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# 65° DEPARTMENTS

## PERSONAS

THERAPY ON CANVAS  
By Peter Hemming

THE NEXT CHAPTER  
By Jennie Tezak

LIFE AHOY!  
By Kimberly Horg

GAME, SET, MATCH: IT'S ACES FOR DAVID FINK  
By Michael Cervin

## SCENE

MAKE-A-WISH

TICKLE PINK INN: HOLIDAY PARTY

## FOTO

PATRICE WARD

## COMMUNITY

PEBBLE BEACH FOOD & WINE  
By Jennie Tezak



# 65°

Photo: Patrick Tragenza  
Pebble Beach Food and Wine  
Founders Dinner

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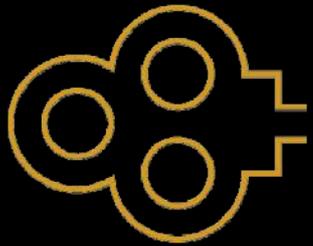
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René



## Therapy on Canvas

By Peter Hemming | Photos by Brian Briggs

Gripping the yellow number two pencil between her thumb and fingers, six-year-old René Romero Schuler pressed its graphite tip firmly into a blank sheet of paper and began writing her parents a letter explaining that she would one day be a famous artist and drive a Rolls Royce. It seems René was born with ambition, even if her success would be preceded by the challenge of a difficult upbringing.

René spent her younger years with her paternal grandparents, Hernan and Elsa, and lived with them in Ecuador, where Spanish became her primary language and her passions were born. René describes this time as a highlight of her childhood.

She left Ecuador at age seven to move back in with her parents in Chicago, and it was not a happy reunion. Although her mother was an indifferent caregiver and her father, Rocky, had a temper that sometimes got the better of him, René enjoyed a close relationship with her half-sisters, Gina and Taña. “We must have moved eight or so times in the time I lived with them,” says René. After attending nine different schools, including two in Texas, survival took priority over education.

“I started running away at the age of ten, but the police just brought me home.” After years of this cycle, her frustrated father threw her out and told her not to come back. René was fourteen. She survived the unforgiving streets of Chicago by living in friends’ basements or spending some nights with friends pending the permission of sympathetic parents. “I was really great at hot wiring cars to sleep in!” admits René. Though underage, at 16 she obtained her own apartment and worked as a cocktail waitress.

Over the years, René endured bouts of depression as feelings of hopelessness buzzed through her head. But there were also whispers of something else. “I knew I was here for a reason,” says René. During those years of struggle, René worked feverishly on her art. “I wanted to be my own boss, so I started calling companies offering my artwork for lobbies or offices.” She began working for interior designers and art consultants and learning the business of art. “It was one of the greatest educations you could have.”

René’s biggest ambition was to exhibit her work in galleries and museums. “You have to deal with so much rejection,” René remembers. But with each rejection came a suggestion and René listened. In 2007, those suggestions paid off when René had her first showing at the ARC Gallery in Chicago. “It was the greatest feeling because somebody deemed my work worthy.” Her career took off. Today, René’s work can be found in galleries across the country and internationally, including those in Chicago, Florida, and Paris.

René’s art is expressionist: simple figures with striated backgrounds of muted highlights and shadows. “My art is deliberate and expressive,” explains René. “It’s about images and perceptions that bring you to a place you can relate to.” To create her pieces, René uses a metal palette knife, carefully layering the oils until she gets the images and textures she desires. René also creates lovely pen and ink drawings and wire sculptures. “Sculptures are a fun, hands-on thing,” says René.

When she is not working, René, her husband Rick, and two sons, Ian and Owen, divide their time between Lake Forest, Illinois and a recently purchased home in Carmel. “Carmel is idyllic,” says René. “It’s always been a dream of mine to live here.” She and her father have also since reconciled. “My father has worked very hard to recover and become a good person. He is a great grandfather to my boys.”

Art is therapeutic for René. “It’s the way I cope with things; I call it therapy on canvas.” Fortunately for her, the results of her therapy are in demand as she plans showing her work at future international art fairs and museums. “I still don’t have that Rolls, but at least I’ve driven one,” she laughs.

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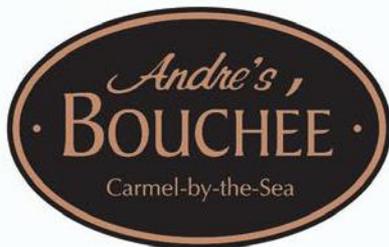
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carmel-by-the-sea restaurants



Andre Lemaire, founder of the popular Mission Street restaurant in the heart of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Andre's Bouchee, left a legacy behind when he passed on April 25, 2012. His son Stephan, wife Elizabeth, and daughter Lauren are now upholding his legacy.



The restaurant's menu derives inspiration from Andre's French heritage, showcasing an elaborate menu of French fare. Start with the steamed mussels with white wine, shallot, fresh thyme, and fine herbs served with pommes frites. For your main course, order the rack of veal with a Sauterne sauce crusted with Meyer lemon capers and pistachios paired with a Burgundy wine. Let Andre's Bouchee introduce you to tender veal, lamb, and fish paired with an assortment of specialty sauces. Their ample wine selection of French, Californian, Italian, and aged Bordeaux along with their friendly atmosphere will give you the feeling of dining in a Parisian suburb.

**Mission Street, two doors south of Ocean Ave. | Carmel-by-the-Sea | 831.626.7880 | [andresbouchee.com](http://andresbouchee.com)**



The first thing guests notice upon entering Cantinetta Luca is the open kitchen, which offers the opportunity to watch their talented chefs in action. The restaurant combines antique and modern styles inspired by classic Italian architecture. Cantinetta Luca imports Italian ingredients for an authentic experience, and it shows through the in-house pasta, gelato, salumi, sauces, and more.

Try opening your meal with a house-cured artisan Salumi selection, then follow with their popular Bistecca. Large enough for two, this Angus Natural Beef Steak is available as a 28-ounce porterhouse, 24-ounce T-Bone, or 20-ounce Bone-in NY strip, and is seasoned and cooked to perfection in their authentic wood-burning oven. Cantinetta Luca has an all-Italian wine list. The perfect pairing for this item is a 2009 Cerbaiona Brunello di Montalcino.



**Dolores St between Ocean & 7th | Carmel-by-the-Sea | 831.625.6500 | [cantinettaluca.com](http://cantinettaluca.com)**



**AFFINA**  
FOOD | WINE

Fans of classic movies will enjoy a night out at Affina of Carmel. A window seat at one of the hand-built wooden tables is the perfect spot to enjoy some gentle piano music and the films playing behind you on a flat-screen television.

The atmosphere may pull you in, but the food will keep you coming back. For your first visit, start with a creamy Di Stefano burrata drizzled with Arbequina olive oil, sea salt, and baguette. For your main course, order the wild scallops pan seared with vegetables from the farmers market and a bright Meyer lemon beurre blanc. To drink? The crisp acidity and minerality of Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin Brut Champagne will embrace both dishes.

**Corner of San Carlos & Sixth | Carmel-by-the-Sea | 831.915.4756 | [affinacarmel.com](http://affinacarmel.com)**



Come as you are to Le St. Tropez for a unique French dining experience, and enjoy the Cuisine of the Sun rooted in traditional casual Mediterranean style. Their large seasonal menu is available both indoors and in their outdoor “Jardin des Artistes,” which features a water fountain, fire pit, heaters, and a special menu for dogs.

Start your experience with a Cosmo Monte Carlo, a combination of French Vodka, Cranberry, Grand Marnier, and a hint of lime. Next, order the Fresh Oysters on the half shell with a glass of local Santa Lucia Highlands Chardonnay. Follow with the Wild Mushroom Raviolis made with Madeira-mushroom cream, French truffle oil, and grated Grana Padano cheese. Pair your main course with a glass of Napa Cabernet. For an added treat, try the chocolate soufflé with a glass of 10 Year Tawny Port.

**Dolores St between Ocean & 7th | Carmel-by-the-Sea | 831.624.8977 | [lestroyez.com](http://lestroyez.com)**





Christopher's is one of the oldest free-standing restaurants in Carmel. The building has been used continually as a restaurant since the late '50s. Christopher's celebrates their eleventh year in April, proving that this cozy spot stands the test of time. They stock a full bar and maintain a comfortable environment where tablecloths and crystal glasses adorn tables, and a warm fireplace, beautiful art, and Italian Murano lighting creates casual elegance. Try the Baked Fanny Bay Oysters in the shell, topped with organic spinach, Applewood-smoked bacon, and parmesan cream. Best paired with Sheldon Grenache Blanc from Sonoma.

For your main course, try the Niman Ranch BBQ beef short ribs served with roasted garlic mashed potatoes and braised red cabbage. A glass of Boete Cabernet Franc from Carmel Valley is the perfect addition.

**Lincoln Street, Carmel, CA 93923 | 831.626.8000 | [christophersrestaurantcarmel.com](http://christophersrestaurantcarmel.com)**



Marble floors, antique chandeliers, fine wool carpeting, Riedel glassware, and a 15-foot walnut bar welcome you into Grasing's. As you take your seat, the knowledgeable and friendly wait staff inform you of their world class wine list. You hear them greet local regulars by name as they enter behind you, and you know you'll feel right at home with Grasing's warm, unpretentious atmosphere.

Start dinner with a bottle of champagne and an order of farm-raised Monterey Bay red abalone prepared Dorè style: the richness of the abalone combined with the crispness of champagne is something that must be tried to be believed. Next, enjoy the richness of their bone-in ribeye steak with a Bordeaux or Rhône wine. The medley of flavors throughout this pairing creates an experience that tantalizes the taste buds and touches the spirit.

**6th and Mission Street, Carmel, CA 93923 | 831.624.6562 | [grasings.com](http://grasings.com)**





# Basil

Seasonal Dining

Basil is the first and only certified green restaurant in Monterey County, offering a seasonal menu made with all organic, local, and sustainable ingredients, including local wine and produce. They use energy efficient equipment in their kitchens, and the result is quality you can taste. Basil seeks to replicate the comfort guests feel in their own homes both inside and on their outdoor European Bistro-style patio.

Begin with the Duck Liver-Pear Pâté served with pickled radicchio, peppers, chef's whole grain mustard, and micro greens with a glass of Morgan Double "L" Vineyards Pinot Noir 2013.

For the next course, develop a romance with Bollito Misto, a classic Italian stew featuring veal tongue, beef brisket, capon, and house-made cotechino sausage dressed with horseradish-apple relish, Mostarda di Cremona (mustard fruits), and salsa verde with capers, cornichons, Italian parsley, and extra virgin olive oil. Pair with a 2011 Rosso Di Sonoma from Petroni Vineyards for the full experience.

**San Carlos Between Ocean & 7th | Carmel-by-the Sea | 831.626.8226 | basilcarmel.com**



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# HIDEAWAY.

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Leon



## The Next Chapter

By Jennie Tezak

Leon Panetta fans flocked to the Casa Munras Hotel November 11 to have their copies of *Worthy Fights: A Memoir of Leadership in War and Peace* signed by the man himself. The former director of the CIA and former defense secretary in the Obama administration recently published his second book. The book chronicles much of his time working in the Obama administration.

Panetta's book is hailed on Amazon.com as "the inspiring and revelatory autobiography of the defense secretary and CIA director who led the intelligence war that killed Bin Laden, among many important roles in a legendary career. Like his career, *Worthy Fights* is a reflection of Panetta's values. It is filled with the frank, grounded, and often funny spirit of a man who never lost touch with where he came from: his family's walnut farm in Carmel Valley, California."

"Basically, I wanted to tell the American story," Panetta says, looking comfortable in a blue blazer and slacks with his golden retriever, Bravo, by his side. His eyes twinkled throughout the interview. "My parents were Italian immigrants and

came here. They wanted to give their children a better life. That's the American dream. I wanted to share that with people, that you can have a better life. Work at it. Fight for it. I describe 'worthy fights' that I went through; this country offers opportunity to do good."

