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On the cover:

*Travaasa Hāna, Maui, Hawaii*

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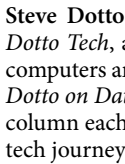
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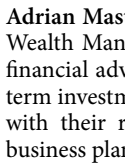
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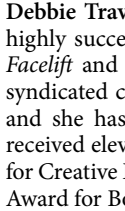
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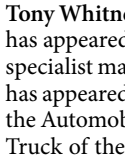
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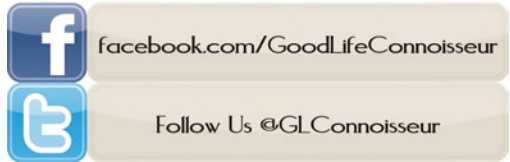
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Our journeys tend to require many hours of flight time, often with connections that require hanging around airports for an unpleasant amount of time. And with Homeland Security being as they are, air travel is certainly no longer fun. So the Maui trip was great, a direct flight, not too long and we were able to deal with Homeland Security prior to departure, with nothing to do at arrival but pick up our bags. Wow, what a treat!

As for Maui itself, that was a treat as well. The people were hospitable. The terrain is very easy on the eye. There's a lot to do. It's hard to come up with something to complain about other than having not made it there sooner. Just might have to go back again.

I want to mention again that we will be having our second annual art auction and expect you to participate in voting for your favourite artist. Plus, bidding in the auction itself will certainly benefit a good cause.


Next up on the agenda is an unusual trip for us—we're going to take a cruise through the Caribbean. Generally, my enthusiasm for cruises is modest at best. However, we are going on a Silversea cruise. Rather than a ship with thousands of passengers, this is a ship with only a few hundred passengers—all of whom have been promised they will be pampered. Each cabin actually comes with a butler. The challenge will be deciding how to keep him occupied.


As usual, I would suggest filling in the reservation form opposite to ensure getting a look inside the ship. Or visit us online at [www.goodlifeconnoisseur.com](http://www.goodlifeconnoisseur.com) to order your free digital subscription.

Compliments or criticisms are always welcome.

Terry Tremaine  
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# Maui

## The Magic Isle

By Terry Tremaine

Photos by Connie Ekelund

Are you feeling a little overburdened by the current economic environment? Tired of headlines predicting impending doom!? Looking for a trouble-free getaway with lots of creature comforts and no stress? Well, let me suggest Maui. It is, after all, all about the “good life.” Maui is the second largest of the Hawaiian Islands, with a laid-back population of only 150,000. Even getting there is relatively easy, with many direct flights.

After arriving at Kahului airport, we headed south in our rented, bright red Mustang (Hawaii 5-0 style) for about thirty minutes to reach the small community of Wailea. The heart of the community is the one-and-a-half-mile long coastal walkway connecting a few luxury resorts and the local shopping area.

At the southern end is the Fairmont Kea Lani. This luxury resort, with its own sandy beach, features one bedroom suites and two- and three-bedroom villas, all recently updated through a multi-million dollar renovation. The suites are a surprising 840 square feet, with amenities in keeping with their grandeur. Balconies face out to the water with the crescent-shaped island of Molonki first in sight and the larger island of Kahoolawe just behind. From November through April humpback whales can be viewed from the comfort of your lounge chair as they return to these waters to mate, give birth and nurse their young.

Dining at the resort is a pleasure with five restaurants to choose from, with the signature acclaimed restaurant Ko reopening in February after its own renovation. Currently, Executive Chef Tylun Pang’s Hawaiiana cuisine is featured in the Kea Lani Restaurant. We were treated to a superb selection of items from the menu while dining poolside in our own private pavilion with torches augmenting the starlit evening.

Naturally there is an excellent spa, featuring treatments that incorporate unique Hawaiian elements such as the Lomi Lomi massage, utilizing traditional forearm strokes and essential oils from the local flora and fauna. Where did the stress go?





Nearby is the Wailea Golf Course, featuring three different courses. The original Old Blue was apparently the first thing ever built in Wailea, the Emerald is for players just looking for fun and Gold for those wanting to be challenged. All come with great views. Plus, with great golf weather year-round, the course is rated as one of the best in the United States and likely the best in Hawaii. It's also a "green" golf club watered with brackish, non-potable water controlled by a system of computers and radio transmitters to reduce the water usage.

Shopping is about mid-way along the coastal walkway at The Shops at Wailea. Home to some seventy retailers, including a surprisingly large number of art galleries featuring internationally recognized artists, shoppers can find everything from luxury brand goods to a deli sandwich and imported wine.

*"...with great golf weather year-round,  
the course is rated as one of the best in the  
United States and likely the best in Hawaii."*

Wailea appears to be in a lush area, but is actually situated on the dry, windward side of Haleakala, the volcanic mountain which is the foundation of Maui. The easiest way to understand the geography is through a tour with Blue Hawaiian Helicopters. From the air, visitors are able to see the large, dry, desert-like areas near to Wailea contrasting with the lush rainforests of the eastern side. Not only will your pilot bring you up front and centre with the numerous waterfalls found flowing through the rain forest, but as well we landed on a flat high point overlooking Tedeschi Vineyards—the only winery on Maui. While stretching our legs, the pilot poured us all a glass of the sparkling pineapple wine produced at the winery. The contrasting fauna of the island is certainly put in perspective when there is a bird's eye view.



From Wailea we drove to Hāna on the eastern tip of Maui. Considering the size of the island, that sounds simple enough—there being only two routes. However, the more southern one is not suggested for rental vehicles, and while the northern route is just 52 miles, with gorgeous views of beaches, lookouts, and stunning scenery, there are also some 600 curves and more than 50 bridges. It is no secret; the highway is tough to navigate. Many of the curves, one guess was 220, are hairpin, with a bridge positioned at the point. To add to the challenge, the bridges tend to be one-lane wide, with drivers having to wait their turn—presuming they are able to see the approaching car around the point. Further, many sections of the highway, maybe better described as just a road, are only a car-and-a-half wide; often at stretches where cars are about to face each other with no clear visibility prior.

Tourists, for obvious reasons, tend to drive the route very cautiously, while stopping frequently to enjoy the spectacular views. Locals being familiar with the route from frequent journeys look for the tourists to pull to the side to allow them to make better time. I have to admit, on the return trip I took on the challenge of keeping up with one of the locals; I'll blame it on the red Mustang, and made it in just an hour-and-a-half.





## TRAVEL & RESORTS



Hāna is a small town in what's considered to be one of Hawaii's last unspoiled frontiers. According to author James Michener, its Hamoa beach is the nicest in the world. Travaasa Hāna is the principal resort with a long history; originally opened as a luxury resort in 1946, it has changed hands numerous times, with the current owners gaining the property just recently. They have under taken to reposition the experience as an all-inclusive luxury resort in the tradition of premium properties found in the south Pacific.

Not only are the a la carte meals, presented by attentive servers in the comfortable open-air restaurant, included along with gratuities, so too are daily spa treatments in the stand alone facility. There is a fitness centre with its own outdoor pool, well removed from the main pool. Plus, there are a host of activities available for those wishing to participate, everything from Pilates on a wooden platform under a canopy provided by the branches of a massive banyan tree, through Hawaiian crafts to coastal horse-back riding and, in the evening, traditional Fire Bowl talks.

Our accommodation was a beachside villa with full amenities and, thankfully, no television to conflict with the sound of the waves landing nearby. It was a treat to be able to watch the sun rise over the water in front of us. Travaasa Hāna is most definitely a stress-free and relaxing environment which will likely have you thinking of when you'll next be able to return.

Nearby is the Kahanu Garden, a tropical botanical garden with a collection of Hawaiian and introduced plants. When the Polynesians arrived on the island, they brought with them plants used for various practical purposes from throughout the Pacific, including Macadamias. A tour of the property will introduce plants used for food, building, clothing, medicine and religion. However, the most significant element in the park is the Pi'ianihale Heiau, likely the greatest engineering and construction feat in all of Polynesia. This sacred lava-stone temple dates back to the fourteenth century and is named for the ruling Pi'ianihale family. It is the size of two football fields and fifty feet high. Visitors are asked to provide the respect due any religious structure.

About ten miles beyond Hāna is Haleakala National Park. There are some twenty-seven miles of trails throughout the park. Haleakala rises to over ten thousand feet, so hiking can be strenuous combined with sudden changes in the weather due the height variation. The changes in terrain are remarkable.



# Maui

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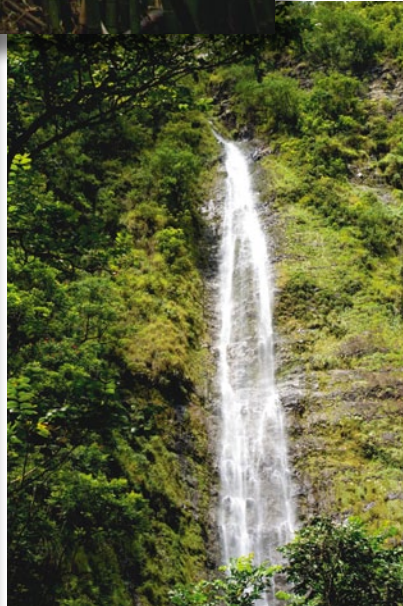
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We followed the Pipiwai Trail from the Pools at Ohe'o up to the Waimoku Falls. This is considered one of the better hikes on Maui. The two-mile-long trail winds up through changing fauna to the four-hundred-foot waterfall, which cascades down a sheer lava rock into a small pool. The hike will take anywhere from three to five hours. About two thirds of the way up, the trail passes through a bamboo jungle. If you've never been through bamboo before, this is a remarkable experience, particularly when there is a breeze and the bamboo stalks bang against one another, creating an unusual racket due to the hollow centres of the stalks.



After our sojourn in Hāna we returned to Wailea, stopping along the way at the iconic Mama's Fishhouse near Lower Pa'ia. Maui's first fresh fish restaurant opened in 1973. Set in a coconut grove on a sandy beach, the restaurant is renowned for its food preparation, incorporating the best of Hawaii. The menu not only details how each species of fish is prepared, but also names the fisherman who caught it—leaving little doubt as to its freshness. We enjoyed the creative cuisine immensely. There is also an inn on the property with beachside cottages and suites.



Back in Wailea, we stayed at the luxurious Wailea Beach Villas situated on the coastal walkway near to the Shops at Wailea. The property comprises ninety-eight penthouses and villas. Each is separately owned and made available through a rental pool when not occupied. Our two bedroom unit was one of the smaller at only nineteen hundred square feet. Elegantly decorated, it came fully equipped in all respects, particularly the kitchen with European state-of-the-art appliances. This property would be ideal for longer stays.

Though all are personal residences, the feeling is of a resort with full concierge service, two pools and Jacuzzis with pool attendants. There is an excellent fitness centre. Plus, there is complimentary wireless Internet. It would be very easy to just move in and consider not ever leaving.

The high point of our stay was a visit from Chef Rodger Shortell, who prepared dinner for us one evening. Chef "Raja" is self-taught and most passionate about his food preparation. He takes exceptional pride in using the freshest of ingredients, often from his own property. It's great fun to pull up a stool to the central work counter and have a glass of wine while bantering with the chef, who is busy preparing a culinary delight. We enjoyed both the company and the food.





## TRAVEL & RESORTS



A convenient five minutes along the coastal walkway from the Villas is the Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea. We enjoyed dinner at Ferraro's, one of their three restaurants. This open-air restaurant has a beachfront setting and features fresh seafood done to the high standards expected of a Four Seasons. We quite enjoyed a lobster dish utilizing North Atlantic lobster. To our surprise, we learned there is a fish farm on Maui where live lobsters and other seafood are shipped to be rejuvenated after the long flight prior to being distributed to the restaurants on the island.

At the end of our visit, we returned to the Fairmont Kea Lani and one of their beachfront villas. These spacious two-storey units are set apart from the rest of the resort. They are fully equipped for long stays and have their own plunge pools and barbeque grill. Chef Tylun Pang, mentioned earlier, was good enough to visit, and, utilizing the grill, prepared an extraordinary lunch on our private patio. He takes pride in utilizing local produce and culinary style to prepare truly remarkable meals.



Maui for us was a culinary delight, with the establishments mentioned all going to great effort to use local, fresh ingredients. There is also a significant effort on the part of the various properties to undertake "green" practices, incorporating individually-organized recycling programs. Maui residents are proud of their island. One young couple we met came to Maui to get married, and enjoyed the island so much they returned shortly thereafter to live permanently.

