

— SPRING 2018 ISSUE —

# THE DISTINCTIVE LIFE



TRENDY COLOR PALETTES  
FOR INTERIORS

Turn to this year's top trends to add  
personal touches to your space. *p.16*

MAKE RECIPES THAT SHINE WITH THESE  
IN-HOME SECRETS FROM TOP CHEFS

Think like a Michelin star chef with a few  
delicious secrets from the pros. *p.46*

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*p.4* **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO  
SHERRY CHRIS**

## Luxury Interior Design

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*p.6* **EXCITING NEW KITCHEN TRENDS**  
Go boldly into your kitchen space with trendy inspiration

*p.16* **TRENDY COLOR PALETTES  
FOR INTERIORS**  
Turn to this year's top trends to add personal touches  
to your space



Exciting New Kitchen Trends *p.6*



Discover the World on a Luxury River Cruise *p.34*

## Destinations & Travel

---

*p.34* **DISCOVER THE WORLD ON A LUXURY  
RIVER CRUISE**  
Sail the high seas of adventure with these glamorous options

*p.52* **THE BEST HIKING PLACES IN THE USA**  
Blaze a new trail to well-being with these paths to nature

# Gourmet Cuisine

*p.40* **8 TIPS FOR THE PERFECT FOOD AND WINE PAIRING**  
Craft a delicious match with a memorable culinary experience

*p.46* **MAKE RECIPES THAT SHINE WITH THESE IN-HOME SECRETS FROM TOP CHEFS**  
Think like a Michelin star chef with a few delicious secrets from the pros



8 Tips For The Perfect Food and Wine Pairing *p.40*



Private Airplane Pilot: Discover this Premier Hobby *p.25*

# Life & Leisure

*p.25* **PRIVATE AIRPLANE PILOT:**  
Discover this premier hobby

*p.29* **DISPLAYING YOUR FINE ART**  
Make your home extraordinary with these placement and framing inspirations

# Listing Ads

*p.56* **LUXURY PROPERTIES**

*letter from the President & CEO*

# SHERRY CHRIS

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**W**hat is your favorite indulgence? Try not to answer too quickly, but really think about it. And while you are doing that, I will tell you mine. Actually - I have a few. I love a beautifully crafted book. Not your ordinary paperback, but something bound with expert craftsmanship, luxurious paper and a heavy, velvety leather holding it all together. I also find myself getting lost in beautiful photography. I love when vibrant colors collide, creating an image that grabs my attention and holds it. Pure magic.

This is our second issue of *The Distinctive Life*, and I sincerely hope that the following pages will capture your imagination and provide countless reasons for you to indulge. Within these pages you can escape, learn, create and find your luxurious sanctuary- whether that be at home, in nature, or abroad!

Please enjoy and thank you for reading this issue of *The Distinctive Life*.

Sincerely,

**SHERRY CHRIS**  
President and CEO  
*Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate*

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# LUXURY BLOG

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*exciting new*  
**KITCHEN  
TRENDS**

**K**itchens are no longer a hidden secret in the back of the house. With the rise in open concepts, this space has truly become the heart of the home, and it reflects the owner's style more than any other.

Trends should you look at as you get ready to update your family's favorite room? This year's kitchens are getting bolder colors, smarter storage and decluttered countertops.





1.

## *THINK BOLD, DARK COLORS*

While a wash of white from counter to cabinet is still a popular choice, this is the year where bold, dark colors get their due. How dark? Greens, blues, dark plums and, yes, even "ultra violet" are popping up in the more color-forward renovations on cabinets, walls, backsplashes, foyers and pantries. Blue kitchens with contrasting brass fixtures started gaining traction in 2017, but this year, designers are going one step further. The rise of green satisfies those wanting a more serene, back-to-nature vibe, while the vibrant "ultra violet" has become a more considered option since it was named Pantone's Color of the Year.

2.

## *CHOOSE POPS OF COLOR*

If you still love the look of clean, white shaker cabinets, countertops and backsplashes, you are in good company. According to Real Simple, this classic palette and style will still reign. What should you do if you want to add a little something new to your kitchen décor? Consider adding a sink in a new color rather than choosing a traditional white or stainless model. The options range from delicate blues to the more dramatic "ultra violet" options, and the new sink can become a focal point that will give your kitchen an updated feel without spending a lot of money on a big reno.



3.