In order to write the book, Panetta sat down with his co-writer for a number of sessions, then conducted arduous research and drafted a number of chapters. Eyes glued to various resources and fingers busy jotting down thoughts, experiences, and information, Panetta became an ink slinger with a potent message.

Currently, Panetta works closely with the Panetta Institute of Public Policy, which he co-founded with his wife, Sylvia. "I'm trying to inspire young people to lives of public service, and there are a number of programs to do that." The institute is the vehicle he's using to inspire and teach the leaders of tomorrow; young men and women who will continue to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Another of Panetta's most prized endeavors was establishing California State University Monterey Bay. "Fort Ord was closed. I thought, 'What would be a good use for the military post?' From the beginning, it made sense to have a campus." Panetta approached the CSUMB chancellor and asked him to look at the area. He thought it could well become a new campus and worked with the chancellor to establish an offshoot of San Jose State. There are currently 7,000 students.

A long-time advocate of preserving and repairing marine ecosystems, Panetta helped to establish the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS). Designated in 1992, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is a federally protected marine area offshore of California's Central Coast. He's also worked closely with Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. "Rising sea levels, severe droughts, the melting of the polar caps, the more frequent and devastating natural disasters all raise demand for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief," he says.

Today, Panetta is working at the Panetta Institute, continuing to work on public policy issues and national security. He is also rediscovering his roots as a musician. "I play the piano, classical piano," he says. "I began as a young boy, and I read music."

Over a long and distinguished career, Panetta fought the worthy fight in the halls of Congress as a part of the cabinets of two presidents. Now, his memoir will fight the worthy fight on bookshelves across America.



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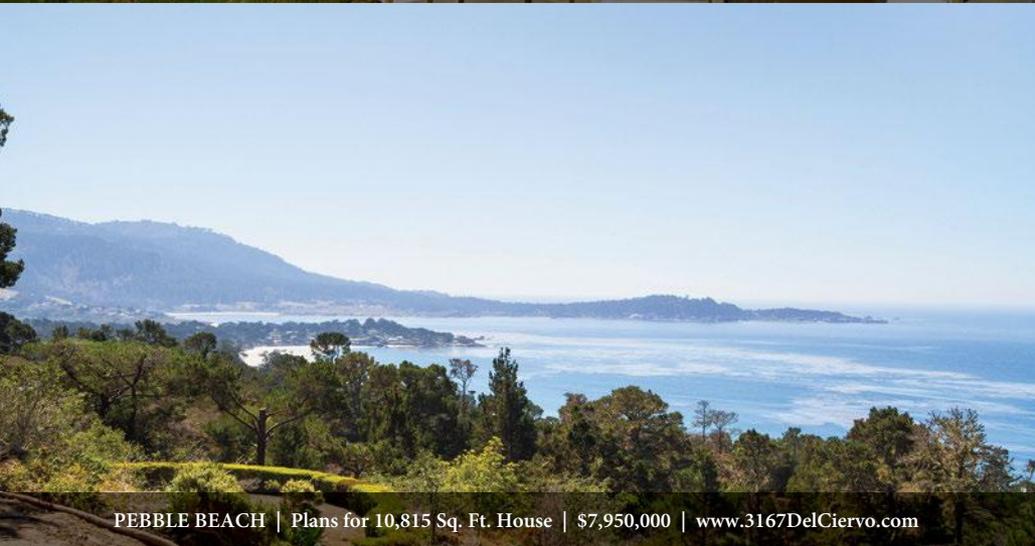
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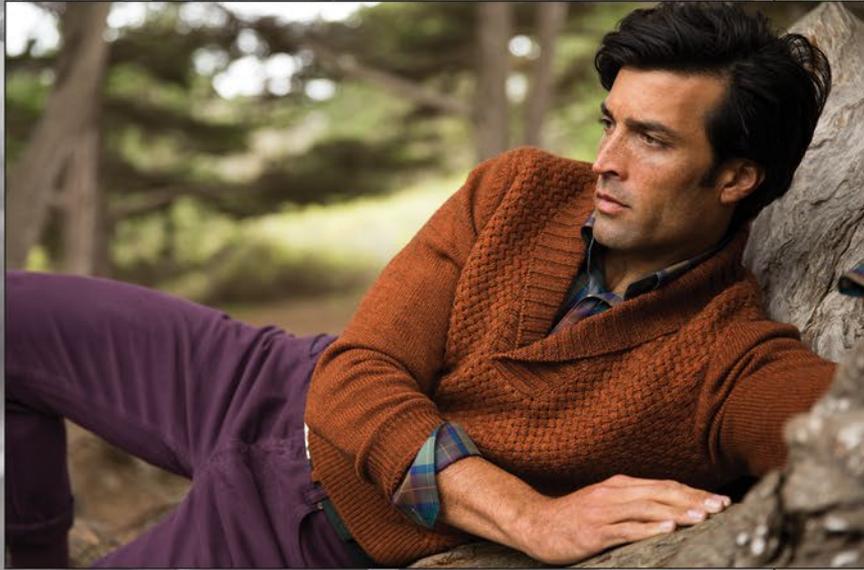
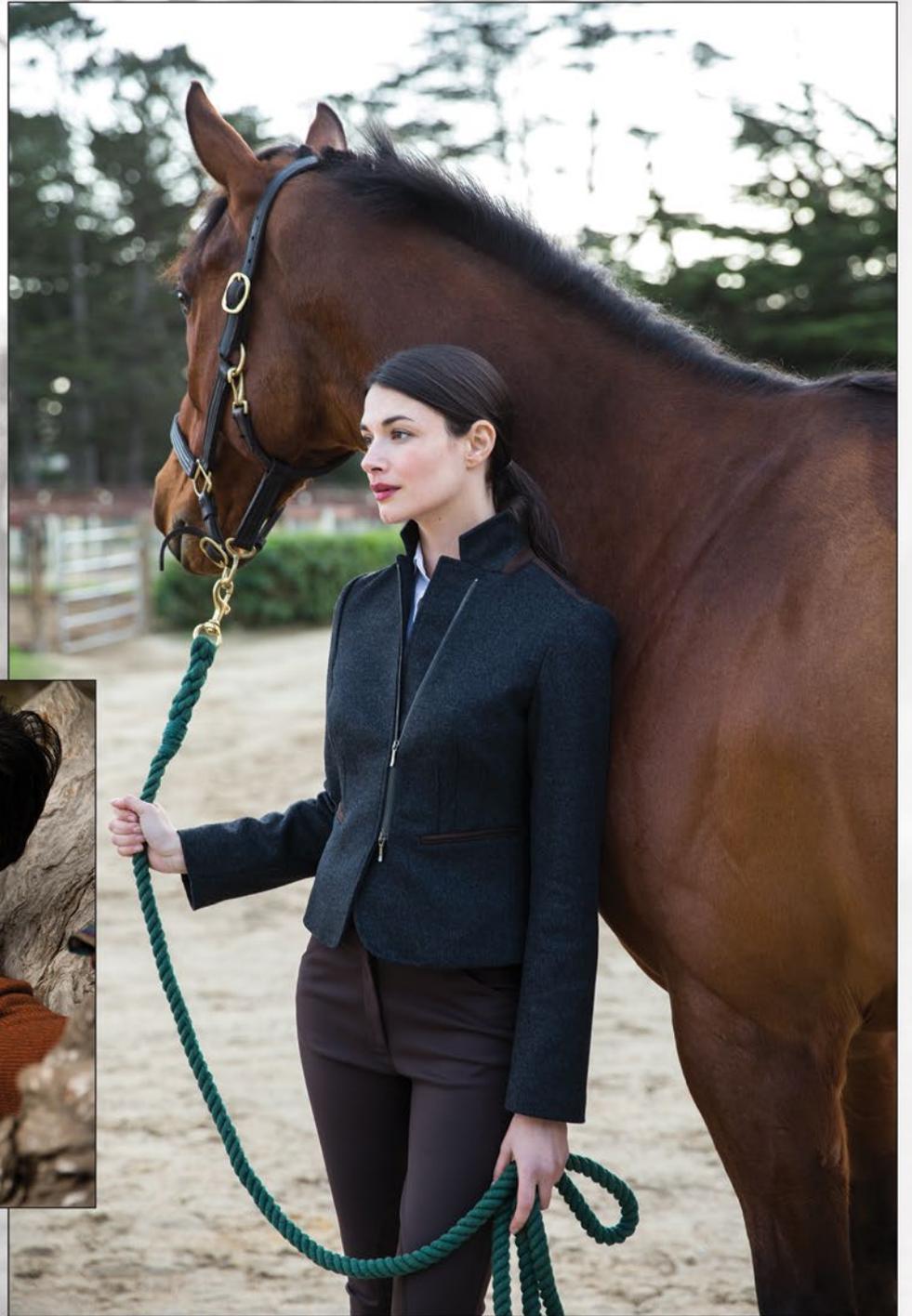
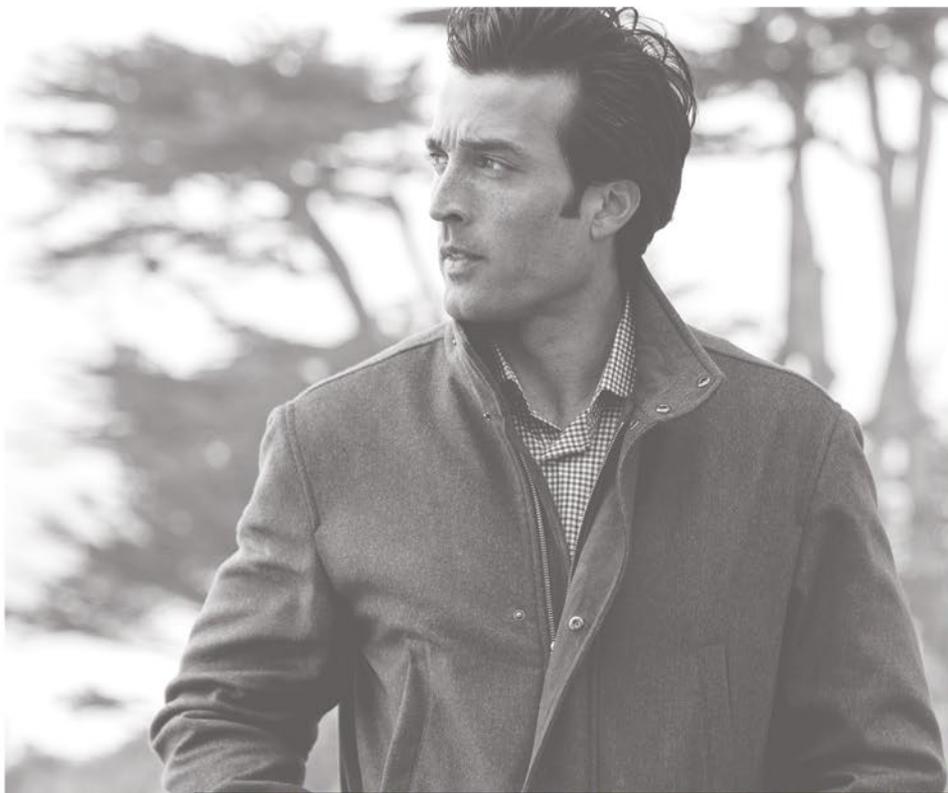


