

Amundsen-Scott is populated year-round by scientists — most working for American universities and studying the atmosphere, astronomy, or seismology — and a support staff that includes everyone from cooks to carpenters. Nearly 250 people are based there in the summer, but the population shrinks to just a quarter of that for the austral winter: February through October.

The first week of February is frenzied as the remaining summer crew clears out and the winter crew receives its vital resupplies. The real cold arrives in March, and the base becomes a very different place: Soon the sun no longer makes it above the horizon, and it becomes so cold (temperatures regularly hit minus-80) that a plane's hydraulic fluids would freeze solid within minutes of touching down. After the last plane leaves, there's no way in or out for eight months, and the continent goes dark and quiet, just the way a winter Polie likes it.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT TYPE OF PERSON WOULD volunteer to work at the South Pole during the winter is something that has intrigued everyone from social scientists to NASA. The physical screening is rigorous — it's often said that everyone handed a winter contract has perfect wisdom teeth, and some bases won't even consider you if you have an appendix — but psychological screening is far less straightforward. Through a series of tests and interviews, the NSF tries to hire people with a rare and delicate balance of good social skills and an antisocial disposition — basically, loners with very long fuses.

Some of the first behavioral studies on the South Pole winterover were launched after the sudden onset of schizophrenia in a construction worker in 1957. He had to be sedated and quarantined for almost an entire winter. Lore has it he was put in an improvised mental ward — a specially built room padded with mattresses. Because incidents like these can spiral out of control quickly this far from civilization, putting entire crews at risk, NASA saw a South Pole winter deployment as an interesting analogue to long stays in space.

"We're social animals," says Lawrence Palinkas, professor of social policy and health at the University of Southern California and the author of several behavioral studies on social dynamics in Antarctica on behalf of NASA. "The separation from friends and family is stressful. But the lack of stimulation — of new scenery, new faces — actually causes people to have difficulty with cognitive thought. Even in well-adjusted groups, we estimate between 3 and 5 percent will experience some form of psychological problem — sleep disorders, depression, alcohol addiction."

It's this ability, even willingness, to live in such extreme conditions for such an extended period of time that sets winter Polies apart. They have an odd sense of adventure and actually seem drawn to the isolation and risk. "These are people who thrive on being the last cog," says Harry Mahar, health and safety officer for the NSF's polar program from 1992 to 2004. The power plant technicians, for instance, "are the type of people who, in their off year, would run DEW line sites [for distant early warning of missiles] up in the Arctic or power plants in the middle of the Pacific, and they're damn good mechanics." That's a good thing: If the generators at the South Pole go down and can't be fixed, the crew probably won't survive.

Rodney Marks was a typical Polie in both his proficiency and his quiet confidence. "Brilliant" is a word colleagues often use to describe him. His aptitude for science was obvious at an early age when he landed a scholarship at a prestigious private school in his hometown of Geelong on Australia's southern coast. (He spent his free time as a youth surfing and rooting for his local Aussie rules football team.) He discovered astronomy at the University of Melbourne, and a Ph.D. in physics soon followed, as did a number of high-profile fellowships and research positions with Australian and American universities. Meanwhile, music had also become a big part of his life, and he eventually formed a band called the Changelings, with a nod to the guitar-driven prog rock of the early '90s. He practically lived in his green Sonic Youth T-shirt.

In 1993, at age 24, Marks approached one of his professors looking for an "interesting" Ph.D. project and learned of a South Pole

study being conducted in collaboration with the University of Nice. A few months later he had become fluent in French, and a year and a half after that he stepped out onto the ice at the South Pole for the first time, for a two-week stint. Marks's specialty was radio astronomy, a highly accurate method of viewing the cosmos that relies on capturing the radio waves that objects in space transmit. Antarctic winters provide ideal conditions for the telescopes that are used, which operate best in the stability of a very cold atmosphere. In 1997, he reported for duty for his first winterover in Antarctica, an experience he enjoyed so much he signed up again just two years later.

Before the start of every winter, the NSF sponsors a staff training. It's a typical team-building retreat, with a ropes course, trust falls, and enthusiastic "facilitators," but it also serves as the first step in weeding out people who might not cope in such close quarters and so far away from home. It was at the 1999 retreat in the rocky hills above Boulder, Colorado, that Marks first met the other people with whom he'd be spending the 2000 winter. He was one of several returning winter crew, and he preferred dispensing advice to newbies during smoke breaks to sitting in a classroom talking about his hopes and fears for the season.

Six-foot-two with long, sometimes dreadlocked hair, Marks stood out from the other scientists physically, but also in the way he was able to mingle effortlessly between competing personalities. He was slightly self-conscious about his mild case of Tourette's syndrome, though it was hardly noticeable to others — some twitching, a sharp clearing of the sinuses from time to time.

This was the first year that the NSF handed all operational duties at the base to Raytheon Polar Services, a Colorado-based division of the defense contractor. For the training, Raytheon used a company whose staff was experienced in working with police and fire departments, special-

izing in high-stress group dynamics. They were used to dealing with people who had a healthy respect for authority; the winter Polies were different. During the two-day session, they questioned every nuance of every exercise and flat-out refused the trust falls, claiming they were sure their colleagues would *not* catch them.

On the last day of the retreat, one of the facilitators pulled aside Darryn Schneider, Marks's fellow Aussie physicist. "You know, you guys are one of the most screwed-up groups of people I've ever come across," he told Schneider. "We work with SWAT teams, and you guys just made them look touchy-feely and friendly. There's no way you'll ever function as a group."

"That's exactly why we *will* function," Schneider shot back. He too already had one winter on his résumé and knew that social survival at the South Pole went against all conventional wisdom: Problems are not swept under the rug; they are placed under it very deliberately. It's the art of containment, rather than resolution, that gets Polies through the eight-month-long night.

But Polies also have quite a bit of help in this department: alcohol. With not much else to do, social life at Amundsen-Scott, particularly during winter, revolves around drinking. Everything from beer to tequila is brought in alongside vital scientific resupplies at the start of the winter, and it's said that every year at least one belligerent al-



LIFE OF THE PARTY A week before he died, Marks played at a Cinco de Mayo event on base.

coholic emerges on base. In 1996 a worker was thrown into detox three times before he was finally forced to live in the medical facility, isolated from the rest of the population. The next year, there was such a booze shortage that the staff wound up giving each other beer as Christmas presents. In 2000 one staffer was rumored to have racked up a \$10,000 bar tab. The Dome even had its own moonshine still that got inherited from one crew to the next.

The beating heart of the base was the bar, 90 South. There, the staff drank and danced until all hours of the night, underneath the colored Christmas lights and disco ball. Graveyard crews would roll in at eight in the morning, post up on the bar stools, and do shots to wind down before going to bed. Over the years the bar had accumulated decades' worth of oddities — stuffed penguins, neon signs, dozens of cabin-fever escape paperbacks. It was the one place on the base where Polies could forget where they were.

When Marks and Schneider finally arrived at the Dome in November 1999, the start of what was supposed to be a yearlong stretch, they quickly claimed their stools at 90 South. Like most of the others, Marks was a drinker. He was always up for a night at the bar, and he wasn't afraid to sneak a bit of "toast juice," the high-octane ethanol-based concoction produced by the still. Sometimes he drank just to suppress his Tourette's.

When not in 90 South, Marks could usually be found in the attached galley, at one of the tables near the "dish pit." Or, during special occasions, on a small stage in the corner, playing his beat-up Gibson guitar, belting out a cover with his South Pole band, Fanny Pack and the Big Nancy Boys. His girlfriend, Sonja Wolter, 33 at the time, played bass. The two fell in love during the summer-winter transition, just as she was about to be shipped out at the end of her contract. They wanted to stay together so badly that she quickly applied for a winter position and was accepted just a week before the last plane out. For the start of the winter, he had dyed his hair purple, and she had dyed hers green. A few months later they were engaged. It was common for Polies to take an "ice wife" just for the winter, but this was different. By all accounts Rodney and Sonja were soul mates.

The base is normally a brutally cliquy place, and crews tend to segregate into three separate populations — scientists; operations (those responsible for the day-to-day running of the base); and skilled laborers. But the winter crew of 2000 was unusually tight-knit; migrating from one group to another didn't provoke the sort of contempt it had in years past. Marks, in particular, had a knack for making others feel at ease. "He had a Ph.D.," remembers Gene Davidson, a Kiwi responsible for telescope maintenance that winter, "and yet he would play poker, smoke cigarettes, and drink whiskey with the carpenters and plumbers."

SOUTH POLE ASTRONOMERS HAVE THE COLDEST commute on the planet. The observatory where they work is a full kilometer from the main station, in an area officially known as the Dark Sector. Like most base astronomers, Marks would bundle up and make the round-trip on foot every day.

He worked for a program for the Smithsonian called AST/RO (Antarctic Submillimeter Telescope and Remote Observatory) and spent most of his time collecting data on how to further improve viewing conditions using an enormous infrared telescope. His work was highly regarded, and he was making profound breakthroughs in the way we

view the cosmos from Earth. On Tuesdays, he held an astronomy class for his fellow Polies, sometimes taking everyone outside and introducing them to a night sky he knew intimately. Colleagues described him as having a combination of wildness, imagination, and dedicated self-discipline that makes for great science.

It was during the walk home from the observatory one Thursday night in May that Marks first sensed there was something wrong with him. At about 6:30 he and Sonja arrived in the galley, where he ate a light meal and drank a can of beer. He mentioned to her that he wasn't feeling well and that he was having trouble seeing clearly. By 9:30 he had retired to the room they shared and fell asleep. That night in the galley was the last time most of the winter crew would ever see Marks alive. He would spend the next 21 hours fighting for his life.

Schneider's blog entry for friends and family back home, written the following night, after he had spent nearly an hour trying to save his closest friend on base, would read: "We did everything we could, but Rodney did not come back. He had friends around him at the end. We have no idea what happened."

While Schneider and others tried to douse the embers of the day's events at the bar, Marks's remains were placed in a body bag and stored in a service area known as the fuel arches, connected to the main station through one of the tunnels. The ambient temperatures there were plenty cold to preserve the corpse, but his friends felt he deserved a more dignified resting place. Like the explorers that came before them, they considered their work heroic, and Marks was one of the best South Pole scientists they'd ever known.

The station carpenters found and milled an old stash of heavy oak for a casket, and the machinist crafted the metal fittings. Schneider and one of the cooks upholstered the interior with an old tablecloth, and Sonja made a maple plaque with a brass inlay of Marks's favorite constellation, Scorpio. Once finished, they placed his body in the casket, then used a traditional wooden Nansen sled to haul it out to the geographic South Pole for a quiet ceremony. It was a Sunday afternoon, and the entire crew gathered under an ink-black sky as someone read a statement from Marks's mother and friends said a few words. Marks was then lowered five feet deep into the ice.