## *PAINT TWO-TONE CABINETS*

A great way to add character to your kitchen is to introduce two-tone cabinets into your style mix. You can keep the classic white upper cabinets and then opt for darker lower cabinetry or on the island. You don't need huge contrasts, even variations on white can make your kitchen pop. Gray cabinets are much loved, and, of course, bolder colors will also make your décor sing. Don't be surprised if you also start seeing a variety of materials being used on upper and lower cabinets. Cabinet faces can trend more rustic than their boxes to create new textures in the space.

4.

## *UPDATE YOUR FLOORING*

Real Simple recently ran a survey by Houzz revealing that hardwood floors remain wildly popular. In keeping with the movement toward contrasts, those floors are darker than ever when the paint on the cabinets and walls swings lighter. The darker woods lend a warmer element to the room. People are also starting to choose more dramatic patterns in the kitchen - think herringbone! If hardwoods (or laminates) are not your favorites, don't despair. Ceramic tiles are making a big push this year. They allow for more personalization in terms of color and style. Consider working with designers to create custom tiles to reflect your personality.





## 5. *TRY STATEMENT COUNTERTOPS*

Are your countertops starting to look worn or outdated? Over the last few years, renovations have seen granite countertops replaced in favor of quartz. Why the trend? Engineered quartz is more durable and stain resistant. A huge bonus for anyone who cooks a lot, has kids or doesn't want to worry

about every red wine spill. Quartz has also started appearing in neutral colors alongside the classic white samples. Want to go even bolder? Consider mixing countertop materials, using different options in prep areas. Don't be surprised if you also see soapstone in more kitchens this year and next.

## 6.

### *EMBRACE SMART STORAGE AND DECLUTTERING*

The decluttering trend has landed in kitchens in a big way. The desire for clear countertops has resulted in different choices, from the products people are buying to their high-tech storage solutions. Instant Pots made their way onto the scene because people loved the simplicity of buying one tool that does so many things with ease. Smart storage has also taken over. Picture smart cabinets that can hide your coffeemaker, power cords and all. These so-called “appliance garages” are perfect for smaller appliances and they take tools out of the visual range to give your kitchen an overall less cluttered feel. Plus, they often take small appliances off of your prep space – a huge bonus for anyone working in smaller kitchens or who loves the minimalist



aesthetic. Other trends include multi-tiered drawers, deep drawer organizers and hydraulic cabinet pieces that lift out of the way when not in use (fantastic for stand mixers). If a pantry is on your wish list, take a look at the latest options for building wall pantries into your existing layout. These stylish built-ins add a custom touch to your kitchen, blend well with your overall design and provide fantastic storage opportunities.



## 7. *LEAP INTO THE SMART KITCHEN*

The year started with a big push toward incorporating automatic sensors for faucets and sensor-activated lighting for overheads and in-cabinet devices. Assistant technology, along the lines of Google Home or Amazon's Echo, is creating increased demand.

Today's meat thermometers can tell you when your meal is ready. Want to go bigger? Think about incorporating smart refrigerators that will alert you through your app to tell you when you need groceries – and which grocery items are going bad.



8

## 8. *BUILD MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ISLANDS*

Islands have long been favorites for anyone who wants to increase their prep space. Style-wise, islands are set to make a visual impact. From dramatic waterfall countertops to bold color blocking, these pieces are meant to be seen. This year, kitchen islands are getting a functionality upgrade to provide not only more storage but a taste of luxury. Add-ins like wine refrigerators, prep-sinks and baking ovens are becoming increasingly popular. If you'd like to incorporate more seating for this entertaining/family space, consider creating a counter overhang and adding tall, colorful stools that fit underneath.



## 9. *UPGRADE YOUR APPLIANCES*

Commercial grade appliances with a classic, stainless steel look have been all the rage. This year is seeing a real swing toward new finishes and improved functionality. Designer appliances in black stainless steel are making a big push, and gray-toned options with brushed finishes are getting more orders. For those looking to add that splash of color, it isn't unusual to see designers adding a colorful, vintage-like (yet, undoubtedly modern) piece into a kitchen that was once dedicated to standard appliance suites.

Commercial ranges are fading a bit, as the turn toward luxury pieces like induction cooktops continues. Steam ovens are getting kudos and being credited for increasing food flavors, while French door wall ovens are sparking interest for their Bluetooth-enabled cook functions.

Are these the only new kitchen trends? Absolutely not! People can get boosts from little changes like adding in rose gold or copper finishes or hardware.

Oversized light fixtures in bold colors can become statement pieces that can add depth to even traditional kitchens. Don't worry about mixing and matching colors. Paint your walls a dark color that highlights your white cabinets. Add metallic trims, change your stove hood to copper or consider a disappearing hood technique that blends the hood with your backsplash. This is the year that kitchens go bold.

