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NOVEMBER 2023



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COSTCO Connection *November*

November 2023

Volume 36

Number 10

Table of Contents

COVER STORY

28 Sleighing it

Put a new spin on festive holiday planning with these party pointers.
by Kira Vermond



SPECIAL SECTION: HOME ELECTRONICS

35 Tech this out

Surround sound
by Christine Persaud

TV mounting help
by Mark Ray

Smartphone photo and video tips
by Marc Saltzman

Action cameras
by Erik J. Martin

Buyers' picks

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Table of Contents *November*

Up Front

COSTCO LIFE

- 9 For November**
Remembrance Day, advice from That Gratitude Guy, supporting grieving children and more.

DEPARTMENTS

- 7 Assistant Vice President's Note**
- 17 Financial Connection**
It's never too early to start learning about saving money.
by Lana Sanichar
- 19 For Your Business**
Clear, concise writing can make a major difference in business.
by Elizabeth Danziger
- 22 Travel Connection**
Take (cruise) control of your dining options.
by Lois Alter Mark
- 25 Member Poll**
What is the best tech invention of the 21st century?
- 91 Member Connection**
Yolanda Pop and Linda Montalbano create gifts for condolences and illness.
by Jen Madera

17

Lifestyle

FOR YOUR TABLE

- 54 Panettone, please**
Wake up to the delicious taste of Italy with a traditional treat.
by Jen Madera
- 62 Festival of Lights**
Celebrate Diwali traditions with bursts of colour, activities and flavour-filled dishes.
by Priya Lakshminarayan

FOR YOUR HEALTH

- 70 Social connectivity**
Learn about ways to combat the feeling of loneliness.
by Anjali Rameshbabu
- 74 On the vertigo**
Causes and treatment for the condition that causes dizziness and more.
by Jane Doucet
- 77 Ask the Pharmacist**
Managing the symptoms of geriatric diabetes.
by Lawrence Varga and Joseph Hanna

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

- 81 Author spotlight:**
The Road Years
Rick Mercer looks back at his TV show *The Mercer Report*.
by Kristi York
+ *No Brainer* by Jeff Kinney.

62

Shopping

INSIDE COSTCO

- 87 Costco Services:**
Primus
Savings on high-speed internet services.
- 89 Special Events**
Exciting products offered for a short time.



70



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PUBLISHER Sandy Torrey storrey@costco.com

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Stephanie E. Ponder sponder@costco.com

EDITORS

Canada Christina Guerrero cguerrero2@costco.com

US Will Fifield wfifield@costco.com

REPORTERS

Shelley Crenshaw screnshaw@costco.com

Dan Jones daniel.jones@costco.com

Jen Madera jimadera@costco.com

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDITION

Jasmine Czaika, William Giroux, Céleste Savoie

COPY EDITORS Jennifer Karchmer, Jodie Warren

CONTRIBUTORS

Elizabeth Danziger, Jane Doucet, Joseph Hanna, Priya Lakshminarayan, Lois Alter Mark, Erik J. Martin, Christine Persaud, Anjali Rameshbabu, Mark Ray, Marc Saltzman, Lana Sanichar, Lawrence Varga, Kira Vermond, Kristi York

ART DIRECTOR Lory Williams lwilliams@costco.com

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTORS

David Schneider dschneider@costco.com

Brenda Shecter bshecter@costco.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

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

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER

Antolin Matsuda amatsuda@costco.com

PRINT, PAPER AND PREPRESS MANAGER

MaryAnne Robbers mrobbers@costco.com

PRINT PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Grace Clark graceclark@costco.com

PUBLISHING PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Jodie Moy jodie.moy@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT DIRECTOR

Shannon Ambrose shannon.ambrose@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT MANAGER

Karine Lapointe-Moses karine.moses@costco.com

PUBLISHING PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Sophia Burgin sophia.burgin@costco.com

ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL COORDINATORS

Nathalie Fauteux, Christin Hudon, Solange Richer St-Jean
cdnconnection@costco.com

ADVERTISING COPYWRITER Bill Urlevich

BUSINESS MANAGER Jane Johnson

ONLINE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Dorothy Strakele

COSTCO CANADA HEADQUARTERS

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

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ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT'S NOTE

A time to remember

During November, we pay tribute to all those who have fought for the freedoms we enjoy today. Thank you to all of you who have joined in the efforts to defend what we believe in. You are our true heroes.

And as we reflect on the lives that were lost protecting our country, we mustn't forget the grief of those who are left behind—especially our children. They are often overlooked, and their grief, without proper support, can lead to physical and mental struggles now and in the future. In our Costco Life section, you can read about how the Children's Grief Foundation of Canada is helping to support our children.

This issue will also bring you some great tech solutions to help make life just a little bit easier. You can learn more about taking great photos and videos with your smartphone or action camera. Or maybe you would like to know how to mount your brand-new Costco television. We have all of that covered.

I recently took an Alaskan cruise. One of the many highlights was the amazing food. Thanks to the savvy booking of my niece, we enjoyed several of the ship's exclusive restaurants. We also frequented a variety of specialty dining venues—coffee shops, ice cream counters and pizza places. Our breakfasts at the buffet were a great start to each and every day. Check out our article on cruise dining to get an even deeper look into culinary life on the open seas!

So, as we take time to honour our heroes, let's also remember how fortunate we are to share this great Canadian life with each other. ■

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Sue Pudrycki
is Assistant Vice President of Marketing.

Coming next issue
We share seasonal recipes from members who are professional chefs.

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Every year on November 11, Canadians pause for a moment of silence to honour those who have fought for our freedom. This day recognizes the men and women who served in World War I, and all servicemen and servicewomen who have served in the military in times of war, conflict and peace.

A day of remembrance



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Back-story

REMEMBRANCE DAY is also known as Poppy Day. The deep red flower is worn because poppies were among the first flowers to bloom on the battlefields of northern France and Belgium in World War I. The Royal Canadian Legion, Canada's largest veteran support and community service organization,

is behind the poppy campaign that raises funds in support of veterans and their families in need.

According to the organization, millions of Canadians wear a poppy as a pledge to never forget those who sacrificed their lives. The symbol should be worn on the left side over the heart.

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GRATITUDE MONTH

He's thankful and grateful

Costco member David George Brooke is a motivational speaker, life coach and author who's driven to spread messages of appreciation. The Washington state resident's experiences, including the loss of his parents when he was a young adult and later the loss of his wife of 11 years, forged a deep appreciation for the fragility of life and a desire to express gratitude—and help others do the same. To date, Brooke (davidgeorgebrookecoaching.com), who has trademarked the name “That Gratitude Guy,” has made more than 750 speeches and keynote presentations.

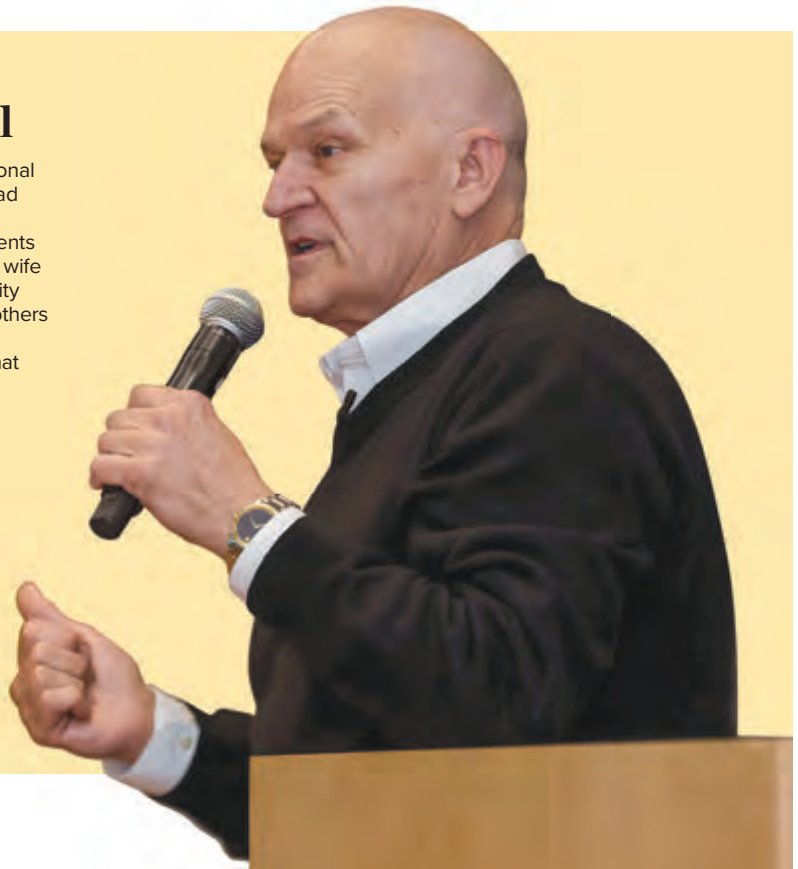
Brooke offers these tips to help cultivate a gratitude mindset:

Start your day with a power hour. Before looking at your devices, make your bed, journal, meditate, stretch and have a healthy beverage or smoothie.

Be aware of who you are hanging out with. Once or twice a year, evaluate those relationships.

Monitor your self-talk and be kind to yourself.

Text someone each day. Tell them how grateful you are to have them in your life. It will make their day.



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◆ CHICKEN CAME FIRST

In Montreal in 1995 Pierre Riel, now Executive Vice President / COO, and Louis Santillo, a warehouse manager, introduced Costco's famed rotisserie chicken!

FRANCE FREEMAN



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COSTCO PHOTO STUDIO

SUPPORTING GRIEVING CHILDREN

Help during tough times

Losing a loved one is difficult, especially for children. "If grief is not addressed or managed, it can lead to further mental health problems," says Christina Walton, creator of The Children's Grief Foundation of Canada ([childrensgrieffoundation.org](https://www.childrensgrieffoundation.org)).