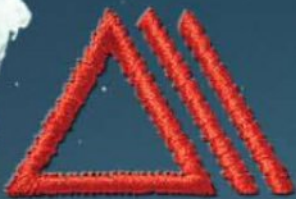
NEW ZEALAND IS ANTARCTICA'S NEAREST NEIGHBOR. It's so close, in fact, that when icebergs recently calved off the Ross Ice Shelf, Kiwis were flying out in helicopters and landing on them. Christchurch, on the South Island, is a small coastal city of about 400,000, but its population swells slightly every spring as people from all over the world pass through on their way to Antarctica, and then again in the fall as they return to catch commercial flights back to their home countries. Murder rates are low, and veteran detective Grant Wormald, 44, spends most of his time overseeing theft and fraud investigations. As a young man, Wormald was given an opportunity to work as a station manager in Antarctica but had to pass it up when career and family obligations got in the way. "It was something that appealed to me," he says. "I hear it's surreal — like going to church in a big way."

In June 2000, four months before flights in and out of Antarctica would resume, Wormald's office received a curious fax from the local coroner: an order to begin investigating the death of an Australian citizen stationed at an American base in Antarctica. Marks's case was fraught with jurisdictional ambiguity, (continued on page 178)

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▲ BIG SOUND, LITTLE 'PHONES

The new **Beats by Dre Solo**: same thick bass, sonic clarity, and smooth style as the originals, but in a smaller, more portable package. [\$200; beatsbydre.com]



▲ THE FIX IS IN

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▲ RAINY-DAY STYLE

The cailux linen-covered wood case and monochromatic panache of the **Dal Negro Backgammon Set** is a reminder that board games are much more than child's play. [\$220; zontikgames.com]

MY FAVORITE GIFT



Kelly Slater, surfer

"As a little kid I went on road trips with my dad and brother, and we always listened to Jackson Browne's music. One year I was on a trip to Tavaruva, Fiji, with Jackson — he's friends with a good friend of mine. At the end of the trip, he thanked me for inviting him. Then he handed me a Taylor guitar. I was blown away."

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◀ BABY SEAT

That slot in the Watershed-leather surface of the **Selle An-Atomica Titanica LD saddle** reduces pressure on the perineal nerves, facilitating a comfortable riding position, as well as procreation. [\$180; selleanatomica.com]

▼ STYLE FOR MILES

For the cyclist who rides in bad weather, the **Rapha Bomber jacket** is key: Its tailored torso is made of Schoeller 3xDry, which blocks rain and cold wind while wicking away sweat. [\$290; rapha.cc]

► COOK'S KIT

The **Indigofera Solvage Apron's** raw denim will look even better with steak-juice stains. [\$117; caliroots.com] Made from 64 layers of stainless nickel steel, the **Shun Bob Kramer Meiji 6-inch knife** is a kitchen scalpel. [\$250; williams-sonoma.com] The **John Boos Octagonal Culinary Block's** end-grain construction won't dull pricey knives. [\$199; johnboos.com]



▲ MOBILE LIBRARY

Why the **Sony Reader Pocket Edition** over the connected Kindle? It's cheaper, smaller, and easily integrates with Overdrive.com (for borrowing e-books from your local library). [\$200; sonystyle.com]



▲ GOGGLES THAT SAVE FACE

A skeletal frame in the **Oakley Simon Dumont Splice goggles** takes pressure off the bridge of the nose and distributes it across the face. No more slope-induced headaches. [\$160; oakley.com]



▲ CUSTOM CHOPPER

The hand-painted Tennessee hickory handles on **Best Made Co. axes** appeal to the man who likes his plaid shirt with a tailored fit. [from \$250; bestmadeco.com]

MY FAVORITE GIFT



Jared Allen, Minnesota Vikings defensive end

"The best gift I ever received was my first shotgun, a Mossberg 12-gauge pump action, when I was 14 years old. I still have it to this day. It was important to me because it meant that my parents felt I was responsible enough to have one, and it led to one of my first loves: hunting. Whenever I get a day off from football, I'm out hunting."

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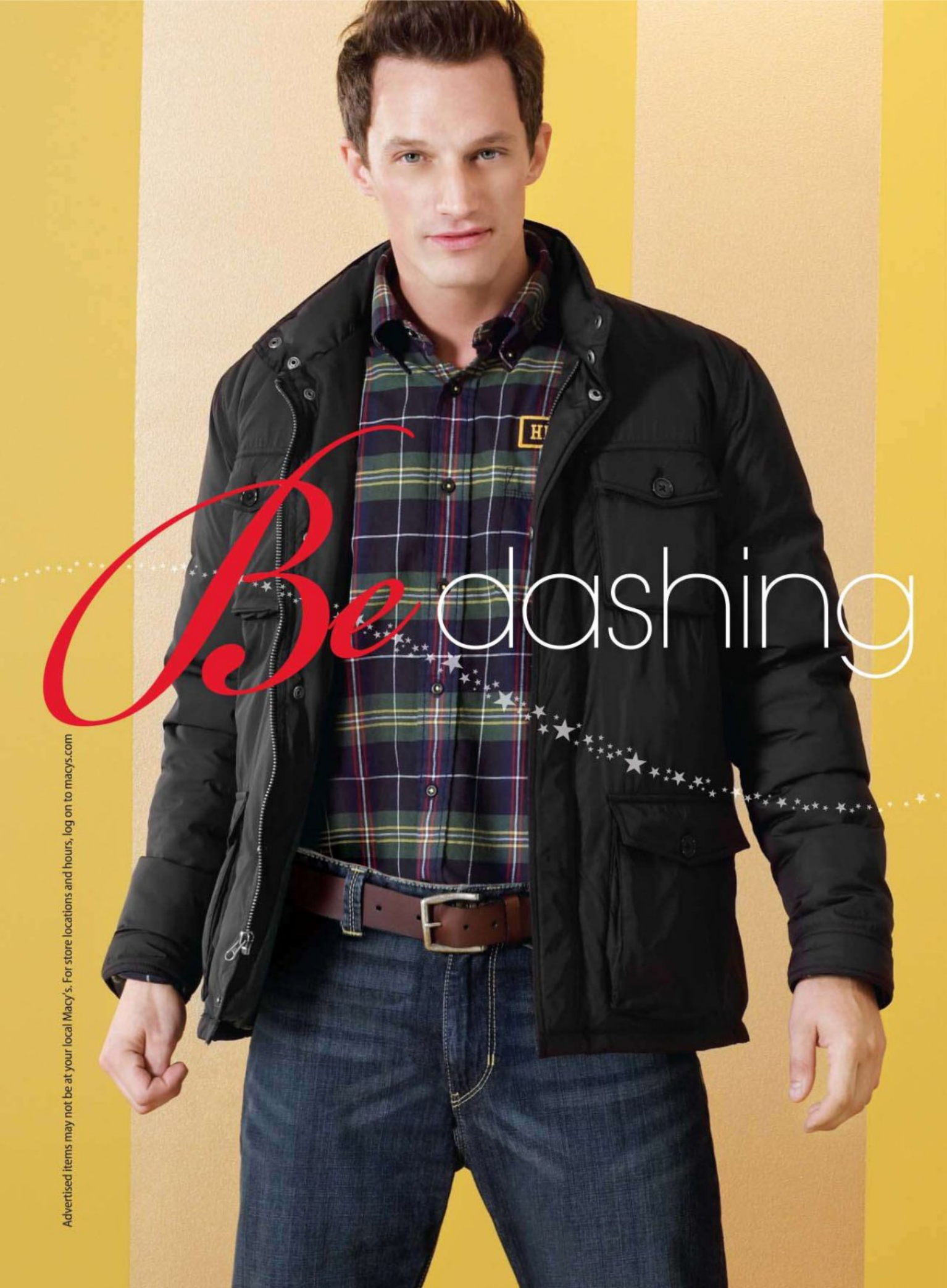


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▲ THE GETAWAY BAG

The **Brothers Bray & Co. Weekender**, inspired by a '30s-era bag, is updated with nickel-plated hardware and a red lining. [\$98; urbanoutfitters.com]

▲ SPECIAL SAUCE

Ignore the fact that the **Glenlivet Nàdurra Triumph 1991**, aged 18 years and made from a no-longer-used barley, is a limited edition. It's meant to be enjoyed, not eyeballed. [\$85; theglenlivet.com]



▲ A SIMPLE SEAT

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▲ THE ART OF NECKWEAR

Alexander Olch graduated from Harvard in 1999 with a degree in filmmaking and quickly established himself as...a tie maker. Like Olch's recent film, *The Windmill Movie*, **Alexander Olch** cashmere ties exude subdued drama. [\$140; olch.com]



▲ ARTISANAL PIGSKIN

You'll need to buy two of the hand-sewn **Lemon Ball Leather Head footballs** — one for the mantel, one to throw around in the yard. [\$95; lemonball.etsy.com]



▲ ADJUSTA-BELL

The **Weider 20 lb. Powerbell's** adjustable weighting allows for kettlebell workouts, minus the pile of kettlebells. [\$99; getpowerbell.com]



▲ KEEP HANGIN'

Wow your Deadhead boss with a **Wolfgang's Vault reproduction concert poster** from the '66 Fillmore shows. [from \$98; wolfgangsvault.com]

MY FAVORITE GIFT



Sergio Garcia, PGA golfer

"I've been a huge football [as in soccer] fan and a proud supporter of Real Madrid since I was very young. A few years ago a good friend of mine who played football professionally gave me a signed Zinedine Zidane Real Madrid jersey from when he retired after the 2006 World Cup. It's one of those rare, unique gifts that you just won't find in a store, and as someone who loves the team, I can't place a dollar value on it."

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▲ GOLFER'S DELIGHT

Drop the **Fine Tune RoboCup** in a regulation-size hole and it flips the ball back to the putter, up to 14 feet. The cord ensures that even misses make it in. [\$60; finetunegolf.com]



▲ EAU DE DRAPER

Distill *Mad Men* to a scent and you get **Black Fleece** by Brooks Brothers cologne, all bourbon and cedar suited up in refined, restrained gray. [\$125; brooksbrothers.com]



▲ FULL-TIME FLIP-FLOPS

A supple leather strap and plush EVA midsole make the **OluKai Hiapo** a year-round fave, whether worn with board shorts or a robe. [\$100; olukai.com]



▲ ONE SHELL TO RULE THEM ALL

There's a reason why the **Marmot Aegis** has earned acclaim — it's as waterproof and breathable as jackets twice the price, but lighter in weight. [\$140; marmot.com]



▲ THE ABOVE-AVERAGE JOE

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▲ SHOOTING STARS

Far Out by Michael Benson proves that putting the photographable universe into a book doesn't dampen its vast beauty. [\$55; borders.com]

▼ AL ROKER MEETS IKEA

Off, it's a mini-monolith. But trip the motion sensor and the **WoodStation Weather Display** turns on, providing indoor temp and humidity, plus an icon showing what's happening outside. [\$100; thinkgeek.com]



MY FAVORITE GIFT



Conrad Anker,
mountain climber

"I've got two: Last Christmas my boys gave me a roll of Gorilla Tape and an eight-pack box of climbing chalk. I use the stuff over the year and it's a nice reminder of them. And a couple of years ago my wife gave me a sweet red tool chest from Ace Hardware, the full-on mechanic style. It's where I store all the gear I need to keep our house in a semblance of upkeep."