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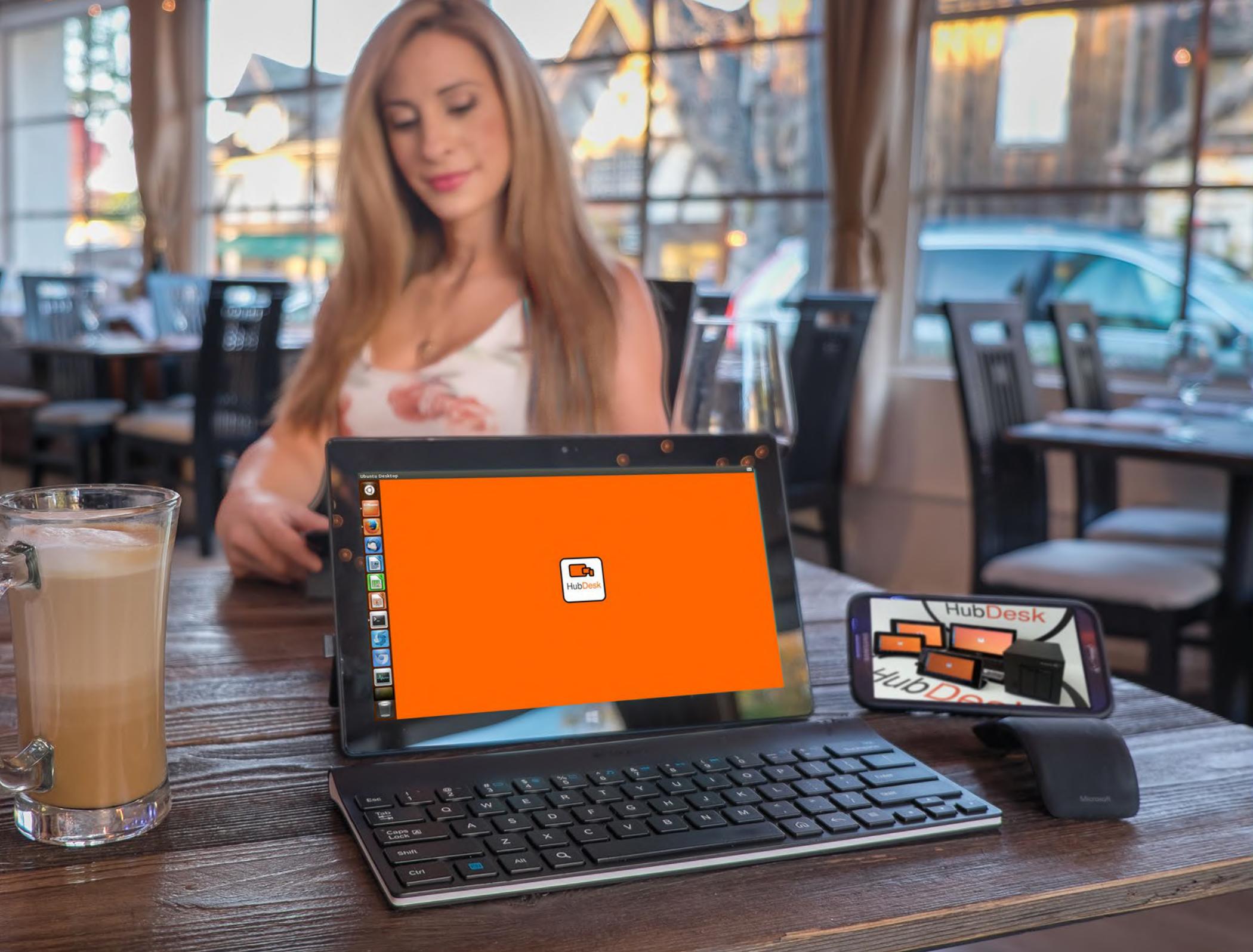
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## HubDesk: Travel Light and Stay Connected

There's a new player in the tech world. HubDesk, Inc. and their team is based here on the Monterey Peninsula. HubDesk is a high performance hosted desktop, application server, and private-cloud storage solution tailored for personal and small business demands. It offers a litany of standard office, creative, and bookkeeping programs in one lightweight application that's ideal for travelers, and those who work remotely.

Alan Forsythe, creator and CEO of HubDesk, and his team are creating synergy between mobile devices and the traditional software programs we all rely on.

Allan Kersgard and Greg Troxell are at the helm of introducing HubDesk worldwide. "HubDesk is a hosted desktop and office suite that can run on any smartphone, tablet and Chromebook, as well as on your personal computer," says Kersgard. "Many people who think of the Monterey Peninsula don't think of technology. They think of golf courses, restaurants, and boutique hotels; however, HubDesk is a game-changer. HubDesk has a unique vision to empower people with ease of access and extraordinary security for personal and business data."

According to Troxell, "What's outstanding is that HubDesk is compatible with practically any device as well as improving functionality of 'outdated' devices. It's an affordable solution for businesses and people around the world." What's different and exciting is that HubDesk offers a private, cloud-based application platform that can be paired with on-premise storage.

So, whether you're an avid traveler, a small business owner, a student, an educator, or a parent balancing the demands of work and family, HubDesk with its one desktop for any device approach, simplifies the ever-changing world of computer applications.

In an era beset with hackers and privacy breaches, the team at HubDesk is proud to offer a solution that is designed to ensure access, privacy, choice, and freedom to people who use technology.

**HubDesk.com**







Jodi



## Life Ahoy!

By Kimberly Horg | Photography by Manny Espinoza

Many people fondly remember their years of early adulthood as full of life and energy, and living without a care in the world. It's difficult to imagine a beautiful young woman with so much to offer fighting for her existence, her own youthful years suddenly interrupted by a life threatening disease.

The word "grounded" not only describes Jodi Essex, it perhaps explains how she was able to battle her early health struggles, which eventually became the building blocks for leading a courageous life.

Her first three doctors misdiagnosed and treated her symptoms nonchalantly, sending her home with nothing more than antibiotics. In response, Essex took her health into her own hands, finding a doctor who looked past her age to treat the unusual lumps with the care she deserved.

Diagnosed correctly with lymphoma just after her twenty-fifth birthday, Essex endured chemotherapy for a year. She was soon fitted with a fearless approach to life. "Going through such an ordeal brings home the concept that life is too short," she says.

After surviving cancer, she added obtaining a pilot's license and starting a female-fronted rock band to her to-do list. Able to soar through the clouds, Jodi experiences sunsets in three dimensions. She also took front stage as a lead singer, simultaneously writing and producing music. A solo artist before cancer, she toured California and the East Coast. She also recorded in London at Abbey Road, where history permeates through seams in the building.

Essex was no stranger to performing, starting out in musical theatre at the age of six; her first role was as a goat during theatre camp in Carmel. Her humble beginning soon flourished when her parents, Joseph and Betty, observed her migrating towards entertainment. With agents in Los Angeles and San Francisco, they shuttled her back and forth between auditions and school; the rejection added to her resilience and contributed to her confidence.

Surviving the industry was tough but exposed her to a variety of different personalities, which has helped her socialize. To succeed in the entertainment industry, it takes a business sense as well as the ability to entertain. Jodi is equally comfortable with both.

As the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society campaign manager for the Man & Woman of the Year, she is hopeful that a cure is imminent for cancer research. Having recently lost a loved one to the disease, Jodi understands how difficult the disease is on the patient and the patient's loved ones. One way of finding beauty in the challenges is by putting her energy to so many positive uses.

Volunteering to help raise money for prosthetics is another cause she holds dear. She feels continually humbled and blessed by experiences that result from everyone she meets. During a triathlon, Jodi once found herself sitting on a rock feeling utterly exhausted and pining over a hurt knee, when a veteran with two blades for legs approached her and asked if she needed help. She started to cry. "After I met him, I immediately got up and finished the race," says Essex. "You are the captain of your ship and can do anything you want to. Nothing worth pursuing is easy."

After moving back to Carmel three years ago, Essex started JEssex Holdings, LLC, a parent vehicle for her entertainment and entrepreneurial endeavors. It has allowed for more projects from a production standpoint, including the management of Seventh & Dolores, a new event venue in Carmel.

At present time, Jodi is writing children's books, writing and directing a short film script, and producing a television show. When she's not behind the creative lens, one might be able to spot her swimming at Carmel Beach, training rigorously for the next Ironman competition in spring of 2015.

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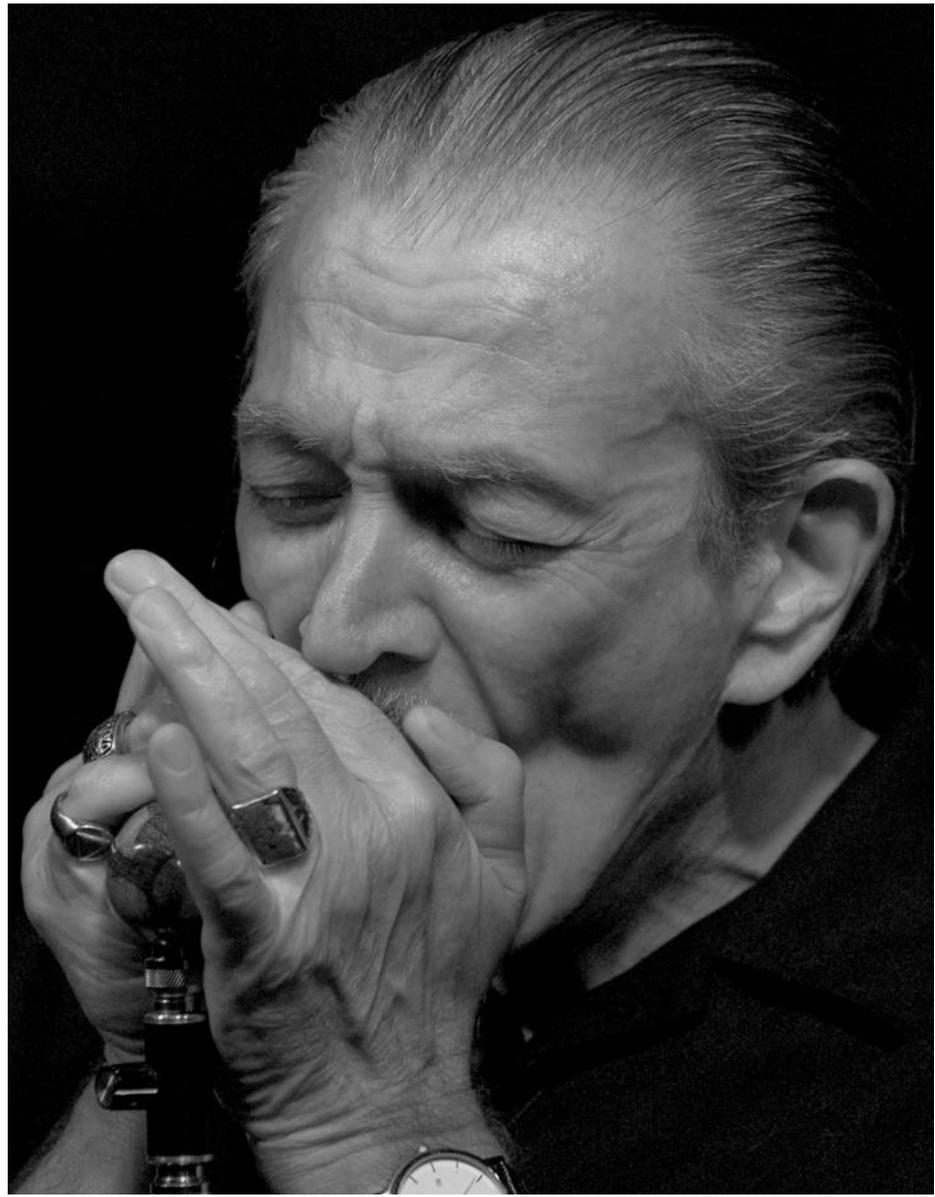
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# David

PERSONA





## Game, Set, Match: It's Aces for David Fink

By Michael Cervin | Photography by Manny Espinoza

For hotelier and restaurant owner David Fink, it's amusing that his most memorable culinary highlight from his childhood was something as modest as cheesecake. "My mother cooked. My father couldn't boil water," jokes Fink. An image of his mother releasing a tender, creamy cake from its springform pan while his father defends himself from a spitting pot of boiling water is unavoidable. Today, Fink is CEO of Mirabel Hotel & Restaurant Group, which is based in Carmel and whose properties include L'Auberge, the eateries 400 Degrees and Cantinetta Luca, and several others.