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# TRENDY COLOR PALETTES

*for interiors*

*For painting inspiration to personalize a new space or enliven an old one, turn to some of this year's top trends. We're seeing bold and beautiful color palettes that add just the right pop to minimalist décor. Others stand out by bringing luxurious jewel tones into an already plush setting. Sultry shades that create intrigue top the 2018 color trends. Pastels done in an ultra-modern way remove any doubt that pinks and pale greens can be luxurious.*

*This year's trendy color palettes for interiors make statements. They offer fresh alternatives to stale spice up spaces. Here are some of our favorites:*





## *DEEP TURQUOISE AND SAPPHIRE BLUE*

Infuse a moody tone into a living room, bedroom or even kitchen with deep turquoise and sapphire. These hues leave a definitive mark when showcased on a sofa, side chair and wallpaper. Partner turquoise and sapphire blue with natural wood tones, as well as gold to create a dramatic look that can be either elegant or contemporary.

## *METALLICS AS NEUTRALS*

Swap out your wood tones for gold, copper and silver. Metallics are the new neutral and no longer the dramatic focal point of a room. Going into 2018, expect to see interior designers using metallics as go-to colors for ceiling paper, furniture and accessories.



## *DARK PLUM*

Go bold in a regal way with dark plum. This hue offers drama and luxury, especially in a dining room, living room or foyer. Kitchens can also be a surprisingly perfect fit for plum. Chairs, walls, cabinets and even tile or a door in dark plum offer intensity without brazenness.

## *FALL HUES YEAR ROUND*

“Autumn Maple” is one of Pantone’s top shades for, you guessed it, autumn. It’s warm and gorgeous year-round, though. Similarly, burnt orange spices up spaces like kitchens and dens. Look to fall hues if you want to bring the feel of rustic surroundings indoors.



## *BLACKS*

There's much to love about black-on-black rooms and blacks as neutrals this year. Sexy and sleek, black compliments nearly any color or design theme. Paint your walls and built-in bookshelves various shades of black. Go with black floors and furniture, just include at least a bit of black to bring some drama to your space.



## *STONE WHITE*

The Parisians know that painting walls just the right shade of white brightens a space lacking sunlight. Mimic the sun and light up the rooms in your French or Spanish-style home, or in your American modern or classic house. Stone white is a perfect shade to make it feel like you have yards of windows when you don't. This hue goes with any color scheme such as mustard yellow and navy, delicate pink and soft grey.



### *MINIMALIST PASTELS*

Bring a touch of softness to a modern space with minimalist pastels. Washed colors like mint green and pale pink look far from cutesy when treated with an eye toward simplicity. Keep the idea “less is more” in mind when decorating with pastels. Pair them with clean lines and shiny accents to achieve contemporary luxury instead of a childlike appearance.



### *ASH*

Nature and man know what beauty is. Ash-colored walls create a natural rock or industrial concrete look that works well with formal and casual interior design. This light and airy color leaves spaces feeling open. It is a great neutral to go with shades of white, black, orange and gold.

## *VIBRANT YELLOWS AND GREENS*

Ready to bring joy into your home? Place vibrant yellows and greens in places you might normally to feed off of their energies. Playful yellows and greens give a formal dining room a social and convivial feel. Carry these hues into other areas of your home like sunrooms and guest rooms, on the wallpaper, furniture and walls.



## GREENERY

For on-trend painting inspiration, look no further than Pantone's Color of the Year winners. 2017's Greenery proves that whether you live in the city, country or suburbs, this apple-green hue offers a connection to "nature, one another and a larger purpose," says Leatrice Eiseman, Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute. She adds that Greenery provides us with "assurance to rejuvenate and revitalize."

Through colors like Greenery and other trending shades, we find energy, connection and meaning. Sometimes, our needs for staying energized, connected and meaningful change. It is great to find painting inspiration and design trends that provide us with what we need at any given time – even if that means altering our space each season or year.





*Private Airplane Pilot:*

# DISCOVER THIS PREMIER HOBBY

If you've seen friends and family fly themselves off to weekend trips and vacations, you might've wondered how to get a private pilot license.

Earning a private pilot license, or private pilot certificate, is a fun achievement. It opens up a door to travel and enjoying life that's incomparable.