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▲ BRIGHT IDEA

A man need never hold a flashlight in his teeth again if he owns the poseable, magnetic, LED-powered **Joby GorillaTorch**. [\$30; joby.com]



◀ IWALLET

The **Case-mate iPhone ID case** lets Apple-phone addicts pare down by holding two cards, making it perfect for everyone but that friend who's always losing his phone. [\$30; case-mate.com]



◀ A SHOT OF ART

There's no way bottles of the limited-edition **1800 Tequila Essential Artists Series** will end up in the recycling bin. [\$25; 1800tequila.com]



▲ THE GIFT OF WARMTH

There are options beyond the beanie. The **Woolrich Yukon Flats Waxed Cotton Ivy Cap** (top) is waterproof and toastier than it looks, thanks to fold-down earflaps. [\$39; woolrich.com] The **Goorin Cadet Granite** isn't so coy, showing off its lobe-warming practicality. [\$33; goorin.com]

▼ THIS IS A KNIFE

No man can resist the **Gerber Gator Jr. machete's** dual-sided steel blade. [\$27; gerbergear.com]



▶ SWINGIN' IN THE RAIN

With a microfiber palm for better grip in the wet, **Nike All-Weather gloves** are a must for golfers who don't know when to stay in. [\$24; nike.com]



MY FAVORITE GIFT



Ben Harper, musician

"The best gift I ever received was a basketball signed by the 1980 Lakers championship team, given to me by my father-in-law. I've been a Lakers fan since age 10 and haven't missed watching or following up on a game since."

Ben Harper is currently touring with his band Relentless7 for their latest album, White Lies for Dark Times.

▲ BE HONEST

With messages like "You're my second best friend," **Mean Cards** are a welcome break from Hallmark lameness. [\$30 for 10; meancards.com]



A high-angle, black and white photograph of two skiers ascending a steep, rocky mountain ridge covered in snow. The skier in the foreground is wearing a red jacket, a light-colored helmet, and is carrying skis on their back. The skier further up the ridge is wearing a teal jacket. Both are using ice axes and crampons. A yellow banner is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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▲ FOREST FILES

Dozens of full-color maps and 100 archival-quality pages for field notes make each **Orvis Leather-Bound National Parks** guide a keepsake for hard-earned adventures. [\$49; orvis.com]



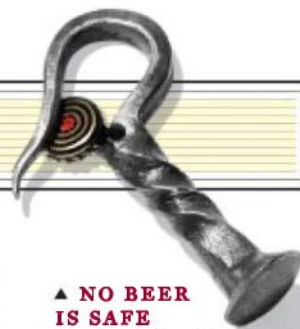
▲ OFFLINE PDA

The **Rickshaw Moleskine Folio** holds an analog man's notebook, pens, business cards, and more. [\$50; rickshawbags.com]



▲ OFFICE TASTE

Even if a man's day job is boring, there's no reason his desk has to be. The signature uniform stripes on the **Paul Smith Pencil Set** [\$20; paulsmith.co.uk] clash nicely with the crumpled-paper-cup look of the **Essey Pen Pen**. [\$23; yliving.com] Offset all the color with the beechwood **Moby** tape dispenser. [\$30; areaware.com]



▲ NO BEER IS SAFE

The hand-forged **Beer Defense Tool** bottle opener makes old railroad spikes more useful and menacing. [from \$40; hammeronsteel.etsy.com]

▼ FUEL CARRIER

The leather-reinforced, canvas **Beckel Log Carrier** means fewer trips outside to keep the fire crackling all night long. [\$26; beckelcanvas.com]



◀ DITCH THE MUG

The 16-ounce porcelain **Eco-Cup** saves not only trees but also delicate skin, thanks to a silicone lid and sleeve. [\$10; iamnotapapercup.com]

▶ MUDDLED SOAP

For the guy who lives for Cabo: the rum, lime, and peppermint **Malin + Goetz Mojito Soap Set**. [\$30; malinandgoetz.com]



MY FAVORITE GIFT



Ryan Newman, NASCAR racer

"My wife bought me my dream car for my 30th birthday: a 1949 Buick Roadmaster convertible. It was one of the cars used in *Rain Man*, one of my favorite movies. I tell people the moral of this story is to marry up."



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For Her
MAKE HER SAY "AW!"

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▲ UNEXPECTED BLING

Tiffany is the easy choice, but **Annie Band jewelry**, one-of-a-kind pieces made with ethically sourced metals and engraved with a message, will show her that you put in some effort. [*from \$68; annieband.com*]

◀ HARDWARE FOR HER

The classic **Klein Tools 12-inch Canvas Tool Bag** has inspired trendy handbag makers to emulate its look. The real deal will carry her life just as well, and you can steal it back when it's out of style. [*\$76; kleintools.com*]

► WARM HANDS, WON HEART

Steven Alan Glittens, fingerless leather gloves with a flip-down cashmere mitten, promise to keep her digits toasty as the temperature drops without offending her fashion sense. [*\$128; stevenalan.com*]



▲ FOR A GIRL ON THE GO

For the running woman: the **Athleta Base Miles Beanie**, with a ponytail hole and reflective snowflakes. [*\$29; athleta.com*]



CHEST PROTECTOR

The **Patagonia Kitlope vest** blocks wind and repels water, but she'll appreciate the retro style, form-hugging fit, and hand-warming pockets just as much. [*\$100; patagonia.com*]



▲ TWO-FACE CAMERA

The second LCD on the front of the **Samsung TL220 camera** lets her get herself into the picture easily. [*\$300; samsung.com*]

MY FAVORITE GIFT



Robin Tunney of *The Mentalist*

"When I was eight I saw a teddy bear with a Polo sweater and a \$90 price tag. I fell in love. My mother said the price was outrageous and the bear would never be mine, but two months later he arrived under the tree. And, gentlemen, a word to the wise: Do not buy her anything that plugs in."

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1. RED8

Red8 is dedicated to producing the anti-luxury timepiece. While watch lovers obsess over Swiss brands, the company's models proudly proclaim their Asian production. A bright-red crown adorns each watch, and the bezel is engraved with four related but seemingly random words. The Red8 is no slouch technologically, either, featuring a quartz movement that gets three months of power from a single wind.

[\$880; red8world.com]

2. JORG GRAY 6500

When a secret service agent assigned to then Illinois senator Barack Obama gave him this timepiece, little did either man know it would spark a national phenomenon. Photographs of President Obama wearing the Jorg have made the pared-down chronograph one of the most sought-after accessories of 2009. [\$325; jorggray.com]

3. TX 530 AIRPORT LOUNGE

For the jet-setter who's just as liable to wake up in Hong Kong as he is in his own bed, the Airport Lounge's ability to display the time (and season) for every time zone at the press of a button is nearly a necessity. And it's all wrapped up in a vintage-inspired body topped off with a domed case crystal. [\$495; txwatches.com]

4. ORIENT CFM00004W

A 21-jewel automatic movement, see-through ("exhibition") back, and power indicator are three features that typically translate into an inflated price tag, but the Orient chronograph offers the hat trick for peanuts. It's versatile, too: sporty enough for daily wear yet stylish enough to be paired with a suit. [\$345; orientwatchusa.com]

5. BREIL MILANO MEDITERRANEO

Deep teak inserts flanking the face and a brushed-chrome casing make this Italian-bred sports watch the perfect choice for a man seeking the European yachtsman flair of an Audemars Piguet Royal Oak — without the yacht-size budget. [\$650; breilmilano.com]

6. LUM-TEC COMBAT B3

Lum-Tec specializes in making hand-assembled, limited-edition military-inspired timepieces with automatic movements and a proprietary luminescent chemical that makes the faces glow like wrist-mounted flashlights. Only 150 Combat B3s will be manufactured, and each comes with two NATO straps. [\$695; lum-tec.com]

7. REACTOR TRIDENT

Soldiers serving overseas are clamoring to score a Trident after a story surfaced about a staff sergeant on duty in Iraq who survived two IEDs and a suicide bombing while wearing one. Despite the explosions, the watch was still ticking.

[\$350; reactorwatch.com]

8. STEEL BLAZE

The Steel Blaze is spartan in both looks and complexity, and at 45mm wide, it's not for the dainty-wristed. For any man who lusts after the ever-popular watches from Italian manufacturer U-Boat but doesn't have \$2,000 to spend on wristwear, it's the next best thing. [\$135; steelblaze.com]

—BENJAMIN CLYMER

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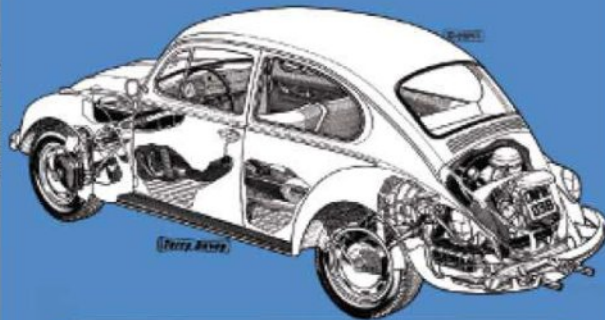


Splurges
WHEN MONEY'S NO OBJECT



▲ THE SOUND OF SMOOTH

The base of the **Galibier Design Stelvio turntable** is milled from a 75-pound block of aluminum so that vibrations can't ruin the sound of your Thelonious Monk first pressings. [**\$15,000**; galibierdesign.com]



▲ WRENCH-MONKEY ART

Increase a room's manliness factor with a **Surface View Haynes Manual mural**, blown up from the old DIY guides. [**from \$415**; surfaceview.co.uk]