Originally from Virginia, Fink grew up with "a Southern sense of hospitality," as he puts it. His mother was a collector of antiques,

including fine linen and crystal, which taught young David an early appreciation of a superlative table. But it wasn't hospitality that originally resonated with Fink; it was tennis and birds. "I've always had an interest in nature," he says. As an avid bird watcher, he considered attending Cornell University for ornithology, although he ended up with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Roanoke College.

He still plays tennis, and back in the day was ranked in Virginia in both high school and college. But just like an unpredictable singles match, Fink's life took an odd bounce. Though he started at age 16 in the hospitality business as a busser and then waiter and he can recall his first Mateus rosé, it was a 1959 Château Lafite Rothschild that changed everything. "That was a seminal moment for me, something I had not expected," he recalls. Fink had landed a job in San Diego at La Mediterrena, where he learned proper table service, preparing Steak Diane, and refining his knowledge of great wines. The spirit of his mother's hospitality "came to fruition" in this environment. He moved to the Highlands Inn as food and beverage director and decided to stay in Carmel. Under his Mirabel Group, he has launched food and hospitality projects including the upcoming Relais & Châteaux GourmetFest set for March 2015.

Sure, larger metropolitan areas offered more opportunities over Carmel. "We still think of Carmel as a hidden jewel even though it's well known," he says. "I love large cities—Prague, Paris, San Francisco—but I'm really a small town guy," he admits. "Being in Carmel I can take a hike in Big Sur, which is very spiritual to me." Fink has been at the core of Carmel's culinary renaissance as evidenced by the transformation of L'Auberge. "I wanted a full service, Relais & Châteaux style property with personalized service and a great restaurant," he says, but it didn't exist.

It took two years with the owners to work out details to morph the former Sundial Court and Bungalow into Carmel's very first full service property. "Carmel has this great blend of beautiful residences, an idyllic downtown walking village and iconic beach," says Fink. This is what draws global guests and keeps locals entrenched. Monterey County is finally getting its dues for food and wine. "The great wine regions of the world like Napa and Burgundy are understandable because they are valleys; you can drive from one end to the other in an hour. Monterey County has twice the vineyard land of Napa and Sonoma combined, but we don't have wineries dotted along an iconic highway, so it's taken longer for people to discover us," Fink admits. "What we want now is more young chefs, young hoteliers, and the next generation of winemakers to be here."

The future holds immense potential, according to Fink. Like the game of tennis, mishits may occur, but it takes only one perfect serve to amaze everyone, and David has amazed and been amazed time and time again.



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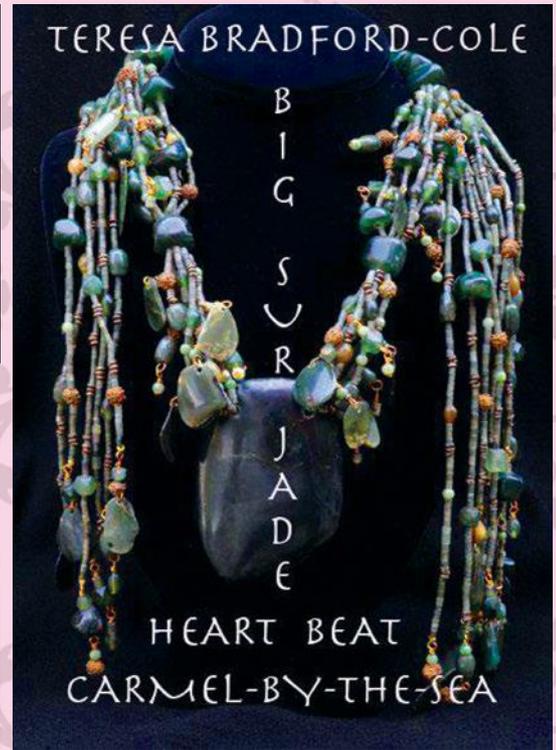
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As certified Advanced Monterey Bay Green Gardeners, the Company focuses on water conservation management – which is critically important, especially considering the drought conditions California has been under. Furthermore, the Company utilizes drought tolerant, native and other plants, shrubs and trees well suited to the local environments along with implementing the reduced use of pesticides.

The Company's focus on attention to detail results in beautifully landscaped properties. As one customer recently stated: "I cannot say enough good things about the services of Greenscape. David, Greg and their work crews are responsive, courteous, creative and efficient. They have now completed several projects for me. They really listened to what I needed, and offered different approaches, and thought about cost as well as visual appeal. I really have appreciated their extra care when offering a variety of quotes. I plan to keep using them for all my gardening needs!"

David Otterbach and Greg Cottingham, co-owners of Greenscape California, are landscaping veterans and are excited to share their gardening passion. Maintaining a deep gratitude for overseeing some of the very best gardens on the Peninsula. Dave and Greg are proud to employ a team of highly experienced gardeners, who average over 18 years of experience per team member. "Our gardeners have a unique understanding and in-depth knowledge



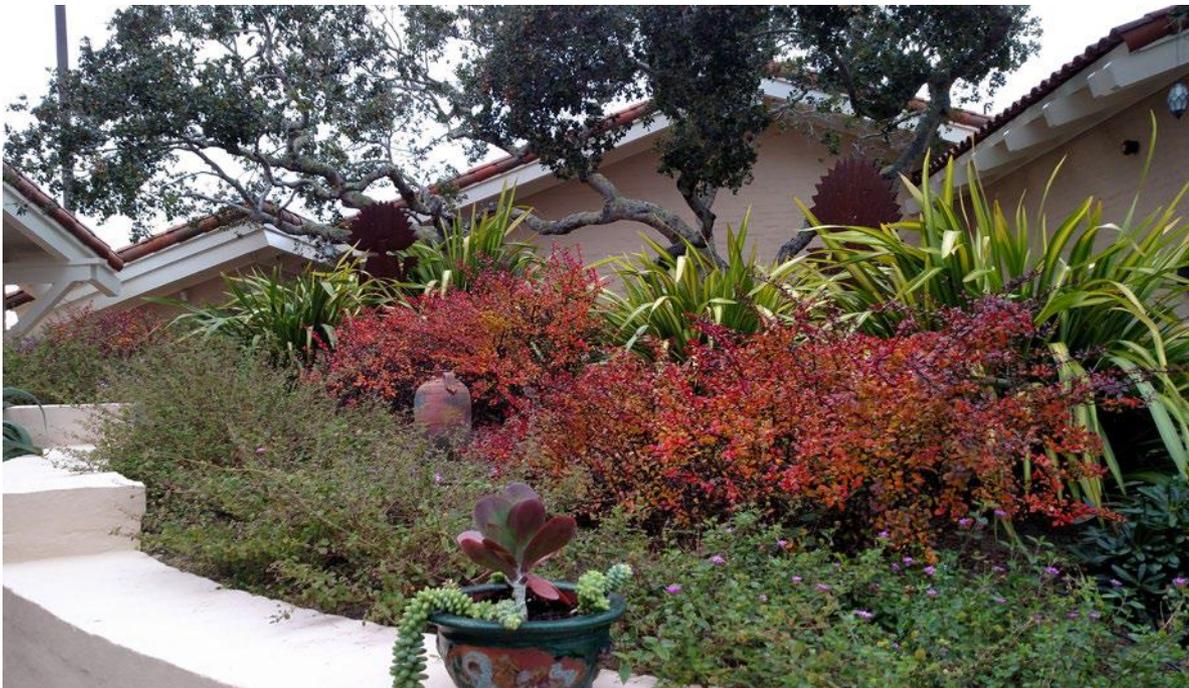


of our area's many micro climates" states Dave. As one customer commented regarding the Company's gardeners: "They provide knowledgeable and talented gardening personnel, and we get exactly the results we want, every time."

Dave and Greg also take pride in being "hands-on owners," committed to being out in the field as necessary in order to better understand the needs of their customer's gardens. They and their entire team of over 30 professional gardeners insist on caring for their customers' property's gardens as if they were their own. Because of this, the Company builds long term relationships, with their customers. "The goal of any green gardener should be to meet the customer's garden and landscaping goals while working more in tune with Mother Nature" states Dave.

With this personal approach, commitment, and their dedication to quality and service, Greenscape California has set itself apart as a valued partner in bringing Peninsula gardens to life in an exemplary way.

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# Pebble Beach Food & Wine

A Conversation with David Bernahl, II

By Jennie Tezak

## **What inspired the Pebble Beach Food & Wine festival?**

It was pretty amazing; we had an aha moment. In 2007, it was the last year of the Masters of Food and Wine festival. It had been going on for 21 years. It was amazing to see 21 years at Park Hyland in Carmel. Then, with the advent of that disappearing and the Aspen Food and Wine classic basically moving to Argentina, it was crazy to think here we were in the “Salad Bowl” of the United States, and with grape growing regions from Napa to Santa Barbara, and with two culinary hubs—San Francisco and Los Angeles—that we didn’t have a single food and wine festival. So we decided to create Pebble Beach Food & Wine. We welcomed so many people and almost 100 celebrity chefs; all these amazing individuals such as Thomas Keller. We were off to the races. The biggest year of the Masters was 650 people and we went from 650 to 4,000 in one year.

## **Why Pebble Beach as opposed to other Peninsula spots?**

Pebble Beach is iconic. It’s one of the most beautiful strips of coastlines in the world, and as a resort it is an amazing company with great culture. It has ample police who know how to handle large scale events already: you’ve got the AT&T Pro-Am and the Concours d’ Elegance. There are so many events that come through as it is, and with two beautiful hotel properties, there is space to build. We were able to do so many things and create a really great home base. As we grow, we do things outside of the forest: things in Monterey and Carmel, even Salinas. Pebble Beach couldn’t be a better place to start. We made this vision come to life.

## **What was the series of major events leading up to it?**

This great event that had gone on for 21 years decided to move to Argentina. My business partner, the food and beverage director at the Highlands Inn, was running the Masters at the time. We made a go of building things from the ground up. It didn’t make sense for California to not have a food and wine festival.

## **How has the event grown and where does it plan to go from here?**

There are 8,000 attendees. It’s double the size from the start. We’re focusing on great partnership opportunities. It’s always been about quality not quantity for us. We’re working in amazing partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium and their Seafood Watch program. We bring that into Pebble Beach and Los Angeles Food & Wine. We’re announcing an amazing partnership with the Ment’or program here in the United States. We’ve got some amazing partnerships coming down the pipeline in addition to all the crazy cool culinary programs that we change up every year. We’ve been able to donate over a million dollars, and that’s something that we’re really proud of. We impact a lot of really great charities with donations and auction items.





# New On Carmelo



Fabulous Carmel-by-the-Sea remodel with architectural detailing reminiscent of the Mediterranean style by respected local architect Braden Sterling of Sterling-Huddleson Architecture. Maintaining the charm and scale of the local vernacular, this Carmel cottage is nearly 2,200 square feet with a detached 200 square foot garage, finished with dry stacked Carmel stone, exposed timbers, wood windows and doors along with integral colored plaster and a slate roof. The design has thoughtful integration of indoor/outdoor living spaces. The main level living area with formal dining, a wet bar and wine storage along with an open kitchen and informal living space is anchored around a south facing patio creating an indoor/outdoor living option along with ample natural sunlight to the home's interior.