Whenever we travel to warm climates, we're always looking to see if "this" could be the place we might return during the winter months in Vancouver, when the days are short and filled with rain. Maui just might be the place. ■

### Connoisseur's Choice in Maui

Maui Visitors Bureau [www.visitmaui.com](http://www.visitmaui.com)  
 The Fairmont Kea Lani, Maui [www.fairmont.com/kealani](http://www.fairmont.com/kealani)  
 Travaasa Hāna [hana@travaasa.com](http://hana@travaasa.com)  
 Wailea Beach Villas [www.waileabeachvillasresort.com](http://www.waileabeachvillasresort.com)  
 Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea [www.fourseasons.com/maui](http://www.fourseasons.com/maui)  
 Mama's Fishhouse [www.mamasfishhouse.com](http://www.mamasfishhouse.com)  
 Private Chef Raja [www.feastonthebeach.com](http://www.feastonthebeach.com)  
 Blue Hawaiian Helicopter [www.bluehawaiian.com](http://www.bluehawaiian.com)  
 Wailea Golf Resort [www.waileagolf.com](http://www.waileagolf.com)

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# Lobster Tempura

By Executive Chef Tylun Pang

Legendary Executive Chef at The Fairmont Kea Lani, Chef Tylun Pang leads the culinary masterpiece of Kō restaurant, the only place on Maui to offer plantation era-inspired cuisine. Throughout the islands, many recognize Chef Pang as being part of an esteemed group of local chefs to develop and coin Hawaiiana Cuisine. But, on Maui, Chef Pang's dedication to local agriculture, devotion to the island's culinary academy, and unwavering commitment to perpetuating Hawaiian culture, is what sets him apart.

On the island of Maui, "Farm to Table" is not just a trend; it's a way of life. Chef Pang has been close friends with many of the island's farmers for decades. Sourcing food directly from local farmers, fishermen and ranchers pays off two-fold. Not only does he utilize the freshest ingredients, but he also supports the island's agriculture industry to ensure that fresh food continues to be available for the next generation of Maui chefs. His deep understanding of island food also makes for the best-tasting ingredients.

"In Lahaina and Kihei, for example, mangoes are sweetest due to the dryer weather; local fishermen know it's going to be moi season when mango flowers are abundant on the tree; and Hāna fishermen catch some of the best ahi," says Chef Pang. At Kō restaurant, Chef Pang ensures that over 90 percent of produce is sourced from local farmers across the island.

In 2010, Chef Pang published his award-winning cookbook, entitled *What Maui Likes to Eat*. Now sold both across the island and nationwide, Chef Pang donates 100 percent of the book's proceeds to the Maui Culinary Academy for supplies, scholarships and books. He also sits on the academy's advisory board and mentors new graduates each year. If one were to walk into the kitchen at Kō, they would likely run into at least nine graduates from the Maui Culinary Academy. Not just dedicated and driven, Pang recognizes that these local graduates also have a strong knowledge base of how to cook Maui cuisine using the island's unique ingredients.

"A Hawai'i kitchen represents the ethnic composition of the island," says Chef Pang. "Therefore, my kitchen staff are some of my best teachers."

Chef Tylun Pang's experience in the culinary world is unmatched. His career has brought him to Asia, South America and across the United States. He has participated in the Best Hotel Chefs of America Series at the James Beard House in Manhattan. His culinary genius is recognized throughout the state of Hawaii. Yet Chef Pang's gracious and humble personality makes him less of a celebrity, and much more of a mentor to students, an advocate for farmers, a committed community member, and a very, very good chef. ■

## Preparation

### Yields 4 servings

Sweet cold-water lobster tails make this lobster tempura dish special. I prefer Tristan lobster tails. Their shells are thin and the meat is exceptionally sweet. You can find these tails at specialty fishmongers. They are harvested in Tristan, the most remote inhabited (barely) island in the world, located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Its rock lobster fishery practices sustainable aquaculture, for which it has received many awards.

Mix up all the dipping sauces. They are all very easy. All you need to do is measure the ingredients into three small bowls and mix. If you think your family or guests might want more sauce, you can double or triple the quantities.

If frozen, defrost the lobster tails in the refrigerator for best results.

### Ingredients:

- 8 (3- to 4-ounce) Tristan lobster tails, unfrozen
- Oil for deep-frying

### For the batter:

- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cornstarch
- ½ tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup ice-cold water (adjust water if thinner batter desired)

### For the grapefruit soy sauce:

- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon grapefruit juice

### For the pineapple sweet chili sauce:

- 2 tablespoons sweet Thai chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh pineapple

### For the garnish (optional):

- 24 steamed asparagus spears



## CULINARY DELIGHTS



### Method:

1. Split the lobster tails in half lengthwise. Gently pull lobster meat from shell, leaving the meat attached to the tail end of the shell.
2. Put all the dry ingredients (flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt) for the batter in a bowl and whisk them together. Gradually add the water, whisking the batter as you pour. Don't feel that you need to add all the water; if the batter looks fine to you, stop pouring. Try not to over-mix the batter. That would release the gluten in the flour and make the tempura coating tough and chewy.
3. Heat the oil in your deep-fryer or deep saucepot to 350 degrees (a frying thermometer would help).
4. Hold a lobster tail by the shell and dip the dangling tail meat into the batter then into the hot oil. Fry the lobster until it is crisp, or about 1½ to 2 minutes.
5. Drain on paper towels. Repeat until all the lobster tails are cooked.

We like to leave the tails on, as they turn red when cooked and make a great presentation.

### Presentation:

Serve the lobster with two dipping sauces on the side. Each tail can be garnished with three asparagus spears.

### Executive Chef Pang's Quick Tips:

- Good cooking is about being precise and paying attention to the details—even for the simplest of dishes.
- Buy local and sustainably grown ingredients. It's the right thing to do for the environment and local economy—not to mention it tastes better!
- Cooking should always be spontaneous and fun.



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# Bubbles & Sparkling Wine

By James Cluer, MW

You can picture it. A drop-dead gorgeous girl is holding court at a dinner party. She begins her spiel with a story about drinking Champagne at The Four Seasons with Gianni, who you would ADORE. Right on cue, she flicks her hair. While she continues her story, I start to drift off. I wonder if it really was Champagne that she was drinking, and if she ended up shagging Gianni.

Chances are that it was Prosecco, and Gianni went home with nothing but the bill. But the point is that I feel sorry for the Champenois, who have worked so hard to protect the name of the place where they make their sublime bubbles. Alas, for many wine drinkers, sipping some god-awful sparkling wine from Peru still qualifies it as Champagne. Shame on you.

Although Champagne is the benchmark, there are some very good quality sparkling wines made around the world. Actually, there are some that outclass Champagne itself. And given the price of the real deal, it's worth looking at what other options exist.

The short story, for those of you who are already bored of reading, is that California produces the best bubbly outside Champagne and it's half the price. If you want to spend even less, then consider Spanish Cava, which is a bargain. And if you like something fruity and oh-so-sophisticated to pronounce, then order some Prosecco. Finally, if you're 16 and its prom night, then fill your boots with some sweet, frothy Asti, close your eyes, and hope for the best.

When you are evaluating quality in sparkling wine, the key things to look for are complexity of aromatics and flavours on the palate. You want a wine that evolves, with layers of flavours. Another key aspect, that is unique to bubbly, is the texture of the mousse. It should be soft and creamy, rather than sharp and aggressive. Otherwise, the acidity is important, and should be balanced with the dryness and fruitiness, so you avoid anything being too tart, or too flabby, for that matter.

Champagne is the benchmark because many of them have exactly these qualities. They make wines that undergo much longer ageing than most other sparkling wines. This allows the nuances of toasty notes, hazelnuts, and fresh baked bread to evolve, the impression of acidity to soften, and the wines to take on great depth. Plus, of course, they have the inherent quality of the grapes which is due to the chalky soils, cool climate and other aspects of this unique terroir.

But if you'd like to explore other sparkling wines, then try some Cremant, which means French sparkling wine made outside the Champagne area, but using the same methods. You can find good Cremant from the Loire valley, where they use Chenin Blanc for the most part. These can have lovely flavours of ripe apple, and a bracing thread of acidity that will make your mouth water for minutes.



Alsace also makes some very nice Cremant, often using Sylvaner, a white grape variety. Some people accuse the producers of only using lesser vineyards or poor quality grapes to make Cremant, but, in fact, some of these can be quite delicious. I once met a producer who specialized in Cremant in Alsace, and claimed to have beaten the Champenois in blind tastings. But, alas, the marketing might of the famous Champagne houses are always quick to dismiss such claims, with a polite but gentle shake of the head, as if to say that you can't compare a Ferrari to a Honda.

*“When you are evaluating quality in sparkling wine, the key things to look for are complexity of aromatics and flavours on the palate.”*

Anyway, you can find Cremant from Burgundy, Bordeaux and even the south of France in Limoux. Each region uses different grapes, but the wines are almost always bone-dry, light to medium in body, with a crisp and crunchy acidity. Expect to pay between \$20 and \$30 for most of them, but don't expect layers of complexity.

Elsewhere in Europe, you'll find a gigantic amount of sparkling wine from Spain, known as Cava. I'm always amazed at the price of Cava, which is often under \$20 in B.C. They use the same traditional methods of production as the Champenois, but the grape varieties are usually indigenous Spanish things with impossible names. Xarel-lo, Macabeo and Parellada hardly roll off the tongue.



Schramsberg Vineyards, California







Roederer Estate, California

The style of Cava can sometimes be identified as having a smell of freshly raked gravel, for those of you who like sniffing driveways. There are usually apple and citrus notes, and almost an earthy touch to the flavor profile. Is there such a thing as high quality Cava? Yes, and some of these have a splash of Chardonnay in them. But, in general, I look at Cava for unbelievable value for money.

Staying within Europe, the Germans have always been fond of a glass of sparkling and they produce ocean loads of Sekt. Some of these, like Henkell Trocken, find a home in hotel mini-bars around the world, inflicting untold punishment on weary travelers who polish off a bottle after a stressful dinner.

Most of the German Sekt that reaches our shores is actually made from grapes grown in France and Italy, and then turned into sparkling wine using the so-called “tank method.” The essence of the tank method is adding yeast and sugar to a tank of still wine, and closing the lid so the carbon dioxide cannot escape. So the second fermentation takes place in a large tank, which means you don’t get the complex flavour effects caused by the yeast breakdown within a smaller container, such as a 75cl bottle.

But, like with Cava, there is such a thing as high quality German Sekt. These are usually made from Riesling, grown in prestigious regions in Germany, and the producers follow the traditional Champagne method. But good luck finding these. They tend to get snapped up in Germany, where they’ll drink them at the breakfast buffet.



Over in Italy, one of my favourite wines is from Franciacorta, a little-known area in the north that produces wines on a par with Champagne. This is worth tracking down. Expect to pay around the \$50 mark for a mature bottle. It is made in the traditional method, from the same grapes that they use in Champagne, and matured for long enough to create the complex flavors that make for high quality sparkling.

But, outside Franciacorta, Italy is much more famous for Prosecco, which has become trendy in recent years. It’s made from the Prosecco grape, usually tank-fermented, and tastes cheap, manufactured, and has a terrible, sweet, fruit salad flavour to it. Obviously, I’m not cool enough to enjoy this popular choice.

I think I’d even take an Asti over a Prosecco, although Asti is primarily a sparkling wine for dessert because of its sweetness. It’s fashionable to hate Asti, and call it “nasty Asti”, but I like the peach, apricot and honey flavours, especially with a plate of fresh fruit. Maybe it’s just because prom night was such a success.

But seriously, the only place I regularly buy sparkling wine from outside Champagne is California. Now we’re talking quality. After all, California is the location of choice for several of the great French houses. You’ll find Roederer, Taittinger, Chandon and others. It’s also where you’ll find some great American houses—like my favourite, called Schramsberg—which produce wines that usually outclass most Champagnes.



Pirie Estate, Tasmania

Thankfully, American consumers think you should only drink sparkling wine on special occasions. This means that prices are very attractive, so expect to pay between \$25 and \$50 for most of them, which is a comparative deal.

Otherwise, for sparkling wines outside of Champagne, you have to include Australia and New Zealand. Both these countries are significant producers and consumers of bubbles. It’s true that there are the cheap and not-so-cheerful versions such as Seaview, Yellow Tail and even that sparkling Shiraz stuff, which is vile at the best of times. But, actually, there are some outstanding sparkling wines made in Tasmania and in the Yarra Valley. Some of these are better than your average bottle of Champagne.

You could also mention the Okanagan valley, but nobody has really nailed making high quality bubbly there yet. The issue is that producers don’t specialize, and they think they can make Shiraz, Merlot, Pinot Gris, icewine and a whole host of other wines whilst perfecting the difficult art of making fizz. Not so, my friends. There is room for a winery that just makes sparkling wine, and does it really well.