◀ TAKE A TREE TO THE SEA

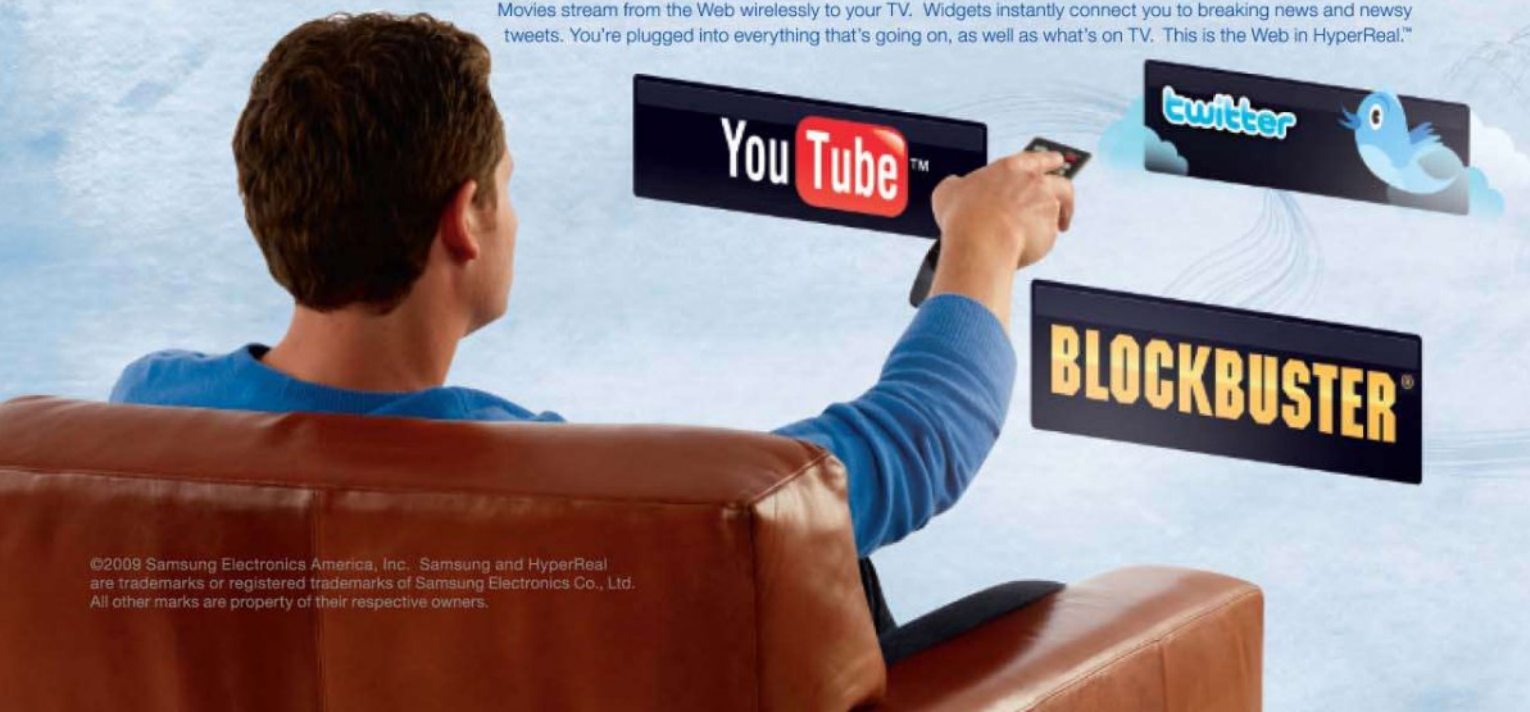
Why make the **Linden Balsa surfboard** from balsa wood? Because not only is it light and strong, it's absolutely stunning. [**from \$2,000**; linden-surfboards.com]

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► **MOTO-SEAT**

Made from vintage scooter parts, the **Bel & Bel Vespa chair** delivers all the Italian flair of driving the runabouts, minus the helmet hair. [\$2,670; beltybel.com]

► **UNDERSEA FERRARI**

The **Scubacraft** is both a speedboat and a submarine capable of diving 100 feet underwater. [\$166,000; scubacraft.com]

► **BREAK THESE IN**

Every man should own a pair of boots that he can wear into the ground. The hand-made, calfskin-lined **Billy Reid Beatty Side Zip Boot** will do nicely. [\$395; billyreid.com]



CONTRIBUTORS: Christian DeBenedetti, Stan Horaczek, Kate Siber, Michael Slenske, Catherine Strawn, Stephen Treffinger



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forestall disaster as long as he could get out of bed in the morning. He always found a way. In his early 70s, when he was flat broke, he went back to the only pool hall in town, now frequented by young black men in satin sweat-suits and lots of gold jewelry. He let them hustle him into a game of nine ball, an old man with downcast eyes and a deferential slouch, until he started banging the balls around the table with that maddeningly methodical southpaw stroke of his, dropping in one ball after another, the guys not laughing at the old man now as they kept tossing their C-notes on the table after each game.

By his early 80s his stroke was gone, and his eyes (he had always told me, "You play an old man, leave him long. He can't see the long shots"), so he made "ends meet" — that was the phrase he always used — by transporting gold coins and jewelry for a pawnbroker. Stolen goods, I'm sure, worth 50 large. He'd pick up his "consignment," as he'd call it, as if he were a representative from Sotheby's, toss it in the backseat of his battered Volkswagen Beetle, and drive west on the Connecticut Turnpike, over the George Washington Bridge, into New Jersey and then on to Delaware. It was a long drive for a man his age, so he always stopped at a McDonald's. He left his "consignment" in the Beetle while he ate. I told him once, "Jeez, Dad, somebody can rip you off." He said, "Me? I'm an old man, for chrissakes. Who'd ever think I got two nickels to rub together?" When he made his delivery, he'd be paid a few C-notes, which, I'm sure, he'd find some way to slip into my hand a few days later.

WHEN I WAS 18 I GOT \$47,000 AFTER I signed with the Milwaukee Braves to pitch in their farm system. The first thing I did with that money was put it in a savings account. The second thing I did was take \$5,000 and pay off my parents' mortgage so they could finally feel secure.

Later, after I was out of baseball, I raised five children in that house and became a writer. I was a contributing writer for *Sports Illustrated* in the early '70s, and one day my editor offered me a staff job. It would pay me almost three times what I had been making, along with an expense account, stock options, insurance, and a pension. There was only one drawback. Two, actually. Time Inc. would own all my stories. Which was also part of the second problem: I would be owned by an institution. My work, my life even, would no longer be in my own hands. When I told my father about the offer, and that I was contemplating taking it, he said, "For chrissakes, what's wrong with you? Didn't I teach you anything?" So I turned it down.

Ten years later, in my early 40s, I was going through a divorce. I gave my wife everything — the house, car, alimony, child support, everything she needed to meet her nut. It bankrupted me. When I mentioned, offhandedly, to my father one day that maybe I should have taken that *Sports Illustrated* job, he snapped

at me: "Forget it. That's baggage. You made your choice, now live with it."

So I fled to Fort Lauderdale, where I could live more cheaply, in a rented apartment for \$500 a month, with only my books, my clothes, my typewriter, and a rusted-out Alfa Romeo as possessions. I began using my many credit cards to pay my bills. Then I fell behind on my credit cards and stopped paying them altogether. I had tapped them out to the tune of \$40,000. When I told my old man, he liked that — screwing an institution at its own game. "Even shylocks got more heart," he said of financial institutions. Then he added, "But you never screw a friend."

I remarried, got back on my feet, began to make enough money to live pleasantly, if frugally at first, in our small apartment. Then we began to accumulate a little money. We bought dogs and went shopping for a new car. We drove north into western North Carolina in 1989 and bought a mountain cabin as a second home. After three more years we began looking to move from our Fort Lauderdale apartment to a house and found an old wood-frame Key West-style bungalow for \$100,000. But I'd have to put down one-third, and I only had \$15,000 in the bank. When I told my father, he said, "Buy the house," and he sent me \$20,000 in cash in a FedEx envelope. I was afraid to ask him where he got it.

Meeting my "nut" always unnerved me. Five children, five dogs, two cars, two mortgages, alimony, and exorbitant health insurance for my second wife, who had had breast cancer in her late 30s. There were so many living things that depended on me for survival that at times, I'd wake at 2 A.M. in a cold sweat, get out of bed, and pace back and forth. Sometimes, during those early-morning dreads, I cursed my old man for all his cavalier advice. No institutions, no investments, give it all away. Easy for him to say.

My mother died at 97, and then my father died two years later, in 2005. A year after that, my wife and I sold the cabin in North Carolina for \$230,000. We were in our mid-60s then, and the 12-hour drive was too much for us. Besides, we had to start thinking about our impending old age. We put \$200,000 into a CD at 2 percent interest and the rest into a savings account.

When our CD came due in February 2006, our banker convinced us to invest that money in an annuity based on the stock market. He guaranteed we'd earn at least 5 percent more than we were earning on our CD. So we signed the papers. I put our future, our life, in the hands of someone else for the first time in my life. I heard my old man's voice, "A fucking scam!" as my wife and I left the bank. I said out loud, "Fuck you! What do you know?" My wife said, "Excuse me?" I said, "Nothing. Just talking to myself."

My old man believed the stock market relied on a "sucker's" gullibility. When it went down, he said, all the working stiff's lost their money; when it went up only the guys in the know made anything. Now I was one of those stiff's, a sucker, the lowest form of life for my father.

I decided I'd master the market myself. I'd find a way to regain control. I began quitting work at noon to watch Maria Bartiromo on CNBC. She reminded me of all the women in my Italian family. Tough, like men. And smart. The market would go up, and she'd explain why. Something about housing construction starts. And then it went down, way down, and she began talking about a mortgage crisis. I died a little death with the movement of each point. It was inflation. No, it was the price of oil. No, it was unemployment. No, it was hedge funds. It was all so fucking confusing I couldn't concentrate on any of it anymore. I stopped watching CNBC. I bid adieu to Maria. I resigned myself to something beyond my control. Not a bad feeling, really. Fuck it. Let it go where it wants to go. It was all baggage anyway.

My experiment in the market taught me something, however. I really was much different than my father in the way that mattered to him most. I rattled the bones and tossed them over the green felt cloth, knowing full well the dice were not shaved. I gambled, always have, because I always wanted to make my life bigger. My father deliberately kept his life small — that rented apartment, that battered Volkswagen — so he could gamble without fear of loss. I always feared loss, which is why I now wonder: Which of us really was the purest gambler? 

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BALDWIN *continued from page 104*

rest of them. He couldn't be more at home or in less likely a place to open up about himself. But then he does, albeit almost accidentally.

"There's a cliché that studio executives and agents have that actors need to fail, that actors self-sabotage themselves, and there's a type that the more talented they are, the more self-sabotaging they are. It's a very, very complicated form of narcissism. You want to be in control, and you want things to run according to your script, not anyone else's. So you end things on your own terms, quit before they can fire you, that type of thing. Literally." He pauses. Then he says, "I might have been capable of that. I could say I was guilty of that to a degree early on."

And that, right there, is about as close as he is willing to come to a more insightful explanation for his so-called failure as a movie star. *The more talented they are, the more self-sabotaging they are.* He doesn't stay there long, however. Twenty words later he's back into the usual litany of complaints about show business being "a lot of guys in a room talking about what shade of brown your hair should be in the movie, and you want to talk about the script, and they say, 'Yeah, yeah, hold on a second, do you like the carmelian-colored tie or the maroon tie?'" That's fine, though. It's understandable — and, in Baldwin's case, probably even necessary. Defenses not shored are no defense at all.

He's been up against this kind of thing before. After the voice mail to his daughter went viral, he thought seriously about committing suicide. "I had not made any preparations, but I thought how I would do it. I was going to put the hose in the most noxious of the cars I own, a Jeep, take some sleeping pills, and take a nice nap in the front seat of my car in the garage." But then he thought better of it, shored up those defenses, worked out his rationales, and wrote a book about it. (Of the voice mail itself, he says today, tenderly: "I feel the consequences of that every day. It's in the reverberations of how I feel and how I wish things had been.") Since then, he has carried on nicely, to a gratifyingly growing amount of chuckles and laughs and public forgiveness.

"There are other people who have done what I've done. There's not one thing I've done that other people haven't done. I mean, I didn't hit somebody in the face with a baseball bat in road rage. I didn't boil a cauldron full of dogs."