Walton provides tips for supporting a grieving child:

- Model your own grief. Showing the child that it's appropriate to show grief can help them express their feelings.
- Seek support for yourself, so you can be grounded and supportive for the child.
- Let the child know they're not alone.



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COZY COMFORT FOOD

Vegan Mushroom Stew

45 mL (3 Tbsp) olive oil	30 mL (2 Tbsp) flour
1 yellow onion, diced	60 mL (¼ cup) balsamic vinegar
250 mL (1 cup) carrot, sliced	30 mL (2 Tbsp) soy sauce
250 mL (1 cup) celery, sliced	454 g (1 lb) yellow potatoes, halved
Salt and pepper, to taste	250 mL (1 cup) split red lentils, uncooked
454 g (1 lb) mushrooms, halved	1 can (425 g/15 oz) tomato sauce
6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced	750 mL (3 cups) vegetable broth
10 mL (2 tsp) thyme	2 bay leaves
5 mL (1 tsp) oregano	Parsley, for garnish
2 mL (½ tsp) sage	

Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, carrot, celery and a couple pinches of salt and pepper. Cook 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add mushrooms, garlic, thyme, oregano and sage. Cook 3 to 4 minutes, stirring frequently. Add flour; cook and stir for 1 minute. Deglaze with balsamic vinegar and soy sauce. Add potatoes, lentils, tomato sauce, broth and bay leaves. Cook over medium-high, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat; simmer 10 to 15 minutes or until potatoes are fork-tender. Season with salt and pepper. Remove bay leaves and garnish with parsley.

Tip: Serve with mashed potatoes and bread.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Kylie Lato (midwestfoodieblog.com)



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Saving grace

It's never too early to teach the importance of socking away funds for big-ticket items

by LANA SANICHAR

We prepare our children for their future in so many ways. We teach them how to cook and how to drive. We teach them that it takes hard work to reach their goals, and last but not least, we teach them about the business of money.

In the first article of this four-part series, Fred Masters, a former professional educator and president of Masters Money Management Inc., commented that “saving until it hurts” is a key element of personal finance success for our young people.

When it comes to discussing and modelling saving-until-it-hurts behaviour with our teens and young adult children, here are a few saving goals that may help impart that lesson.

Post-secondary costs. For teens and young adults, some major expenses are likely just over the horizon. Post-secondary costs are the obvious one. Saving a significant portion of part-time job earnings is a terrific idea, given that these schooling costs—think tuition, books, supplies, food and entertainment—are looming.



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First car. Borrowing your parents' car is easy; buying a first car is a different game altogether. A quality used car still costs thousands of dollars. Part-time job earnings that are saved means taking on less debt when it comes to buying that first car—keeping it filled up, running and insured.

First apartment. We want the kids to launch when the timing is right, and they want to launch too. Saving in advance for the costs that accompany a first apartment is wise, practical and a good introduction to adulthood.

This wraps up our series on youth and money. Parents are first educators in many crucial areas. This certainly is true when it comes to personal finance. Children learn about money from their parents on many levels. Financial literacy is taught in schools but the “money lessons” that are taught at home—both formally and informally—are invaluable. ■

Please do your own due diligence when making any financial decisions. This column is for general informational purposes only and may not apply to all provinces. It is meant to get the reader thinking about their finances; it is not meant to be used in lieu of advice from a professional.

Schooled in savings

According to the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, half of Canadians ages 18 to 24 currently have student loans. The proportion with an

outstanding balance on their student loan declines with age, to about 36% for those ages 25 to 29 and 21% for those 30 to 34. After age 35, only about 5% have an outstanding balance on a student loan. For

Canadians under age 35, those with a budget (29%) are less likely to have an outstanding student loan compared with those who feel too overwhelmed to budget (36%).—LS

COURTESY OF LANA SANICHAR



Lana Sanichar

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

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FOR YOUR
BUSINESS

by ELIZABETH DANZIGER

Writing well is vital to a thriving career. Some people consider writing skills as "nice to have" but not a necessity. This attitude can cost a person a sale, a promotion or a job, because in reality, being a good writer is more important today than ever before.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 73.4% of employers want a candidate with strong written communication skills. A recent article in *Forbes* magazine reported that people who write well are more likely to get hired, be promoted and succeed. Good writing is crucial because it leads to efficient, effective and credible communication.

When people do not write clearly, they lose productivity by having to continually clarify their messages. They reduce revenue by not making their value proposition clear to sales prospects. And they also damage the company's brand by not proofreading published materials.

Whether you are a student entering the workforce, a seasoned employee or a business owner, you will increase your odds of success by upping your writing game. Here are three ways to become a more effective writer:

Know your point before you start. It's maddening to slog through a long email or document, searching in vain for the main idea. To improve your writing, focus on the reason for the communication before you start writing. Put the main point within the first 40 words. Repeat it at the end.



Keep your sentence length in check. Long sentences decrease readability. The ideal average sentence length is about 20 words. (You can easily measure sentence length with Microsoft Word's Word Count tool.) If your sentence has multiple clauses starting with "which," "that," "who," "when," "because," etc., consider breaking it into separate sentences.

Reread everything before you send it. We all know we should reread before we send a message, but there doesn't seem to be enough time. However, failing to proofread for errors can cost your company its credibility. Rereading rescues you from remorse: Make time for it whenever you write.

By practising basic writing skills and continually polishing your prose, you can be among the winners who express themselves clearly on paper. ■

Clear copy

Tips for success in business and life through strong writing skills

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Elizabeth Danziger is the owner of Worktalk Communications Consulting in Los Angeles (worktalk.com) and the author of four books.

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- Grammarly is helpful for catching errors in grammar, syntax and punctuation. Sign up for the basic free program

at Grammarly.com.

- *Writer's Digest* named Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips as one of the top writing resources. Sign up at Quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl.—ED

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Bounty on the seas

Catch the latest
wave of cruise
ship dining

by LOIS ALTER MARK



MICHAEL MARK

Lois Alter Mark is an award-winning travel writer. She's sailed on oceans and rivers in Antarctica, Europe, North America, Russia and the United Arab Emirates. She hopes to check a world cruise off her bucket list soon.



Cruising can mean different things to different people: adventure, or even romantic or exotic destinations—just to name a few. However, one aspect that is consistent for everyone: food. If you haven't been on a cruise in a while, or ever, you will be amazed—cruise lines have expanded offerings and elevated cuisine to provide true culinary experiences.

Notable chefs

From Guy Fieri's Guy's Burger Joint on Carnival to James Beard Award winner Michael Schwartz's 150 Central Park on Royal Caribbean International, many cruise lines are now boasting big-name chefs and restaurants.

Michelin-starred chef Daniel Boulud recently introduced his first signature restaurant at sea, *Le Voyage*, on *Celebrity Beyond*. With dishes like Tamarind and Peanut-Crusted Prawns and Grilled Rubia Gallega Filet Mignon, cruisers can savour world-class dining at sea.

Exclusive restaurants

You may want to consider upgrading your stateroom so you can eat at

restaurants available to suite guests (there are options for non-suite guests too; see the sidebar "Specialty dining"). These restaurants are more intimate and feature exclusive dishes with impeccable service.

On Cunard, suite guests get complimentary access to the Queens Grill or Princess Grill, beautiful fine-dining venues serving dishes like beef Wellington and rack of lamb.

On Celebrity, guests have two options: If you stay in The Retreat, you can enjoy your meals in the comfort of Luminae, featuring signature dishes by chef Boulud. If you're in Aqua Class, your wellness journey includes dining in Blu, with its spa-inspired menu.

Princess Club Class offers guests their own separate area of the main dining room, with expedited seating, dedicated waitstaff and additional menu items.

And Holland America Line gives Club Orange guests their own private eatery on select ships.

Unique dining experiences

Going beyond the food itself, cruise ships are turning meals into memorable experiences, thanks to innovations like Disney Cruise Line's Animator's Palate



FAR LEFT: © DISNEY © MATT STROSHANE



LEFT AND ABOVE: © CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE

Clockwise from top left:
Arendelle: *A Frozen Dining Adventure*, a theatrical dining experience on Disney Cruise Line; Carnival's Havana Bar & Pool; Carnival's Cucina Del Capitano restaurant.

restaurant and the *Frozen* theatrical dinner, both of which offer top-notch entertainment while you eat. Celebrity Cruises feature Le Petit Chef, a delightful, animated experience that brings the tabletop, and your plate, to life.

Many cruise lines, including Princess, Carnival, Royal Caribbean International and Azamara, offer chef's table experiences that treat a small group of passengers to a multicourse meal created and hosted by the chef, who describes each dish and the wine with which it's paired. It's a rare opportunity to feel like a VIP.

Coffee shops and afternoon tea

Cruise ship cafés are where you can pick up a specialty coffee (included in many beverage packages) along with a complimentary pastry or two. Café al Bacio is a popular gathering spot on Celebrity ships; at Holland America

Line's Grand Dutch Café, consider trying the Triple Berry Pannenkoek, an underrated treasure. The International Café on Princess is filled with goodies, from doughnuts to quiches to sandwiches—and the food is free all day.

Don't skip afternoon tea, though—especially on Cunard's *Queen Mary*, *Queen Elizabeth* or *Queen Victoria*, where the three-course version of the British tradition is fit for royalty.

Buffets still rule

A cruise ship standard, buffets are bigger and better than ever, with vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options, and everything from chicken and seafood to Indian dishes, pasta and sushi.

With offerings like these, you may need to add another cruise to your vacation list just to experience them all. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers ocean and river cruises, as well as vacation packages, rental cars and hotel-only options for destinations in Canada and around the world. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.ca or call 1-855-863-0357.