So, the bottom line is that Champagne still represents the pinnacle, but if you want to save a few dollars and try something else, then look to California. If you want to go even further on austerity measures, then maybe Cava is for you, or perhaps even a bottle of Cremant. Yes, they can be good, but frankly I’d rather save my shekels and spring for the real deal—like a nice bottle of Bollinger, Taittinger, Roederer, or Krug. ■



Connoisseur’s Choice in Sparkling Wine

WINE	REGION	FOOD PAIRING
Schramsberg	California	Smoked salmon
Roederer	California	Caviar
Pierre Spar	Alsace	Oysters
Segura Viudas	Spain	Goat’s cheese
Henkell Trocken	Germany	Mimosas
Batasiolo	Italy	Fresh fruit plate





# Added Pleasures

## Make the Most of Your Kitchen with Carefully Chosen Upgrades

By Debbie Travis

When the weather outside is frightful, there's nothing like a steaming bowl of stew, warm crusty bread, and the company of family and friends to take the chill off. Our kitchens earn their reputation as the true heart of the home when it appears there's no better place to gather, work, play and eat. Such a busy area requires lots of attention to keep it up to speed, and it deserves the odd splurge on stylish, as well as practical, features. The kitchen does not require a full renovation, an expensive proposition that will dampen your spirits at the best of times. You will reap the benefits of a fresh outlook and renewed space with one or two of the following ideas. Any of these features will improve the quality and ambiance of your kitchen, and enhance the mood and spirit of command central.

*“Any of these features will improve the quality and ambiance of your kitchen, and enhance the mood and spirit of command central.”*

### Build in Shape and Colour

An otherwise plain room gains style and power with the addition of architectural details. Utilize the classic lines of mouldings, sconces, corbels, balustrades and archways to create a new and captivating setting. Browse kitchen websites such as [www.kitchencraft.com](http://www.kitchencraft.com) to discover the variety of styles that can be achieved with the cabinet door designs and finishes. Kitchen Craft's inviting traditional family kitchen (shown here) illustrates how to layer cabinetry, build out and support a large island, and create a captivating arched line over the stove top. These custom details furnish the room in classic style.

I was asked to redefine a small kitchen to surprise a single father on one of my *Facelift* shows. He wasn't much of a cook, so I thought that if I could make his kitchen a tempting place to be, this might help. The inset brick archway was framed with drywall and plywood. Electrical wires were put in place and holes cut for the pot lights. The “brick” archway was made with Spacco, a plaster with a lot of sand in it. What an amazing transformation! And rumour has it that he is learning to cook Italian in his Tuscan-inspired kitchen.

It's not always necessary to replace the cabinetry when a switch of doors will do. Thinking outside the box really turned up the heat for a young couple not afraid of colour. The cabinet doors were custom made; a wild laminate in swirls and flames of fiery orange was glued in place and then secured with aluminum trim. The doors now stretch to the ceiling and flank the stove like a funky modern frame for this kitchen facelift.

### Fine Finishes for Cabinetry

Much of the character of your kitchen cabinets is created by the finish. The glowing finish of Kitchen Craft's cherry stain shows off the beautiful wood grain and panel details. A strip of ebony for the light hidens and flat panels under the stove is a handsome complement that enhances this luxurious kitchen style.

When it's not feasible to buy new, paint is your best bet. I went retro in a 70s kitchen with plain white laminate cabinets and wood handle bars. I used two shades of blue to break up the monotony of so many doors, and the handlebars were modernized with metallic paint and high-gloss varnish.

For a cottage kitchen, we were lucky enough to come across an antique candy case at a second-hand shop. A perfect size for this small kitchen, it did need to be refinished. Some sanding, a white base coat and a sienna glaze to highlight the carved details, and we had a fabulous antiques counter.

*This page left to right: Kitchen Craft provides cabinetry and added moulding details for layered historic charm; This custom-built faux brick arch is reminiscent of a Tuscan kitchen; Rich cherry finish on Kitchen Craft cabinets resonates around the eclectic, artful backsplash.*

*Above: The bright colour and artsy design of these cabinet doors brings modern spirit to a young couple's kitchen. Below: Dated laminate cabinets find new life with a modern blue paint finish and silver handlebars.*





Clockwise from left: Electrolux wine and beverage coolers fit beautifully into a busy entertaining schedule; Recycled glass counter from Icestone is eco-friendly, durable and beautiful; The popular farmhouse kitchen sink is updated with new designs and materials by Kohler to fit modern and traditional settings.

Replace Countertops

Eco-friendly product choices are appearing in every sector, and kitchens are a key space to renovate with thoughts on green living. Where possible, pick products that utilize local sources and materials. One of the hottest choices on trend is a countertop made with 100 percent recycled glass. Just the thought of all those millions of bottles and glasses being recycled and repurposed fits nicely into our ecological thinking. Recycled glass counters are durable and come in a variety of colour mixes, depending on the glass chosen for the project. The glass particles add a lovely colour and subtle glitter to the surface. The recycled glass is combined with cement and is porous, so it requires sealing after installation, best done by your installer, and resealing every year or so. You will find detailed information about recycled glass countertops through companies such as [www.icestone.biz](http://www.icestone.biz). Not just for countertops, this beautiful, hardwearing surface is also seen in backsplashes, tabletops, interior walls and fireplace surrounds.

Change up Sinks and Faucets

The apron front or farmhouse-style kitchen sink is an iconic symbol of country kitchens that is making a comeback in both traditional and contemporary kitchens. The oversized basin is made for large pots and pans, and situated at the front rather than the middle of the counter, which allows for easier access without bending or straining your back. The apron can be plain or textured, stainless steel and colours, too. Kohler also offers easy installation options with styles and sizes to fit your existing counter and cabinetry in most cases. Kohler's Vault stainless steel double sink can be flush mounted or under counter to capture the essence of minimal design. Their Simplice single hole, pull-down faucet allows for a clean, sleek surface. Faucets are engineered to last, yet show beautiful, sculptured lines that enhance the look of your workspace.

Create an artful backsplash

There's nothing like a few gorgeous tiles to rev up the style quotient in your kitchen. Choose a material that you love—it can be slate, ceramic, glass, even tin—and design your own personal masterpiece. The backsplash in the Kitchen Craft photo is a true work of art, combining different tiles and colours in an eclectic design that melds with and energizes the luxurious cherry cabinets. For a young family's kitchen on one of my *Painted House* shows, we had fun designing a backsplash from drawings the children had made. We copied the drawings onto Bristol board cut to fit the backsplash space, then filled in the pictures with black, white and mirror tiles. We glued the board in place before we added the grout. This is a project the whole family can enjoy, and the kids really love to see their work on display.

Heat the Floor

Oh the ultimate luxury, bare feet on warm tile while pouring that first cup of coffee. One source I have used is Nuheat Floor Heating Systems. Their heat mats are installed under the floor and provide soothing comfort and consistent, even heat for your tile, stone, laminate, and engineered wood floors—without cold spots. Not recommended for nailed down hardwood as the nails can pierce the heat mat. The mats are cut to fit your kitchen, and do not run under the fridge or stove. Nuheat Floor Heating Systems are easy to install, energy efficient, and can be controlled using a variety of programmable and non-programmable thermostat options. A heated floor can be a primary source of heat for your room, allowing you to remove awkward heat vents and electric heaters. Show your kitchen a little love and it will pay you back in happy times and warm thoughts. ■

Produced by Debbie Travis and Barbara Dingle.



Counter-clockwise from top: Minimal lines and flush mount modernize the traditional stainless steel double sink by Kohler; Kids helped design this mosaic backsplash for their family-friendly kitchen; Nuheat's electric radiant heat mat provides pure luxury underfoot.



**Connoisseur's Choice in House & Home**  
Kitchen Craft classical white kitchen and cherry cabinet kitchen with artful backsplash. [www.kitchencraft.com](http://www.kitchencraft.com)  
Electrolux quality appliances, wine and beverage coolers. [www.electrolux.com](http://www.electrolux.com)  
Recycled glass countertop, Icestone Sky Pearl. [www.icestone.biz](http://www.icestone.biz)  
Kohler Whitehaven apron front-cast iron sink and Park deck-mount kitchen bridge faucet; Kohler Vault stainless steel double sink with Simplice single hole, pull-down faucet. [www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com)  
Nuheat electric floor heating system. [www.nuheat.com](http://www.nuheat.com)  
Projects from Debbie Travis books by Debbie Travis with Barbara Dingle, published by Clarkson Potter:  
Retro painted laminate, antiques candy counter, mosaic backsplash from *Debbie Travis' Painted House Kitchens and Baths*.  
Faux brick arch and orange laminate kitchen from *Debbie Travis' Facelift*.  
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# Gift Guide Holiday 2011

By Connie Ekelund

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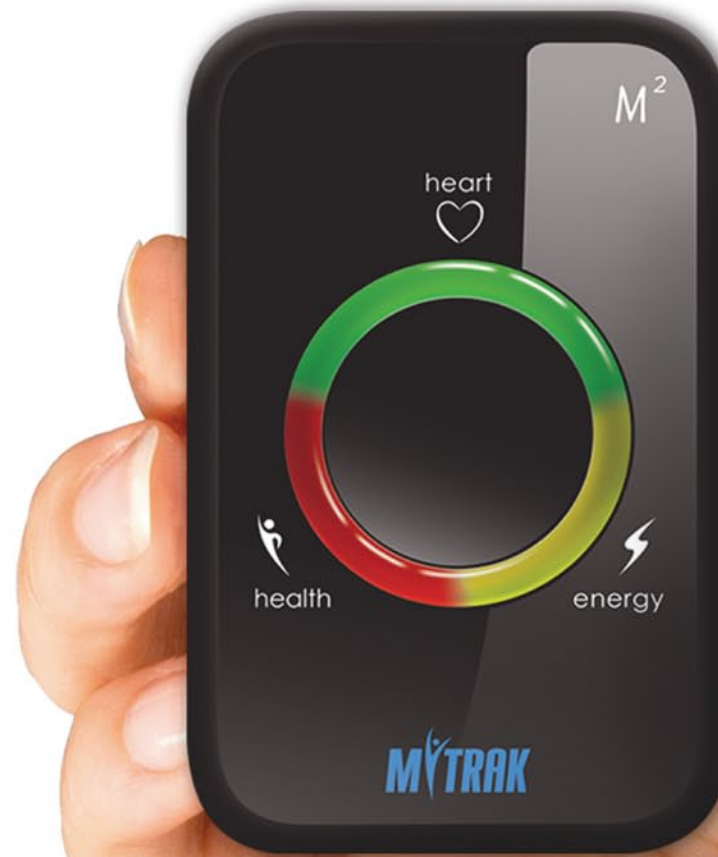


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[www.trynono.com](http://www.trynono.com)

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[www.nonoskin.com](http://www.nonoskin.com)



**Mytrak.** The M2 Personal Smart Coach tracks, monitors, challenges, and guides you as you go about your day; challenging you to stay active helping you achieve your goals. The system utilizes a feedback interface on the centre of the M2, the health circle—it tracks your activity and energy spent. MYTRAK challenges you to increase your level of activity as your fitness improves. Whether you want to lose weight or get more active, M2 guides you throughout your day, while at home, work or play, engaged in daily activities you enjoy, living your normal lifestyle. \$100.  
[www.mytrak.com](http://www.mytrak.com)





**Burberry** navy merino sweater with nova check. \$295.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



**Badgley Mischka** purple and black beaded cocktail dress with feather bottom. \$795.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



**Theory** black Hid Harmen sequin tunic. \$425.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)

**Paul and Shark** hails from Milan, Italy, and it was first established as a wool clothing store back in 1921. The brand is known for providing the newest and the latest collections of outerwear for men, women and children, and these include sweats, knitted items, jackets, vests, coats and windbreakers.

- Down-filled parka with fur lined hood (fox) and nylon shell. \$1,450.



- Ladies down-filled coat with fur lined hood (fox) and nylon shell. \$1,450.



- Extra fine merino wool ¾ length cardigan with fur collar and cuffs. \$1,950.



- Down-filled shawl with fur collar. \$1,595.

Available at Ella's  
[www.paulshark.it](http://www.paulshark.it)



**ACCESSORIES**  
**Michael by Michael Kors** Repeat argyle box set including wool-blend toque and scarf. \$165.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)

**Stuart Weitzman** glazed lamé heel with gold buckle detail. \$420.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



**FASHION**  
**Annie Fink.** A signature accessory, the innovative and stylish “Annie Sleeve” adds comfort and creativity to any outfit. Their fingerless faves are created in a wide variety of fabrics, colours, and styles—from edgy to sophisticated, pretty to punk, casual to formal. \$24-\$36.  
[www.anniefink.com](http://www.anniefink.com)

**Pink Tartan** black sequined merino wool cardigan. \$345.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



**Diesel** grey alpaca wool hooded cardigan. \$600.  
[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



## STYLE



**TAG Heuer Eyewear.** L-TYPE LW (lightweight) glasses are designed to showcase the brand's most innovative and advanced patents in one product. Each pair is handmade in France by highly skilled master craftsmen, utilizing a subtle blend of detailing and materials that would be right at home in an exotic sports car: pure titanium, carbon fibre, composite elastomere and a selection of genuine leathers. The versatile design is available in eyeglasses as well as prescription and non-prescription sunwear. \$1,190.

[www.tagheuer.com/eyewear](http://www.tagheuer.com/eyewear)

**Valentino** camel leather Histoire satchel. \$1,995.

[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



**Tiffany's** bracelet bag in burgundy velvet performs beautifully on all occasions, from cocktails to black-tie galas. \$1,200.