Then again, as Baldwin sometimes says, there's always tomorrow, and you really never do know what he's going to do next. That's one of the things that makes him such a compelling figure. He might not be as loose a cannon as he once was. He did have to attend 12 anger-management classes as part of the custody battle. But he's still loose.

What is the one thing he thinks that every man should know how to do?

"Start a fire," he says promptly. "With anything. Two sticks, even. You've got to be able to start a fire." He beams. "I'm a great fire starter." And about that, of course, he could not be more right. 

SNIPER *continued from page 141*

down the road and picked up the farther body. But the first guy had fallen directly on top of the mine, or whatever it was. And it was a mine. We detonated it, and he disappeared."

Tyler didn't take those death shots, but he produced them. Though he won't talk about it, it seems likely that snipers under his command have killed more than two dozen men, and he himself has killed maybe a half dozen or more. He won't deny that. And maybe the body count is much higher. He doesn't like to discuss it. "There are noncombatants in that number," he says.

"If I shot somebody, or men under my command did, I took full responsibility for that. I know that helped the men, lifted the burden." But what about the burden on him? "It sucks. It's impossible, really, trying to be precise. Nothing is clear. I never had a textbook case. Never. You do your best. You follow the rules of engagement, your conscience. And then the next morning you wake up and you think, Oh, my God."

AT A SHOOTING RANGE OUTSIDE NEVADA City, far up in the wooded, mountainous eastern corner of California, not far from Reno, Tyler lies motionless on his belly in his khaki uniform, his heels pressed flat on the wooden platform, an Austrian-made Steyr Mannlicher .308 collector-grade sniper rifle pressed against his cheek. The rifle is brand-new and belongs to a range member named Rod. Next to Tyler is a box of Hornady 150-grain, lead-core, copper-jacketed, high-impact bullets with polymer tips. The tips are harder than the surrounding lead, so the synthetic red cone will be driven back on impact, causing a small explosion of lead fragments into the target, thus creating a larger hole at the back of a man than at the front. These bullets will travel more than half a mile per second.

Each rifle a sniper uses has unique characteristics that are compounded by the ammunition and many, many exterior factors. There is wind. There is humidity. There is the spin of the Earth. There is even the fact that as a rifle is fired, its barrel heats up, the metal contracts, and the bullets are propelled faster. As a sniper Tyler had a "quiver of rifles," including a huge .50-caliber McMillan Brothers bolt-action, a .300 Winmag, and an MK 12, which he liked because it was light and small, though it "didn't pack much of a punch" in the recoil. But his favorite was a CheyTac .408, a weapon he discovered late in his career and never used on a human. "It was accurate up to 2,500 yards," he says. "The round had a very stable flight. Most rounds, when they go from supersonic to subsonic, start to tumble. This one tumbles and then restabilizes."

I ask Tyler about the drama shots we see from snipers in the movies, like how they always seem to be shooting one another through their scopes. "It's mostly Hollywood," he says. "Head shots seldom happen. Anywhere from here to here" — he indicates the lower chest to the neck — "is good. There are so many

variables. A shot that's off by an inch at 100 yards will be off by 10 inches or more at a thousand yards."

To ensure he's as accurate as possible, Tyler meticulously charts the results from his practice shooting, logging all the variances he can think of — temperature, barometric pressure, wind speed, direction. He's looking for patterns — not just, say, how one type of bullet might vary from another, but how one particular *batch* of that bullet might vary. "That way when it comes down to game time you know what's going to happen," he says.

In combat Tyler never took a shot from more than 400 yards. But at a practice range in Idaho, he once hit a foot-square metal target from 1,600 yards. He was shooting across a valley, amid a furious wind and rain, and still hit the target on his first try. "We used the ballistic computers to deal with the environmental conditions," he says matter-of-factly. That bullet was in the air for well over a second, rising, spiraling, descending, and fading to the right like a Tom Brady Hail Mary pass.

As astonishing as that feat was, it doesn't come close to the long-distance killing record that was recently set by a Canadian sniper in Afghanistan. His fatal shot traveled 2,657 yards — more than a mile and a half. That bullet was in the air for four seconds and dropped 146 feet, while also curving to the side a good amount. "Those Canadians," Tyler says, "they're raising the bar pretty high."

THE RANGE IS NOW SILENT, EVEN THOUGH 15 men have come by from various spots, shuffling and eager, to see the SEAL shoot.

"Going hot," Tyler says.

He appears to have no breathing at all, no motion, no nothing. His feet are laid out flat on their sides behind him because snipers do not give the enemy even the sight of raised heels as targets.

There is an explosion, and then silence. He racks the bolt, and a bright, smoking casing pops out. He picks it up and lays it carefully to his right. He shoots again.

When he shoots, Tyler keeps both eyes open and lets the floating circular reticules hover like a halo around the target. "I try to get in a good pattern of breathing, try to relax everything. I'll pull the slack off the trigger and know I'm at the point where only the mechanism is barely keeping the hammer back. You do not slap the trigger. You have to be in the moment. It's a little bit of an out-of-body experience." High-powered rifles are incredibly loud. They can be deafening. But Tyler has shot in war zones without muffling devices or earplugs. And a strange thing happens. "I don't hear the blast," he says. "I don't hear anything."

He mentions that many hunters — regular guys out for deer, longhorn, elk — flinch at the last moment, because they're not relaxed. Because they're thinking of what they're doing. A sniper can do what he does because — after months and months of training and study and reflection — he knows that he has done it all before thousands of times,

effortlessly. "It's like golf," Tyler says, "except every time you swing there's an explosion in your face."

This gun, a gun he never used before, misfires three times on the range, and the scope has never been accurately adjusted, but when we walk the 218 yards — two football fields, two end zones — to the target, the Styrofoam square has three patterns of three holes, each of which could be covered by a quarter.

IT'S WORTH NOTING THAT TYLER DOES NOT especially like guns. He owns only a shotgun, which he has never shot and which he needed when he lived up in the hills of the Sierras with his wife and young daughter (he is recently divorced) as protection from meandering bears. He has never hunted, never killed an animal, never even shot at an animal.

Hemingway once wrote: "Certainly there is no hunting like the hunting of man and those who have hunted armed men long enough and liked it, never really care for anything else thereafter." But that is not strictly the case for Tyler. He left the service voluntarily, because he felt his principles were being violated by a superior's decisions. It had to do with responsibility — his for the men under him. And he could not live with his conscience.

He admits he is still searching now, trying to come up with a lifestyle that embraces all that he is, all that he has done. Without a permanent address, he's basically living in his pickup truck. He's dating, and he wants to marry again, have more children, continue his art, and live "in a Mongolian yurt along the Pacific coast."

A nice vision. But it must coexist with Tyler's memory of, for instance, the first time he was fired upon in Baghdad: "We were in the back of a Humvee and I thought it was cigarette ashes flicked from a car. Heard nothing, had no idea where it was coming from. Just sparks skipping across stones." The man riding next to Tyler said, "Motherfucker! The turret guy just hit me in the back of the head with the turret!" But the turret was high up. He'd been shot in the neck. By a sniper.

A man, a thinking man, a philosophical man, chooses to be a sniper, to fight his war from a distance. And why would he do so?

Maybe because he can say this, as Scott Tyler does: "If you're shooting from 700 yards, you become the scope, you go down it, you become the tip of the bullet, you project yourself 700 yards. You're there." ■

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SOUTH POLE *continued from page 151*

but New Zealand law states that the coroner is entitled to hold an inquest on the basis of a body simply being present in the country, and Christchurch was certain to be the first place Marks's body would land. Jurisdiction would soon become the least confusing thing about Marks's death.

Anywhere else in the world, following the unexplained death of someone so young and healthy, Marks's office and sleeping quarters would have been cordoned off and preserved for investigation. And although Raytheon, the facility management company, is reported to have requested this, its authority was simply too remote to impress upon the grief-stricken crew, who felt sure Marks had died of natural causes. A few items were collected from his office and bedroom and put aside, but anything that didn't look suspect went straight into the garbage. After being cleaned up, both areas continued to be used just as they had been before his death: his office by other scientists, and his room by Sonja, who lived there for the rest of the winter.

At around midnight on October 30, the first plane off the ice landed in Christchurch carrying Marks's casket. Also aboard were Darryn Schneider and Sonja, who wearily made their way to a hotel where Marks's mother, Rae, and his two sisters were waiting to meet them. The five eventually moved across the street to Bannies, a Polie hangout where both Shackleton and Scott once drank and where more people who had worked with Marks showed up. The impromptu wake carried on well into the following morning.

Along with a few others from the base, Schneider stayed in Christchurch just long enough to talk to police, but without any autopsy results yet, it was largely fruitless testimony. Had they known what the autopsy would reveal, they probably would have stuck around, if not been required to.

Six weeks later, on December 19, the forensic pathologist made a shocking announcement: Rodney Marks had been poisoned. His blood contained lethal traces of methanol, a highly toxic wood-alcohol-based chemical Marks used to clean the high-tech telescopes, but in amounts far beyond what would be expected with normal contact — about a small wineglass's worth. It was, the pathologist believed, "virtually certain to have been ingested."

The news was all the more tragic because of testimony that base physician Robert Thompson had given a month earlier. He had revealed that while Marks lay dying, his potential lifeline was sitting dormant in a corner of the room — an Ektachem blood analyzer. Its single, tiny lithium-ion battery had died, and therefore, the machine lost its calibration every time it was turned off. Once turned back on, it took up to nine hours to recalibrate. Thompson had known about the malfunction, even reported it to Raytheon, but for some reason never attempted to fix it and decided against simply leaving it on. It was by no means a necessary piece of equipment in the physi-

cian's day-to-day duties, but it was there for a reason: emergencies just like this one.

A working Ektachem machine would have recognized an abnormal anion gap in Marks's blood, the causes for which make up a fairly short list, including methanol poisoning. Had his condition been caught in time, reversing the effects could have been a simple matter of running a mixture of ethanol and saline through his body. Even if it hadn't saved his life, it would have immediately raised the question of how methanol could have possibly gotten into his system.

"MURDER AT THE SOUTH POLE" IS THE kind of headline that newspapers can't resist. Shortly after the pathology report was released, Wormald made a short, simple statement about what he and the coroner knew so far. Like any good detective, he wasn't prepared to rule anything out so early in the investigation, including homicide, and the media pounced.

"Common sense told us there were only four possibilities as to how Rodney came to ingest the methanol," Wormald explains. "One, that he drank it willingly and knowingly with the intention of getting a high; two, that he took it to end his life; three, that he took it accidentally; and finally, that someone had spiked his drink, possibly as a prank or even knowing that it would either make him very ill or kill him."

Considering what Marks had going for him when he died — a fiancée, a sterling reputation among his colleagues, and a bright future — suicide was ruled out almost immediately. And for those who knew Marks, it was equally inconceivable that one of his fellow Polies would intentionally do him any harm. "I never noticed anyone acting differently afterward," says telescope mechanic Davidson. "And I can't think of anyone who would have disliked Rodney that much or had anything against him, or even had anything to gain by it." It was looking more and more likely that someone had simply made a tragic mistake, but who, and how?