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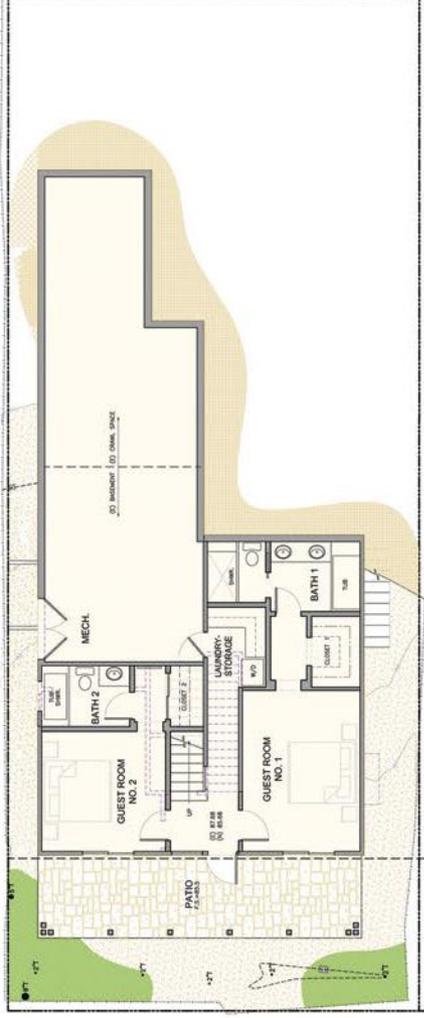
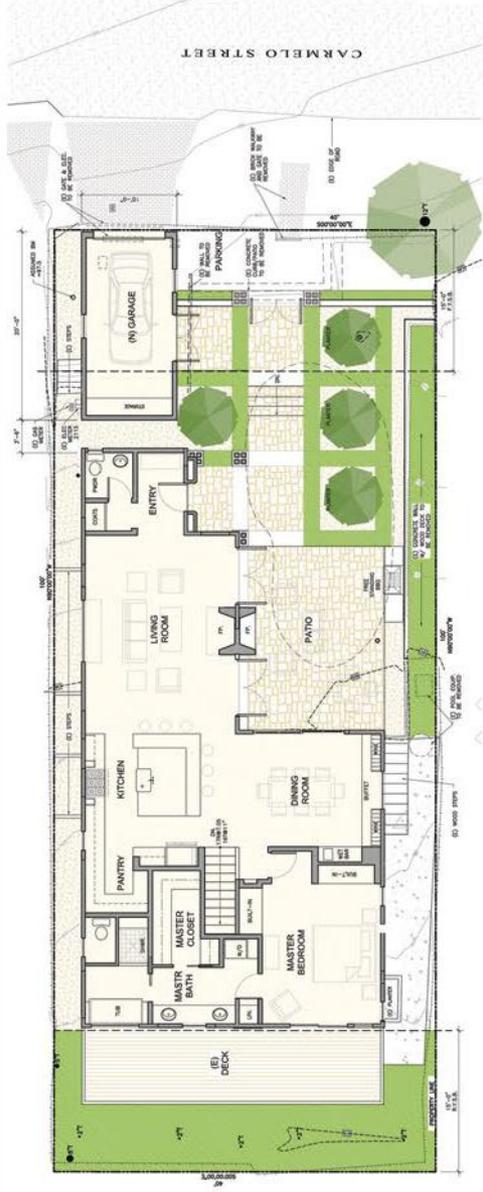
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A ROCK SOLID OLYMPIC LEGACY

By Maggie Grainger

AN EMBELLISHED LIFE

By Maggie Grainger

I LEFT MY HEART IN SAN FRANCISCO

By Alexis Chavez

## FEATURE

THE BATTERY SAN FRANCISCO

## SCENES

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## COMMUNITY

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By Andrea Stuart

## STAY

SOARING LUXURY

By Tammy Neal



# 57°

Photo: Ron Niebrugge  
Bay Bridge, San Francisco

THIS IS THE CITY 57°

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

by Rich Medel



Welcome, 2015! Two thousand fourteen was an amazing year. We enter this year with a spring in our step, sharing enlivening stories about some pretty stellar movers and shakers.

We attended Leon Panetta's book signing in December for his new book, *Worthy Fights: A Memoir of Leadership in War and Peace*. Panetta drew quite a crowd—a recorded 500 or so people—over the two-day signing at Casa Munras Hotel and Spa in Monterey, which made for an interesting setting for an interview. As usual, Panetta demonstrated nothing less than grace and professionalism. We're grateful to Ted Balestreri for helping us to make this project come to fruition.

As you read through *65°* this quarter, your heart will be touched by artist René Schuler, an incredible woman who has used the lemons from life and turned them into the sweetest lemonade by translating her life experiences onto canvas. And we believe our story about Jodi Essex will empower and inspire as she shares how she turned her health challenges into a vehicle for helping other people. Meanwhile, David Fink, the king of Dolores Street (otherwise known as CEO of Mirabel Hotel & Restaurant Group), shares how he's putting his southern hospitality to work building the next generation of chefs, winemakers, and hoteliers in Monterey County.

Since we're such big fans of wine, *57°* is excited to introduce you to the San Francisco Wine School, a school that is stepping outside of the box to educate wine professionals and enthusiasts alike. If you've ever eaten at Kokkari in San Francisco, you'll especially enjoy our story about Robin Kirby, a pivotal player at the Greek restaurant. Plus, we introduce you to an Olympic water polo dynasty, the Wigo brothers, and fashionista extraordinaire, Hong Ni.

Finally, we thank photographer Patrice Ward (aka Patrice Pour) for his photographic contributions this issue. We'd also like to draw your attention to the cover of *57°* and the Bald Eagle photo spread by Ron Niegberger.

Happy New Year!



# 57°

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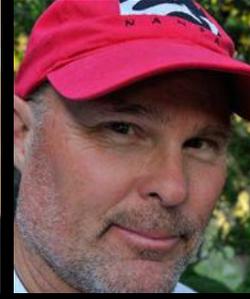
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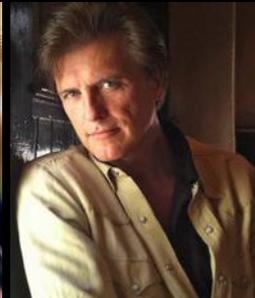


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# DRAC & JANSON





# A Rock Solid Olympic Legacy

By Maggie Grainger | Photos by Lisa Vortman

They say birds of a feather flock together. This happens to be true for twin water polo players Drac and Janson Wigo. The two powerhouses are part of a water polo dynasty—older brother Wolf competed in three summer Olympic Games (1996, 2000, 2004) and their father, Bruce, is currently the president of the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

With pools ever present in their young lives, it seemed only natural that the twins would follow in their family's footsteps. However, Drac and Janson are the first to admit water polo wasn't always on their radar. "Honestly, we were against swimming at first even though it was all around us," Drac admits with a laugh. "We were both more into soccer."

After trying their hand at a variety of other sports both in and out of the water, the two found their true calling playing water polo. The Florida natives played for Stanford University, where they honed their impressive skills in the pool—both made All-American all four years and Janson worked as an assistant coach for the 2013 team.

Although he said coaching was a rewarding experience, he's focusing on finishing his own athletic career before looking into coaching options. For now, he's all about getting ready to train with Team USA in Los Angeles, and Drac continues to train right here in San Francisco at The Olympic Club while juggling a career in the tech industry.

It will be a big adjustment for the brothers, who have been inseparable for as long as they can remember, excluding their first year at Stanford University. "We had to split up freshman year," Janson says with a smile. "But we lived together sophomore through senior years." They currently live only four blocks away from each other in Russian Hill, and can easily walk to each other's houses.

Although he's not in full training mode yet, Janson says he trains daily on his lunch breaks at the Olympic Club City Clubhouse with other Stanford, Cal, USC, and UCLA alumni water polo players. Soon, Janson will head off to Australia to train and then move to L.A. The brothers aren't taking this short period together for granted, making the most of their limited free time, and neither let training consume their lives. Both guys love hitting up Crissy Field or Dolores Park with friends on the weekends, although it's tough to get them to stray too far from water.

"I'll go down to the Aquatic Park and do laps or head to Ocean Beach to surf," Janson admits. "I love the big waves." And if this whole water polo thing doesn't pan out, the boys have a backup plan: sharpening their skills as male models, another profession that runs in the family. Their parents actually fell in love while filming a commercial in Italy.



Photo by Roy Morsch

“Our mom was Miss Chinatown in the 1980s and our dad was an actor who let us tag along to auditions,” Drac explains. Both boys remember the excitement they felt when they would come home and see their parents on TV. They say they still feel that flutter of pride when they see their mom in commercials today.

In fact, it was during an audition run that the duo got their first taste of the spotlight, acting in a Dunkin’ Donuts commercial when they were barely out of diapers. After closing down an entire section of an airport for the shoot, the boys spent the day sinking their teeth into doughy treats. Not a bad work day for any kid. Cheshire smiles cross their faces. The decision to get back into acting after a long hiatus was a piece of cake.

“Water polo is such a physically demanding sport,” Janson explains. “You can’t get hurt in front of the camera.” Plus, the brothers are routinely stopped by people who think they know them or have seen them before, so they both agreed modeling feels like a natural progression for them. Janson and Drac are represented by Brave Talent, the brand ambassador division of Bratty Model Agency in San Francisco.

Although they are gracious about getting recognized on the street, their brother, Wolf, gave them some good advice about fame, telling them not to let it go to their heads when they went to college. “Other than that, he’s been good about letting us do our own thing and go through the motions,” says Janson.

You might think the pressure to succeed at such a high level would cause friction between all of the brothers, or at least make for some heated family discussions, but Drac and Janson are the first to say they’re each other’s biggest supporters. “We’ve only competed against each other in scrimmages,” Drac says, and they both hope to keep it that way.

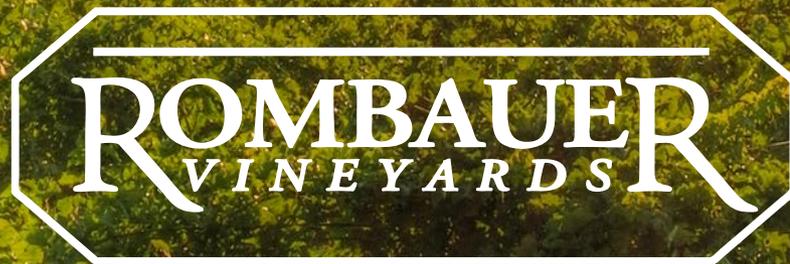
Janson will never forget going to Atlanta at nine years old to cheer Wolf on during his first Olympic Games back in 1996. It wasn’t until they approached the stadium, surrounded by clusters of people, and saw their brother playing in front of thousands that they realized this was a big deal. “It was crazy.”

Now the twins are ready to hear thousands of people cheer them on, and they know how much work they need to do in order to achieve this dream. A lot rides on the next year for Drac and Janson, but they know no matter what happens, their brotherly bond is rock solid.