[www.tiffany.ca](http://www.tiffany.ca)

### JEWELLERY

The **Tiffany Grace** collection features princess-cut and round brilliant diamonds in platinum. Precision of cut allows these sparkling stones to be set on the bias, creating drop earrings (\$10,400) and a pendant (\$3,200) of striking beauty.

[www.tiffany.ca](http://www.tiffany.ca)



A pendant showcases an emerald-cut sapphire of deeply saturated colour. Tiffany designers framed the 26.23-carat stone in a magnificent setting of sparkling diamond baguettes and round and pear-shaped stones (price upon request).

[www.tiffany.ca](http://www.tiffany.ca)



Tiffany Locks accent bangles of different widths and metals, creating distinctive and versatile fashion statements. Designs include a narrow 18 karat gold bangle (\$4,600), a wide hinged bangle of 18 karat gold and sterling silver (\$2,250), and a narrow bangle of sterling silver with 18 karat rose gold (\$845).

[www.tiffany.ca](http://www.tiffany.ca)

The grandeur grows with every flourish of an 18 karat gold scroll leaf pattern that overlays an oval-shaped bangle. The design is accented with sparkling diamonds, highlighting gold's captivating beauty and pre-eminence as a classic symbol of luxury. \$82,500.

[www.tiffany.ca](http://www.tiffany.ca)



**Philip Stein** signature gold tone dual-time watch with layered dial and interchangeable bracelet. \$1,155.

[www.holtrenfrew.com](http://www.holtrenfrew.com)



The **Atlas** timepiece represents the best of the jeweller's and watchmaker's art. An icon of style, the watch features Roman numerals that contrast with a black and gray lacquer dial. Stainless steel chronograph with black rubber and Swiss-made mechanical movement. \$8,900.

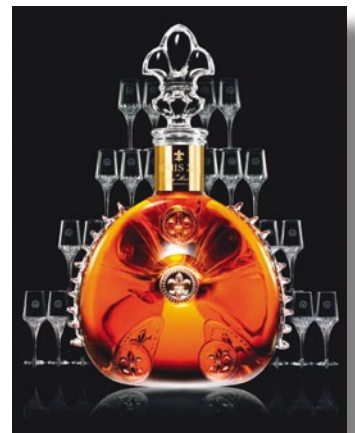
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### SPECIALTY GIFT

#### Luxury Gift that Keeps On Giving

The **LOUIS XIII** three-litre "Le Jeroboam" crystal decanter is crafted in the form of the metal flask discovered by Emile Rémy Martin in the Rémy Martin vineyards in Cognac, dating from the 16th century, where it was lost by a chevalier under King Louis XIII. Today, the decanter's shape signifies the storied legacy of the namesake's complex, elite spirit. Produced in extremely limited quantity of the finest Grande Champagne grapes, **LOUIS XIII** is made of 1,200 eaux-de-vie aged up to 100 years. The single "Le Jeroboam" limited edition coffret to be sold in the U.S. will benefit the Ruby Peck Foundation for Children's Education, which raises funds to provide children with access to educational programs essential to their future success. Don't miss your chance to bid on this prestigious cognac.

[www.rpfoundation.org/LOUISXIII](http://www.rpfoundation.org/LOUISXIII)



And, finally, if you're looking for something a little more environmentally friendly and meaningful, be certain to look to our 'Culture' column. We have suggestions for some Canadian charities where even gift cards are available—there is something to please everyone on your list. ■





# Back on Course

## Retired Calgary Businessman Discovers the Benefits of a Private Medical Clinic

By Nicole Aubertin

Climbing the hills near San Luis Obispo, 68-year-old Michael Parsons was suddenly gripped by a paralysing pain in his chest. Although he had been active most of his life, a recent back injury had caused him to gain 26 pounds and, for the first time, he had to admit he was not in optimal health. The unthinkable crossed his mind...*could this be a heart attack?*

"After the third day of having these pains come and go, I was quite frightened," said Parsons, from his home in Calgary. "So I went to a very good clinic in San Luis Obispo and after running a few scans they said I might have a heart condition."

The scans revealed something unusual, but they couldn't be sure whether it was heart damage or equipment failure. It was the start of a lengthy medical investigation that eventually resulted in him being put on three different heart medications with serious side effects.

"I felt like the walking dead. I couldn't do anything," Parsons said. "I don't know how people on these medications function. Twice, I almost drove into oncoming traffic."

His quality of life took a turn for the worse. Although the cost of the medications was not an issue for Parsons, he felt like he just didn't have the energy to do anything. Then, his situation deteriorated further when he returned to his family physician in Canada, only to find that he had announced his retirement.

"It was pretty frustrating to have what I thought was a life-threatening illness and be without a doctor. All I could do was go around to these offices, put my name on a list and hope they would call. They told me they would only call if they wanted to take me as a patient."

Nobody called. For months he fretted without a doctor. He began asking around to find out what others were doing. His friends suggested he try the Copeman Healthcare clinic that had just opened in Calgary.

"It was a novel concept to me at the time to join a private healthcare clinic in Canada," recalls Parsons. "But I had been to the Mayo Clinic when I lived offshore for 11 years—everybody went to the Mayo Clinic. So when my friends suggested I try out the Copeman Clinic I thought, hey, maybe this would be even better."

Mr. Parsons came for his first tour of the Copeman facility three years ago and was immediately impressed. Although the facility was still being finished, he liked what he saw.

"I liked the integrated approach," Parsons said. "It wasn't just about seeing a doctor for my heart; they also had registered dietitians, physiotherapists, kinesiologists—they looked at the whole picture."

Upon joining, one of the clinic's expert physicians conducted an extensive history and physical focusing on Mr. Parsons' symptoms. Combined with the comprehensive battery of blood tests and diagnostics that all Copeman Healthcare patients undertake, the doctors at the clinic came to the conclusion there was a chance Mr. Parsons' problem was not his heart, but possibly related to his oesophagus (the tube that connects a person's mouth to their stomach).

One of Copeman Healthcare's expert physicians discussed his suspicions with Mr. Parsons. He explained that it would require more testing to make a conclusive diagnosis. If it proved to be something other than a heart condition, Mr. Parsons would be able to get off the cardiac medications and start to enjoy a dramatic improvement in his quality of life.

"It was wonderful news!" Parsons said, "The tests revealed that I had the biggest, widest, cleanest arteries they had ever seen in someone my age."

The tests indicated that Mr. Parsons did not have a heart problem. Immediately, he was taken off heart medications and his quality of life improved overnight. Further investigations indicated he had a condition called oesophageal spasm. Mr. Parsons learned to control the oesophageal chest pains without medication. All he had to do was simply move his workout schedule to allow for adequate time between meals. With the aid of the clinic's expert kinesiologists, he was able to get back to an active lifestyle.

"It was like I was given my life back," Parsons said. "I was able to return to a complete workout, I dropped from 205lbs down to 179lbs and now I'm playing golf, riding my bike and going to the gym without any fear."

The vast improvement in lifestyle has made Michael Parsons a Copeman Healthcare customer for life. He no longer worries about his health when he travels and enjoys significant savings on health insurance premiums when travelling to the United States.

"I am most impressed with the access to doctors," says Parsons. "If you need a doctor, you're going to see one in a day or less. If you want 15 minutes you take 15 minutes, if you need half an hour you're given half an hour. But it's more than that. The clinic creates discipline—they follow-up with me on a regular basis to make sure I'm staying on track and the annual assessments make me try even harder."

The experience that Mr. Parsons had is what the Copeman Clinic is all about. Don Copeman, the clinic's CEO and founder, created the clinic to offer unhurried healthcare, access to expert physicians and a roster of healthcare professionals that collaborate with the patient's overall health in mind.

"Mr. Parsons' case is a great example," says Copeman, "We find patients come to us with different needs and at different stages in their health. We provide world class medical care when our patients need it and prevention when they're ready for it. We never tell our patients how to live, we're here to provide the best integrated healthcare available when and how they want it."

Back at the golf course, Michael Parsons has enjoyed some friendly ribbing from his friends, who have noticed the remarkable turnaround in his health.

"I think they liked me better when I was out of shape!" he jokes.

He credits his newfound freedom to the doctors at the Copeman Healthcare clinic.

"At the Copeman Clinic they look out for your overall welfare, they're not just focused on a specific complaint—they look at the whole picture."

Unfortunately for his golfing buddies, he has never looked better. ■

*Michael Parsons has been a client of the Calgary Copeman Clinic for three years. Copeman Healthcare has clinics in Vancouver and Calgary, and will open facilities in Edmonton and West Vancouver in January 2012. Spaces are limited, to pre-register for one of the new facilities please visit [www.CopemanHealthcare.com](http://www.CopemanHealthcare.com).*

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604.707.2273 (CARE)  
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Suite 400, 628 12th Ave. SW  
403.270.2273 (CARE)





# Taming Hormone Havoc

By Lorna Vanderhaeghe, MS

If there is one thing that is the bane of a good figure and vibrant health, it is belly fat. I am talking about that stubborn extra roll around the middle that does not seem to disappear, no matter how swift your metabolism, how much you exercise or how many sit ups you do. For some people, belly weight means the dreaded “muffin top” that escapes over the top of your jeans. For others, abdominal weight gain results in a clear round, apple shape. The fat in those love handles also contributes to increased blood triglyceride levels, inflammation and insulin resistance. Carrying extra weight around the middle puts you at higher risk of heart disease, cancers and diabetes.

So why do we gain belly weight? Why do men develop a beer belly and breasts and why do women suffer with rolls of belly fat they can't budge? Our hormones are the short answer. Throughout life, hormones regulate everything from bone strength to heart beat, to how quickly food is utilized by the body. Insulin is the main hormone contributing to belly fat. When you eat, sugar levels increase in your blood. Insulin is produced by the pancreas to push blood sugar into cells where it is burned up and this action decreases your blood levels of sugar. The more sugar in your blood from eating high-carbohydrate, high-sugar, low-protein foods, the more insulin that the hard-working pancreas must produce. Eventually, however, your cells can become resistant to insulin, resulting in excess insulin in the blood and elevated blood sugar that isn't pushed into the cells. Insulin resistance is a pre-diabetic condition which causes belly fat weight gain. Skin tags are a common early sign of pre-diabetes due to elevated insulin and blood sugar. Weight gain, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, elevated cholesterol and triglycerides ultimately result if elevated blood sugar is not controlled.

## Insulin-Testosterone Connection

In women, when insulin levels become high, it also causes an increase in male hormones circulating in the blood, particularly testosterone. When insulin and testosterone are elevated, women develop hormone-related conditions like acne, male-pattern facial hair growth (e.g. hair above the lip, on and under the chin), infertility, and polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS).

In men, elevated insulin causes testosterone to convert to estrogens (which results in the breasts and beer belly) and also the conversion of testosterone to DHT, a harmful male hormone associated with prostate cancer and hair loss.

*“Skin tags are a common early sign of pre-diabetes due to elevated insulin and blood sugar.”*

## Step 1: The Green Diet to Normalize Blood Sugar

To normalize blood sugar and insulin, we have to modify the way we eat. Start by eating protein the size of the palm of your hand at every meal. Breakfast should consist of an egg, a chicken breast (skin removed), a steak, a protein shake, protein powder in organic yogurt, etc. Basically breakfast should be pure protein. By eating protein at breakfast we can boost our fat burning furnace, also known as our metabolism. And this increase in metabolism will last four to five hours after eating a protein breakfast, unlike a classic breakfast of skim milk, cereal, toast or fruit, which lowers metabolic rate.



Get rid of the white foods in your diet. No more white rice, white pasta, white potatoes, white bread and white sugar. Replace these with brown rice, whole grain pasta and yams, for example. And when you have pasta, there should be a small amount of pasta on the plate and the sauce should be full of veggies and meat. If you want to lose that weight fast, eliminate consumption of white foods altogether. Clean out your cupboards and head to the grocery store for all the foods that are going to aid weight loss. You won't be tempted if the bad foods aren't in your kitchen.

Eat some protein every three hours. And, remember, if you have an alcoholic beverage, that it is like eating a piece of cheesecake. Switch the butter and margarine in your diet to extra virgin olive oil and coconut butter—both are great fat burners.

Lunch and dinner should include a piece of protein and plenty of dark green veggies. You should have no more than one serving of fruit a day and that should be dark-coloured berries—these are low on the glycemic index. No fruit juices—they completely disrupt blood sugar.

If you are at a party with a buffet, make sure you only head to the section with the veggies and protein. Don't even think of heading to the Nanaimo bars. Put sparkling water in your glass as soon as you arrive.

It takes ten days to change your eating patterns, so don't give up. Once you hit ten days, the diet changes will become part of the way you want to eat.

