

TRAVEL • FOOD • DRINK • TY'S TIPS • LIFESTYLE • DIY • MUSIC

Enjoy

JULY 2017

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Barcelona
ROMANCE,
ART & INTRIGUE



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PARTY FAVORS

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LAWN SOME LOVE**

and much more!

Vol 6 ISSUE: 2

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JULY 2017

Nothing makes me happier than seeing people live their best lives. When our resident yogi turned world traveler told us she was trading in her laptop for a life of flip-flops, sandy beaches and parts unknown, I cheered her on. We only get one shot at life, so you might as well live it on your own terms. Now, she's 7,447 miles away from clocking in and one-hour lunch breaks. Jennifer Wolan shares her personal journey with us in the **Lifestyle** section.

For a festive 4th of July, we concocted a red, white and blue beverage that's sure to light a fire under your next celebration. It starts with rum and finishes with "More, please." Get the recipe in our **Drink** section.

Nothing says summer like corn. Roasted, raw, creamed or buttered, corn is as integral to summer as sunshine. In this month's **Food** section, we share our favorite corn salad recipe. With a little cilantro and a lot of avocado, it's a crowd pleaser.

This month, and always, get out and *Enjoy* life.



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ALL ABOUT JULY

EVENTS, HOLIDAYS AND THEN SOME



JULY 2017

JULY 3

St. Thomas

JULY 4

Independence Day

JULY 5

National Bikini Day

JULY 11

World Population Day

JULY 14

Bastille Day

JULY 16

National Ice Cream Day

JULY 18

Nelson Mandela Day

JULY 19

National Hot Dog Day

JULY 22

Hammock Day

JULY 23

Parent's Day

JULY 24

National Tequila Day

JULY 29

World Lasagna Day

JULY 30

International Friendship Day

National Cheesecake Day

OBSERVANCES

National Parks Month

UV Safety Month

BIRTHSTONE

Ruby & Onyx

FLOWER

Water Lily & Larkspur

Barcelona

ROMANCE, ART & INTRIGUE

by: Amanda Pearson

Barcelona has always been at the top of my travel bucket list. As a Chicagoan, the bustling atmosphere, proximity to water, metropolitan feel, and, of course, the amazing cuisine seems familiar while altogether different. While Chicago is a gem of a city, nothing can compare to Barcelona's architecture; intricate carvings, towering cathedrals and Gaudí masterpieces. With only 6 days and 5 nights to explore, we set out with cameras and itineraries in hand to capture as much of the sights as possible.

I'm very thankful for our decision to stay in the heart of the city. Not only was it convenient to explore by foot, but our hotel was perfectly located at the edge of the Gothic Quarter and at the end of La Rambla – a famous street for locals, musicians, and poets alike. This allowed us to sample the best tapas and views Barcelona had to offer. We often found ourselves pondering how they could build such complex designs and sculpt such detailed carvings into the sides of these magnificent structures.

TAPAS

You've never had real tapas until you've had tapas in Barcelona. Every single restaurant and café that we stopped at offered some sort of tapas menu. For those who are unfamiliar with tapas, it's simply a small plate of food, served either hot or cold, that is meant to be shared. In Barcelona, however, it's its own category of food that can easily turn into an entire meal. In terms of tapas, we ate everything from "garlic sizzling prawns" to "Galician style octopus" to "marinated mussels." I was in seafood heaven! Of course, they offer beef and poultry options too but since we had access to such fresh seafood, we took full advantage.

LA RAMBLA

As Ed Sheeran serenades "Las Ramblas, I'll meet you, come on and dance with me in Barcelona..." He's right in that this iconic street is full of exuberance, shopping, eating and an overall feeling of happiness. La Rambla, a broad pedestrian boulevard, runs right through the