Location: The Olympic Club, Grooming: Yvette Armendariz, Wardrobe: Marine Layer



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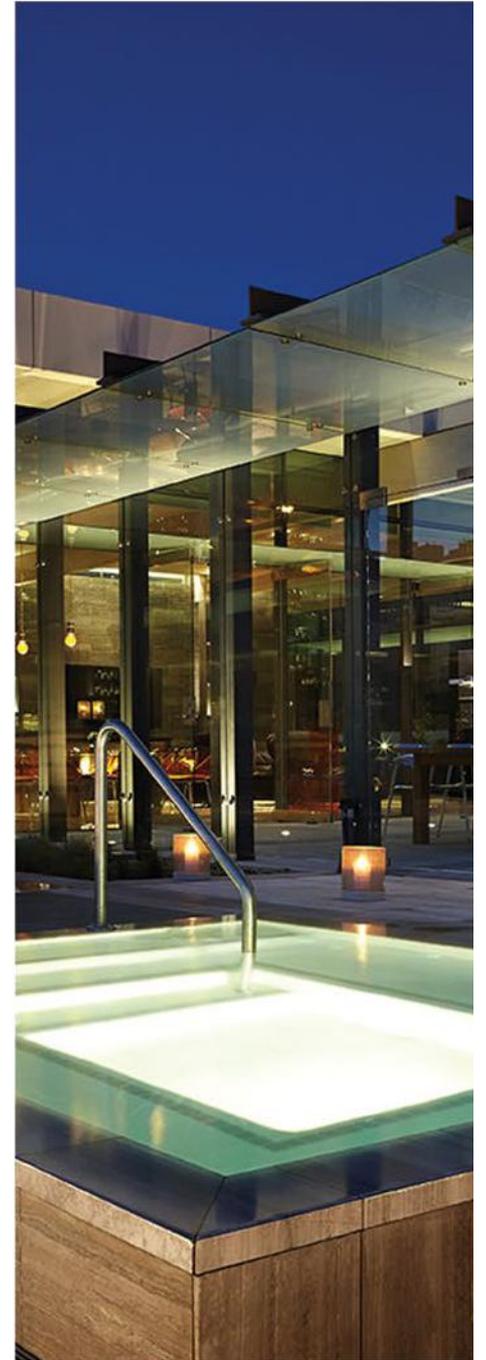
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# Every Jack Has His Jill

*Champagne walks hand-in-hand with culinary creations from Chef Giles at Jacks.*

By Andrea Stuart | Photos by Remy

When I received an invitation to a Sparkling Wine dinner at Jack's Restaurant & Lounge at Portola Hotel & Spa in Monterey in December, the creases of my mouth became moist.

From the amuse bouche to the dessert, Executive Chef Jason Giles proved he has a firm grasp on flavors, textures, and presentation. Beginning with Bordelaise-infused popcorn paired with Piper Sonoma Brut, we followed Heidsieck Champagne Ambassador and Sommelier Kyle Kaplan on a journey through time, learning the colorful history of the Heidsieck families.

As we pressed our fork tines into the Crisp Pear and Endive Salad with Saint Andre Brie and Beurre Noisette paired with Piper Heidsieck Brut, our senses hit happy overload at the marriage of delicate bubbles and the salad's creamy nuances. Then came the Potato Roastie with black truffle and caviar that romped with the Charles Heidsieck Brut Rosé, followed by the Rouleau de Homard (lobster poor boy sandwiches that redefined savory) was accentuated by the lively Charles Heidsieck Brut Réserve.

The grand finale was the Crispy Duck with Chestnut Roulade dressed with parsnip purée, apricot marmalade, and fresh figs paired with the sophisticated Charles Heidsieck Rosé Réserve. In lieu of crisping the entire duck, which experience has shown can dry the duck meat according to Chef Giles, the skin was removed and made into chicharrón for a playful and creative modification of this dish. Chef Giles hit a home run on this dish as we all vied for each other's plates even as our tummies tried breaking belts and waistbands.

For a sweet treat, the experience concluded with a generously portioned Crispy Brioche Bread Pudding with dark chocolate nibs, Tahitian vanilla bean ice cream, and brandy caramel sauce. Unlike the heavy bread puddings I grew up on, this was soft and graceful, a perfect pairing with Piper Heidsieck Cuvée Sublime from France or, as we learned, the Rosé Réserve.

There couldn't have been a better way to welcome the approaching New Year.



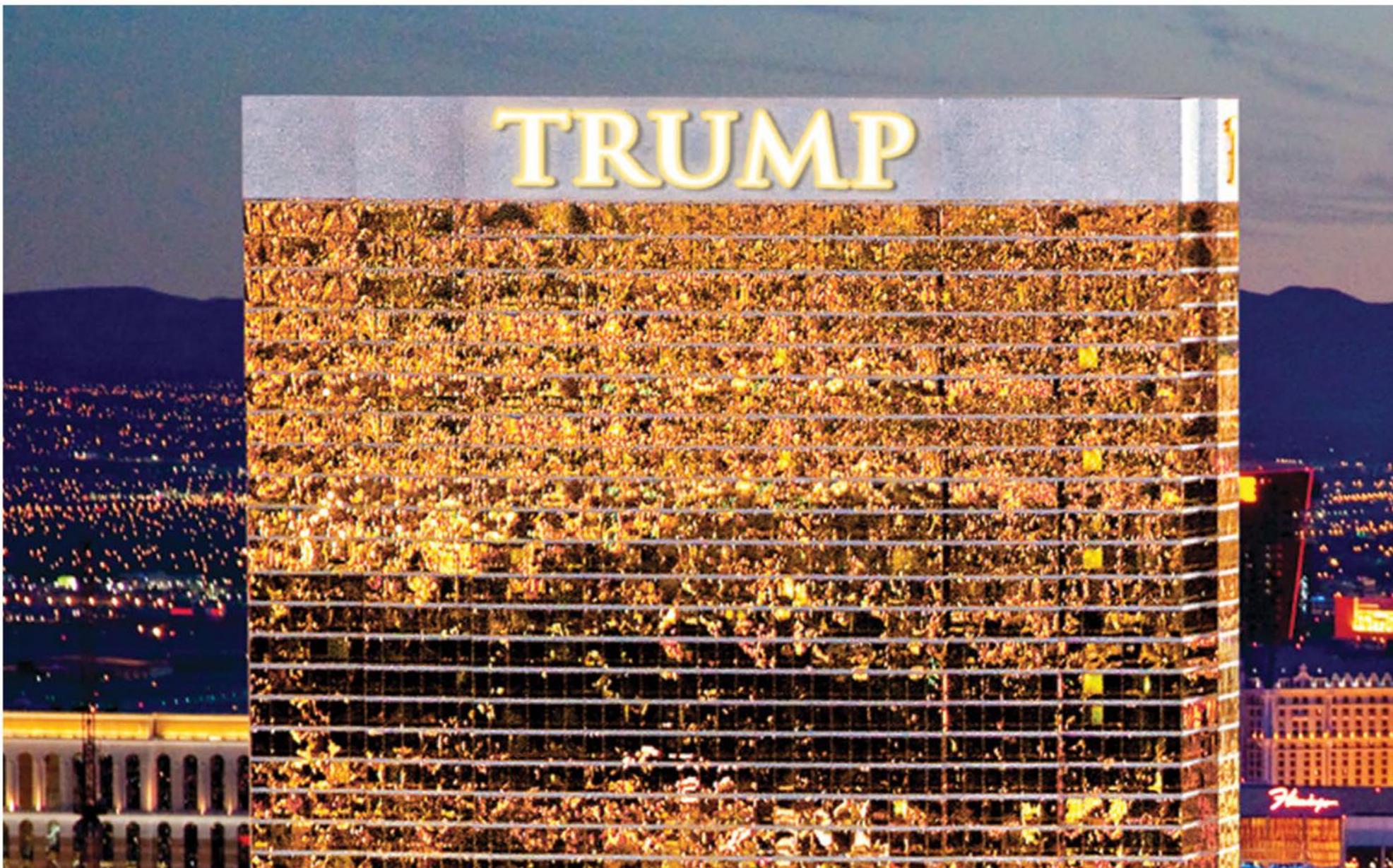


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TRUMP





# Soaring Luxury

By Tammy Neal

There are many great hotels on the iconic Las Vegas strip, but Trump International Hotel is without a doubt Las Vegas' premier. This world-class luxury hotel condominium rises 600 feet and is set against a majestic backdrop of surrounding mountains and sweeping panoramic views of the city. Trump International is a 64-story tower of golden glass, home to 1,232 graciously furnished non-smoking guest suites and 50 luxurious Las Vegas penthouse suites. It is just steps away from the best of Las Vegas, Nevada's shopping and entertainment, yet removed enough to be considered a family-friendly hotel.

Setting new benchmarks in stylish living, the 50 generously-proportioned penthouses demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to craftsmanship and world-class service. With spectacular views and opulent, contemporary interiors, they bring outstanding new options to discerning travelers seeking the ultimate Las Vegas residence. One such opportunity is the exquisitely sumptuous 3-bedroom penthouse, complete with 180° panoramic views over Las Vegas, striking architecture and interiors, and unsurpassed amenities and services. Trump Las Vegas represents a one-of-a-kind ownership opportunity, allowing residents to indulge in the city's world-renowned lifestyle and enjoy five-star comfort, a central location, and the timesaving convenience of a fully-furnished, turn-key property.

Trump Las Vegas takes VIP service to new heights thanks to their exclusive partnership with Maverick Helicopters, presenting new buyers with a luxurious on-call "House Helicopter" for evening routes, allowing owners and hotel guests to book tours just hours before the desired flight time. Whether owners or guests are attending a show or heading out for a spectacular dinner, an evening tour of the Strip in this "limousine in the sky" is a sensational addition to any evening. The Trump Las Vegas House Helicopter will be on-call for residents and guests and can accommodate up to six people for Vegas night tours.

Residents will experience the true essence of hospitality with an unprecedented level of personalized service and pampering, from white-gloved doormen to the signature services of Trump Attaché, a luxurious Spa at Trump, and DJT, the hotel's signature restaurant. Additionally, Neiman Marcus Las Vegas is pleased to provide a variety of services to all Trump Las Vegas owners on an ongoing basis. As part of this partnership, Trump Las Vegas residences will enjoy VIP access to Neiman Marcus Las Vegas' roster of exciting events, including early notification of trunk shows and fashion presentations. Furthermore, owners will be treated to a convenient complimentary courier service of their Neiman Marcus purchases to ensure items are safely transported back to their Trump residence. Finally, residents can enjoy the benefits of a personal Shopping Concierge, whereby a direct contact at Neiman Marcus will assist with coordinating visits to the store and address any shopping needs or questions.

With so many opportunities for new experiences and a focus on uncompromising service, Trump International Hotel Las Vegas is truly a world-class destination.

**To learn more about Trump International Hotel Las Vegas, visit [www.trumplv.com](http://www.trumplv.com).**



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Hong



## An Embellished Life

By Maggie Grainger | Photos by Rick Baraff

San Francisco's aura is a prismatic tapestry embellished by a host of character traits: vibrancy, edginess, controversy, style, sophistication, and history. For fashion designer Hong Ni, the City by the Bay is all of this and so much more. She has developed an affinity for its nuances and has a different way to describe her new home city: "Calming," she says with a smile. "I'll just go down to the Ferry Building and look out at the water. It's so nice and relaxing."

It's also the perfect place for the Chinese native to sit back and reflect on all the things she's accomplished in the past year alone, including seeing all of her hard work come to life on the runway at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week back in February 2014.

Ni grew up in Hangzhou, China, a waterfront city known as "Heaven on Earth" since ancient times. Hangzhou is home to around eight million people, remains one of China's most popular tourist venues, and sits about an hour away from the cosmopolitan city of Shanghai. Considering she grew up within visiting distance of the renowned West Lake, which has inspired poets for centuries, perhaps it is unsurprising she always dreamed of doing something artistic. Her parents encouraged her to

nurture her passions early on. "They were both supportive and restrictive," Ni explains. "Before I turned fourteen, they encouraged me to try as many things as time allowed, but after that, they forced me to choose only one to focus on."

She spent time flitting her fingers across the ivories, learning the careful brushstrokes of Chinese painting, and folk dancing, but she ultimately decided to pursue a different form of art. Ni gravitated toward textiles about ten years ago when she first encountered textile design in an elective course. "I still remember my first homework assignment was to create a blanket cover," she remembers fondly. "It had beautiful white graphic patterns on an indigo-colored canvas." Unfortunately, Ni left the blanket in the classroom to dry and it "grew legs and walked out," never to be seen again, but that didn't stop her from studying textile design more in-depth.