Imagine the convenience of being able to take yourself and anyone close to you off to beautiful locales, without arranging your trip within a pilot or airline's schedule. Think about the sense of accomplishment when you're able to fly yourself nearly anywhere, reaching great heights physically and symbolically.

Getting a private pilot license can make it easier to make meetings, get to loved ones in a hurry or simply escape. While some say it's a hobby, many define it as sport and others insist it's a necessity. Flying yourself as a private pilot is unbeatable.

Here's how to get a private pilot license:

1.

## *CHECK IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE*

Anyone who wants to get a private pilot license has to meet eligibility requirements as set forth in FAR 61.103.

The regulations state that an applicant for a private pilot license must be at least 17 years of age. It's also a requirement that an applicant be able to speak, read and understand English.

Successful completion of flight training requirements and passing of a knowledge exam is also mandatory. There's a practical exam that needs to be passed as well, which includes a verbal exam and flight test.

2.

## *GET A STUDENT PILOT CERTIFICATE*

If you've already obtained a student pilot certificate, sport pilot certificate or recreational pilot certificate, you can proceed to the next step. Those who haven't must start out by obtaining the student pilot certificate (this usually includes getting an aviation medical certificate simultaneously). There are three ways you can obtain a student pilot certificate:

- Get the student pilot certificate and the required medical certificate from the aviation medical examiner, at the same time when you're in the office for your medical appointment.
- Submit an application for the student pilot license at an FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), but remember you'll still need the medical certificate.
- Obtain the student pilot certificate from an FAA examiner.





### 3. *PASS YOUR CLASS AVIATION MEDICAL EXAM*

To obtain your aviation medical certificate, you'll need to pass the 3rd class aviation medical exam. Don't put this step off, because it's necessary before you make any solo flights. The entire process of becoming a private airplane pilot can go by rather quickly, so you won't want to delay your first flight on your own.

### 6. *IT'S TIME TO FLY!*

Working toward your private pilot license involves many hours of actual flight experience. You and your instructor will practice basic maneuvers like takeoffs, landings, climbs, descents and turns. Students need to complete 10 hours of flight experience to solo an aircraft. Many, however, opt to complete a substantial number of hours beyond this requirement, which offers more opportunities to learn about the plane and potential emergency situations. Additional hours allow you to become familiar with radio communication, navigation techniques and advanced piloting skills.

### 4. *SEARCH FOR AN INSTRUCTOR*

Sometimes, finding the best flight instructor is just a matter of asking a friend, colleague or family member for a reference. If you don't know anyone who has taken flight lessons, you can check with a local flight instruction school or your local airport.

### 7. *TAKE THE FAA PRACTICAL EXAM (CHECKRIDE)*

To be eligible for the FAA Practical exam or checkride, you need to have at least 40 hours of flight time behind you. Of these hours, 20 must with an instructor and 20 need to be solo flight time. You also have to have three hours of instructor-accompanied cross-country training, one cross-country flight greater than 100 nautical miles, three hours of night flying and many more hours of specific training. An FAA examiner gives the checkride and verbal exam.

### 5. *PASS THE FAA WRITTEN EXAM*

Many flight instructors will require that you pass the FAA written exam before you even get into an airplane. Some may let you fly while you're readying for the test, but keep in mind you must pass the exam before you can go on your final checkride (the flying test for becoming a certified private pilot). Taking the written test early on is beneficial, as it offers knowledge that can be helpful to you throughout the licensing process.

### 8. *FILL OUT THE PAPERWORK AND PAY FOR YOUR LICENSE*

When you've successfully completed your FAA Practical Text, you'll have to pay your fee and fill out your FAA paperwork to get your license. The examiner can give you a temporary pilot license certificate while you wait for your official certificate to come in the mail. That's it! Private pilot training is intense, but it's a worthwhile pursuit and a noble feat.



# DISPLAYING YOUR FINE ART

*Art is a vital part of a home. It makes a space extraordinary and personal. Displaying your fine art for guests to enjoy, and for you to cherish, is an art form in itself. The wrong placement or framing not only buries the beauty of a piece, it ruins the refinement of a room. When it's time to consider wall-hanging images, or placing precious prints or paintings, consider showing them off with some of these best practices in mind.*

## *HANG ART AT EYE LEVEL*

Depending on the piece and your unique approach to design, you might be able to break this rule, but generally, hang art at eye level. While you're at it, take the time to make sure your art is straight.

Fine art deserves the most beautiful display. Take care that each work is in the right place to be admired. Whether art is placed over a bed, above the mantle, across a long wall or as a focal point behind the sofa, it should sit positioned where a person's natural line of sight meets the piece's point of attention.