Specialty dining

Although you can eat happily on any cruise ship without spending extra money, you may want to splurge on one of the

many specialty restaurants now available at sea. My favourites include Celebrity's Eden and Raw on 5, Cunard's Steakhouse at The Verandah, Princess' Sabatini's and Disney's

adults-only Remy.

Holland America Line offers a number of Culinary Cruises with top chefs. The ships also feature a variety of specialty dining options.

—LAM

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Costco members respond to our poll, posted to Costco's social media

GPS navigation.

Rebe Gonzd'Aven

Washer [and] dryer in one!

Amy Singleton

Smartphones. They have replaced the need to carry: watch, stereo, computer, calculator, wallet, planner, flashlight, etc.

@concertcrazyfestivalgirl

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Apple CarPlay. [I] use[d] to not go far from home. With Apple CarPlay I'd now drive across the country by myself. Best thing ever!

Barbara Basciano

Air fryers.

@costcomarkhameast



Plugged in

According to TheCanadianencyclopedia.ca, Research in Motion released the first BlackBerry smart-phone in 2002.

New tech at your fingertips

Find your own favourite tech inventions. Did you know the following items are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca?

- Cellphones and accessories
- Smartwatches and activity trackers
- Security cameras and surveillance systems
- Video games and consoles
- TVs, monitors, computers and tablets

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Making merry

Holiday parties are back! From coffee-fuelled festive brunches to elegant sit-down celebrations, it's time to put a fresh spin on this year's seasonal gatherings. So break out those ugly Christmas sweaters, draw up a guest list of favourite folks and throw a holiday bash they'll remember all year. (Eggnog optional.)

by **Kira Vermond**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30





When Costco members Paul Nielsen and Lisa Groulx throw a holiday party, you won't find them polishing crystal or frantically putting on lipstick before their 75-plus guests arrive. Instead, the couple doesn't even bother getting out of their pyjamas.

For the past eight years, they've hosted an annual holiday PJ brunch party that starts before most people roll out of bed. But the unconventional time works for Nielsen and Groulx, a firefighter and nurse from Guelph, Ontario, who have two small daughters.

"When you're young, you go to evening parties. Then all of a sudden you have kids and you're getting up at 5 a.m. and so are all of your friends who have children," says Groulx. "So we thought, why don't we have our party in the morning?"

Not only is their commitment to holiday entertaining admirable, but so is their brunch spread. Nielsen and Groulx moved their party outdoors two years ago due to the pandemic, fashioning their large, detached garage into a holiday wonderland with tables laden with a granola bar, cheese boards, homemade bread, overnight oatmeal fixings and coffee. Always coffee.

They purchase aluminium pans, ingredients and other party supplies at Costco well in advance so they're not scrambling last-minute, and build a fire outside the morning of to warm their guests.

But the culinary star of the show has to be the massive mound of æbleskiver, tiny puffs of pancake that guests dot with jam and powdered sugar. With a nod to





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: © ALINA MONKEY BUSINESS; PIXELSHOT; MICROMONKEY; CAPABLE97 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Nielsen's Danish heritage, the family starts flipping batches in specialized pans about three weeks before the big day and freezes them for later. And no wonder.

"We do 500 to 600!" says Nielsen.

Thinking ahead is a great idea, says Adaobi Kanu, owner and lead planner of Events in a Crunch, which serves clients in Austin, Texas, and New York City.

"When it comes to party planning, the biggest tip is the more time the better," she says, explaining that many people underestimate how much work goes into a fabulous party and overestimate their ability to juggle jobs, family obligations and party planning as the holidays approach.

To make it memorable and cost-effective, it also pays to put a fresh spin on your soiree—something guests look forward to each year. In fact, creative party ideas are often budget-friendly. Beyond pyjama brunches outdoors, here are a few other original holiday entertaining ideas—from small to large—to get everyone in the festive mood.

Make it formal

Perfect for a pocket-sized crowd—think 8 to 15 people—the formal dinner is making a comeback. Buy an extra folding table if needed and splurge on flowers and pretty napkins. Offer mineral water for those who don't drink alcohol to accompany a five-course meal. (There's no shame in hiring a caterer for part of the meal either. You need to enjoy the night, too!) Candlelight sets the mood.

After dinner? Why not break out the party games.

"Food and games make a fabulous time," says Kanu. "People are able to just really connect, build those stronger relationships and kick off the holiday season with all that goodness and joy."



How to set the tone

Need even more inspiration? Here are a few tips to make your event special.

- Get creative with your invitations! Digital versions are popular, but paper invites still impress. Or follow the newest trend: filmed party trailers that give guests a sense of what to expect and build anticipation.
- Offer a welcome drink and snack near the door. Hire servers or get your teens to pitch in.
- Smile. Hug. Make merry. Forget the work that went into the party and just enjoy. Happiness is contagious.—KV

LIGHTS: © MICHAEL KRAUS / SHUTTERSTOCK; INVITATION: © DARIA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco warehouses and Costco.ca sell a variety of food, beverages and other hosting supplies to host a holiday gathering that will set the bar for years to come.



Try something new

Standing around with a drink chatting near the buffet table is nice, but it can feel more ho-hum than ho-ho-ho, especially if it's your fourth holiday party of the month. Kick the fun meter up a notch by giving revellers something to do to break the ice and make some memories.

Set up an epic scavenger hunt for adults and kids. Plant candy canes, chocolate coins, stockings and other holiday-themed items around the house and break guests into teams. Those who find the most win. Or host a gingerbread house decorating party. It's a good way to get rid of leftover Halloween candy hanging around the house.

Another idea: Spend quality time with friends and organize an afternoon cookie decorating party. Supply a selection of pre-cut sugar cookies in festive shapes, tinted icing, sprinkles, edible markers, piping bags and other tools for beautifying batches. Tea, coffee, hot chocolate and cookies (of course) keep bellies fed.

Make parties productive

If you tend to leave gift-wrapping until the last minute (busted), why not cross the dreaded chore off your list while surrounded by friends and family? Throw a present-wrapping get-together by providing gift wrap, tape, bows, scissors and name tags (or have guests bring their own) then get down to work. Sip cocktails and munch treats to make the time fly. Don't forget to vote on the best wrapped package too!

Soon, your least favourite task will be wrapped up for another year.

Dress it up

For large parties with more than 50 guests, Kanu likes to combine a cocktail and appetizer party with silly wearable pizazz. Create a "make your own ugly Christmas sweater" station complete with washed second-hand sweaters and supplies—or choose Kanu's theme from last year: an "elf yourself" party.

"I went full elf," Kanu jokes, who admits the kids joined her in going all-out with the elf apparel and makeup, while adult party-goers politely donned elf ears.

"People still talk about that party though," she says. "So now I'm thinking, 'I've got to level up this year.'" ■

Kira Vermond is an Ontario-based freelancer.

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Avoid these hosting mistakes

We asked Adaobi Kanu, owner of Events in a Crunch, and Emilie Williams and Heather Siebath of Tulips & Maple in Ottawa, Kingston and Picton, Ontario, the biggest blunders hosts make—and how to fix them.

The gaffe: Not paying enough attention to music.

The fix: Create a playlist in advance and ensure your Bluetooth speakers are charged. Or hire a musical performer.

The gaffe: The food is too complicated.

The fix: Ditch prep stress, and buy oven-ready appetizers and vegetable trays. Or hire a caterer to craft Pinterest-worthy charcuterie boards and themed drinks.

The gaffe: No follow-up.

The fix: Didn't get a chance to say goodbye to everyone? Send an email the next day to spread party afterglow cheer.—KV

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Dialed in

Technological advancements are making the everyday products we use more precise, efficient, convenient and powerful. This issue's Special Section shows how to enhance what you do, see and hear with the latest in tech.

Learn more about spatial audio technology, which brings immersive theatre-like sound to your home, and set the stage with advice for mounting a TV. Look like a pro with our photo and video tips, or take your creativity a step further with action cameras, such as a GoPro. Finally, check out our buyers' picks, which feature tech items of quality and value.

36 Spatial audio

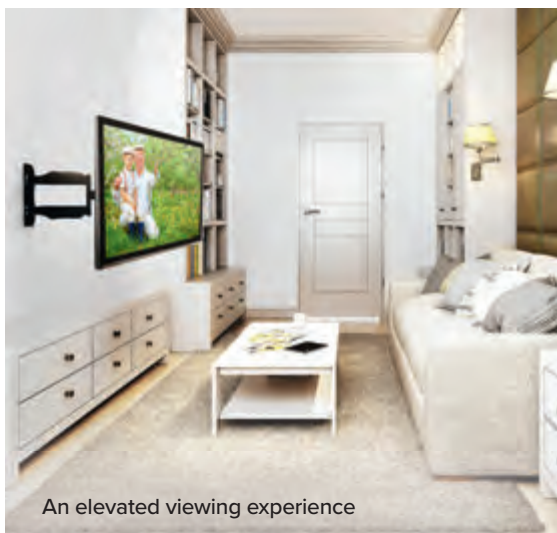
39 TV mounting

40 Smartphone video and photo tips

44 Action cameras

47 Buyers' picks

An elevated viewing experience



KANTO MARKETING DEPARTMENT



Beautiful noise

Spatial audio takes the concept of surround sound to new heights

by CHRISTINE PERSAUD



JOHN THOMSON

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

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of products that support spatial audio in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

You might have heard of spatial audio and wondered what it is. It's a technology that processes audio to create the illusion that sounds are coming from all around, including from above. You'll hear it in an action movie with planes flying overhead or cars zooming by in every direction; a romantic comedy with a sappy scene in the pouring rain; a horror flick with scares in every corner; or a musical track with distinctly placed instruments. It can be found in video games, too, like first-person shooters, keeping you apprised of your in-game surroundings.