At her local university, she received a Master of Fine Arts in textile design and came to California in 2009 to study fashion and textile design at San Diego State. It was here she realized she could combine her love of textiles with the ever-evolving world of fashion, and she jumped in head first. She studied at San Francisco's prestigious Academy of Art University where she simultaneously maintained a 3.8 G.P.A. and turned heads in the fashion world.

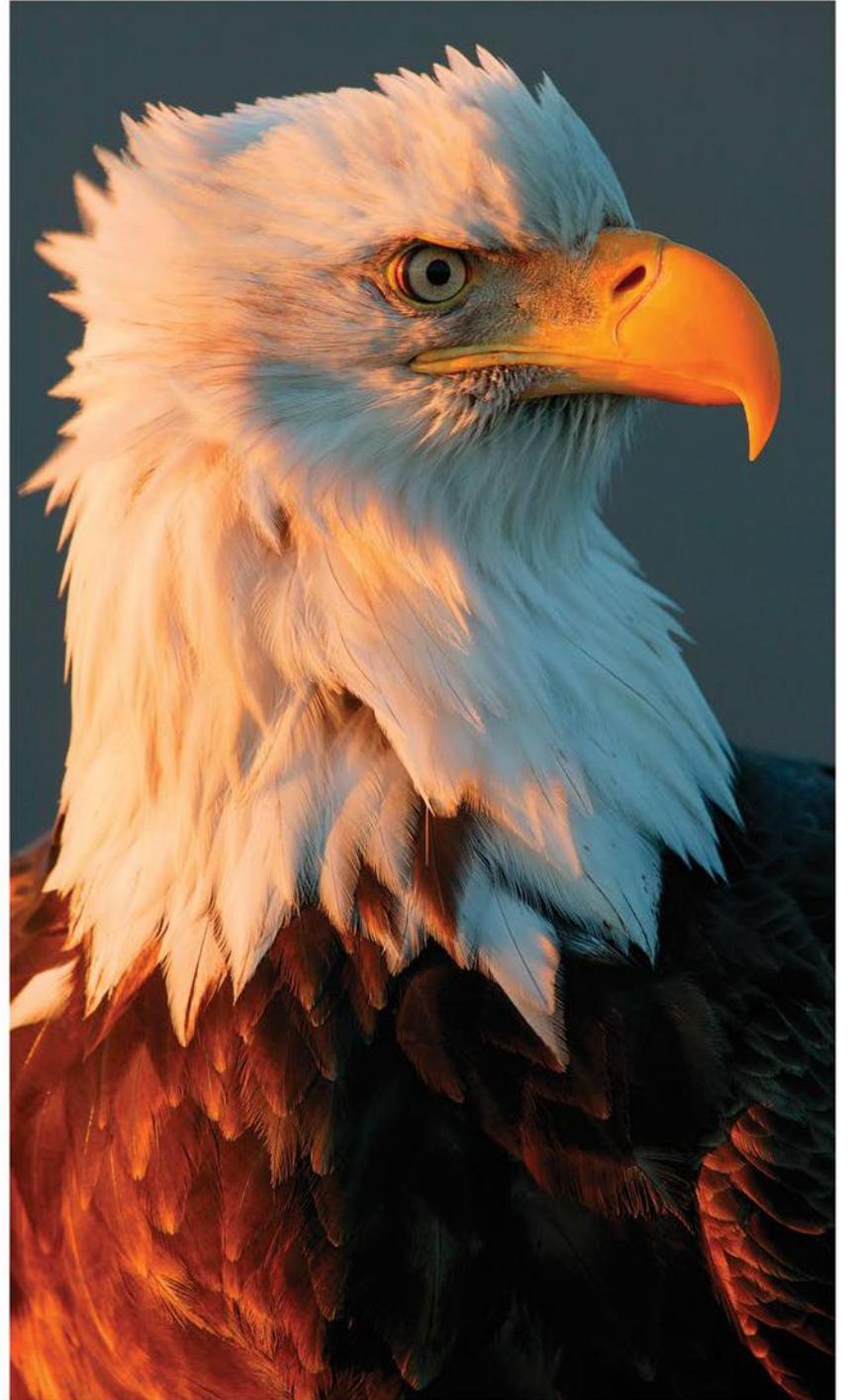
Her hard work has definitely paid off, and she isn't slowing down. Before gracing the runway in New York, she earned the Chinese National Art Exhibition Award in 2010, and even taught at her Chinese alma mater. She's also the chief designer of not one, but two fashion companies, LingLuoHui and Dacheng Cityscape Design LLC. With dreaminess in her tone, she expresses hope that one day her work will garner the same respect as the late Alexander McQueen.

Nature, the countryside, and unique textiles—particularly silk—all serve as inspirations for her creations. "I like natural fabrics, especially 50% cotton, 50% silk," she says. "I can use a variety of techniques to bring out subtle details." That's not to say she shies away from unconventional cloths, but she admits there is one material you will never see on her models: spandex. For now, she's having fun collaborating with other designers, expanding her creative horizons, and looking for an authentic Chinese restaurant that reminds her of home. "San Francisco has some of the best Chinese restaurants in the world, but nothing can replace hometown cooking," she admits. "I miss that and tea gardens."

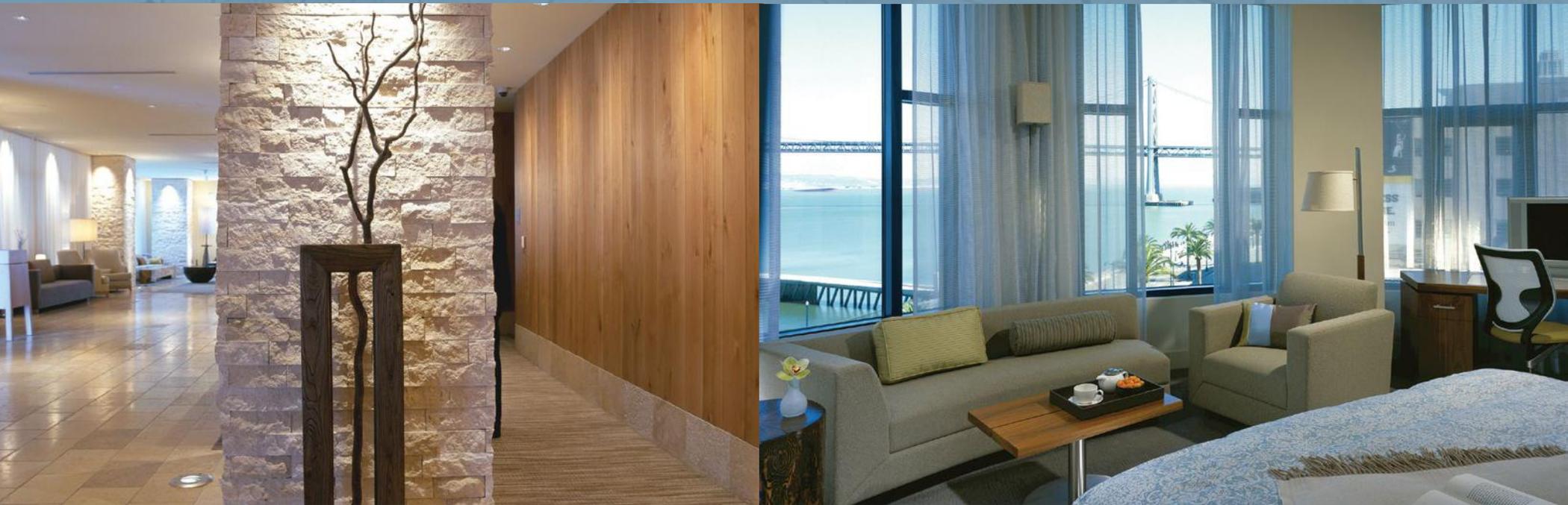
Whenever bouts of homesickness sneak up on her, Ni knows exactly what will cheer her up. She goes outside, starts walking, and heads straight down to her happy place: the Ferry Building.



RON NIEBRUGGE







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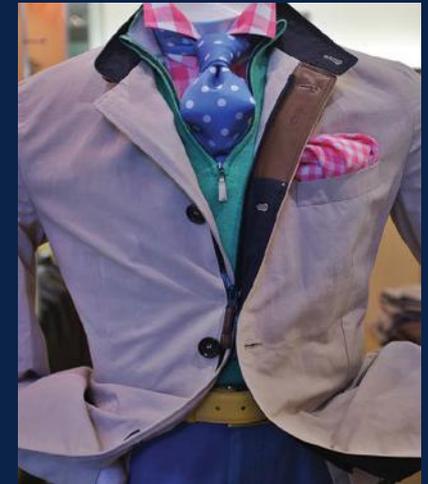
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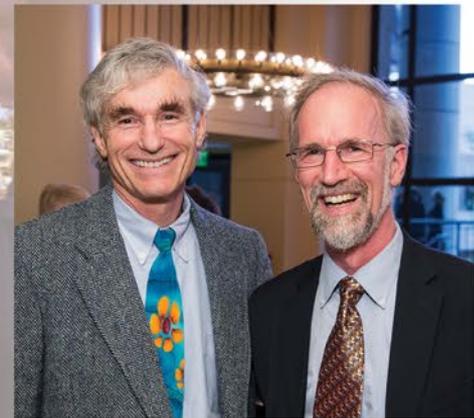
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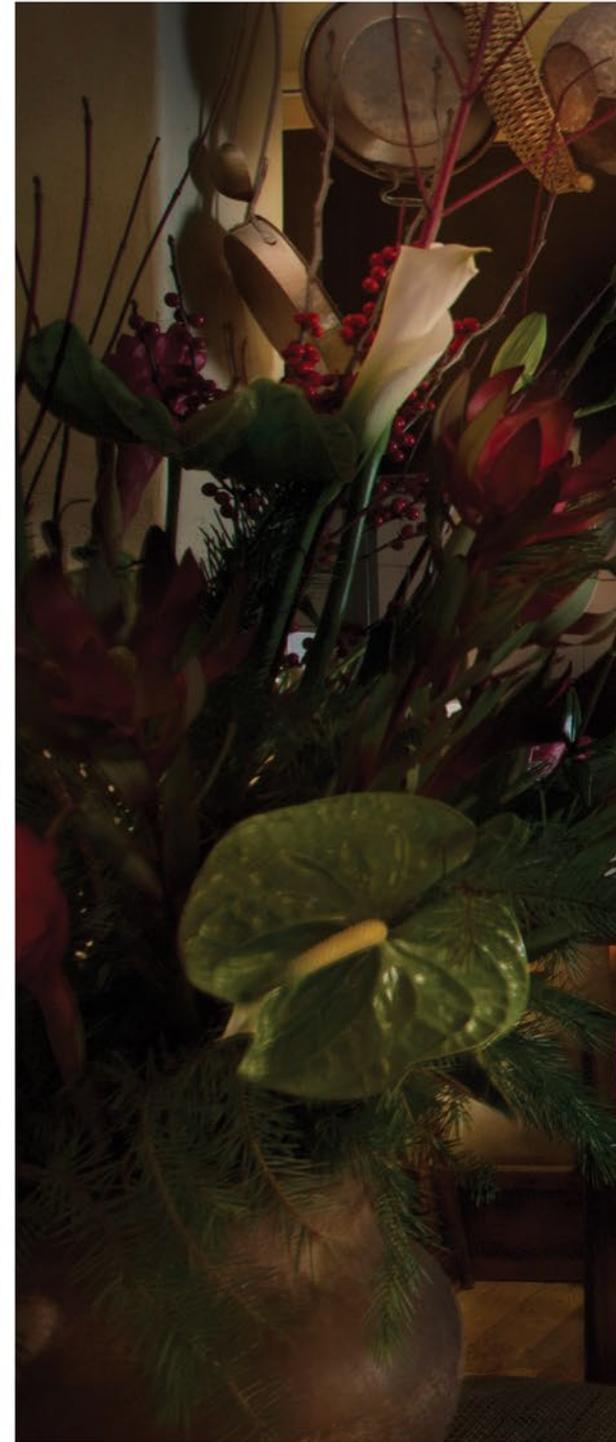
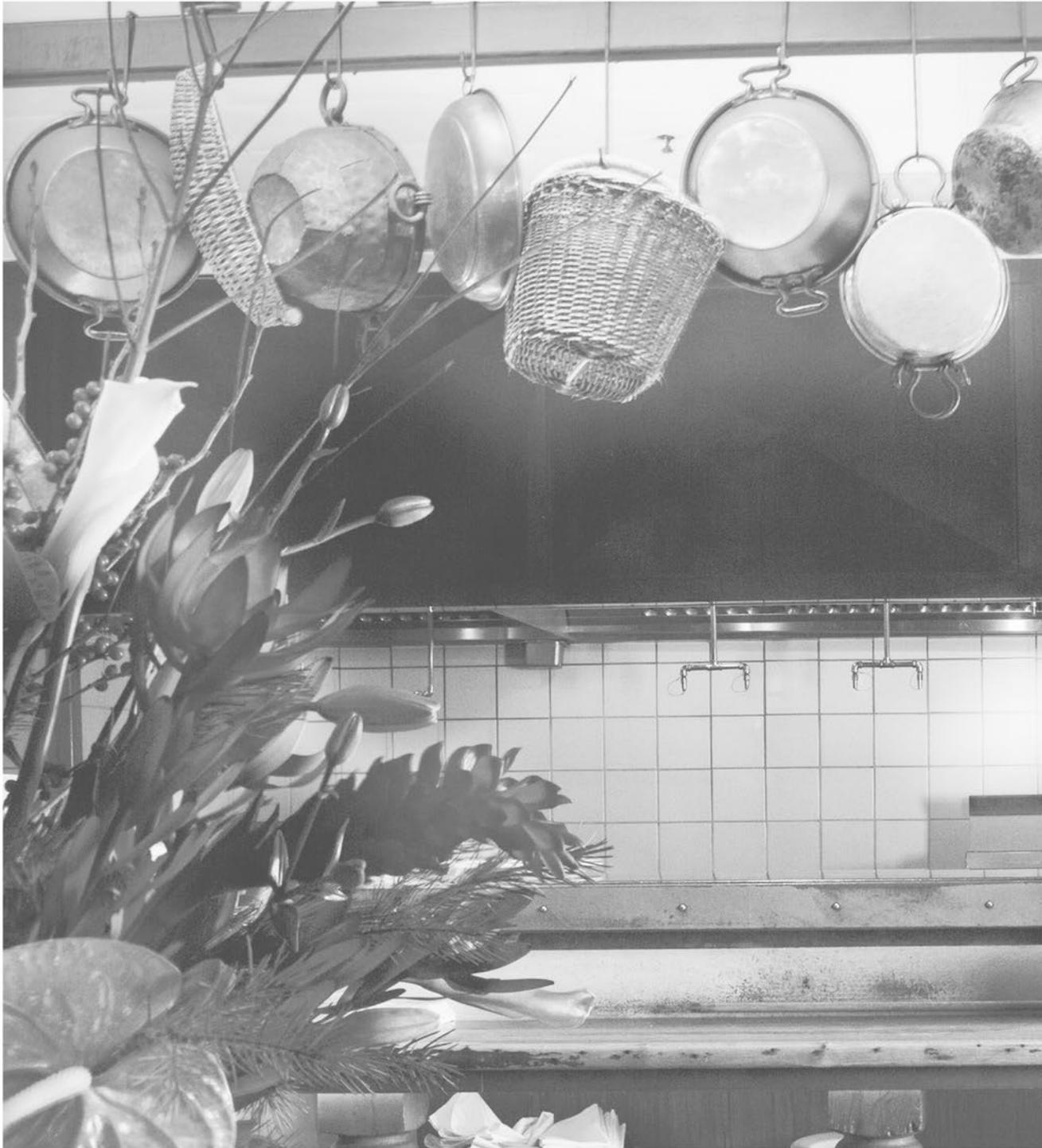