## Step 2: Bust Belly Fat Fast

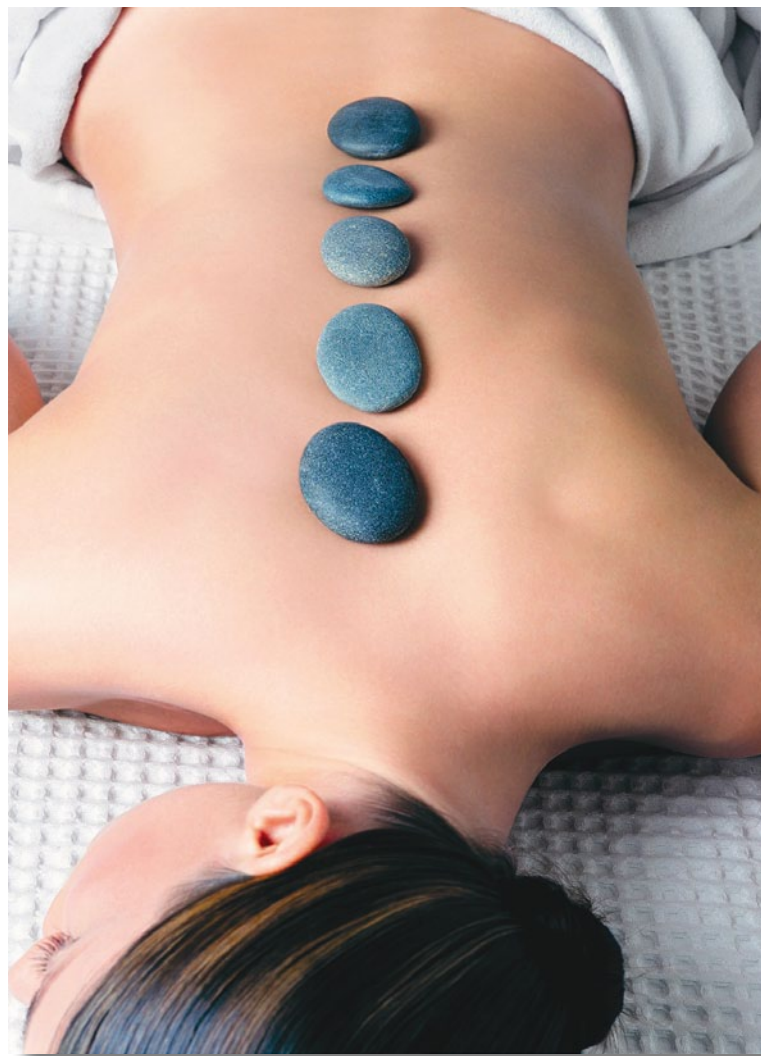
To bust belly fat faster, we not only need to change our diet, but add some powerful nutrients to aid weight loss. Health Canada is only approving a few supplements for weight loss, because only a few supplements have good clinical evidence to prove effectiveness. Normalizing insulin and blood sugar, and thereby weight loss, just got easier. A unique, well-researched ingredient derived from carob called Chiroitol has been involved in more than 30 published studies at Virginia Medical School over the past 25 years. Research on Chiroitol (pronounced kur-au-sitol) has shown excellent results for weight loss, especially belly fat weight loss, and in the treatment of insulin resistant conditions like Type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome and PCOS.

Chiroitol has many actions that contribute to its well-documented effectiveness. First, it stimulates insulin activity, helping to regulate blood sugar levels, and pushes sugar into the cells where it is supposed to be (not leaving it in the blood), which in turn helps to aid weight loss. It acts like insulin in this action. Due to Chiroitol's ability to improve the action of insulin, it thereby reduces the high testosterone seen in women with elevated insulin and improves conditions such as excessive weight gain around the middle and male facial hair growth in women. It does not reduce testosterone levels in men, but does regulate insulin to maintain healthy testosterone levels that do not convert to estrogen and DHT. But where Chiroitol really shines is in busting belly fat in both men and women.

## Reduce Appetite and Elevate Happy Hormones

Chiroitol has further been shown to reduce appetite and improve serotonin, our happy hormone. Reduced serotonin or poor metabolism of serotonin, is linked to increased sugar cravings. So by restoring serotonin, Chiroitol also helps control appetite.





#### Overweight Women May Have PCOS

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) has been a very difficult condition to treat until Chiroitol came to the rescue. In women with PCOS, weight gain around the hips and thighs, insulin resistance, higher-than-normal male hormones resulting in male facial hair growth and acne, sometimes multiple cysts in the ovaries, period problems and infertility due to not ovulating are major components of the condition. In multiple studies, Chiroitol was found to effectively treat insulin and blood sugar levels, excess male hormones, weight gain and appetite in these women. In women who also do not ovulate or have irregular periods associated with insulin resistance and PCOS, Chiroitol is the answer. Most women with PCOS are overweight, but for those who are thin and have PCOS, Chiroitol maintained their normal weight while regulating insulin and blood sugar levels, improving ovulation and menstrual cycles, and reducing excess circulating male hormones.

#### Step 3: Reduce Stress and Belly Fat Melts Away

When you are under constant stress, your adrenal glands pump out a hormone called cortisol to help you deal with the stressors you are facing. Just as insulin resistance promotes weight gain, so does chronic stress, because it triggers the adrenal glands to produce cortisol. Elevated cortisol is associated with elevating insulin, blood sugar problems, fat accumulation, poor immunity, infertility and more. Cortisol also causes our fat cells to change structure and become resistant to fat loss. In short, cortisol makes our fat cell door slam shut and not let the fat out even when we reduce calories and exercise. For these reasons, it is imperative to reduce stressors and to support the adrenals, too. To help reduce stress, do the following:

- We should not exercise in the evening, as this elevates cortisol and disrupts weight loss by changing the structure of fat cells. Walking is the best exercise for weight loss.
- Deep breathing exercises also aid weight loss. Clear your mind when you perform these deep breathing exercises. Breathing is a powerful de-stressing tool. Several times per day, breathe in through your nose and fill your lungs with air until your abdomen rises. Then slowly exhale from your mouth until your lungs are empty. Repeat this five times.
- Get eight hours of sleep every night and try to sleep until 7:30 in the morning.
- Just say “no” when you have too much to accomplish in one day.
- Share the household workload with family.
- Eat five to seven cups of vegetables every day.
- Smile. It is impossible to be stressed if you smile—even if it is forced.
- Get help in dealing with grief. The loss of a loved one, a divorce, or the loss of a job all produce grief. Immune suppression is the result when grief is not dealt with.
- Carpe diem. Seize the day and live it to the fullest. Don’t worry so much about tomorrow.
- Believe in yourself. Negative self-talk and continually doubting your abilities hamper your body’s ability to heal.
- See the beauty around you. Smell the flowers, watch the sunset and listen to the wind.
- Love your family and friends, and be forgiving.
- Be good to yourself. Most of us are our own worst enemies. We focus on our weaknesses and minimize our strengths. Wake up each day and tell yourself you are a good and useful person.
- Adrenal support nutrients like ashwagandha, rhodiola, suma, and schizandra berries work to normalize adrenal function.
- Do the things you have always wanted to do. Learn to water ski, sing in a choir, write a book, tell stories to your grandchildren, walk, garden—whatever makes you happy.
- Seek your spiritual side. This does not have to be religious, although those with strong religious beliefs generally live at peace and feel protected. Most of us believe in something greater than ourselves, a spiritual power that offers solace and helps us find the quiet place within.

Weight loss is effortless when you find the missing key. Simply eating protein and green vegetables combined with stress reduction and the addition of Chiroitol will have that weight falling off effortlessly. ▮

# WHOLE BODY HEALTH SCREENING

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# Zerona™ Laser Body Sculpting Changes How You Look and Feel

*More and more people are discovering the benefits of clinics utilizing the Zerona™ laser, which has been FDA approved for safe and effective non-invasive body contouring, fat loss and inch-loss treatment.*

Watching what you eat and getting regular exercise are important components of a healthy lifestyle, but don't always result in the reduction of unwanted bulges.

Deborah is in her early fifties. A former aerobics and fitness instructor, she maintained a healthy diet and exercised regularly, but developed a tummy bulge that wouldn't go away.

"I do 90 minutes of hot yoga almost every day" says Deborah. "It's pretty intense. My instructor kept telling me to pull my tummy in, but it was "in" as far as it would go. I've been active in fitness all my life, but I couldn't get rid of that bulge. I guess it's a function of aging. Things got loose as I got older."

She was watching a health program on TV one day where she saw a completely different way to reduce body fat in specific areas—the Zerona laser.

The Zerona laser creates temporary small openings in the fat cell wall, which allows the fat to seep into the surrounding tissue. It is then picked up by the lymphatic and circulatory system and is naturally excreted out of the body. The Zerona laser does not heat, kill or do anything else but make a temporary pore in the cell wall which then repairs itself after 72 hours. It has no effect on any other cells in the body.

*"The Zerona laser does not heat, kill or do anything else but make a temporary pore in the cell wall which then repairs itself after 72 hours."*

Deborah was determined to flatten her tummy and didn't want invasive surgery, so she did some research and found Laser Body Sculpting Wellness Clinics. She made some enquiries and booked an appointment.



"It was like a trip to the spa. I fell asleep during the treatment. It was so effective and easy I went back for a second set of sessions."

Having undergone the laser fat reduction process, today Deborah has the body she knew was possible.

"That stuff hanging over my waist? It's not there anymore. I have a flat tummy and surgery was not an option for me. It's not a replacement for exercise, but it takes the fat away from the areas that I just couldn't change from exercise. It really helped with my yoga and I can wear hipster jeans without worrying."

As we age, most people find that diet and exercise aren't always enough to halt the accumulation of body fat. The Zerona laser treatments are a safe, painless and time-effective alternative to liposuction surgery. This is the only FDA-approved laser shown to be effective for inch loss. On average, most people lose three to nine inches off their target areas by completing six, forty-minute treatments, which are done 48 to 72 hours apart over a two-week time period.

For more information see [www.laserbodysculpting.ca](http://www.laserbodysculpting.ca) or call their offices for a free consultation appointment. ■



**Laser Body Sculpting Wellness Clinics**  
North Vancouver | 604.988.7080  
South Surrey | 604.535.4003  
[www.laserbodysculpting.ca](http://www.laserbodysculpting.ca)



# Holiday Wish List for Techies

By Steve Dotto



## Star Trek is Here

Apple's iPhone 4s may be the device that changes the way you use your technology! All because of a little feature called Siri. Siri is a personal assistant that responds to your voice commands. It is far more than simple voice recognition. You talk to Siri and it responds; ask it what the score is in the game, and it finds it for you. Tell Siri to "Text my wife and ask her if we need any milk" and Siri knows who your wife is, composes and sends the text. You may never type in another message on your phone! Siri is currently only available on the iPhone 4s but look for it on other Apple (iOS) devices soon! Price varies according to plan.  
[www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

## On A Mission To Reduce Traffic For All

TomTom GO LIVE 1535 M and TomTom HD Traffic provides the most accurate reporting by capturing more of the actual traffic jams than ever before. Additionally, TomTom HD Traffic will recognize traffic conditions for all major and secondary roads within the Canadian road network and will deliver real-time traffic updates every two minutes. With these advancements, TomTom HD Traffic will help drivers steer clear of traffic sooner and get them to their destination faster. TomTom GO LIVE 1535 M pricing starts at \$269. A free 12-month subscription of LIVE services will be available with each purchase.  
[www.tomtom.com](http://www.tomtom.com)



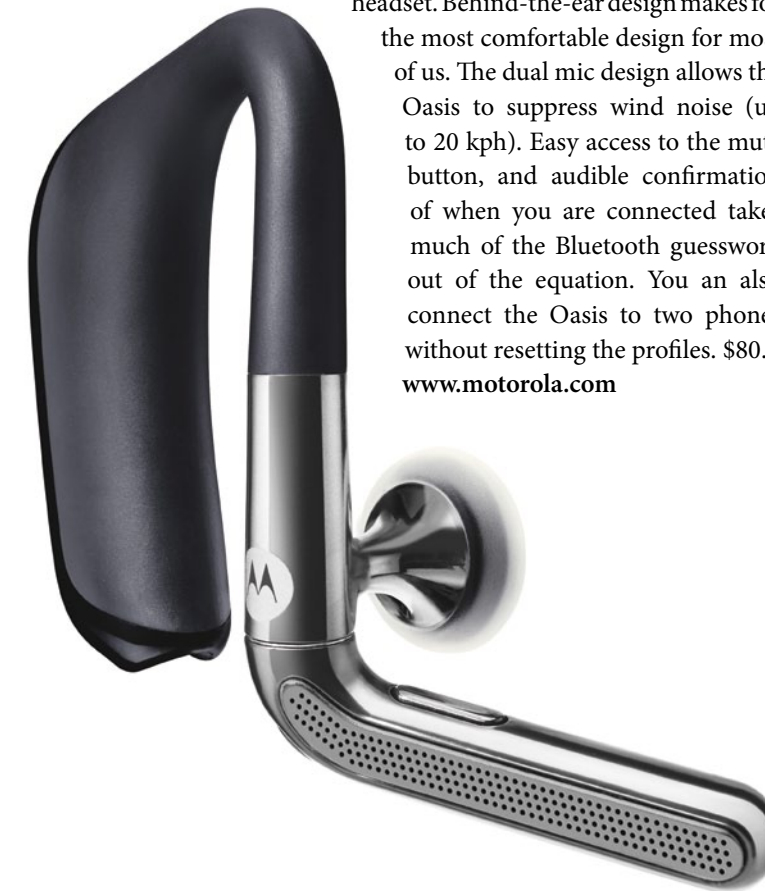
## The X-Box Factor: More Voice Command

X-Box 360 Kinect has changed console gaming by allowing your body to control the on-screen action. If you are playing a baseball game, you can wind up as a pitcher and deliver the ball by "throwing." The Kinect interface is an outward-facing camera that interprets your actions as controls for the game. It has become popular for all sorts of gaming, including sports, dance and combat games. Now you can add voice command to the physical gestures. The voice command will work in certain games, as well as in console management. Using the Kinect voice commands, you no longer need to search for the remote or game controller, you can command the X-Box to do everything from launching a game to playing a movie. \$149.  
[www.xbox.com/kinect](http://www.xbox.com/kinect)