The term was coined in 2020 by Apple at its developers conference to describe the company's implementation of immersive audio. But it has since become more generally used to refer to any type of immersive, three-dimensional sound (not unlike how we refer to tissues as Kleenex or bandages as Band-Aids). Spatial audio is cited interchangeably with similar technologies, such as Dolby Atmos, DTS:X, and Sony 360 Reality Audio and 3D Audio. All of these tech-

nologies, which come from different companies, accomplish the same thing and fall under the umbrella of "immersive audio."

The idea with spatial audio, available in products like soundbars, wireless speakers and headphones, is to replicate an immersive audio experience without the use of multiple speakers around you. For a home theatre, spatial audio is a step up from surround sound because you will feel like you're right in the action. It is available for music, movies, TV shows and video games, though not all titles are mixed for it.

Here's a look at what you will need to enjoy this technology:

A product that supports it. Products that support immersive audio playback are labeled as such, with words like spatial audio, Dolby Atmos, DTS:X, 360 Reality Audio or another similar term. Spatial audio speakers are made by brands such as Apple and Sonos, 360 Reality Audio headphones from Sony



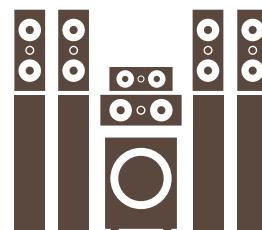
Spatial audio can make you feel like you are in the centre of the action.

mixed for spatial audio, however. *The Witcher* on Netflix is available in spatial audio, for example, but *Titans* is not.

Not all music streaming platforms support spatial audio. Spotify, for example, does not yet support it. However, Apple Music has a dedicated category for spatial audio content. Amazon Music HD, Apple Music and Tidal offer some spatial audio content, too. If you're unsure of what's available, type "spatial audio" or "Dolby Atmos" in the general search bar to isolate applicable search results.

An appropriate subscription. Even if the service supports immersive audio, you may need a specific subscription tier to access it. With Netflix, you need the Premium plan. It's available on music streaming services, too. With Tidal, you need the HiFi Plus subscription tier. Apple Music, however, offers tracks in spatial audio with its base subscription option.

With spatial audio, you can use a single premium speaker (or other audio device) and high quality mixed content to get an impressive, enveloping experience. ■



Go big

Even though technology now makes it possible to enjoy immersive audio through a single speaker, for an even better audio experience, the pros will tell you that you need to install multiple speakers in various locations to get the best effect. If you go this route, you'll want to place speakers at the front and back of the room, at the left and right, the front centre, and above, plus have a subwoofer for enhanced bass. This setup is called a 5.1.2 system: five main speakers plus a subwoofer and two height speakers on the ceiling. A 7.1.2 system adds two more speakers on the sides of the room as well for a movie theatre-like experience.—CP

FROM LEFT: © VLAD KOCHELAIEVSKIY/ODERDE/STOCK.ADOBE.COM

All in your head

Spatial audio is handled differently with headphones. A technology called head-related transfer function

(HRTF) tricks your brain into believing that sounds are farther away or closer to you than they really are. To enjoy it, use a pair of spatial audio headphones, like the Apple

AirPods Max or OnePlus Buds Pro 2 with a compatible smartphone, like the Apple iPhone 14 or OnePlus 11, respectively.—CP

3 PK

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Hanging around

Display and protect your TV with a wall mount

by MARK RAY



© PHOTOS COURTESY OF AVF GROUP

Television mounts are a great way to secure your new flat-screen TV to a wall and free up space in your home. Here's what you need to know about these handy accessories.

Types of TV mounts

Manufacturers typically offer three basic styles:

- Fixed mounts
- Tilting mounts
- Multi-position mounts

Which should you pick? That depends.

"Fixed is for customers wanting the simplest, lowest-profile mount—great with OLED TVs," says Geoff Ireland, senior account executive for Costco supplier Kanto.

"Tilting mounts tilt up and down to reduce glare or reflections from lights and windows," adds Victoria Francisco, senior marketing channel manager for Costco supplier SANUS.

"Multi-position mounts provide additional versatility," says John McCreath, global sales director for Costco supplier AVF Group. "A fully articulated multi-position mount can be used to offer multiple

viewing angles in open-plan living spaces or to perfectly position a screen in the corner of a room," he says.

What else you should consider

Once you've settled on a style, pick a mount that supports your TV's weight and matches its VESA pattern. "The VESA pattern is simply the spacing of the bolts on the rear of your TV measured in millimetres," McCreath says.

Where to mount your TV

You can mount a TV pretty much anywhere you have wall space, but that doesn't mean every spot is ideal. Eye comfort is a big factor, according to Jason Zavarella, Kanto's product manager. "Line up the centre of the TV with your eyes while seated to reduce eye strain," he says. "With a large TV you may be a bit shocked about how close the bottom of the TV is to the ground!"

Once your TV is securely mounted to the wall, there's just one thing left to do: enjoy the show. ■

Mark Ray is a freelance writer (and Costco member) based in Louisville, Kentucky.



COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of TV mounts and accessories are available in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca).

Calling in the pros

TV mount manufacturers work hard to make installation easy. For example, SANUS and AVF both have online height calculator tools that will tell

you exactly where to drill holes based on your TV and the mount you select. But don't hesitate to hire a professional installer if you need one. That's especially true if you're uncomfortable

with the process or have a special situation like steel wall studs or a brick wall. Installers can even hide cables inside hollow walls, resulting in a more polished look.—MR



Merry memories

Tips for making great photos and videos with your phone this season

by MARC SALTZMAN



SEVAG SAGHERIAN

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

Twitter
@marc_saltzman

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Please include "Tech Connection" in the subject line.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find quality smartphones at cellphone kiosks located in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.



The best camera, they say, is the one you have with you. If that happens to be your smartphone this holiday season, that's a good thing. Today's phones have seriously good cameras, and they're ideal for on-the-spot editing—including adding fun filters—and the images and video you take are easy to share with loved ones.

Whether you're on iPhone or Android, the following photography tips and tricks will help ensure you're capturing the best images and video of your time with friends and family this season.

Avoid the digital zoom. Get closer by walking up to your subject with your smartphone rather than pinching and expanding the screen with your fingers to digitally zoom in, which often yields pixelated images. Fill up the entire frame with your subjects, unless you're also trying to capture the scenery, like the mountain behind the family

on a hike. Try your phone's "Portrait" mode, as it cleverly blurs the background behind your subject for a professional-looking, soft, out-of-focus background, called bokeh.

Right or left, not centre. Memorable photos need great composition. Instead of placing your subjects in the centre of the frame—what most amateur photographers do—move them to the left or right to make your photos instantly become more powerful and beautiful. You may hear pro photographers refer to a "rule of thirds," which creates a nice balance by breaking up a scene into three parts where you place your subject to the left or right.

Cloudy days are great. When outside, try to resist using the flash, as natural light is typically superior. Cloudy days provide great lighting because the clouds diffuse the sun. If it is a sunny day, ensure your back is to the sun. You want to avoid having your subject backlit, with the sun behind them, because it will create



Left: When taking a photo, don't centre your subjects. **Below:** For sharp photos and video, a tripod will steady your phone.



a silhouette effect. This is true also for photos shot indoors near a window (especially with bright white snow outside). Sometimes I take indoor photos with and without a flash to see what I like best. Review what you took and redo, if needed.

Turn the phone sideways. Unless you're trying to capture a tall structure, like a Christmas tree, use a landscape orientation when taking photos and shooting videos to get more in frame—especially with group shots. Holding your phone horizontally will also create photos that look better when viewed on a widescreen computer or television.

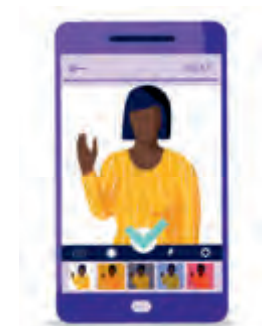
Don't forget about audio. Don't underestimate the importance of loud, clear audio when shooting videos. Hearing what the kids say when they rip open the presents or when carolers are at your front door is just as important as the image. Getting closer to what you're recording will help with this. Pro tip: Consider investing in an external microphone (wired or wireless).

Keep 'er steady. Ever hold your camera at arm's length to get a shot? Try to avoid this because hands are prone to shaking. To get a good, sharp photo or video, hold the camera with both hands and pull your arms into your chest or stomach to steady the shot. You can also use a tripod or rest your phone on a table.

Angle is everything. When shooting photos or videos, try to match the height of the subject. Consider kneeling on the ground to snap a picture of a baby's first steps or a video of a beloved family pet. You'll get better shots when at eye level rather than angling the phone up or down, which can look awkward.

Candid shots are keepers. Don't always take photos of people posing for the camera as their expression can look forced and predictable. Some of the best photos of subjects are when they don't realize they're being photographed—but be sure to get their permission before uploading to social media or sharing with others.

With these tips and a little experimenting, you can make great photos and videos with your smartphone. ■



FROM LEFT: © UNDRREY, АНАТОЛИЙ САВИЦКИЙ; DMYTRO / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

APP IT UP!

Play around with your smartphone's camera options, such as creating a timelapse video of stringing up holiday lights outside or shooting a slow-motion video of kids tossing snowballs.

Plus, there are many free apps to help you easily edit photos and videos, and share them with friends and family. Instagram and Snapchat, for example, allow you to add fun filters, like a sepia-tone finish or a retro '70s look.

Some apps leverage more advanced artificial intelligence (AI), such as Lensa and PicAI, to magically enhance your portrait photographs, create all new images out of a single shot (like a virtual photo-shoot) and add wild, cartoon-like effects.

—MS

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48 in **SNOW-BOARD**





Snap into action

Rugged action cameras conveniently chronicle your adventures

by ERIK J. MARTIN

Smartphones are handy for taking photos, but try using one when jumping out of a plane, skateboarding a half-pipe or snorkelling with sea turtles. Recording these, and other exciting activities, calls for a dedicated, compact, rugged action camera. GoPro-style cameras are designed to take high-quality footage in adventurous environments.