## *DON'T WORRY ABOUT MATCHING COLOR SCHEMES*

Fine art isn't made to match or go with a particular shade of paint. It's art and it's meant to stand out on its own. Don't worry about your favorite works fitting in with your color palette.

Break any rules you've heard of or made up, and simply display your art in all its glorious colors (or muted hues if that's the beauty of the piece). Fine art is a perfect vehicle for expression. Let it say what it needs say without conforming.



## *USE APPROPRIATE SCALE*

When wall hanging an image or fine painting, pay attention to scale. A beautiful small picture or drawing is best placed on a small wall. Go bold with larger landscapes or designs arranged on lengthy walls or in vaulted spaces.

Sometimes, you can get away with putting a wide frame and mat on a piece to make it take up more space and fit better within a large area. Keep in mind, however, that you don't need to achieve perfect proportion all of the time. Often, an obviously out-of-scale composition looks brilliant.

## *INCLUDE A VARIETY OF PIECES*

Do you place the same kind of art on each wall in your house? Displaying fine art in your home is not the same as curating an exhibit in a gallery. You don't need cohesion between works.

Searching for just the right piece is a great way to get a variety of art to enliven a room, and your entire home. Don't be scared of walls being bare until you've found what brings the perfect energy to your room. Wall hanging images simply to hang something, and failing to treat your house as a canvas for expressing various parts of you, leads to a dull environment.





### *FIND AN APPRECIATION FOR NEGATIVE SPACE*

The fact that you have walls in every room (unless you live in a gorgeous glass house) doesn't mean you have to fill every inch with art. Fine art often looks more stunning as the sole focus point of a wall or even an entire room.

If you collect art, consider rotating pieces to give each the space and attention it warrants. Restricting the artwork you display can produce a more impressive look overall.

### *LAYERING TO CONNECT ART WITH YOUR DÉCOR*

Layer your furnishings, flora and fine art to connect a space. Placing a lamp in front of a large painting is okay, as is letting a bit of a palm fan out in front of a framed photograph.

Connection through layering ties together areas of a room, without the need for following strict color rules. It creates sophistication, depth and interest in a bedroom, great room, parlor or any area of a home.

## *SECURING YOUR ART PROPERLY*

When you have an extraordinary piece of art to display, you must take care to secure it properly and keep it safe. A swiftly closed door, accidental bump or act of nature could cause your art to unattractively shift or even fall.

Spend the necessary amount of time choosing the right hardware for displaying your fine art. You might be anxious to get a piece up. Slowing down to find ways to affix your treasures suitably can extend your enjoyment of them.

Fine art lends to a home's atmosphere. Take the time to create exactly the atmosphere you want, one that will best tell your home's story and yours.



*Discover the World on a*  
**LUXURY  
RIVER  
CRUISE**

*Luxury, intimacy and unique itineraries define a new generation of river cruises, making them a first-choice vacation option among luxury travelers. Intimate river cruise boats can travel up smaller rivers, making parts of the world accessible in a way that hasn't been available before. Travel rivers like the Mississippi, Danube, Ganges and more, placing the world just down the gangplank to port. With many river cruises prioritizing luxury and elegance, each trip is memorable, restful and once-in-a-lifetime. Discover where the world's luxury river cruises will take you.*





Gain a perspective that you can only get when you take a river cruise. Landscapes slide past as rivers roll through untouched forests, beautiful landscapes and uninhabited deserts. Cities come alive from their waterfronts. Regional cuisine helps to define culture and give visitors a taste of the area. Plus, traveling by river makes traditional landmarks and attractions accessible by stopping at ports of call in the heart of the most famous cities in the world.

River cruises can also boast about their intimate experiences. Open-ocean cruises rely on huge ships with thousands of passengers. When you reserve a river cruise, you are committing to traveling with only a few hundred people. When you get off the boat in a port of call, you aren't swarmed with other passengers all trying to get into the same attractions. Fewer passengers also means more personalized service on board.

River cruise boats offer a full luxury experience. With fine dining, beautiful and private accommodations with boutique-style décor, your time on the cruise boat will not be forgotten. You will be able to relax completely while experiencing a one-in-a-lifetime vacation.

## *THE UNITED STATES*

With rivers like the mighty Mississippi, Snake and Hudson, river cruises across the United States offer views you will not experience on any road trip. Set sail the length of the Mississippi River aboard a traditional river cruise boat, or try something more authentic like one of American Queen's paddlewheelers or steamboat.