Wormald would eventually learn that Marks's work space was notoriously messy; bottles of lab agents like methanol and ethanol were often strewn about alongside a dozen or so empty bottles of alcohol. The methanol used at the South Pole is similar to a car's windshield-wiper fluid, while the less toxic ethanol, a common ingredient in the base's homemade moonshine, is more like rubbing alcohol. Both are colorless and nearly as odorless as vodka and almost indistinguishable from one another in taste. Mistaking the two was certainly a possibility, especially by someone under the influence of alcohol.

But it's unlikely that person would have been Marks. He certainly knew how lethal it was and that ingesting even a small amount could be fatal.

"I've gone over it many times in my mind," says Davidson. "He was too smart to drink it knowingly. If anything, maybe someone else didn't know the difference between methanol and ethanol and put the wrong thing in his drink, saying, 'Here, drink this. It'll give you a

good buzz.' I always come back to the idea he was slipped it, and maybe the person didn't even know it." Wormald agrees: "Rodney was lucid for 36 hours before he died. If he had known what was ailing him, he would have told somebody."

Given the contained nature of the incident and the fact that he had a finite list of witnesses, Wormald was feeling optimistic about his investigation. But then he hit a brick wall with the NSF.

In 2002, Wormald made a formal request for the contact information of the 2000 winter crew along with any other facts the NSF had gathered during its own investigation. He got no immediate response. (Eventually, the NSF declined, citing privacy concerns.) He requested the results of lab tests done on what little evidence was collected in Marks's room and work area. Nothing.

He was puzzled by the lack of cooperation but had no authority to compel the NSF to comply. "Had there been evidence of a criminal act, things would have been very different," he says. "The FBI would have been flown in, maybe even the Australian police." But although Wormald hadn't ruled out manslaughter or even homicide, he simply didn't have enough evidence of foul play to justify classifying the case as such. Wormald's investigation came to a near standstill as almost every request he made was met with silence.

Even before Marks's death, the NSF was under pressure to update its outmoded base. It knew it had issues with drinking among its Polies. Now, with news of an inoperable Ektachem machine and the fact that a wood-alcohol-based chemical killed Marks, it had a potential PR crisis on its hands. The organization seemed to be in lockdown.

Over the next four years, Wormald persisted with his own investigation as the NSF and Raytheon drip-fed him information, including the fact that the moonshine tested negative for methanol. But little else shed new light on the case. The NSF also never announced the results of its own investigation, effectively absolving itself of any culpability in the matter. The agency appeared ready to move on.

But Wormald wasn't. "I'd like to think that if my children went to work down there and something went wrong, someone would be responsible for finding out what happened," he says. "I know Rodney's family wants to know why the machinery that would have diagnosed his illness wasn't working and whether anyone will actually be held accountable — whether anyone even gives a shit. Someone should be required to give a damn."

Finally, in 2005, the NSF agreed to forward questionnaires to the remaining 49 members of the 2000 winter crew on Wormald's behalf. He got just 13 back and remains convinced that the pressure of losing future employment was simply too great for the rest of the crew. But Polies are also notoriously transient and hard to track down. Also, they were as eager as the NSF to put the incident behind them, accepting it as a freak, tragic mistake. Even those closest to Marks, including his fiancée, Sonja, decided

early on that to keep chasing answers was to degrade the memory of their friend.

In September of last year the official findings from the coroner, based largely on Wormald's investigation, were finally released. The 50-page report is little more than a neatly packaged catalog of theories and speculation, concluding that "Rodney David Marks died as a result of acute methanol poisoning, probably occurring one or two days earlier, he being either unaware of the overdose or not understanding the possible complications of it."

But buried in that report is a detail that has gone largely overlooked throughout the investigation — a detail that points to what may be the most compelling theory yet as to how Rodney Marks was poisoned.

The revelation is made in a section of testimony by Harry Mahar, South Pole health and safety officer at the time. Mahar mentioned to investigators "an unusual-shaped bottle of liquor" he'd heard that Marks had brought back to base from an R&R trip to New Zealand just before the start of winter.

Schneider remembers the bottle too, and says it was among several empty ones found behind Marks's computer after his death. He recalls it had an exotic-looking black-and-white label with writing in Portuguese or a similar language and a picture of a shrimp. He believes it was thrown away with the other bottles.

One Polie who remembers the bottle but wishes to remain anonymous says that as soon as he learned Marks had been poisoned, it hit him that this bottle could have played a role. He had a theory, and he shared it at the time with a fellow crew member and investigators, but it was roundly dismissed as wild speculation. The Polie explained it in an e-mail to *Men's Journal*:

In certain parts of the world, he wrote, "people are aware of the dangers of tainted alcohol from places like Southeast Asia. There are regular warnings for travelers." He included a link to a Lonely Planet travel forum from this June: "Deadly Brew Kills Foreigners in Bali" was the headline. That, in turn, linked to a report of 23 people dying after drinking a local palm liquor that had been spiked with methanol to increase its potency.

Turns out, every year there are hundreds of similar cases, everywhere from Southeast Asia to Africa to the Himalayas. Just last May, an almost identical story made its way out of Everest base camp when a popular Sherpa died after drinking methanol-tainted whiskey. The World Health Organization reports as many as 300 deaths per year relating to the "lack of quality controls, especially in the preparation of illicit liquor." All of these deaths are the result of acute methanol poisoning.

Detective Wormald says the bottle was "not ruled out as a possible source." He even asked about it on the questionnaire he sent out to crew members — a handful of Polies acknowledged its existence in their responses — but he says "no identification of source [of the bottle] was made."

The anonymous Polie is quick to admit that even he feels that his theory is "out there."

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but that it was essentially the only wild card he could think of. He still doesn't understand why it wasn't pursued more vigorously, even if just to rule it out. He went as far as forwarding to investigators the names and contact information of some of Marks's friends back home who he thought might be able to help pinpoint the bottle's origin. "I felt like I was being accused of making stuff up," he explains. "I don't think they followed up with any of the individuals I suggested. I was essentially told to forget about it."

And so he did. But if he's right about his theory, it points to a great potential irony: that not one drop of the methanol that killed Marks came from the gallons of it that surrounded him at Amundsen-Scott.

Had that one bottle made it off the ice in one piece and been tested, or even if investigators were able to determine where it had come from, we might know for sure how Rodney Marks died.

LAST YEAR DARRYN SCHNEIDER FLEW TO Antarctica for what would be his 10th deployment. It was a straightforward four-month summer stay, but these days, trips to the pole are bittersweet for him. The old Dome that he called home for a cumulative two years of his life has since been repurposed as vehicle and refuse storage. The South Pole he remembers has all but disappeared.

January 2008 was the ceremonial opening of Amundsen-Scott's third and latest incarnation, a striking outcrop of steel and glass, perched on stilts 12 feet above the ice. It's three and a half times the size of the Dome, which is now nearly buried under 34 years' worth of spindrift. The new 65,000-square-foot facility cost \$150 million to build and required nearly a thousand cargo planes full of materials. It's an engineering achievement: Its stilts can be jacked up as snow accumulates below the structure, and the two units of the main building can move independently as the ice shifts in different directions beneath their feet. It towers above the old Dome like an enormous gravestone.

These days Schneider finds himself wandering its cavernous hallways feeling a bit lost. Even though he has spent four seasons at the new base, which became partially operational in 2004, he misses the "old pole" and the old way of doing things. "One of the observatories where Rodney and I worked was just shut down last month," he said earlier this year, while still on base. "Rodney's death also had an influence on getting rid of the old biomed facility, but the real turning point was when they finally got rid of the bar. The NSF did not like the culture of 90 South." A new bar was built, but after it became illegal to smoke in a government building, it was converted into a TV lounge. "This was a place that was supposed to replace the old 90 South, and now it's a place where people do Pilates," Schneider says. There's no more moonshine still either. The NSF hauled it out onto the open ice and made a show of running it over with a tractor.

Schneider says things have been slowly changing for a decade now, and old-school Polies like him are an endangered species. He was puzzled by the introduction of a follow-up psych test, mostly dealing with addiction and mostly handed to those who spent time in 90 South. He also began to notice that fellow veterans were no longer being asked back in favor of more rule-abiding new blood.

"The government just underestimates the importance of the culture," Schneider says. "It's strange, you would think they would keep some of these old-timers around because of their institutional knowledge. Tradition used to mean a lot down there."

Despite the changes, there's one tradition Schneider refuses to let die: a living memory of his good friend Rodney Marks. After the winter crew of 2000 buried him in the ice, they planted an Australian flag over his grave, a temporary marker to help them find the casket again at the end of the season. When his body was flown back to Christchurch, a flag was all that remained at the South Pole to mark the tragedy. Schneider decided it should stay. Since then, each time he returns to Amundsen-Scott he removes the old, brittle, sun-baked piece of cloth and replaces it with a new one. For nearly 10 years now, he and three of Marks's other close friends have acted as unofficial stewards, making sure there's always a Commonwealth Star waving at Marks's last resting place in Antarctica.

"The NSF hates it and continually fights to get rid of it," says Schneider. "I guess they don't want there to be a reminder of the incident. But I want that flag there, and Rodney's family likes the fact that that point in the ice is marked. The fact that the flag moves farther away from the base each year, as the ice moves, is a very graphic reminder of the passage of time since this terrible event in our lives. At some point it might die, but the ephemeral nature of it makes it a powerful memorial."

With or without the flag, it's doubtful anyone will ever forget the curious death of the South Pole scientist in the winter of 2000. One crew member's blog from 2006 says it's now lore that the fuel arches are haunted by Marks's ghost; as recently as 2004, Schneider overheard some Polies who never even knew Marks talking about his "murder." "People love putting rumors out there, and South Pole stories become mythical," he says.

Ultimately, Rodney Marks may have simply slipped through the cracks — disowned by the NSF for the sake of its reputation; overlooked by his native Australia; left to rest in peace without resolution by a coroner and a detective exhausted by an eight-year battle with the NSF; nothing more than a stark reminder to his fellow Polies that at the South Pole, shit happens.

Polies have a saying: "What happens on the ice stays on the ice," and, to them, to try to help outsiders understand what life is like there is an antithesis to why one goes there in the first place. Perhaps Rodney Marks himself would be perfectly happy remaining one of the South Pole's great enduring mysteries. 

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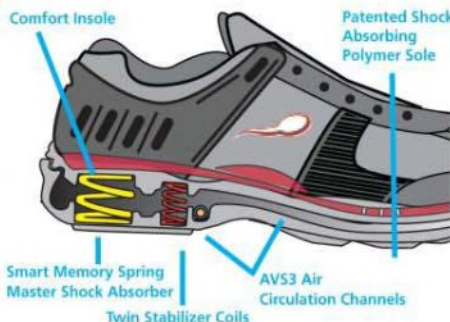
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A YEAR TO REMEMBER



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main reason metals have done so well and are expected to continue is because of the overwhelming fear of the devaluation of the American Dollar. Many Americans feel their savings and retirement is at risk and are seeing the safety and security silver has to offer. Bottom line, countries across the globe use precious metals such as silver to protect their wealth, shouldn't you?