“Action cameras allow users to record activities hands-free while still producing stable and immersive footage,” says Arianne Burrell, communications manager for Costco supplier DJI North America. “They have become increasingly popular due to their versatility, ease of use and ability to capture unique perspectives. They are built to withstand harsh conditions, including water, dust and impact, making them ideal for capturing moments where other cameras may not survive.”

A product for all passions

Costco member Christen da Costa, CEO of product review website



Gadgetreview.com in Houston, says action cameras are ideal for any outdoor pursuits involving movement—from running, surfing and rock climbing to kayaking, bungee jumping and snowboarding. “Using one of these devices attached to your body, helmet or gear with a mount can be a great way to record your activity without missing out on the full experience,” he says.

Keenan Beavis, a Costco member in Langley, British Columbia, has documented activities on numerous trips with his action camera, including

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of action cameras in Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

hiking in nearby Whistler and surfing in Hawaii. “These gizmos shine in scenarios where the camera may be exposed to the elements or in dynamic situations like extreme sports. You can attach one to a drone for aerial footage, mount it on your helmet during a bike

ride or strap it to your pet for a fun perspective,” says Beavis.

You can even attach one to the roof of your car for fantastic footage at fast speeds, notes London, England-based travel expert Zaeem Jafri. “My wife and I have even used an action camera while scuba diving in Bali,” Jafri says.

Essential features

Action cameras are typically packaged in a basic kit that includes the camera, a rechargeable battery, a micro SD card and a few accessories (see “Worthy extras”). These pocket-sized, lightweight devices are equipped with a fixed wide-angle lens to capture a broader view (some even have detachable lenses) and a mini screen to control settings and view recorded content. Several models offer advanced image stabilization and built-in Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connectivity to make transferring files to the internet (or other devices) easy.

Most action cameras shoot photos at 12 megapixels or higher resolution and record video in 4K or 5K quality at 30 to 240 frames per second (fps). Note: You need higher fps—at least 60 fps—to shoot slow-motion video. Common video formats include MP4 or HEVC; common photo formats include JPEG or RAW. Experts recommend

using a memory card with minimum write speeds of 80 to 100 Mbps and at least 64-gigabyte capacity.

Be aware that action cameras lack some of the zoom and low-light functionality, battery life and editing features of DSLRs and larger cameras with bigger sensors. You also have less artistic control over elements like focus and lighting, although some of these flaws can be addressed with the right editing software.

Shopping tips

It’s smart to research different models, read online reviews and compare specifications before buying an action camera, which can range from \$100 to more than \$500 for a basic bundle.

“Look for cameras that align with your requirements and offer good value for the investment,” says Ravin Goyal, a professional photographer in Los Angeles. He suggests considering factors such as image quality, video resolution, waterproofing, battery life and connectivity options.

An action camera might be just what you need to capture active sports video this winter. ■

Erik J. Martin is a freelance writer who lives near Chicago.



FROM LEFT: © ANATOLIY_GLEB / STOCK.ADOBE.COM; MEGAN LEES

Worthy extras

Action camera owners are advised to stock up on essential accessories compatible with their devices that can make it easier to get the fun footage they favour, including:

- A waterproof case, which protects a non-waterproof model from moisture damage (often \$50 and up).
- Various mounts and grips for photo and video versatility, such as chest mounts, helmet mounts, handlebar mounts, tripod mounts, suction cup mounts, handheld grips and selfie sticks (\$10 to \$50 each).
- Extra rechargeable batteries to ensure extended shooting time (\$20 to \$40 each).
- A portable charger so you can recharge your camera battery quickly on the go (\$60 and up).—EJM

Sharpen your skills

To create the finest-looking videos and photos possible, try these tips:

- Choose the appropriate shooting mode (such as HDR, time-lapse, burst mode, etc.).

- Select the highest resolution for video and photos.

- Turn on image stabilization, if available.

- Shoot photos in RAW (DMG/GPR) format for best image quality because doing so preserves

more image detail and colour.

- Lower your ISO setting in bright daylight; increase ISO in low-light conditions.

- Pick a wide field of view setting for recording expansive scenes.—EJM

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Product selections from Costco's Home Electronics buying team



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—*Sean Oliver*



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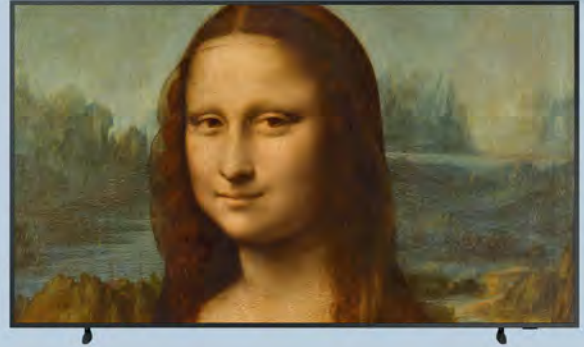
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Pass the panettone

Try an Italian holiday staple that's been popular for centuries

by JEN MADERA



© KAYLA HOWEY

A traditional offering at Italian Christmases, panettone (pronounced pa-neh-TOE-neh) is a cake or sweet bread studded with dried fruits, such as candied orange peel and sultanas. This signature holiday cake originated in Milan and is now popular worldwide. Panettone is cut vertically and served in slices, and can be accompanied by warm beverages, such as coffee or tea, or a sweet wine.

Legend has it

The origin of panettone is rife with mystery. According to Italoamericano.org, one legend claims a young man, in love with the baker's daughter, invented panettone and saved the bakery from bankruptcy, while another details a nun that cut a cross into the top of the bread, creating the traditional four-sectioned dome shape.

According to Italymagazine.com, another tale occurs at Ludovico Sforza's royal court at Christmastime in the 15th century, when the baker accidentally burned the dessert in the oven. Toni, a member of the kitchen staff,

offered a sweet bread he'd baked previously with leftover ingredients. The bread was well-received, and was named pan de Toni, or "Toni's bread"—which became panettone.

Bake it till you make it

Baking your own panettone is a challenging endeavour. It starts with the proofing—or proving—process, which involves resting the dough and allowing it to rise before baking. The dough used for panettone is acidic, similar to sourdough, and undergoes fermentation, giving panettone its characteristic fluffiness, softness, porous texture and a hint of sweetness.

Panettone is as versatile as it is delicious. Look for versions stuffed with fruit, laced with chocolate or topped with nuts or a glaze. Or, get creative and transform your panettone leftovers into one of the recipes on the next page.

With so many options available, pick up some panettone this holiday season and start your own legend. ■

Panettone French Toast with Orange Cream

ORANGE CREAM

250 mL (1 cup) heavy cream

1 mL (¼ tsp) orange zest

2 mL (½ tsp) vanilla extract

15 mL (1 Tbsp) sugar

680 g (1½ lbs) panettone

4 eggs

250 mL (1 cup) whole milk

10 mL (2 tsp) vanilla extract

1 mL (¼ tsp) almond extract

30 mL (2 Tbsp) honey

Butter as needed, for greasing the griddle

Maple syrup, for serving

Powdered sugar, for dusting

Prepare the cream: Using an electric mixer, beat the cream until soft peaks form. Add the orange zest, vanilla extract and sugar. Continue to whisk until stiff peaks form, being careful not to over-mix. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Preheat the oven to 180 C (350 F). Slice the panettone in half, then slice each half into 1.27-cm (½-inch) slices. In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs. Whisk in the milk, vanilla extract, almond extract and honey.

Heat a flat-top griddle or large sauté pan over medium heat. Once the griddle is hot, add enough butter to coat the surface completely. Dip each piece of bread into the egg mixture and place onto the griddle. Cook each side for 3 to 4 minutes, or until golden brown. Work in batches if all of the bread won't fit on the surface, adding more butter for each batch. Place the French toast onto a baking sheet and bake for a few minutes until done. Serve with orange cream, maple syrup and powdered sugar. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Kayla Howey (theoriginaldish.com)

Panettone Bread Pudding

2 L (8 cups) panettone, cubed

640 mL (2⅔ cups) whole milk,
room temperature

500 mL (2 cups) heavy cream,
room temperature

9 large eggs, room temperature

250 mL (1 cup) granulated sugar

2 mL (½ tsp) salt

15 mL (1 Tbsp) vanilla extract

125 mL (½ cup) unsalted butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 180 C (350 F). Spray a 23 x 33-cm (9 x 13-inch) casserole dish with cooking spray and set aside. Line a sheet pan with parchment, then place cubed panettone on it. Bake until just starting to brown, then set aside to cool.

In a large bowl, whisk the milk, cream, eggs, sugar, salt, vanilla and melted butter. Place the panettone in the casserole dish. Pour the milk mixture over the panettone. Press the panettone down into the milk mixture and let stand for 30 minutes. Bake for 90 minutes, or until puffed and set. Cover the casserole dish with foil after 45 minutes if needed to prevent over-browning. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

Tip: Top with cranberries and powdered sugar.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Traci Crossland and Caylie Crossland (bakerstable.net)



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COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of panettone can be found in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.ca.

Delightful entertaining

CRANBERRY-WALNUT STUFFED DATES SERVES 12

36 pitted **Medjool Dates**
180 mL (¾ cup) mascarpone cheese
60 mL (¼ cup) toasted walnuts,
finely chopped
60 mL (¼ cup) dried cranberries, chopped
15 mL (1 tbsp) honey
Finely minced chives for garnish, optional

In a bowl, combine mascarpone cheese, walnuts, cranberries, and honey. Stir until blended.

Split the **Medjool Dates** lengthwise and stuff with about 1 tbsp cheese mixture, and transfer to platter.

Cover the platter and refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 24 hours. Garnish with finely minced chives, optional. Serve chilled.