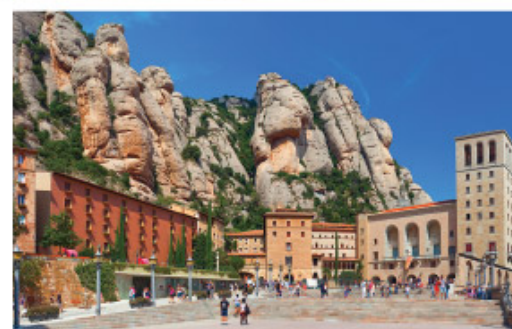


center of the city and cannot be missed. It's divided into five sections which is why it's also referred to as Las Ramblas. You'll find everything from flower vendors, to outdoor cafes to children playing hopscotch all along the way. It's full of foot traffic (parallel to motor traffic) and leads to another iconic place, Mercat de Sant Josep de la Boqueria, or simply, the Boqueria. I highly recommend a trip into the Boqueria to experience the lively atmosphere and browse a variety of vendors selling everything from freshly caught fish to Jamón ibérico (cured ham) to the most popular item, fruit smoothies.

LA SAGRADA FAMILIA

Out of all the cathedrals I planned to visit during this trip, I was most excited to finally see La Sagrada Familia – one of the most distinguished works by famous Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí. The sheer size of it takes your breath away and only until you're standing right at the entrance do you realize the magnitude of work that was (and is still being) put into it. Construction

for La Sagrada Familia began over 100 years ago and is ongoing! There are plans to make it taller than its current 566-foot stature. Lining the front of the building are thousands of intricate concrete carvings of nature, scrolls and tributes to Mary and Jesus. Once you step inside, you'll marvel at the beautiful stained glass windows and the way Gaudí constructed them so that light cascades through them and illuminates the entire interior with vibrant reds, yellows and blues. I'm still in awe at this marvelous structure and highly recommend an entire afternoon here to experience it all.



MONTSERRAT

The last day of the trip was spent driving through the country to the beautiful mountainside monastery that is Montserrat. It was one of the most breathtaking experiences of my life. There are two options to get to the top of the monastery: railway or cable car. We chose the Aeri de Montserrat, or cable car. We climbed into the bright yellow cable car and made the 4,000-foot ascension over the Llobregat river and valley at about 11 miles per hour. The views were stunning with green valleys and Spanish roofs lining the bottom. When we reached the top, I needed a minute to take it all in. In front of me was all of Catalunya below, with peaks, valleys, winding rivers and lush landscape. And behind me was the actual town with prominent, almost caricature-like cliffs as its backdrop. We spent a day up there eating our Iberian ham sandwiches and soaking up the views. I couldn't think of a better way to end our Spanish adventure.



Fiesta Corn Salad

by: Chrystal Caruthers



INGREDIENTS

6 ears of grilled corn (kernels stripped)

3 avocados

3 plum tomatoes

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

¼ cup Cotija or Parmesan cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 tablespoon chili powder

2 stalks green onion

1 can black beans (drained & rinsed)

Kosher salt

DIRECTIONS

Grill corn. Allow to cool. Cut corn kernels off the cob into a bowl. To that, add chopped cilantro, chili powder, chopped green onion, chopped avocado, black beans, chopped tomatoes and olive oil. Toss vigorously. Add crumbled Cotija cheese. Salt to taste.

ENJOY!



Firecracker Cocktail

IT'S GOT SOME POP TO IT!

by: Chrystal Caruthers



This drink is made for summer Bar-B-Q's. It's 4th of July in a glass – or Mason jar, to be exact. If you want to impress your guests and add some patriotism to your holiday gathering, make this cocktail and set off the festivities!

INGREDIENTS

Ice

Blueberries

Strawberries

Dubouchett White Crème de Cacao

DeKuyper Blue Curacao

Bacardi Superior Rum

Mason jars

DIRECTIONS

This drink is all about layering. Mix each layer separately.

Combine a scoop of ice, a pint of strawberries, and an ounce of rum. Blend for 15 seconds.

Next, combine a scoop of crushed ice, a pint of blueberries, and an ounce of Blue Curacao. Blend for 15 seconds.

Finally, combine a scoop of crushed ice and an ounce of White Crème de Cacao. Blend for 10 seconds.

Pour strawberry layer first, then add clear icy Curacao layer and finally top with the Blue Curacao layer.

ENJOY!