High traffic areas of the Mississippi offer views of cities like Nashville or New Orleans and specialty tours that focus the area's history or culture. American Queen offers themed cruises that focus on subjects like Mark Twain, the area's unique bourbons or the blues and culture. Cruises through the Pacific North West and Alaska on American Cruise Lines explore the rugged beauty and wildlife of the region.



## *EUROPE*

Traveling through Europe's famous rivers, visitors can see history unfold. Famous river tours include trips on the Danube, Rhine or Seine Rivers. The most famous cities these cruises visit are filled with beautiful architecture that dates from as far back as the Middle Ages. Plus, the steady and slow pace ensures that you truly explore any city you visit. European cruise providers include luxury amenities on board and professional tours in port. Companies like Avalon Waterways have expanded their fleet and offerings ensuring your river cruise is exactly what you want it to be.





## *ASIA, INDIA AND CHINA*

Plan a luxury river cruise through unexpected destinations. River cruises have expanded to rivers like the Ganges in India or Yangtze in China or Vietnam, Cambodia and the Mekong Delta. Ships that travel these routes, like Viking Cruises or Uniworld, are some of the most luxurious. These routes offer an unbeatable experience as you learn about the

region's culture, traditions and wildlife. India's Golden Triangle offers views of the Taj Mahal and the Raj Ghat, a black granite memorial to Gandhi. You can explore China's long and storied history afloat the Yangtze River, past panda bears, misty mountains and bamboo grooves, creating a sense of peace and surrounded by history.



## *AFRICA*

Beginning in Cairo, a river cruise down the Nile offers visitors a combination of river and air travel to see sights like King Tutankhamun's tomb and the Valley of the Kings. The result is a dramatic and beautiful river cruise perfect for those who want to combine ancient history and ultimate luxury. Uniworld, Viking and Avalon all offer Nile River cruises.

Start planning a luxury river cruise vacation to one of the world's top destinations, and prepare yourself for an experience unlike any other.

*8 tips for the perfect*  
**FOOD AND  
WINE  
PAIRING**

**S**electing wine for your table needn't be difficult. With some easy guidelines, you can be an expert at food and wine pairings. Whether the perfect vintage is on your mind for a holiday meal, dinner party or personal pleasure, remember just a handful of loose rules to create an exceptional experience.

Perfect pairing matches weight with weight. Food and wine intensities should be in harmony. Aromatics of properly paired food and wine agree with each other. Depending on a food or wine, one of these ideals may need to take precedence over another. The goal, however, is to achieve overall balance.

As an example, you might pair a full-bodied pasta dish with an unoaked full-bodied chardonnay. Oily plates should have companion wines with heavy tannins. Spicy dishes go well with sweet wines, bringing both flavors towards balance. Sometimes it takes a bit of practice to get it right.

## *PAIRING WINE WITH SPICY FOODS*

Spicy foods like curries, intense Thai dishes, gumbos and kimchi require a low-alcohol, sweet wine. Think of a Riesling, gamay Beaujolais, chenin blanc or petite sirah. If you pair spicy dishes with high tannin wines like a merlot or cabernet, you'll experience a dry palate with too much alcohol and heat. A sauvignon blanc is a superb wine to pair with Asian foods, as is a great gewürtztraminer.



## *WINE TO PAIR WITH STARCHY FOODS*

Starchy, fibrous foods like bready dishes, pastas and potato-based meals, pair best given the seasonings or sauce used. Consider a medium-acid wine with light fruit tannins and a bit of body. A foolproof food and wine pairing might be an oven-baked red onion, garlic and spinach pizza on whole-wheat crust, with an unoaked Italian pinot grigio or a rosemary potato gratin with a light merlot.

## *WINE PAIRINGS FOR ACIDIC FOODS*

Meals made with citrus, tomatoes and even eggplant, which are all acidic foods, pair well with high-acidity wines. For paella, lemon and herb rice dishes and baked eggplant entrees, go with a pinot grigio, sauvignon blanc, grenache or zinfandel. Even a sangiovese or cabernet sauvignon is sensational with acidic fare.



## *FATTY FOODS AND WINE PAIRINGS*

Meals that are rich on fatty ingredients like olive oil and avocado should partner with medium-bodied, soft-tannin wines. The tannins will slightly dry out the palate, which is preferable when there's considerable oiliness to a dish. With an olive oil or avocado pasta, try a syrah, merlot, chardonnay or soft-tannin cabernet.