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**GRILLED KIRKLAND SIGNATURE
MEDIUM CHEDDAR FRENCH
TOAST WITH CARAMELISED
MAPLE APPLES**
SERVES 2

4 slices Kirkland Signature Medium Cheddar, about a ½ cm thick
2 apples, washed, cored and quartered
30 mL (2 tbsp) butter
125 mL (½ cup) maple syrup
2 eggs, beaten
125 mL (½ cup) milk
15 mL (1 tbsp) sugar
4 large slices rustic bread
15 mL (1 tbsp) butter

Heat a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat and melt the butter. Add the apples and cook for about 5 minutes until brown. Stir in the maple syrup, bring to a boil and remove from heat. Set aside.

In a rectangular dish, add eggs, milk and sugar, and mix. Soak the slices of bread in the mixture.

Heat a non-stick skillet and melt the butter. Cook slices of bread on both sides until golden brown. Divide the Kirkland Signature Medium Cheddar on two slices of bread and cover with the other two slices. Reduce heat and cook until the cheese melts slightly.

Remove from heat and garnish with maple apple mixture. Serve hot.



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TUNA POKE BOWL WITH SRIRACHA MAYONNAISE

SERVES 2

2 pouches of **DOM Reserve Tuna Poke**
250 mL (1 cup) of cooked sushi rice
310 mL (1 ¼ cups) of water
30 mL (2 tbsp) of rice vinegar (unseasoned)
15 mL (1 tbsp) of sugar
0.5 mL (⅛ tsp) of salt
½ cucumber, thinly sliced
2 radishes, thinly sliced
1 ripe avocado, diced
30 mL (2 tbsp) of mayonnaise
10 mL (2 tsp) of sriracha sauce
10 mL (2 tsp) of sesame seeds

Thaw the sealed **DOM Reserve Tuna Poke** portions in the refrigerator overnight.

In a small pot, whisk together the rice vinegar, salt, and sugar over medium-high heat until the mixture just starts to bubble and dissolve. Immediately remove the pot from the heat and transfer the vinegar to a small dish. Set aside to cool.

In a small dish, whisk together the mayonnaise and sriracha sauce. Set aside.

Place the cooked rice in a bowl and toss with half of the vinegar seasoning; add more to taste.

Portion the rice into serving bowls, add the sliced vegetables, the **DOM Reserve Tuna Poke**, drizzle with the sriracha mayonnaise and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Serve.



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EL MONTEREY CHICKEN & CHEESE ENCHILADA BAKE SERVES 5

20 El Monterey® Chicken & Cheese Taquitos, partially thawed
1 Large Can Enchilada Sauce
500 mL (2 cups) Mexican-blend shredded cheese

Preheat oven to 190 C (375 F).

Spread 20 El Monterey® Chicken & Cheese Taquitos evenly in a baking pan. Cover in enchilada sauce and cheese. Bake at 190 C (375 F) for 30 minutes.

Top with tomatoes, sliced olives, and green onions. Enjoy!



**EL MONTEREY CHICKEN
AND CHEESE TAQUITOS**
Itm. 393667

KOREAN-INSPIRED ANGUS BEEF BURGERS SERVES 4

4 Cardinal Angus Beef Burgers

1 L (4 cups) of chopped napa cabbage
60 mL (4 tbsp) kosher salt
60 mL (4 tbsp) of canola oil
40 mL (8 tsp) toasted sesame oil
250 mL (1 cup) gochujang
180 mL (¾ cup) of mayo
60 mL (4 tbsp) of chili crisp
4 scallions, thinly sliced (both white and green part)
4 hamburger buns

Place the chopped napa cabbage into a bowl and add 4 tbsp of salt and let sit for 10 minutes.

In a separate bowl add the mayo, the chili crisp and the scallions and stir. Then set to the side.

Once your cabbage has sat for 10 minutes, take a cheesecloth or clean dish towel and squeeze out as much moisture as possible. Then add cabbage to a dry bowl.

Heat a skillet to high, add 4 tbsp of canola oil. Once the pan has had time to come to temperature add your cabbage. Cook the cabbage until it starts to crisp up around the edges.

Add the gochujang and the toasted sesame oil and continue to cook. Stir the cabbage until all seasoning has been incorporated. Then remove from heat and into a separate bowl.

Cook the **Cardinal Angus Beef Burgers** on a skillet using medium high heat, 5 minutes per side until we reach an internal temperature of 71 C (160 F).

Toast the 4 buns and add 3 tbsp of chili crisp mayo to the bottom side of each bun, then top with the **Cardinal Angus Beef Burgers** and finish with the prepared cabbage. Enjoy!



**CARDINAL ROADHOUSE
ANGUS BEEF BURGERS**
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**PARTINI
BACON WRAPPED
JALAPENO PEPPERS**
Itm. 1446552

PERSIMMON COOKIES

36 COOKIES



250 mL (1 cup) **persimmon** pulp (3 persimmons)
 1 large egg
 500 mL (2 cups) all-purpose flour
 250 mL (1 cup) granulated sugar
 125 mL (½ cup) unsalted butter, at room temperature
 5 mL (1 tsp) baking soda
 2 mL (½ tsp) cinnamon
 2 mL (½ tsp) ground cloves
 2 mL (½ tsp) allspice
 2 mL (½ tsp) salt
 7 mL (1 ½ tsp) pure vanilla extract
 250 mL (1 cup) dried cranberries, optional
 500 mL (2 cups) confectioners' sugar
 45 mL (3 tbsp) fresh orange juice
 5 mL (1 tsp) orange zest

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F). Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, salt and spices. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, cream the butter with the sugar. Beat in **persimmon** pulp, egg, and vanilla. Gradually add the flour mixture into the wet ingredients until combined. Add the dried cranberries, optional.

Make 36 even dough balls and place them on baking sheets 2 inches apart. Bake for approximately 12-14 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets for five minutes.

For the orange glaze, in a bowl, mix the confectioners' sugar, orange juice, and zest together. Whisk until smooth. Dip each cookie tops into the glaze. Set cookies on a wire rack for the glaze to set.



PERSIMMONS
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Diwali delights

Celebrate the festival of lights with food, fireworks and fun

by PRIYA LAKSHMINARAYAN



Paal Payasam

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CASSANDRA BORYSZAK

Priya Lakshminarayan is a cookbook author and food blogger at Cookilicious.com.

Diwali, also known as Deepavali, means “festival of lights.” The name comes from the clay lamps lit to symbolize the victory of light over dark and good over evil. It is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains, as well as members of other religions, with great pomp and show.

The festival has several origins in Indian mythology. Northern India celebrates it to honour the return of Lord Rama after 14 years of exile. Southern India celebrates the occasion as the day Lord Krishna slew the demon Naraka.

Diwali happens in October or November, with celebrations typically lasting five days. This year, it occurs on November 12. While everyone has their own special way of celebrating the festival, here are a few themes:

- Temples, homes and offices are cleaned, sometimes renovated, decorated and brightly lit.
- New clothes and jewellery are purchased.
- On the first day, participants oil their hair and body, and take a bath, called an *abhyanga snanam*, before sunrise.
- Entryways to homes are decorated with *rangoli* (a design made out of coloured powder and sand) on the floor.

• *Diyas* (earthen lamps) are lit all around the house and lanterns are hung on balconies or porches.

• Fireworks add to the celebration.

The days leading to Diwali are usually spent preparing a variety of sweet and savoury treats to exchange with friends and family. The savoury treats, called *farsan* or *namkeen*, are usually fried and made in bulk to last a couple of months. They include *chivda* (snack mix with puffed rice and nuts), *mathri* (crackers), *chakli* (crunchy fried spiral-shaped snacks) and *kachori* (stuffed deep-fried snacks). Popular Diwali desserts, or *mithai*, mostly made with milks, sugar, nuts and ghee, include *gulab jamun* (similar to a doughnut hole dunked in syrup), *halwa* or *barfi* (fudge), *kheer* (pudding), *karanji* (fried filled flaky pastries) and *laddos* (small flour-based balls).

Entire families get together to celebrate Diwali with joy, cheer, festivities and a lot of good food. Try these two recipes that my family and I prepare in our household every Diwali. ■

Paal Payasam (Rice Pudding)

30 mL (2 Tbsp) ghee
8 almonds, sliced
8 cashews, chopped
8 pistachios, chopped
6 raisins
60 mL (¼ cup) basmati rice
125 mL (½ cup) sugar
500 mL (2 cups) whole milk
500 mL (2 cups) evaporated milk
1 mL (¼ tsp) cardamom powder
1 mL (¼ tsp) saffron,
plus more for serving
15 to 30 mL (1 to 2 Tbsp)
mixed nuts, chopped, for garnish

Turn on an Instant Pot to Sauté mode. Add ghee, then fry almonds, cashews, pistachios and raisins for 1 minute. Add raw rice to the pot and sauté for another 30 to 40 seconds. Add sugar, followed by milks. Bring to a boil, then press the Cancel button.

Close the Instant Pot with the lid. Position the valve in the seal position. Select Porridge mode and cook for 20 minutes.

When done and the Instant Pot beeps, let the pressure release naturally, then open the lid.

Mash some of the rice with the back of a ladle to make the pudding creamier.

Sprinkle with the cardamom powder and saffron and mix.

Serve warm or chilled. Garnish with chopped nuts and saffron before serving.

Makes 10 servings.

*Recipes and photos courtesy of
Priya Lakshminarayan (cookilicious.com)*

Cilantro Mathri

250 mL (1 cup) whole wheat flour
125 mL (½ cup) plain flour
30 mL (2 Tbsp) sesame seeds
30 mL (2 Tbsp) paprika
5 mL (1 tsp) turmeric powder
5 mL (1 tsp) salt
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
60 mL (¼ cup) yogourt
15 mL (1 Tbsp) vegetable oil,
plus much more for frying
60 mL (¼ cup) water, as needed

Put whole wheat flour, plain flour, sesame seeds, paprika, turmeric powder and salt in a mixing bowl. Add cilantro, followed by the yogourt. Mix all the ingredients together. Knead into a soft dough, adding oil and water as required.