 **TY'S TIPS**

JULY TIPS FROM
TY
PENNINGTON
INTERIOR DESIGN STAR

GIVE YOUR LAWN SOME LOVE

TIPS FOR A LUSH AND LASTING YARD

Hello, July! With summertime in full swing, your lawn and garden surely needs a little extra TLC to stay happy and healthy in the heat. Wilting plants and yellow patches of grass are an eyesore; flashy flowers and an emerald-green lawn are an eye pleaser. Remember, it's all about curb appeal. Heed these warm weather tips to get the most out of your plant life—you'll earn that green thumb in no time!

Contributed by:
Nick Van Heest, based on tips from the Ty Pennington Design Team



WATERING

You can never have too much water, but your plants certainly can! Overwatering leads to root rot and compaction, which prevents air from absorbing in the soil. Most lawns need an inch of water a week, while perennial plants and shrubs need 1-2 inches. If conditions are hot and dry, water more frequently without increasing the amount.

A standard garden hose and nozzle is not an effective way to water your plants—a great deal of water is lost via mist, runoff and evaporation. Use a soaker hose or sprinkler for even and efficient distribution. If water is puddling or running off, shut it off! Give the water a chance to permeate the soil before continuing. Got sprinklers? Make sure your lawn is getting watered, not your driveway or the side of your house. Wasting water is a no-no!

As a rule of thumb, mornings and evenings are the best time to water your plants. The cooler temperatures allow the water to soak in before it evaporates on the surface. If you want to conserve water, or if you live in a state under water restrictions, prioritize your front yard and let the rest of your property take care of itself.

HEAT WAVE TWEAKS

Stuck in a heat wave? Your lawn and garden routine may require a few adjustments. Here are several tips for when temperatures soar above 90 degrees:

- Don't fertilize—plants absorb little water in the heat and fertilizer can burn them.
- Raise your lawnmower's cutting height to preserve soil moisture and reduce weed growth.
- Only prune dead or diseased branches—leaves help cool off your plants.
- Pile on the mulch to cool the soil and retain moisture.
- Unfortunately, weeding is a chore that never goes away, regardless of the heat index. Keep pulling up weeds and your yard will thank you!

WEED AND PEST CONTROL

Not all weeds are bad news. A smattering of dandelions, chickweed and white clover can add a burst of color and attract beneficial insects. Ladybugs and lacewing larvae chow

down on plant-destroying aphids and parasitic wasps take down caterpillars, beetles and flies.

Be careful. Weed killer can damage surrounding plants, so aim carefully. Rope off weeds with a piece of cardboard to shield your beloved plants from overspray.

Standing water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes, so change your birdbath water and empty rainwater from buckets or trash cans. Mosquitoes prefer laying eggs in quiet, standing reservoirs. Weeds and pests can spread like wildfire—employ a ruthless tack to protect your property.

YOU

The gardener is more important than the garden! Don't forget to take care of yourself—stay hydrated, use sunscreen and work during the cooler morning and evening hours.



Why I Quit My Job *to Travel the World*

by: Jennifer Wolan



On April 17, 2017, I quit my job in Chicago and moved to Taipei, Taiwan.

A desk job—shuffling papers and helping others achieve their dreams—was not for me. Ever since I was toddler, I longed to be outdoors. I cried when my mom would tell me to come inside, to put on shoes, to conform. I was born to roam. At age 22, I made a life-changing decision I will never regret: I traded the comforts of suburban life for exploration and global adventure. I choose to become who I have always been deep inside—a traveler.

It wasn't easy mustering the courage to tell my family, friends and coworkers that I was giving it all up—the designer handbags, the weekends bar-hopping in Chicago and the family gatherings that I've always known. When I finally found the courage to run away from the Midwest, I told my parents (and my Facebook friends) that I bought a one-way ticket to Taipei with plans to travel across Asia.

Most of my friends said "Cool! Be safe," but I could tell they didn't understand my choice. The response from my mom was much worse. While sitting on the

couch in the home I grew up in, I shared how excited I was about my upcoming trip. My mother cut through with one question, "Are you living in some kind of fairytale?!"