## *WINE AND NUTS*

Nut-based dishes, such as gourmet nut cheese boards and nut pâté find balance with dry sparkling wines. Pair an Italian white like a pinot grigio, or a cava from Spain, with nutty appetizers and entrees. Sherry is a delightful wine for nut-based main dishes, such as an almond vegetable stew.

## *ROOT VEGETABLE AND BEAN PAIRINGS*

Dense pinot noirs complement root vegetable and bean recipes perfectly. With a carrot bisque or a plate of black bean enchiladas, go with a hearty wine from California's Central Coast. You might also choose a field blend from a Northern California winery.



## *PAIRINGS FOR GREEN VEGETABLES AND MUSHROOMS*

Earthy foods like green vegetables and mushrooms pair exceptionally well with French syrahs, verdant pinot noirs and tempranillos. Find an herbaceous wine like a Sancerre or a Chablis for a menu of portobello and poblano fajitas along with sautéed chard. Rosé can be a beautiful partner to a green vegetable dish, such as a green bean risotto.

## *PAIRING WINE WITH SWEETS*

It's simple to remember which wines to pair with sweets. Go for a vintage that's sweeter than your dessert and you'll be more than fine. You can stick with the classic pairing of cabernet and chocolate, and chardonnay and apples is always a great choice. Generally, just opt for a port, Riesling or Sauternes to enjoy an absolutely decadent addition to dessert.

Consider looking for organic wines if you're already careful about choosing organic food ingredients. Wine grapes can be heavily sprayed with pesticides, so think about purchasing wineries that use healthy, earth-friendly and biodynamic production methods. Girasole makes extraordinary organic wines and Cantina Pizzolato produces sulfite-free wines.



*make recipes that shine  
with these in-home secrets*

# FROM TOP CHEFS

*More than knowing which flavors pair perfectly with others or how to achieve perfect peaks in their whipped cream, chefs are masters of knowing how to maximize efficiency and productivity in the kitchen. They know their tools, their recipe hacks and the best kitchen practices. We've compiled this list of in-home kitchen tips used by top chefs and in professional kitchens around the world. You'll feel like a pro when you apply these secrets to your own recipes at home.*





## *PREP EVERYTHING IN ADVANCE*

Mise en place is when a chef measures, chops, cuts, slices, dices and all-around prepares ingredients before the stove is turned on or the oven preheated. This technique is the basics of any cooking class, and chefs rely on it to save time and avoid disastrous kitchen tragedies. “A good home cook is part ballet dancer, part chemist, part juggler, part anthropologist, part laborer, and part project manager,” says Cooking Light. But mise en place allows all those parts to work seamlessly together to create the best dishes.

## *KEEP YOUR KNIVES SHARP*

It may seem like common sense, but a sharp knife will be better able to tackle whatever chopping job needs doing in your kitchen. Sharpen your knife using a long, slow stroke over a whetstone before you use it. How do you know when your knife is sharp? Rachel Ray says that “a sharp blade will slice a ripe tomato or a rolled-up sheet of paper cleanly and effortlessly.” Keeping your knife out of the dishwasher will help lengthen its life and keep it sharper longer.



## *STORE YOUR INGREDIENTS PROPERLY*

Just because your refrigerator is equipped with a vegetable or fruit drawer doesn't mean those are the best places to put your broccoli or avocados when you get home from the grocery store. Should lemons be treated the same way as tomatoes? Martha Stewart recommends leaving vegetables and fruits like onion, garlic, potatoes and tomatoes on the counter because the cooler temperatures ruin the flavors and textures.



## *USE A LARGE CUTTING BOARD*

Don't rely on miniature cutting boards because that's what you have. By investing in the largest cutting board that will fit your space, you avoid a continuous shuffle of things to cut up. Have room for it all with one large cutting board. Better yet, color code the space so you never chop veggies for salad where you've already sliced chicken.

## *INVEST IN IRON COOKWARE*

Despite being harder to manage than its non-stick equivalent, cast iron cookware is a secret tool when it comes to making a chef's recipes memorable. The improved heat control and overall durability makes these pans the go-to choices for chefs worldwide, plus their versatility is remarkable; cast iron can go on the stovetop, in the oven or anywhere.

Make sure you season cast iron pans before use with vegetable oil or shortening. According to BH&G, this "seals interior and exterior surfaces to keep out moisture, prevent rust from forming, and create a smooth, shiny surface that quickly releases cooking foods." But always, always avoid soap.