Make small balls of the dough, then flatten each ball with a rolling pin to 0.5-cm (¼-inch) thickness. Prick all over with a fork. Using a biscuit cutter, cut out desired shapes.

Heat 2.5 cm (1 inch) to 5 cm (2 inch) of oil in a deep frying pan, over medium heat. Fry dough in batches until both sides are a light golden brown and the mathri float on top, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove them carefully and place on a paper towel to soak up the excess oil. Cool completely before serving or storing. As crackers cool, they will get crispier and become slightly dark in colour. Makes 10 servings.



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COSTCO CONNECTION

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Making connections

Social connections are essential for physical and mental health

by ANJALI RAMESHBABU



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Anjali Rameshbabu, Ph.D., is a health-social psychologist and the founder of Health2Wellbeing.com, which provides scientific guidance for healthy living and social connectedness.

COSTCO CONNECTION

A trip to your local Costco warehouse can be a great way to connect with a loved one.

According to a growing number of studies, loneliness is becoming a global concern, impacting up to a third of the world's population. The feeling of loneliness comes from wanting social connection in one's life but not having it. Feeling socially connected means having relationships in our life we can rely on to give us a sense of belonging, share the good times and bad, and feel secure, loved, accepted and valued. We need human connection like we need clean air, running water and shelter.

While we live in a hyperconnected world, studies report that many people feel less connected on a personal level.

So, what can we do to become more meaningfully connected with the people in our lives? The following steps may seem simple, but they can have a significant positive impact.

Swap phones for people

We tend to spend too much time on our phones. So, put it down and look up and around you. Pay attention to things outside your device. Take a moment and think. Is there at least one person in your life you haven't talked to in awhile or could check in with? Pick up your phone only if that person is not within walking distance, and use it to either make a plan to get together or have a proper conversation with that person.

Do mundane things together

Running errands can feel like a drag, but getting groceries, cooking, doing the dishes, picking up mail or cleaning the house can feel quicker when you're chatting with someone.

If you live with family or roommates, make mundane activities more fun by doing them together. Make it a priority to have meals together, at least once a day. (If you live in a busy environment and doing errands is your chance to get a break from a chaotic day, that's OK too.)



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Plan a daily walk with a companion

Research consistently shows that people who walk regularly are more likely to be healthy, feel well emotionally and even experience more creativity. Walking with a companion means sharing these positive effects with another person. New to the area or living alone? Make plans for a daily walk with a neighbour.

Get involved in your community

Getting involved in your community doesn't have to mean organizing a fundraiser or neighbourhood meetings. You can engage in simple yet practical ways

to stay connected. For example, when you're outside, make eye contact with a passerby and say hello. Take a minute to check in with your neighbour if you are both in your front yards or driveways. Getting to know people in your area will help you stay connected in your neighbourhood and develop a greater sense of belonging.

Work is your community too

We spend many of our waking hours working, so why not build relationships with co-workers who share your hobbies and interests? Stay connected in healthy ways by making plans for a hike, a visit to the local farmers market or a meal together. If you're a manager or business owner, allow time for your employees to briefly connect with their co-workers every day and maybe even join in, but without monitoring or micromanaging. This will help your employees feel less stressed, more connected and engaged at work, and more productive.

No matter who we are, where we come from or what our daily experiences are, we all benefit from positive human connection. Find small yet meaningful ways to stay connected. ■



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A minister of loneliness?

The loneliness epidemic has spurred governments across the world to drive action at the highest level. The UK appointed the world's first minister to address loneliness in 2018 and Japan followed suit in 2021. Such a commitment can take shape in various ways. For example, the UK launched a national strategy geared toward building awareness, creating multi-sector partnerships and funding projects aimed at promoting social connections within communities. In Canada, the Canadian Alliance for Social Connection and Health (casch.org) leads scientific and policy action to promote social connection.—AR

Connecting well

Research shows that loneliness can negatively impact our physical health, mental health and well-being. Having positive

social connections can enrich our lives, make us resilient and keep us well. Think of social connectedness as a healthy behaviour that's part of your lifestyle. The Canadian Alliance for

Social Connection and Health developed the GenWell Project Human Connection Movement to increase social connection. Learn more at Genwellproject.org.—AR

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*Adriana J. van Ballegooyen, Stefan Pilz, Andreas Tomaschitz, Martin R. Gröbler, Nicolas Verheyen. The Synergistic Interplay between Vitamins D and K for Bone and Cardiovascular Health: A Narrative Review. *Int J Endocrinol*. 2017. Katarzyna Maresz. Proper Calcium Use: Vitamin K2 as a Promoter of Bone and Cardiovascular Health: *Integrative Medicine: A Clinician's Journal*. 2015 Feb; 14(1): 34–39

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Spin doctoring

A look at the causes and treatments of vertigo

by JANE DOUCET



COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of over-the-counter medications that may help with vertigo are available in most Costco warehouses and at Costco.ca.

Twenty years ago, when Costco member Theresa Babb awoke on a workday morning, the room started to spin when she sat up in bed. Feeling nauseous, the then 43-year-old resident of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, lay back down, which worsened the spinning sensation. Instead of driving her to work, Babb's husband took her to the hospital, where she was given a shot of something (she can't recall what) that made her feel better. After she got home, she went back to sleep—but when she tried to sit up again, the spinning returned.

A friend who happened to be a neurologist figured Babb was experiencing vertigo. An appointment with a vestibular rehabilitation physiotherapist at the Atlantic Balance and Dizziness Centre in Dartmouth confirmed benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, or BPPV.

"It was a relief to get a diagnosis, because I had to sleep sitting up, and I couldn't drive," says Babb. "It was extremely debilitating." It took about

three weeks of treatment—a series of positional head movements performed by a physiotherapist that Babb was taught to do at home—to stabilize the dizziness so she could resume normal activities.

Kinds of vertigo

Costco member Kim Dao, an assistant professor at Tufts University School of Medicine, has treated many vertigo patients. A board-certified clinical specialist in neurologic physical therapy, she says that up to 40% of adults will experience some form of vertigo-related dizziness.

Women are three times more likely than men to experience vertigo. "That could be hormonal or due to changes in bone structure, because BPPV, the most common type, is starting to be linked to osteoporosis," says Dao. "We know a lot about vertigo, but there's always more to learn through research."

In addition to BPPV, there are other types of vertigo, including labyrinthitis, viral, migraine and Ménière's disease. "Even if a vestibular physical therapist



isn't sure of a diagnosis if it isn't BPPV, the treatment is similar," says Dao. "Some strokes can present purely with vertigo, so during our assessment, we ask questions to rule out stroke. If we think a patient needs further attention beyond what we can provide, we refer them to urgent medical care."

A look at the causes

The causes for vertigo vary. For example, BPPV occurs when calcium carbonate crystals that are normally embedded in gel in the inner ear canals become dislodged and move into one or more of the three fluid-filled semi-circular canals, where they are not

supposed to be. Labyrinthitis is usually caused by the common cold or flu, which spreads to the innermost part of the ear. And Ménière's disease is a recurrent attack due to fluid imbalances in the inner ear (a drug called betahistine taken during an attack, along with a low-salt diet, can improve Ménière's symptoms).

"With any type of vertigo, brain signals need to be rewired to correct the error signal to decrease the dizziness," says Dao. A weakened vestibular system can be improved through eye-strengthening exercises and closed-eye balance postures. "These adaptation exercises help strengthen the whole vestibular system."

Since Babb's first BPPV episode, she has experienced one other as severe, plus several milder episodes. "I can manage the mild ones on my own, but when it's severe, I know where to go for help," she says. For someone newly diagnosed with vertigo, she says this: "Don't think this is going to be your life from now on. You will recover from it, and you'll learn how to manage it." Dao echoes Babb's hopeful note: "Physical therapists can treat it quickly and have an immediate impact. There's a way out, and it can be as simple as one visit to get the positional manoeuvres done." ■

Jane Doucet is a Halifax-based journalist and author.



FROM LEFT: © ANDREY POPOV; YTEMHA34 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

STROKE AWARENESS

Certain types of strokes are often missed because symptoms of vertigo or dizziness can be misattributed to ear conditions. According to an article in the *Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine*, several multi-centre studies were conducted at 13 Canadian hospital emergency rooms over 11 years. They enrolled patients who were diagnosed with a transient ischemic attack (a stroke that lasts only a few minutes) and compared them to patients with isolated dizziness.

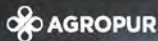
Only 0.8% of patients with isolated dizziness had a stroke within 90 days, compared to 2.9% of those presenting with neurological symptoms. Because such a high number of emergency room patients with dizziness do not have a stroke, properly diagnosing a stroke in these cases is a challenge.—JD

Concussion concern

"Concussion from a sport, or any trauma to the head, such as from a car accident, can dislodge calcium carbonate crystals and cause vertigo,"

says neurologic physical therapist Kim Dao. Feeling dizzy, lightheaded or like the room is spinning can happen after a concussion. These sensations can be caused by the brain injury, or from

changes in blood pressure or problems with vision or the inner ear. Visit a doctor for possible concussion. They may refer you to a physical therapist specializing in vestibular rehabilitation.—JD



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Geriatric diabetes

Aging well with this health condition

by LAWRENCE VARGA
and JOSEPH HANNA



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Lawrence Varga, B.Sc.Pharm., is assistant vice president of Costco Pharmacy.

Joseph Hanna, B.Sc.Pharm., CDE, BCGP, director of Costco Pharmacy, contributed to this column.

You've made it to your golden years, and you now qualify for the senior discount at most places along with government drug benefits.

Growing older may have its own set of health challenges, including geriatric diabetes. Statistically, more than a quarter of all seniors have been diagnosed with diabetes, a disease that can take an average of a decade off of a lifespan. Fortunately, older adults can overcome the challenges of this disease with the help of their health care team, including their Costco pharmacist, family and friends.