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2009 will be a year to remember for many reasons as we have watched history unfold right in front of our eyes. We currently face the worst economic disaster since the great depression. President Obama has just became the first African American President to take office and many people will forever remember this year as a year of change. Many Americans have sought after the 2009 American Silver Eagles as a way to remember this historic year. In fact, due to an overwhelming demand the mint has had to suspend the sales. As of Now these coins are not available to the public from the US Mint.

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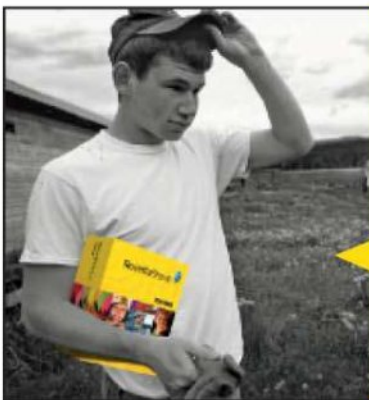
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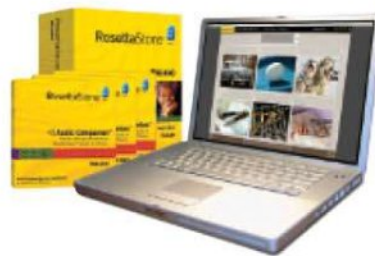
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Amish mantle and miracle invention help home heat bills hit rock bottom

Miracle heaters being given away free with orders for real Amish fireplace mantles to announce the invention that helps slash heat bills, but Amish craftsmen under strain of Christmas rush force household limit of 2

Save money: only uses about 9¢ electric an hour; so turn down your thermostat and never be cold again

By MARK WOODS
Universal Media Syndicate

(UMS) Everyone hates high heat bills. But we're all sick and tired of simply turning down the thermostat and then being cold.

Well now, the popular HEAT SURGE® miracle heaters are actually being given away free to the general public for the next 7 days starting at precisely 8:00 a.m. today.

The only thing readers have to do is call the National Distribution Hotline before the 7-day deadline with their order for the handmade Amish Fireplace Mantle. Everyone who does is instantly being awarded the miracle heater absolutely free.

This is all happening to announce the HEAT SURGE Roll-n-Glow® Fireplace which actually rolls from room-to-room so you can turn down your thermostat and take the heat with you anywhere. That way, everyone who gets them first can immediately start saving on their heat bills.

Just in time for winter weather, portable Amish encased fireplaces are being delivered directly to the doors of all those who beat the deadline.

These remarkable fireplaces are being called a miracle because they have what's being called the *Fireless Flame™* patented technology that gives you the peaceful flicker of a real fire but without any flames, fumes, smells, ashes or mess. Everyone is getting them because they require no chimney and no vent. You just plug them in.

The *Fireless Flame* looks so real it amazes everybody because it has no real fire. So what's the catch? Well, soft spo-



■ **GENUINE AMISH MANTLES MADE IN THE USA:** Everyone wants to save money on heat bills this winter, so entire Amish communities are working from the crack of dawn to finish. These fine real wood Amish made fireplace mantles are built to last forever. The oak mantle is a real steal at just two hundred ninety-eight dollars because all those who beat the order deadline by calling the National Hotline at 1-866-815-7004 to order the fireplace mantles are actually getting the imported hi-tech *Fireless Flame* HEAT SURGE miracle heaters for free.

ken Amish craftsmen who take their time hand building the mantles have a process that forces a strict household limit



■ **JUST ANNOUNCED:** The Heat Surge miracle fireplace has earned the prestigious Good Housekeeping Seal. The product has earned the Seal after evaluation by the Good Housekeeping Research Institute.

of 2 to keep up with orders.

"We can barely keep up ever since we started giving heaters away free. With winter just around the corner, everyone's trying to get them. Amish craftsmen are working their fingers to the bone to be sure everyone gets their delivery in time for Christmas," confirms Frederick Miller, National Shipping Director.

"These portable Roll-n-Glow Fireplaces are the latest home decorating sensation. They actually give you a beautifully redecorated room while they quickly heat from wall to wall. It's the best way to dress up every room, stay really warm and slash your heat bills all at the same time," says Josette Holland, Home Make-

over Expert.

And here's the best part. Readers who beat the 7-day order deadline are getting their imported hi-tech miracle heaters free when encased in the Amish built real wood fireplace mantles. The mantles are being handmade in the USA right in the heart of Amish country where they are beautifully hand-rubbed, stained and varnished.

You just can't find custom made Amish mantles like this in the national chain stores. That makes the oak mantle a real steal for just two hundred ninety-eight dollars since the entire cost of the miracle heater is free.

This free giveaway is the best way to slash heating bills and

HEAT SURGE™ Fireless Flame™

How It Works: The HEAT SURGE miracle heater is a work of engineering genius from the China coast so advanced, you simply plug it into any standard outlet. It uses only about 9¢ of electric an hour on the standard setting. Yet, it produces up to an amazing 5,119 BTU's on the high setting. So watch out, a powerful on board hi-tech heat turbine silently forces hot air out into the room from the vent so you feel the bone soothing heat instantly. It even has certification of Underwriters Laboratories coveted UL listing. It also comes with a limited full year replacement or money back warranty less shipping plus a 30-Day Satisfaction Guarantee. OH and FL resident transactions require the remittance of applicable sales tax. Sorry no shipments to MA residents.



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**Hot air only
comes out of
the top vent**

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heat turbine takes
in cold air**

How to get 2 free heaters

The National Toll Free Hotlines are now open. All those who beat the 7-day order deadline to cover the cost of the Amish made Fireplace Mantle and shipping get the HEAT SURGE miracle heater free.

A strict limit of 2 per household has been imposed. Since some home woodworkers want to build their own mantle piece, they are letting people get the imported miracle heater alone for just \$249. Or, with the Amish made mantle you get the miracle heater free.

Use the map below to locate the weather zone you live in and call the Hotline number for your zone.



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9:00 A.M. TODAY

1-866-815-7112

FOR HEAT SURGE, LLC 8000 FREEDOM AVE., N. CANTON OH 44720

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■ ON THEIR WAY: Christmas orders have turned country roads into pipelines to the big city delivery system. Everybody wants a fireplace that comes fully assembled with a hand-made Amish mantle in oak or cherry finish and gets delivered by truck right to your door. All you do is plug it in.

stay warm this fall and winter. The HEAT SURGE Roll-n-Glow Fireplace gives you zone heating and all the beauty and warmth of a built-in fireplace but rolls from room-to-room so it can also save you a ton of money on heating bills.

Even people in California and Florida are flocking to get them so they may never have to turn on their furnace all winter. And since it uses only about 9 cents of electric an hour on the stand-

ard setting, the potential savings are absolutely incredible.

"We are making sure no one gets left out, but you better hurry because entire communities of Amish craftsmen are straining to keep up with demands. For now, we are staying out of the large national retail stores in order to let readers have two per household just as long as they call before the deadline," confirms Miller.

It's a really smart decision

to get two right now because for only the next 7 days you get both miracle heaters free. That's like putting five hundred bucks right in your pocket and you can save even more money on your monthly heating bills.

"Everyone's calling to get one but those who are getting their Christmas shopping done are surprising the whole family by getting two. So when lines are busy keep trying or log onto

amishfireplaces.com. We promise to get to every call. Then we can have a delivery truck out to your door right away with your beautiful Heat Surge Roll-n-Glow Fireplace," Miller said.

"You'll instantly feel bone soothing heat in any room. You will never have to be cold again," he said. ■

On the worldwide web:
www.amishfireplaces.com

Rolls anywhere to throw an instant heat wave with no chimney, no vents, no wood and no smoke



■ EASILY ROLLS ANYWHERE:

This is the portable Roll-n-Glow® Fireplace that easily rolls from bedroom to living room to keep you warm. No vents, no chimney and no tools. Just plug it in.



■ SAVES ON BILLS:

Everyone can get low bills and stay warm and cozy. The Roll-n-Glow Fireplace saves a ton of money and makes your front room look like a million bucks.



■ SAFE FLAME:

The Fireless Flame looks so real it fools everyone but there is no real fire. That makes the flame window safe to the touch under the watchful eye of a parent. It's where the kids will play and the cat and dog will sleep.



■ FREE:

Get this \$249 miracle heater free. It is being given away free to all who beat the 7-day order deadline for your choice of the oak or cherry finish Amish Mantles. The free heater comes already encased.

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building **YOUR** body?



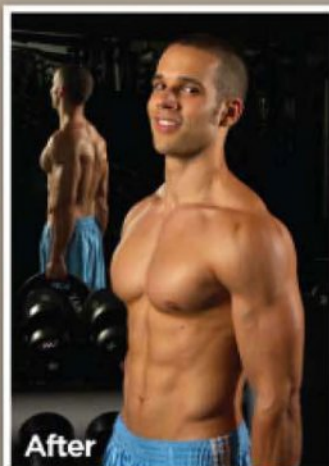
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A NOTE ON 70 YEARS IN CAR
INSURANCE FROM ONE OF THE
GIANTS IN THE INDUSTRY.

(WELL, NOT IN TERMS OF
HEIGHT, OF COURSE.)

What the Gecko lacks in stature he certainly makes up for in ability. In fact, under the ownership of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc., he's helped GEICO rise to become the nation's third-largest car insurance company. Of course, the fact that GEICO has been helping people save money on car insurance for over 70 years hasn't hurt either. And when it comes to financial security, GEICO is consistently ranked "excellent" or better by independent experts. But even though it's not common practice to have geckos in the highest levels of business, this one inspired three million drivers to switch to GEICO last year (and never missed a day of work). Perhaps proving that you can be both big and small at the same time.