## Easy on the Ears

Finding the ideal Bluetooth headset is a bit like the search for the Holy Grail. Many have searched, but it does seem to be elusive. Motorola may have found the perfect combination with the Motorola Oasis Bluetooth headset. Behind-the-ear design makes for the most comfortable design for most of us. The dual mic design allows the Oasis to suppress wind noise (up to 20 kph). Easy access to the mute button, and audible confirmation of when you are connected takes much of the Bluetooth guesswork out of the equation. You can also connect the Oasis to two phones without resetting the profiles. \$80.  
[www.motorola.com](http://www.motorola.com)



## Back to the Future

Voice recognition is all well and fine, but we still have the need for good, old-fashioned keyboards. While most companies are getting away from that old-fashioned look and feel, looking for modern sleek design, there are hundreds of \$80 to \$120 keyboards that will do a good job for you. But none that will speak to the soul; for that you need to drop between \$1,000 and \$1,500 for a Datamancer Original! Harkening back to a more industrial age, these keyboards are each handcrafted and unique. The old-fashioned keys and mechanical feel make a statement. We are not sure what that statement is, but it is a good one!  
[www.datamancer.net](http://www.datamancer.net)



## iPad Keyboard

As iPads increase in popularity, they are replacing notebooks in many a briefcase. The biggest drawback for the iPad is the onscreen keyboard, which is less than optimal for any writing tasks that are more than a few words.

The Zaggfolio is the answer. A multifunction case for the iPad2, the Zaggfolio both protects the iPad and comes complete with a removable Bluetooth keyboard and a built-in stand system, ideal for on-the-go use. The Bluetooth keyboard has iPad 2-specific keyboard shortcuts, including volume control, music control, home, search, copy and paste. \$99.  
[www.zagg.com](http://www.zagg.com)



## The Colour of eBooks

While the iPad continues to explode in popularity, at the other end of the Tablet world, Amazon's Kindle Fire and the Kobo VOX vie for the lower end of the market. The Kindle Fire is an Android-based seven-inch colour tablet with 1024 x 600 resolution, 8GB of internal memory and built in Wi-Fi.

The success of the Fire will most certainly be based on the full ecosystem offered by Amazon—books, music, apps, all accessed through Amazon's online services—and, perhaps even more important, a custom web browser, Amazon Silk, that is optimised for the Fire and supported by a massive back end provided by Amazon. Silk may well be the difference that drives the Fire to the top of the low end tablet market. \$199.  
[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)





The Kobo Vox will be a contender, especially in Canada, where the Kobo brand has a great deal of equity due to the relationship with Chapters/Indigo. The VOX boasts a few bells and whistles not found on the Fire, higher resolution and expandable memory.

The VOX also has a seven-inch anti-glare colour display, but at 1280 x 800 resolution, you can expect seven hours of battery life from the 14 oz eBook reader. 8GB of internal memory, and a MicroSD port allows for plenty of storage.

The VOX runs on the same OS as does the Kindle Fire, Adroid, meaning there are thousands of apps available to run on it. With built-in Wi-Fi, networking is no problem, plus built-in Web browser, email client and FaceBook and Kobo apps make the VOX much more than just an eBook reader. \$199.

[www.kobo.com](http://www.kobo.com)



**Way out Wi-Fi**

If the limited range of your Wi-Fi router has you bummed out, there is an answer. Try the 1.5 mile range of the Amped Wireless High Power Wireless-N Pro Smart Repeater. You can expand the range of your wireless network by repeating the signal from your home or office wireless access point or router. With a high power 600mW power amplifier and a high-gain, bi-directional antenna, the SR600EX is capable of repeating networks up to 1.5 miles away. The Pro Smart Repeater features a weatherproof outdoor/indoor enclosure with desktop, wall and pole mounting options. The Pro Smart Repeater features two network ports for connecting additional PCs, network switches and other devices. The SR600EX is great for covering large areas and buildings, indoor or outdoor, with strong, fast, extended Wi-Fi coverage. \$179.99.

[www.ampedwireless.com](http://www.ampedwireless.com)



**Time to Get Fit**

The Garmin FR70 Fitness Watch lives at the heart of a world of cyber trainers, all talking to each other about how hard you are really working. The watch uses a proprietary networking technology called ANT+ to communicate with compatible treadmills, spin bikes, elliptical trainers and the Garmin Foot Pod to track your training efforts. To verify results, there are even high-tech scales that will track weight, body fat, body water and six other measurements when using the FR70, the Tanita BC-1000 body composition scale. The readings are stored on FR70, then automatically sent to Garmin Connect (fitness software) when in range of your computer. FR70 \$129. Tanita Scales (Mac and PC Compatible) \$27.

[www.garmin.com](http://www.garmin.com) | [www.connect.garmin.com/tanita](http://www.connect.garmin.com/tanita)

**Scanning Simplicity**

The Doxie Go scanner is a wireless—make that semi-wireless—scanner. You can wirelessly scan in documents, photos, receipts—pretty much any paper—and then sync it to your computer. The sync occurs when you plug it into a USB port (or into an iPhone or iPad). A software suite helps you organise and manage all your documents in either Mac or Windows. There is also support for Evernote (cloud-based note manager, and a must have app!) and for DropBox. The scanner charges via the USB connection, so you can scan in a bunch of documents and then download and sync them all at once. \$199.

[www.getdoxie.com](http://www.getdoxie.com)



**2D or 3D? Why choose?**

The DXG-5F9V records both 3D and 2D video in 1080p HD video resolution and also captures both 3D and 2D still pictures. If you only have one camera, seems to me one that works in four formats may be a good choice! Featuring a sleek, compact design and advanced dual-lens technology, which is necessary for the whole 3D thing frame your subject or review files on the 3.2" 3D LCD display—no 3D glasses required! DXG makes 3D video technology simple with its intuitive menu controls that let you easily adjust shooting preference between 3D and 2D. Windows only. \$299.

[www.dxgusa.com](http://www.dxgusa.com)



**Not a Still Camera, Not a Video Camera**

According to JVC, the GC-PX10 is not a video camera that also records stills, nor is it a digital still camera that also records videos. It is a true hybrid that has been redesigned to provide satisfaction no matter what you choose to record, and offers unique advantages to being an all-in-one camera.

At the heart of the GC-PX10 is JVC's new Falconbrid high speed imaging engine. The Falconbrid is a single-chip technology with the processing power to allow the GC-PX10 to record full HD progressive video at 36Mbps for rich, detailed images.

For still images you can capture 8.3 megapixel images from the recorded video, or take photos at up to 12 MP resolution in still mode! The camera's image sensor is a 1/2.3", 12.75 megapixel back-illuminated CMOS sensor. For super-slow motion shooting, the GC-PX10 can shoot video at 300 frames-per-second. Image resolution is VGA (640 x 360), making it more than sufficient for online posting and viewing. But more importantly, this mode can be used for approximately two hours straight. So, to offer an extreme example, it's possible to record an entire soccer game in super-slow motion.

Other features that will appeal to the serious shooter include optical image stabilization, 10X optical zoom, KONICA MINOLTA HD LENS, a mode dial for both automatic and manual settings (white balance, aperture and shutter), microphone output and headphone input.

The camera offers 32GB of internal memory, SDXC/SDHC card slot, tiltable three-inch touch panel monitor, and HDMI output. OK, I want one! \$899.95.

[www.jvc.com](http://www.jvc.com) ■





## Whole Body Vibration

Whole body vibration has been taking the health and fitness industry by storm. Never heard of it? You will! Several celebrities have been reported to use the technology, including Madonna and Karl Lagerfeld (who apparently credits whole body vibration with his dramatic weight loss).

Whole body vibration—or WBV for those in the know—works on a very simple concept. The user stands on a platform, which moves up and down very quickly. These very quick movements keep the body slightly off-balance, forcing muscles to involuntarily react to keep the user upright. These reactions, which happen several times a second, mean the body is contracting and releasing muscles several times more rapidly than would happen in a regular exercise routine.

“Instead of you moving, the platform moves you,” says Morris Aboody, owner of T-Zone Vibration. The company has seen tremendous success with their machine, with over 50 dedicated studios in Canada where consumers can try the machine, and either join as a member or take one home.

Aboody adds: “The body reacts (muscles contract and release) up to 32 times per second. That accelerated movement, plus the fact that the whole body is being worked at once, as compared to individual muscle groups as in a conventional gym routine, means you get the benefits of a 60-minute workout in just 10 minutes.”

*“These very quick movements keep the body slightly off-balance, forcing muscles to involuntarily react to keep the user upright.”*

Whole body vibration has been shown to increase muscle strength and tone muscles, improve flexibility, and increase metabolism. Different people have used WBV for different reasons. Many people use it for weight loss, and have had startling results.

“After a bit of apprehension, I am amazed with the results I’ve had after only two months,” says Don P., a fan from Prince Edward Island. “My energy level has gone up and I feel invigorated and alert. The machine awakens every muscle in my body. I feel stronger, more flexible and stimulated. I have lost inches around my midriff, my muscles are more receptive, and my joints are less sore. The benefits I’ve had have been phenomenal! This new technology is a sure hit with me; I sincerely believe in the process and recommend it highly. I look forward to every session.”

T-Zone says many fans of this innovative technology enjoy the health benefits by simply standing on the vibration platform while others who are looking to tone and sculpt their body can perform strength training exercises such as squats and lunges.

You can even use the machine to massage your muscles. Because it’s low-impact, the machine is also kind to joints—meaning it’s suitable for all ages, from athletes to the elderly.

If you’re thinking it sounds too good to be true, of course there are some caveats; if you have any health issues, make sure to consult your health practitioner before using vibration. And that weight loss effect won’t counteract a daily visit to your local fast food joint—combining WBV with sensible eating and a regular cardio exercise routine is definitely recommended for best results.

Try it and you’ll want to take one home, too!

For more information, visit [www.t-zonevibration.com](http://www.t-zonevibration.com). ■



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2012 Ferrari FF



2012 Porsche 911

# Christmas Dream Cars and More

By Tony Whitney

There are no end of exotic cars out there that most of us will never even get close to, but we can always dream and, after all, if people didn't have these kinds of dreams, not a single lottery ticket would ever be sold. Christmas is certainly a time for dreaming—even if you won't get a Bentley under the tree—so let's take a look at this season's crop of highly desirable and (for most of us) unattainable automobiles and perhaps also at one or two that don't cost quite so much hard cash—plus something special on two wheels.

Starting with something especially desirable, how about the new Ferrari FF? The \$400,000 FF marks two key milestones for Ferrari. It's the first Ferrari to feature four-wheel drive and it has the largest capacity engine ever produced by the famed Italian maker—a whopping 6.3-litre V12. I've long been an advocate of four-wheel or all-wheel drive for high-performance cars—it simply gets the power to the road more effectively, whatever the weather. The bodywork for the new FF was penned by coach-builder Pininfarina, whose association with Ferrari goes back to the 1950s. This is a very handsome car, indeed, and has that Ferrari nose job that's been used (apart from the FF's high-tech LED lighting) in some form or another for many decades. You can get your FF in a wide range of colours, but please make yours a red one—they just look “right” in that hue. This is not the prettiest Ferrari they've ever built, but it's no easy task to create what is the nearest thing to a “Ferrari family car” without shedding a little of the usual swoopiness.

On the SUV front, Range Rover has its new Evoque available—an entirely new vehicle for the British automaker. And while it may be the ultimate stylish downtown prowler, I proved it was still a Range Rover by driving one to the top of Blackcomb Mountain near Whistler, using all kinds of deeply-gullied back roads, rather than the graded ski facility service route. It was amazing how the Evoque handled this kind of territory, but confirmed that Range Rover parent Land Rover is determined that every one of its products can go just about anywhere, even if it seems too elegant to handle it. The Evoque is a great looking SUV and the new lineup has a major surprise in it—there's a coupe version available (around \$52,500). This is a bold move because nobody's tried a two-door luxury SUV for years, if ever. While both variants look very handsome, I liked the Coupe a lot for its originality—it looks like nothing else out there. Both Evoques look great, but the Coupe has something special. Power comes from a 2.0-litre, 4-cylinder turbo engine, delivering an impressive 240-horsepower and 250 lb-ft of torque. It's no slouch and is capable of hauling the vehicle over very steep grades, but on the highway, it's surprisingly refined, considering it's “only a four-banger.”