The night I left for my travels, my dad drove me to the airport. My mom, on the other hand, refused to speak to me and told me to never speak to her again. My little sister was out hanging with friends. (Later, she wrote me a heartfelt "see you later" post on Facebook). Only my dad knew how to handle the situation. I was leaving for Asia, going somewhere they had never imagined, for an indefinite period of time. Looking back, it may sound like they were a little harsh, but I knew deep down they were scared. I also knew I would see them again. One day.

Twenty hours of flight time later, I was living my dream. Leaving the Midwest to travel through Asia has been the best decision I've ever made! I'm on my fourth week of travel and at the time of this writing, I'm eating breakfast at a picnic table in a sleepy beach town called Hoi An, Vietnam—unlimited scrambled eggs, fresh passion fruit juice and coffee from beans picked last week.

All this for \$5/day, including my room at a friendly hostel.

In the last month, I've explored three different countries, hiked over a dozen mountain paths, stayed with a Vietnamese family in the Mekong Delta, rock climbed through the jungle and met some of the friendliest people on earth. I traveled to Asia alone, but here I'm never alone. I'm always surrounded by 20-somethings from all over Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Asia who take a "gap year" after high school or university to travel the world. Many people I met in southern Vietnam I've seen again in hostels throughout central and northern Vietnam. The backpacker route is well maintained and easy to travel, we're all following the same path. I have found my path in life.

No, I'm not saving for retirement. I'm not planning my wedding or my friend's baby shower like many of my friends back home. But I'm happy.

Want to follow my adventure? Follow me on my travel blog "Sun-kissed Travels" at www.jenniferwolan.com or on Instagram @jenniferwolan.

DIY



clips by Jane



Fired-Up

PARTY FAVORS

by: Jane Monzures

Handing out fun party favors is the norm these days for any event. This year, you can really ignite the party with DIY Rocket candy bags! They are sure to be an explosive treat for your 4th of July celebration.



SUPPLIES

- White paper bags
- Washi tape in red and blue strips, dots, stars or whatever pattern you can find
- Star-shaped stickers in various sizes
- Construction paper or card stock cut into a circle
- Silver pipe cleaners
- Glue

STEP 1

To create the body of the rocket, cut the bottom off a white paper bag to create openings at both ends.

STEP 2

Lay the bag flat. Use washi tape to decorate the bag with alternating colors, patterns and designs. Be sure to leave white space in between each stripe. Add star stickers all over the bag.

STEP 3

Tightly twist one end of the bag, then wrap red tape around the twisted end to secure it closed.

STEP 4

Fill the bag with candy, then tightly twist the open end and wrap tape around it to secure.

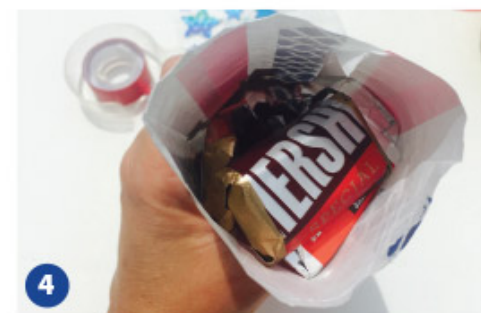
STEP 5

To create the rocket head, cut halfway into the red construction paper circle until the point of your scissors reaches the center. Using the center as a point, overlap the edges of the circle to make a cone. Squeeze a dab of glue inside the point of the cone and place it over one of the twisted ends of the bag.

STEP 6

Add silver pipe cleaners to the end of the bag.

Make several of these rocket candy bags and display them in a large bowl. Partygoers will love ripping into the bags for a tasty "explosive" treat!





MUSIC

Light Up the Night

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

Talking Heads

WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE

Billy Joel

FIREWORKS

Drake featuring Alicia Keys

SET FIRE TO THE RAIN

Adele

TOUCH THE SKY

Kanye West

A SKY FULL OF STARS

Coldplay

BURNING

The War on Drugs

FIRESTARTER

The Prodigy

STARS

Demi Lovato

FIREWORKS

Katy Perry

LET IT BANG

Fetty Wap

ROCKET MAN

Elton John

ROCKETS

Ella Henderson

FIRE

Jimi Hendrix

BURN

Ellie Goulding





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