## *UTENSILS SHOULD DO DOUBLE DUTY*

Avoid fad utensils that are only for specialty dishes, and instead rely on kitchen tools that can serve two purposes. Stick with classic utensils that you know you will use over and over again, and save the precious space you have in your kitchen for cooking and storing only what you truly need.



## *CLEAN AS YOU GO*

Remember that a clean kitchen is easier to cook in. If your kitchen is littered with butter wrappers and vegetable skins, by the time you are nearing the end of your recipe, you are likely to miss an important last step. Throw trash away as you go, put dirty dishes and kitchen tools in the sink, if not in the dishwasher as you go. This will make clean up after your meal easier and ensure your dish is perfectly prepared.

When you follow these simple kitchen tips that the chefs use, you can feel like a pro in your own kitchen. By focusing on the process and the tools that you use, you become more efficient, and you are able to make your dishes as memorable as any top chef's recipes.

# THE BEST HIKING PLACES

*in the USA*

*The United States maintains 58 national parks and thousands of state parks. Which means if you love the outdoors, there is a seemingly endless number of hiking trails to entice you to unplug and reconnect with nature. While there are terrific hikes in every state, here are some suggestions for the best hiking destinations in the USA.*





### *THE MIST TRAIL IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA*

The Mist Trail runs along the Nevada Fall and the Vernal Fall. The spray from the waterfalls in springtime can lead to some slippery conditions, as there is a fair amount of overspray, but the views are incredible. The length of the hike depends on whether you walk the whole route, or only hike up to the first waterfall. It's a difference of a 2.4-mile hike or a 5.4-mile roundtrip trek.

### *SOUTH KAIBAB TRAIL IN GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK*

The South Kaibab Trail is the rapidly descending path to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. With gorgeous views that are perfect for day hikes, travelers will experience the vastness of this natural wonder by following the open ridgelines. At a moderate pace, it takes four to six hours to get to the Colorado River. Be mindful of the steep descent that drops nearly 5,000 feet in 6.3 miles.

### *AWA'AWAPUHI TRAIL IN KAUAI, HAWAII'S KOKE'E STATE PARK*

The Awa'awapuhi Trail reveals stunning views of the famed Na Pali cliffs. The trail begins in the midst of highland trees, but about three miles in, the views of the cliffs and the vast Pacific Ocean are revealed. It's so stunning that you may just want to stay at the overlook. The first portion of the hike is downhill, which means that you'll have to save some energy for that uphill return trek.

## *CASCADE CANYON TRAIL IN WYOMING'S GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK*

The Cascade Canyon Trail is a longer hike, it runs approximately 14 miles, so this one takes some planning. But from the moment you begin it at Jenny Lake, you'll be glad you did. The views of the evergreen forests, mountain peaks and passing wildlife in Grand Teton National Park will stay with you forever.

## *APPALACHIAN TRAIL IN SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA*

There are more than 500 developed hiking trails in Shenandoah National Park that can appeal to hikers of all ages and skill levels. From the waterfalls to the dense forests, there is something that will grab your imagination and allow you to forget about any worries. Among these trails, is approximately 101 miles of the rugged Appalachian Trail.

## *NAVAJO TRAIL LOOP IN BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK, UTAH*

Bryce Canyon National Park, like nearby Zion National Park, provides stunning views for adventurers. Bryce is considered one of the best hiking places in the USA due to its striking rock formations, including rock pillars called hoodoos, that are the result of millions of years of erosion. You can take the more family-friendly loop, or opt for something more challenging. You may even want to consider a little nighttime stargazing.



## *BURROUGHS MOUNTAIN TRAIL IN MT. RAINIER NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON*

Burroughs Mountain takes you to the highest point that is accessible by foot trail in Mt. Rainier National Park. It's 6.3 miles, and it will test you. But you will be rewarded with one of the best hikes in the park and views of Willis Wall and Emmons Glacier as you go. Start at sunrise if you plan on making this a day hike.

## *ROCKY TOP IN THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, TENNESSEE*

This one is not for the faint of heart. It's a strenuous hike that has you climbing up to Rocky Top and up Thunderhead Mountain. This takes some planning, including a very early morning start so that you can guarantee you will return before nightfall, as it runs nearly 14 miles. Your rewards include pretty fantastic views of the Smokies.

## *HARDING ICEFIELD TRAIL IN ALASKA'S KENAI FJORDS NATIONAL PARK*

The eight-mile Harding Icefield Trail rewards hikers with panoramic views of Alaska's glaciers. It also takes you through alpine meadows and dense forests. Due to the significant elevation changes, most hikers consider this trek to be strenuous.





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