No dream car list could be complete without a Porsche of one type or another. For 2012, there's an all-new 911 model to lust after and celebrate. This is the iconic sports car that's at the heart of the Porsche legend and a complete revision doesn't come along very often—or indeed, need to.



2012 Range Rover Evoque



2012 Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG

The 911 tends to evolve with glacial speed, but each is a little better than its predecessor. As might be expected, no dramatic changes are immediately evident and nobody, I'm sure, would want it any other way. The unique styling is a tad sleeker, but the famed profile remains. Porsche 911s have reached such a level of perfection in recent years that it's difficult to figure how Porsche could have improved anything, but of course, they have. The total re-design includes a longer wheelbase and reduced height and weight. There's a smaller base engine available with more power, plus the world's first 7-speed manual transmission. They cost one side or another of \$100,000. These cars are built for seriously fast driving and even on the Autobahn at 250 km/h, a Porsche 911 feels entirely stable, and braking is so effective and assuring, you never feel at any risk at all. Very few sports cars at any price, built anywhere in the world, give you this kind of confidence.

When it comes to a Mercedes-Benz, there's nothing more desirable than one of the AMG models. AMG is the famed tuning firm that Mercedes ended up acquiring and now they build some of the world's finest road car engines. Each engine is built by hand and each is the work of one highly-skilled technician. They trundle the engines round the assembly shop, stopping here and there to add components until it's completed. The technician then signs off on the engine and gets started on another one. My favourite AMG is the one based on the C-Class model, which is being extensively revised for 2012. There's now a C63 AMG Coupe and that might be the most “must have” Mercedes-Benz of them all, though it's far from the most expensive at around \$70,000. There's also a sedan-based C-Class AMG for people who must have four doors.



No self-respecting automotive dreamer could muse too long without thinking of a Lamborghini—one of those fabled Italian makes that gets the heart beating faster after just a glimpse of one. Latest from the “rampart bull” automaker is the Aventador—a stunning sportster that’s part of a tradition that goes back to unforgettable models from this marque like the Miura and Countach. Power is abundantly available with the Aventador—some 700-horses, in fact, from a 6.5-litre V12. And like many Lambos that went before, it has all-wheel drive to keep the power where it belongs. My experience with Lamborghinis is that they’re a lot friendlier to drive than they might appear at first glance—once you get used to sitting a cushion’s depth off the road. This kind of technology, styling and pedigree doesn’t come cheaply, of course, so be prepared to ante up over \$400,000 or find a very free-spending benefactor. Lamborghinis involve a considerable amount of hand building and finishing, and increasingly, the cars make use of exotic and expensive aerospace grade composite materials.

*“My experience with Lamborghinis is that they’re a lot friendlier to drive than they might appear at first glance—once you get used to sitting a cushion’s depth off the road.”*

No dream car list would be really complete without a Jaguar in it, and although the British maker doesn’t have anything totally new right now, it does have the very tempting XKR-S, a derivative of the firm’s wonderful range of sports coupes and convertibles. With its impressive 550-horsepower, 5.0-litre V8, Jaguar’s sports classic is even more appealing. With all the grace and speed that mark Jaguar’s heritage, the XKR-S is also a “pussycat” around town, just as easy to cruise in as to drive the winding byways with a little verve. Expect to spend around \$140,000, but few cars from any manufacturer have this kind of elegance and outright prestige, and this must surely be the fastest production Jag ever built.

There are lots of folk around who wouldn’t take a second look at an imported performance car. For them, nothing will match “good old American iron” and for these dreamers, Dodge has its Charger SRT8. In Dodge-talk, “SRT” means unbridled power, and the Charger SRT8 has lots of it. With a mighty 6.4-litre V8 delivering 465-horsepower, this is a muscle car in the traditional sense of the word. It looks the part, too, with its low-slung bodywork and wide wheels. The cockpit is a great place in which to go to work and it even has a few elements that harken back to earlier days when brawny machines like this ruled the roads of North America. The SRT8 is a beast of a car to be sure, but unlike its predecessors of decades ago, it’s very safe, has great handling and brakes, and is just as easily controllable as a Honda Civic. It has an awful lot of performance for a reasonable \$48,000 or so.



2012 Lamborghini Aventador



2012 Jaguar XKR-S



2012 Dodge Charger SRT8



2012 Volkswagen Touareg TDI



2012 Harley-Davidson CVO



2012 Fiat 500 Cabriolet

For those who would never look beyond an SUV for their favourite set of wheels, VW’s big Touareg TDI is an impressive rig with its powerful diesel and amazing torque. The engine is “only” a 3.0-litre, 225-horsepower unit, but it boasts a whopping 406 lb-ft of torque—and it’s fast, too. With its highly effective 4WD system, this vehicle really can go anywhere. It’s not widely known that the Touareg was developed by VW and Porsche as a team and is related to the latter automaker’s Cayenne model. While the Touareg is less expensive, the interior is finished to luxury standards and the vehicle’s off-road capability is beyond dispute. With the big diesel, it’s even better when the going gets rough, but it’s comfortable to ride in, even on rocky surfaces. Diesel engines are economical, last almost forever and, nowadays, have none of the noisy, smelly characteristics of oil burners of long ago. VW’s TDI is a highly sophisticated powerplant and a match for anything out there, regardless of what fuel it uses. Expensive for a VW at \$60,000 to \$64,000, but worth every dollar.

Of course, to many people, transportation dreams run more towards two wheels than four and for them, Harley-Davidson offers products like the very-desirable CVO Ultra Classic Electra Glide, a touring bike in the grandest manner. An aristocrat among motorcycles, the handsome CVO has a suspended, dual control heated seat, adjustable passenger backrest with lumbar support, plush-lined luggage, saddlebags and numerous other goodies. Designed for long-haul touring, the CVO is beautifully built and finished, and surely rider and passenger never had it as good as they do on a bike like this. There’s no need to mention that power comes from a vee-twin on a Harley and in the case of this model, it displaces 1802 cc and boasts an impressive amount of torque—important in this class of bike. It may be a large machine, but, like most motorcycles, it has very thrifty fuel consumption. In case the motorcycle doesn’t keep you happy enough out on the road, it comes with an Apple iPod Nano which plugs into the sound system interface and stores in a pocket—luxury cruising indeed. Don’t expect too much change out of \$40,000 or so for one of these “instant classic” machines.

To wrap up, how about something that you could probably fit almost comfortably under a nice, big Christmas tree? The tiny Fiat 500 can be had for less than \$20,000 but it somehow carries its share of Italian “brio” that all cars built in that country seem to possess. The original Fiat 500 (Cinquecento to Italians) made its debut in 1957 and would endure in one form or another for more than 20 years. Now the legendary Fiat 500 is back in the news as the nameplate’s “debut product” in Canada following the Fiat/Chrysler alliance. Power comes from a 1.4-litre 4-cylinder mated to either a 5-speed manual or a 6-speed automatic transmission. The engine only just nudges beyond 100-horsepower, but since the 500 is small and light, it feels nice and lively, and is great fun to drive. It sounds good too, as all Italian-designed powerplants should. Although it’s primarily a city car, it’s perfectly happy on the freeway or even winding mountain roads with steep gradients. The ride is pretty good too and for its diminutive wheelbase, it irons out the surface variations very effectively. You won’t impress your friends as much as you would in a Ferrari FF or perhaps on a Harley CVO, but you’ll feel pretty good in it anyway. ■



# Market Strategies Marathon

By Adrian Mastracci, Portfolio Manager, KCM Wealth Management Inc.



*“I became a good pitcher when I stopped trying to make them miss the ball and started trying to make them hit it.”*

~ Sandy Koufax, retired baseball pitcher.

Investors are always looking for new and improved ways to approach the markets, all in the quest of becoming better stewards of their wealth. We’ve pulled together some ideas rethought for exactly these reasons.

### Confidence and expectations

Stock markets are subjected to many moving parts every day. This year has been a graphic reminder. Credit rating downgrades continue to weigh on headlines. Declining global productivity data is another release adding to uncertainty.

These same markets are very thirsty for two simple things: confidence and expectations. Both can move markets quickly and significantly; the scarcity of either heightens the wall of worry. Buying stocks is best when confidence and expectations are hard to find. Selling stocks is best when confidence and expectations are overflowing.

Investing sentiment can change day to day. There are serious concerns about what is taking place around the globe. The direction of this nervous recovery is anything but normal.

Here are six issues that impact the outcome:

- Prospects for fixing the limping global recovery.
- Achieving corporate earnings growth.
- Long-term job growth.
- Reversing the U.S. real estate mess.
- Consumers loosening their purse strings.
- Resolving world debts and deficits for many countries.

Rebuilding sluggish economies takes patience and a serious game plan. Lasting jobs is the medicine that plays the biggest part in a sustainable recovery.

Many investors have found these markets a painful roller coaster. More potholes may be waiting around the curve ahead. Keep a keen watch for changes in confidence and expectations.

### Considering new investments

We sympathize with being an investor—we, too, are investors! Trying to navigate the market machinations during the wall of worry is hard. Ongoing management success requires patience, discipline, strategy and knowledge. Knowing about investments, retirement, income tax, managing risk, estates and the family business are but a few.

You also need experience and know-how to design, implement, monitor and tweak your road map. There are many decisions to make for each portfolio. For example, at some point you will consider some new investments. Perhaps you initiate the process or your advisor makes some suggestions.

But how do you assess whether the selections are suitable for you? Ask these important questions before you buy any new investment:

- Why am I buying it?
- Do I understand it?
- What risks am I taking?
- What are my expectations about it?
- Am I receiving objective research and advice?
- How does it fit into my portfolio?

If the answers don’t seem to make sense, ask again. If you are still not satisfied, ask someone else. Perhaps, another opinion may reduce your apprehensions—and enhance your knowledge.

*“Your first step to sanity is to find out  
what your investor profile really is.”*

### Reshaping asset mix

Stock markets can often turn murky and portfolios become muddled. Investors run scared, especially when they incur those triple digit market drops. Our role as portfolio managers is to keep things in perspective. We focus on the fundamentals of investing and don’t let emotions run away.

Accordingly, here are three portfolio comments for your consideration:

- Your current “asset mix” may not resemble your real investor profile.
- You may still have too much invested in stocks and mutual funds.
- Your unintended consequences are that you incur too much risk.

Judging by the portfolios of our first time inquiries, there are many firmly in these predicaments.

Your first step to sanity is to find out what your investor profile really is. For example, a 70 to 85 percent mix of equities is an aggressive profile; 85 to 100 percent is speculative. It takes a serious appetite for risk to embrace either of these profiles.

Reshaping your investing road map is prudent, especially your “asset mix” targets. “Buy, hold and pray” is not reliable strategy. Studies have found that asset allocation has the biggest impact on your portfolio. Not investment selection, nor market timing.

Your portfolio focus should be your allocation decisions. Particularly, if your allocations to stocks and mutual funds are too high for comfort. Our premise for your asset mix is two-fold:

- If you have over 65 percent in stocks and mutual funds, conduct a detailed portfolio review. Your asset mix is likely sporting more risk than you can safely tolerate.
- If you have up to 65 percent in stocks and mutual funds, also revisit your mix. Reconfirm that your allocations are still appropriate vis-à-vis personal goals.

Your smart and simple fix is to lighten up on equities. Begin with trimmings, not major surgery. Deal with your riskiest investments first. Prune gradually to the asset mix that matches your investor profile.

Use market rallies to help make adjustments to your mix. Most investors are comfortable within a 40 to 60 percent equity mix. Best to promptly revisit your asset mix, then rethink and reshape it.



### ETF giant in Canada

Good news all round. The Exchange Traded Funds (ETF) landscape is getting bigger and probably cheaper. Vanguard, the U.S. company, has applied to launch six new Canadian-based ETFs. This is good news for clients and investors as a whole.

ETFs are baskets of securities purchased and sold on exchanges as you would a stock. A single ETF covers investment in a specific geography or sector, like Canada or energy. Vanguard is one of the largest investment management companies in the world. They manage \$168 billion in ETFs and over \$1.7 trillion in other investments.

Market indices show their ETFs will track slightly differently from other providers—thereby offering a slightly different approach, but still passive in nature. We anticipate their costs to be competitive. We also expect Vanguard’s ETFs will pressure other ETF providers to lower costs.





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## WEALTH



### Investing clichés

Like sports, the investing world is full of clichés. Some are pearls of wisdom to behold in today's volatile climate. They are found all over the internet. Understanding the implications of clichés often helps the investing process.