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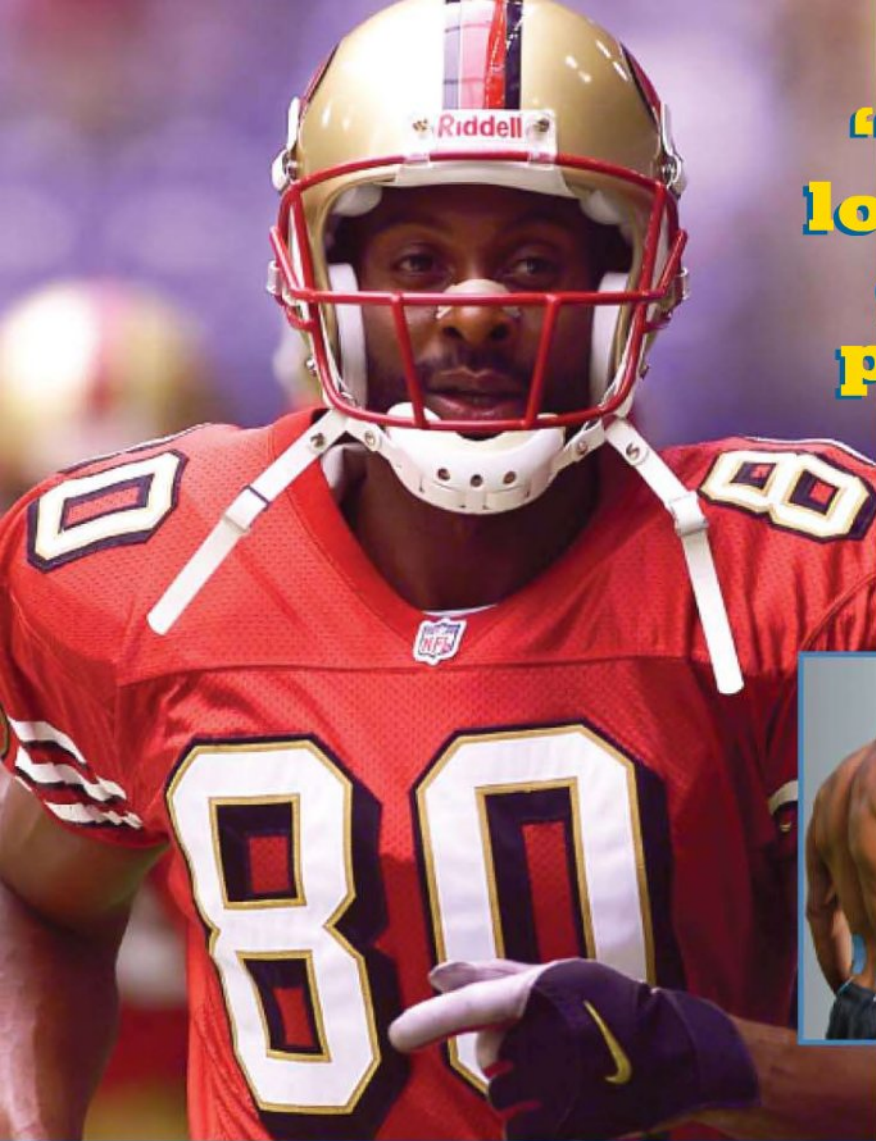
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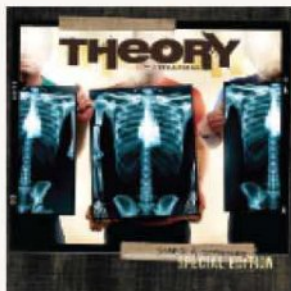
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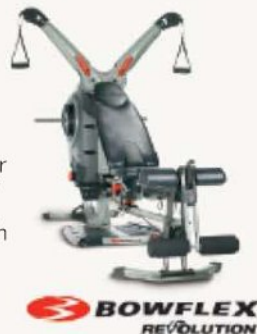
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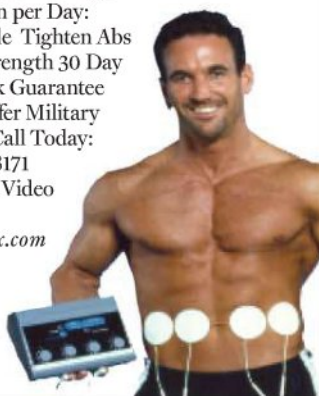


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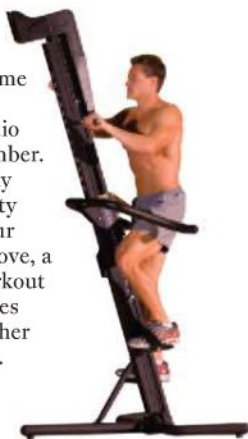
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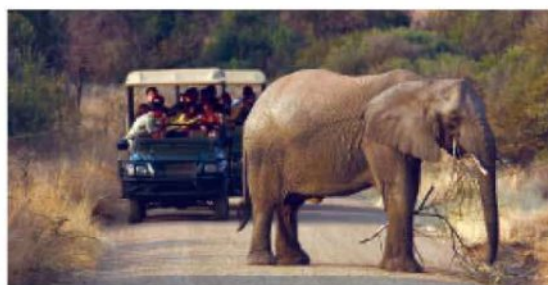


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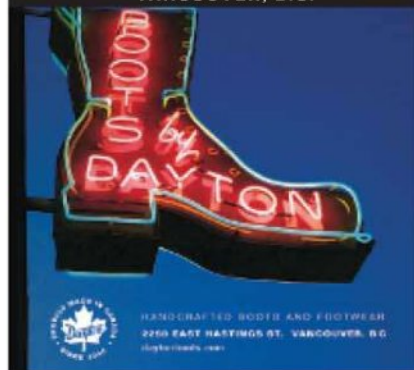
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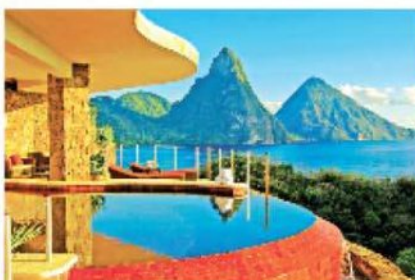


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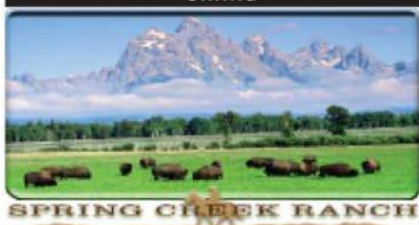
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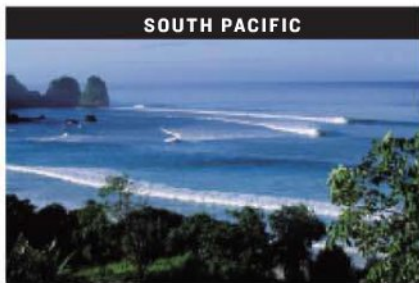
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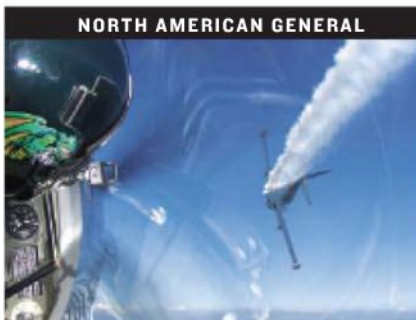
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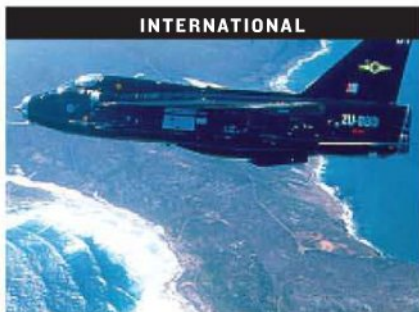
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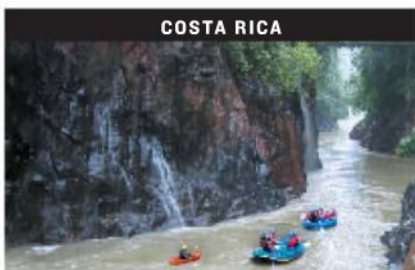


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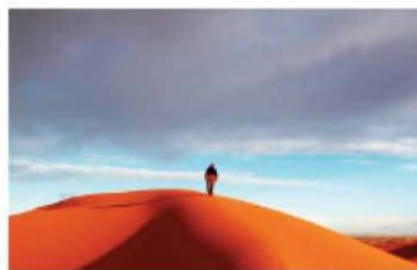


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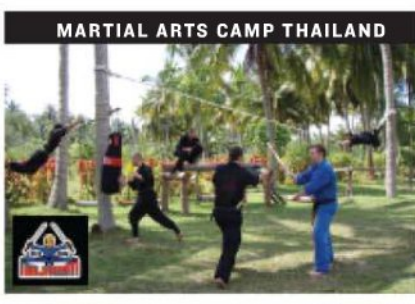


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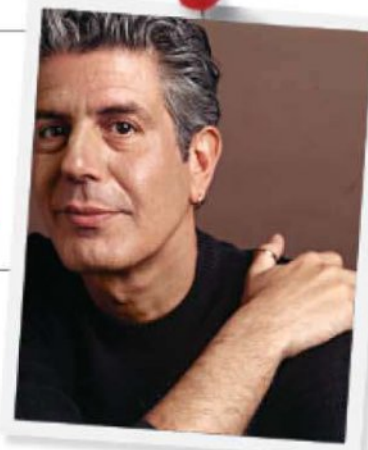
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They are stronger than us. If you've ever hauled a 28-pound two-year-old around New York, you'll find that men fold at the knees a lot quicker than women.

What's the best way to impress a woman?

Pretend to know what you're doing. One of life's terrible truths is that women like guys who seem to know what they're doing.

How do you make your favorite drink?

A Negroni. One-third good gin, one-third Campari, one-third sweet vermouth in a glass with some ice and a gossamer-thin slice of orange. Mario Batali taught me, simultaneously ruining my life and improving it, as he often does.

Who's the toughest guy you know?

Marco Pierre White. He's a British chef and a hero of mine. There are plenty of people in this world who can take a beating. Real toughness comes from people who stay true to themselves and don't give a fuck what anyone else thinks.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Show up on time. An employer of mine back in the '80s was kind enough to take me on after a rough patch, and it made a big difference in my life that I knew I was the sort of person who showed up on time. It's a basic tell of character.

What tool should every man own?

A good, and this is an important distinction, well-maintained — kept in a cool, dry place and regularly sharpened and honed — professional-quality chef knife, whether Japanese or German, speaks well of a man.

What skill should every man have?

To know how to make an omelet. It's one of those dishes where your true nature reveals itself — how fastidious you are in the kitchen; how you move, graceful or ungraceful. It's not a recipe; it's technique.

What skill would you still like to master?

I wish I could play bass like Larry Graham or Bootsy Collins. My God, I'd give up just about everything else for that.

What's the best cure for a hangover?

I have never found a better one, I regret to say, than Coca-Cola, a joint, and some really spicy food. I'm a big believer in spicy. It scares the evil out.

How should a man best face his fears?

"What the fuck" is a good mantra. The answer to overcoming fear is an uncomfortable truth that your life just isn't that important.

How should a man handle getting old?

A little dignity goes a long way. There comes a time to take the earring off. There's a time to stop dancing in public. I don't know who said it, but at 40 or 50 every man gets the face he deserves. I'm not a believer in improving that.

What advice would you give the younger you?

I've made pretty much every terrible mistake you could make. Cocaine, crack, heroin. But the sort of person I was, and would be again if I lived my life over, is the sort of person who at 17 would just not listen.

What one thing do you want to do before you die?

I want to be on *The Simpsons*. My voice is getting high and squeaky just thinking about it. —INTERVIEWED BY DACUS THOMPSON

Have you ever cheated death?



(I) A few years ago in New Zealand I was riding an ATV and didn't hear the guy in front of me say, "Don't do this." (II) I ended up rolling it over myself numerous times on a steep sand dune. I think everyone who was watching it pretty much expected me to die. (III) Then I was on a talk show where we watched the footage along with Ozzy Osbourne, who himself had been badly injured in an ATV accident. Afterward he was following me around backstage like a concerned grandfather, just shaking his head and saying, "You could have been killed!"



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