Common symptoms of diabetes, such as increased thirst and urination, may not be present in older adults. Instead, they may experience dry mouth, dry eyes and confusion.

Some of the common diabetes drugs like metformin and a class called sulfonylureas—such as glyburide—can cause more problems than they prevent in the elderly, whose livers or kidneys may not be working as well as when they were younger, and are often avoided. Depending on the severity of the impairment of those organs, sulfonylureas can result in severe hypoglycemia (blood sugars that are too low) and subsequent dizziness, fainting and falls.

Those with additional medical conditions, such as difficulty walking and performing basic activities of daily living, fall onto the frailty scale, where a more

cautious approach to treating diabetes is taken. While we aim for certain blood sugar and A1C results, which are similar to a three month-average of blood sugars in those with diabetes, we individualize these targets and allow higher levels for those who are frailer to prevent complications.

Seniors with cognitive difficulties will need help with all the monitoring that comes with diabetes, such as a blood glucose monitoring or taking a complex regimen of medications, which a Costco pharmacist can assist with through the use of a compliance pack that shows photos of the medication and organizes them by what time they should be taken. Due to lack of sensation in the nerves of the feet, another key step in monitoring the health of people with diabetes is conducting regular foot inspections to look for signs of injury, infections or ulcers.

On a positive note, newer, long-acting insulins have helped those with diabetes control their sugars better and with less side effects of hypoglycemia.

You may have heard the expression that growing old is not for the faint of heart, but this additional bit of knowledge may help you or your loved ones be better prepared to work with resources to manage this disease. ■

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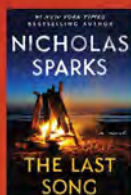
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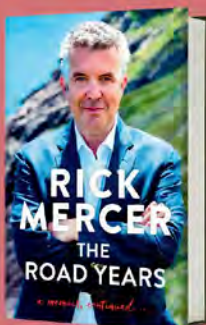
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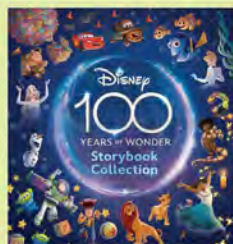
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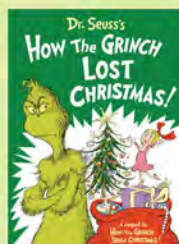
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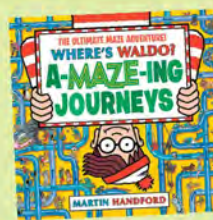
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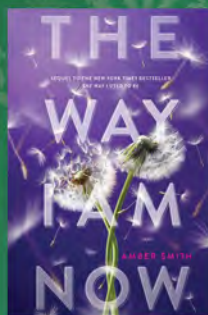
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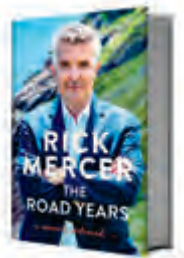
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Road show

Rick Mercer's second memoir goes behind the scenes

by KRISTI YORK



Rick Mercer

© KARA O'KEEFE

When it comes to Canada, Rick Mercer has seen it all.

That's because the comedian, author and Costco member spent 15 years travelling across the nation for his CBC-TV show, *The Mercer Report*. He provides an inside look at these unique experiences in his latest book, *The Road Years*.

The book picks up where Mercer's first memoir, *Talking to Canadians*, left off. *The Road Years* begins in 2004 with Mercer, a proud native of Newfoundland and Labrador, launching a new weekly show with his executive producer and partner Gerald Lunz. Their mission was to create, as Mercer puts it, "the most unapologetically Canadian TV show ever." The result, of course, was *The Mercer Report*.

For 255 episodes, Mercer demonstrated his quick wit and willingness to try anything. He attempted numerous sports alongside Olympians, bungee-jumped into a canyon and allowed a giant swarm of bees to crawl up his neck.

"There were many segments that we described as 'host in peril' or 'host in discomfort,'" Mercer recalls in a phone interview from his home in Toronto. "Still,

I felt it was my job to go for it—to strap on the skis and go down the hill. I always gave 100%, which was often not nearly enough."

Mercer's trademark humour and self-deprecating style are on display as he describes his experiences interviewing celebrities and everyday Canadians. "We had guests who were musicians, athletes and prime ministers, but the real rock stars of our show were oyster farmers, recycling plant workers and local high school students," he says.

The book never wavers from Mercer's desire to honour all things Canadian. "The philosophy behind *The Mercer Report* was to celebrate every town, every province, every territory," he explains. "It was a great privilege, and I loved doing it."

These days, Mercer still performs stand-up comedy and is pondering the topic for his next book. "I enjoy writing, and it's very satisfying to have completed two memoirs," he says. "Next, though, I'd like to write about someone who's not me." ■

Kristi York is a freelance writer in Waterloo, Ontario.

BOOK PICK

BOOK *No Brainer*

AUTHOR Jeff Kinney

In *No Brainer*, book 18 in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series from bestselling author Jeff Kinney, it's up to Greg to save his school when the town threatens to close the crumbling building.

Middle school hasn't been a joyride for Greg, so he's not too broken up about the closure. But when Greg realizes it means attending a different school than his best friend, Rowley, Greg changes his tune. Will he be able to save it?

Intended for readers ages 8 to 12.

—Stephanie E. Ponder



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COSTCO CONNECTION

To learn more about Primus and a variety of other services offered at Costco, visit [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca) and click on "Services."

Picture it: Your daughter is streaming her favourite TV show in her bedroom, your son is gaming in the family room and you are needing to attend a virtual meeting in your home office. Whether it's for work or play, Primus internet service can equip a home with the tools to improve internet speed, increase Wi-Fi connectivity and provide crystal-clear audio with less video freeze-up.

Primus' high-speed internet service offers leading-edge Wi-Fi technology at competitive prices that can provide the performance necessary to run everyday home smart devices such as thermostats, doorbells and alarm systems.

"The demand for multiple users at the same time has made it imperative that homeowners have the connectivity they need," says Lawrence Robins, channel partnership

manager for Primus. "Our goal is to offer Costco members across Canada a reliable choice for quality internet at a great value."

With Primus internet service, the home becomes the central hub where the data is shared between the physical devices and the user who controls them via a mobile app or website.

For areas in your home where the Wi-Fi signal could use a boost, the Primus X50 Wi-Fi pod system works in tandem with the online network. The pods can be tucked away in locations throughout the home where the computer signal is the weakest. The pods boost the signal in hard-to-reach locations and eliminate Wi-Fi dead zones so everyone can enjoy home entertainment simultaneously. ■

Member savings

Primus offers unlimited affordable internet for your home or your business, and members who sign up for the

internet service receive a Primus X50 Wi-Fi pod system and modem. Primus also offers long-distance plans and exclusive calling features for home phones.

For more information about the available plans for Costco members, or to customize a plan, visit [Primus.ca/connection](https://www.primus.ca/connection).



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FOR SCHEDULES AND DESCRIPTIONS

Go to Costco.ca and search “Special Events.” Or, from the Costco mobile app, go to “Warehouse Locator” and choose a warehouse for events info.

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JEN NG / JEN CREATIVE

TIMING IS KEY

Yolanda Pop and Linda Montalbano, founders of leolam, suggest waiting to send a gift to a grieving person. “It’s within that quiet time in the weeks and the months that follow a loss when support and acknowledgement can mean so much to let them know you are thinking of them,” says Pop. This thoughtfulness will speak volumes. “Showing you care about someone in the most difficult time is the most important thing you can do,” Montalbano adds.—JM



A gift of support

Many people wonder what gift to buy for a loved one who is grieving or going through an illness. This is the question Costco members Yolanda Pop and Linda Montalbano sought to answer when they created the brand leolam, supplying carefully crafted gifts for condolences and illness. “Following the loss of both my parents (the name leolam is named after my father, Leo, and

mother, Lammy), I noticed the discomfort people experienced with what to say, do or give,” Pop says.

According to Pop and Montalbano, every gift purchased from Leolam.ca—right down to the packaging—is curated to provide the recipient with connection and support. Each gift includes a heartfelt sentiment card and a small marbled heart. “Customers who have received a leolam gift are so touched and moved, often carrying the heart with them,” says Montalbano.

—Jen Madera

Clockwise from top: Linda Montalbano, left, and Yolanda Pop; Little Wing Condolence Gift Box, unpackaged and packaged.

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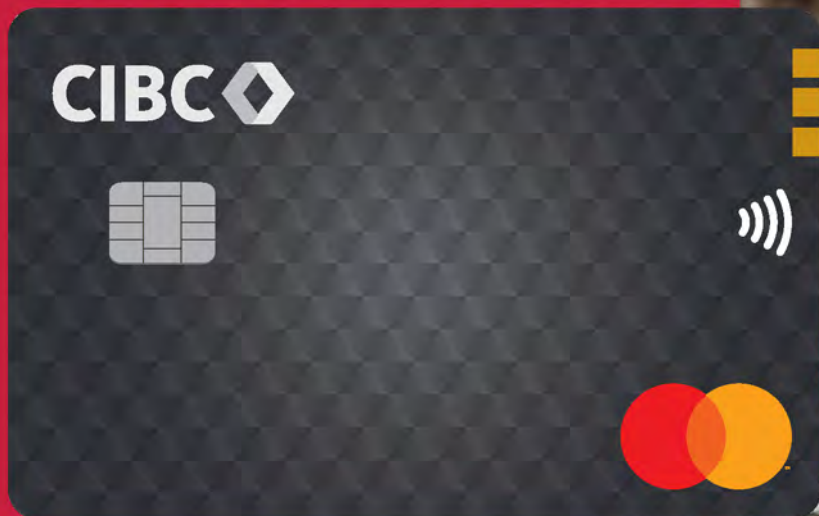
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