Here are a few that stand out from the crowd:

- It's not different this time. Stock market activity of today has happened before and will repeat again. The debate is to what degree.
- Investors have no control over stock markets. The best they can do is recognize the messages that the markets are conveying.
- Buying at the low point and selling at the high point has similar odds to winning the lottery. Very few investors achieve these milestones.
- Never try and catch a falling knife. Wait for it to hit the ground then pick it up. The same applies to falling stocks.
- Greed can be the Achilles heel of investors. Sell when you can, not when you must.
- Accept that losses are part of the investment experience. The biggest problem is not incurring losses. Rather, it's holding losses too long.
- Wise investors can change course quickly when the time comes. Remain objective and void of biases.
- Bad news on a stock is often not a one-time event. More usually follows soon after. If the news troubles you, sell your stock.

Appreciating these clichés handles a few important investing issues. Your long-term investment road map should improve.

### Dramatic game changers

Investors are in an era of dramatic game changers. The game of economics has changed noticeably—especially in the U.S. and Europe over the last few years.

These five key economic drivers stand out:

1. Fed effectiveness: The U.S. Fed used to use a toolbox full of tools to direct the economy, being effective either in putting on the brakes or stimulating more activity. Today, they telegraph zero interest rates for at least two years. Clearly, the Fed does not command the same effectiveness it once enjoyed.
2. Sovereign debts: Bond investors happily loaned to sovereign countries—quite often, billions and billions of funds—that is, until this year. Today, there is a loud debate as to how much debt some countries can actually repay. There may not be enough money available to recapitalize all the affected banks.
3. Governments de-hire: Governments became used to borrowing more and hiring an increasing workforce at the municipal, state and federal levels. Today, governments are finding austerity at all levels, and are seeking to shed more and more jobs.
4. Consumers de-leverage: Consumers used to merrily take on more debt, spend and keep the economy going. Then the “saving” word found some comfort in their vocabulary. Today, they are trying to rid themselves of the painful, crippling debts. They are less willing to shoulder the heavy task of keeping the economy afloat.
5. Job search: Finding a new job was not so stressful when U.S. unemployment hovered near five percent, frequently taking less than two months. Today, the lucky ones need at least six months, often much more time. Many have given up job searching, even with two years of unemployment benefits.

These drivers affect fragile economies in big ways. The next few years may not bring about much positive change.

### Business guidance is key

Markets will soon begin digesting the corporate earnings for the last quarter of 2011. Investors are keenly awaiting the much anticipated earnings reports. No doubt some companies will miss on expectations, while others will deliver. There will be plenty of headlines and debates surrounding the S&P500 earnings.

However, earnings are not the primary focal point for investors. The far bigger question is the business guidance companies provide for the next quarter and beyond. That outlook will be the driving force for renewed market optimism or continued worries. So, become a better investor and deal with the real centre of attention.

Look for indications of revenue growth. Other welcome signs are a dividend increase or stock repurchase plans. Peek beyond the unfolding earnings reports. One solid way to revitalize market confidence is with improving prospects.

Keep your eye on the ball. The pitch to hit may be coming your way. The marathon continues. ▮





## Giving Gets Charitable this Holiday Season

By Maggie Leithead

Instead of giving the same old sweaters and jewellery this year, why not fill the stockings of your loved ones with a goat or a metre of the Trans Canada Trail? Charity gifts have emerged as a popular alternative to the tired old chachkas of yesteryear.

Most of us don't need more "stuff" in our lives and many people have switched to making charitable donations instead of giving traditional gifts for the holidays. For the person who has everything, a donation can be a memorable and impactful way of celebrating the season. It might be a gift to the local food bank, or to a charity doing sight-saving cataract surgeries in Tibet. Whatever the cause, holiday gifts to charities have a much longer-lasting and positive effect than unwrapping another coffee mug stuffed with chocolates.

*"...an overwhelming majority of  
Canadians would opt to receive  
a gift that helped others, rather  
than a traditional holiday gift."*

Several years ago, World Vision and Ipsos Reid released a survey showing that an overwhelming majority of Canadians would opt to receive a gift that helped others, rather than a traditional holiday gift. This year, a similar survey by Ipsos and the Nature Conservancy of Canada found that 74 percent of Canadians agree that knowing someone has made a donation in their name in lieu of a holiday gift makes them feel good.

Charities from coast to coast have responded to this trend with new options and holiday catalogues filled with ways to do good with your gift giving.

Whether the people are on your list are interested in the arts, the environment or international development, there's a charity that can help you celebrate their interest in a meaningful way. Charitable gift menus include tangible items like crafts and clothing, as well as eclectic finds such as adopting a star or adopting a killer whale.

Not sure what charity your recipients would be interested in supporting? Get them a charitable gift card from CanadaHelps.org and they can pass the donation along to any charity in the country.

Charity holiday gifts can also accommodate almost any budget. For under \$20, you can order small items like CDs, calendars, and other stocking stuffers. In the \$50 range, you can give tangibles like clothing or first aid kits, or "virtual" gifts like a goat to a family in Ghana or seeds, farming tools and training in pest management to a family in Kenya. For gifts over \$100, you can adopt a guide dog puppy or protect an area of lynx or caribou habitat.

If you want to splash out for a family gift, some charities and nonprofits offer custom experiences that take you behind the scenes. You can ring in the New Year with a sleepover at the Vancouver Aquarium or arrange a sleepover later this spring at the Ontario Science Centre. Many arts organizations also offer back-stage tours of their facilities or member-only special events to preview shows or new exhibitions.

So, when you're wandering around the mall or heading down Main Street in a gift-hunting daze this month, don't forget to add a few gifts that give twice to your shopping cart. It'll bring a smile to the face of more than just the person who opens the gift. ■

### National charities with holiday giving options:

Amnesty International Canada | [www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca)  
Canadian Hunger Foundation | [www.giftsthatmatter.ca](http://www.giftsthatmatter.ca)  
Nature Conservancy Canada | [www.natureconservancy.ca](http://www.natureconservancy.ca)  
Plan Canada | [www.plancanada.ca](http://www.plancanada.ca)  
Seva Canada | [www.seva.ca](http://www.seva.ca)  
St. John Ambulance | [www.shopsja.ca](http://www.shopsja.ca)  
Trans Canada Trail | [www.tctrail.ca](http://www.tctrail.ca)  
World Society of the Preservation of Animals  
[www.reallywildgifts.ca](http://www.reallywildgifts.ca)  
World Vision | [www.worldvision.ca](http://www.worldvision.ca)  
World Wildlife Fund | [www.wwf.ca](http://www.wwf.ca)  
Charitable gift cards from CanadaHelps.org  
[www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)  
Find more giving options at [tinyurl.com/givetwice](http://tinyurl.com/givetwice)

# For the person who has everything, Give the Gift of Giving.



Charity Gift Cards let you give back, and they're the perfect gift for everyone on your list: **clients, colleagues, family, friends, neighbours... everyone!**



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## Soaring Sculptures

Things are changing in the studio of sculptor Cathryn Jenkins. Cathryn, who is known internationally for her larger-than-life stone grizzly bears, has other ideas flying around in her creative mind. Birds, eagles, hawks, ravens, ospreys and several species of owl are being transformed into wing-tipped, tall, elegant, and ingeniously designed stone sculptures.

With endless stones from quarries in B.C., and recently Newfoundland, as well semi-precious stones from around the world, Cathryn is creating stone mosaics that are engineered to take the weight of the stone used in these majestic sculptures, and the wind and weather of our natural environment.

*“...sculpture with height and strength and  
grace, with the raw edges of the stone left  
for the viewer to envision the movement  
that static stone sculpture begs.”*

“There are exquisitely beautiful stones that are small in size,” Jenkins states, “that I just felt compelled to create something with. So I put them together, building on top of an engineered steel and fibreglass form, to create sculpture that I have always wanted to do—sculpture with height and strength and grace, with the raw edges of the stone left for the viewer to envision the movement that static stone sculpture begs. Balance, or rather the feeling of a lack of it, is important for creating movement as well.”

Stone sculpture of this size and complexity takes time to create. Cathryn is working hard to get these ideas out of her head and into reality. A large eagle graces the Grandview Business Centre Lobby in South Surrey, B.C., while another completed work flies through the sculpture garden of Sid and Joanne Belzberg of Vancouver B.C. A nine-foot eagle is now being mounted at the home of Peter Spencer in Edmonton, and the large eagle that graced the lobby of the Chateau Whistler is being permanently installed at a private residence in Whistler, B.C.

However, even with the call for more of these unique sculptures, Cathryn is moving forward with a smaller version of the “Room with a View” series. “Even six-foot sculptures would be a large and dramatic statement” states Cathryn, “but will fit through doors, and can be displayed in so many different ways, and will be, as the larger birds, created from beautiful stones from Canada and around the world.”

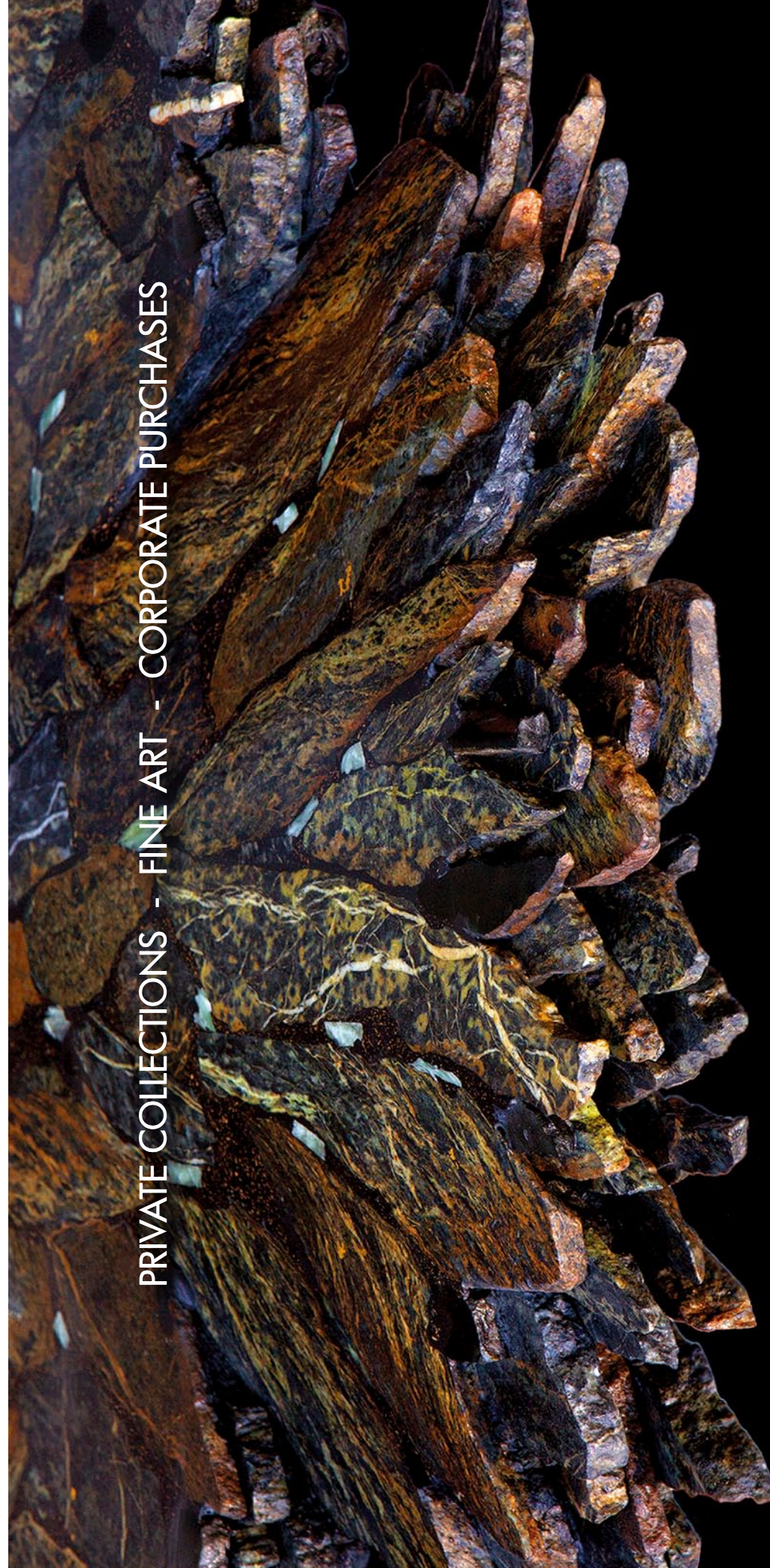


Cathryn is excited, no doubt, about all of this. She envisions black marble ravens, pink rhodonite snowy owls, naturally toned golden eagles—some highlighted with carefully placed inlays of blue lapis, translucent B.C. jade, and gem quality turquoise. “Smaller, tall, elegant sculpture can grace almost any home. Pairs would be beautiful so the birds can relate to each other, and “First Flight” combinations with the large nine-foot birds would create amazing large works for lobbies and sculpture gardens.”

It takes time and work to complete each individual bird. Cathryn is pleased, though, to announce that the smaller six-foot birds will be in progress in her studio by January 2012. A new year, and a new challenge. ■

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# GEORG SCHMERHOLZ



## *PREDATOR*

16"L x 12"W x 18"H

Ogden Mt. (BC) Jade

⊕

Calcite Stalagmite