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# ARIL

NAPA VALLEY WINES



A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a black blazer over a patterned top and black skirt, stands in a restaurant kitchen. The kitchen features a tiled backsplash, a stainless steel range hood, and numerous copper and metal pots and pans hanging from the ceiling. In the foreground, there are stacks of white plates and a wooden table. The lighting is warm and focused on the woman.

# Robin

## I Left My Heart In San Francisco

By Alexis Chavez | Photos by Hemali Zaveri

Eager to break into the restaurant industry, twenty-something Robin left the fashion and home design industry in New York City to set her sights on the burgeoning foodie culture back home in Marin. Armed with a passion for food and wine, but not many connections in the Bay Area, Kirby took matters into her own hands, with a sense of ambition that continues to propel her through life.



One cold call to the management at Buckeye Roadhouse in Marin led to an interview with Patrick Coll, the opening general manager and now managing partner of Marinitas. Sitting across from the gruff Irishman, Kirby was well aware that the two could not be from more different worlds. “I think he took one look at me and thought, ‘You don’t get your hands dirty,’” she remembers. This was 1993. The two would eventually work together in other ventures, and Kirby knew she would have to work hard to prove herself, a lesson she never forgot.

Originally from New York, Kirby moved out west with her family when she was nine. The move to California in the ’70s introduced her family to healthy eating, while the proximity to wine country helped them cultivate a taste for wine, which Kirby would eventually inherit.

Living on the west coast inspired Kirby’s family to explore this half of the country. The family would camp and travel, instilling a sense of adventure in her at a young age. When she was in her teens, Kirby’s father left his corporate executive job to start his own venture capital firm. Watching him take risks in business was inspiring for Kirby, who rarely shies away from trying something new.

Throughout the mid-’90s, she managed multiple restaurants in the Napa Valley and the Bay Area, helped open Plump Jack Winery, and worked with old friend Patrick Coll on a venture with Gap Inc. until 2001. When the two left Gap,

they had planned to open a restaurant together, but after September 11, plans came to a screeching halt. “Suddenly opening a restaurant seemed completely unimportant in the grand scheme of things; meanwhile, investors were being financially conservative,” she says.

While trying to figure out her next career move, plans for Kirby and her then-boyfriend-now-husband, Paul Kirby, turned personal. The two decided to start a family, and Paul had an epiphany—for Kirby to work with him at Kokkari Estiatorio. Although they initially met in the industry, she was hesitant to work together.

It’s been twelve years since they made that decision, and the two not only work together, but also are proud parents of their eight-year-old daughter, Erin. These days, Kirby is a manager at Kokkari, while Paul is managing partner of both Kokkari and sister restaurant Evvia Estiatorio in Palo Alto.

Nestled in a brick building on the old Barbary Coast for the last 16 years, Kokkari thrives by staying true to their mission, an extension of what the Greeks call *filoxenia*—providing a good meal with warm service in a beautiful and welcoming environment. This spirit of generous “what’s mine is yours,” is essential to Greek culture and part of what keeps customers, old and new, from all over the world and up the street, coming in.

The familial feel isn’t coincidental either. Kirby’s husband has been at Kokkari since 2000, while managers Dimitrios Kalessis and Doug Dietz have been there for eight and fifteen years, respectively, an unusual feat in the restaurant world. The atmosphere of family that Kirby, her husband, and their restaurant team have created extends to each customer, creating an ethos of community within an international city. “There is a culture we have created that has not changed,” she says. “And I think that’s wonderful for a place, to have that sort of permanency and roots.”

Driven by the idea of nurturing customers and creating special moments, a Greek restaurant is a natural fit for Kirby. Yet despite having settled down, she hasn’t lost her sense of adventure. Always up for a challenge and opportunity to learn, Kirby is considering the possibility of starting a new venture in the near future.

“We would love to open up another restaurant. It’s important to us that whatever we choose, the strength of our concept will not be compromised,” she excitedly says. “But it’s time for us to share something else with the Bay Area.”



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# Wine, Dine, and Refine!

## San Francisco Wine School Carves Education into Passion

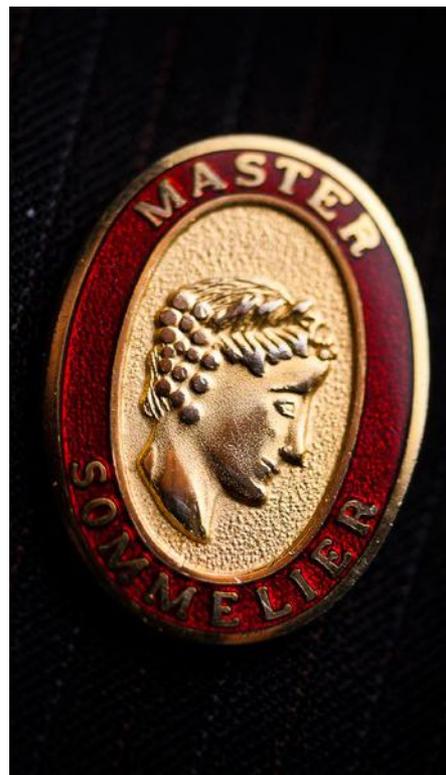
By Andrea Stuart

Most of us wine lovers can probably extract the exact time and place in which we first met that sultry libation. For Master Sommelier David Glancy, founder of the San Francisco Wine School (SFWS), it was a meet-cute with a Vouvray demi-sec during his first trip to France at age sixteen.

Since first immersing in the restaurant industry at age fifteen, Glancy has procured several credentials, including Master Sommelier, Certified Wine Educator, and Certified Specialist of Spirits, each of which has served his current purpose.

In 2011, Glancy launched the SFWS in an effort to expound upon the wine knowledge that wine enthusiasts had already obtained while also providing focused curriculums for students who desire more in-depth exploration. More than a credentialing body, SFWS provides continuing education as well as fundamentals for individuals seeking careers in or related to the wine industry.

After operating and teaching wine programs across the country from Cordon Bleu to the former Professional Culinary Institute (PCI), Glancy observed an underserved market and aimed to fill that gap. "While I was proud of what I created at PCI, I wanted to provide educational programs that help students with their wine careers, not just the exams," he explains. "It was clear that some graduates had no intention of working as sommeliers, but this was their best educational option. There was also a demand and need for continuing education after the Certified Sommelier exam." Glancy knew that an independent wine school would have more focus and give higher priority to wine education than a culinary school ever could.





Unlike other industries, there are no legal requirements for a sommelier. As such, many people are confused by what Glancy calls “wine credential blur.” There are at least a dozen sommelier credentialing bodies or schools that offer their own sommelier programs. SFWS provides career-based training and bridges educational gaps where no certification body currently exists. In addition to becoming a Certified Wine Specialist (CWS), students can refine their knowledge by obtaining specialized certifications such as French Wine Scholar (FWS) and California Wine Appellation Specialist (CWAS) among others.

Glancy recognizes there is a delicate balance required between on-the-job-training and formal education. “We emphasize the importance of work experience, volunteering, networking, reading, travel, wining and dining in addition to everything we provide in the classroom,” he adds. “The industry is getting more competitive every day, and formal education will give workers an edge.”

SFWS has opened the educational door to more than just sommeliers. Restaurant, hotel, wine bar and tasting room managers, as well as waiters, bartenders, chefs, wine educators, sales executives, and other culinary and beverage-related professionals can now refine their crafts. And it’s all part of a larger community effort. “We have also donated our time, wine, and efforts to charity events for Guide Dogs for the Blind, St. Anne Parish, the Olympic Club Foundation, Les Dames d’Escoffier, American Institute of Wine & Food, and the SF-Marine Food Bank to name a few.”

In an industry worth more than \$250 billion, the wine world is begging for more wine specialists with focused core values. You need not insure your nose for one million dollars in order to secure a wine career. It seems the recipe for success begins with a passion for libations and food followed by a desire to learn.



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