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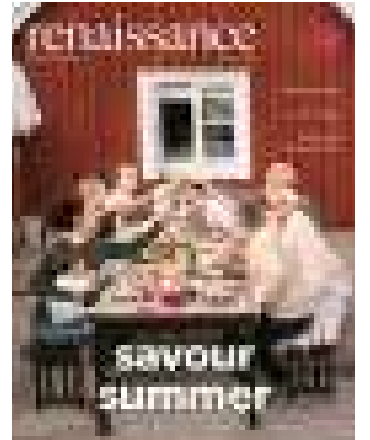
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Reader letters

Thank you for this beautiful edition of *Renaissance*. It has loads of practical advice. Thank you to everyone who contributed to its creation. –Sharon Jones (District 5 Cochrane, Temiskaming)

Thanks for including the feature “My Mom Remembered” in the spring issue of *Renaissance*. My mom was 96 when she passed away on July 22, 2022. Stella Chorney was her maiden name before she married my dad and became Stella Krochak. Mom came from Ukraine in 1937 to Canada with three sisters and a brother. They settled in Saskatchewan, and she later came to Ontario. Like Terry Chattington’s mom, my mom didn’t go to university and teachers’ college, like I did, and didn’t realize she was a teacher to her children — a very good one, who on her journey gave us many life lessons. –William Krochak (District 14 Niagara)

What an impressive issue the spring *Renaissance* is. Thank you very much. I read it cover to cover. I write a newsletter for our horticultural society and I understand the work, and I understand the pleasure. An excellent read. Have a wonderful spring, and thanks again. –Connie Matthews-Cull (District 27 Ottawa-Carleton)

The spring issue of *Renaissance* was a really good read. Keep up the good work. –Jeannie Kostick (District 26 Kenora)

Just had to write and tell you how great the spring issue is. From the beautiful front cover to Spotlight On, it is a winner! I thoroughly enjoyed all the articles and am adding some extra spices to my shopping list so I can try the Jamaican patties recipe! Thanks again for a great read. –Lynn Opre (District 39 Peel)



As a retired teacher who has joined my husband in fruit production, I am always pleased to see articles on food production, particularly Canadian food production. I don’t wholly support organic or non-organic farming. I do know that our climate in south-central Ontario is our biggest challenge to farming organically with success. Drier, less-humid climates tend to get stronger results using organic methods.

Keeping a crop disease- and pest-free is extremely costly, and growers apply products only when needed, just as you visit your doctor only when you need to. The use of synthetic products requires the applicator to obtain a licence, which must be renewed. The use and availability of these products are regularly updated and modified. Kindest regards. –Karen Ferri (District 39 Peel)

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We welcome your feedback, so please send your letters to renaissance@rtoero.ca. Letters may be edited for length and clarity at the discretion of the editor.

RENAISSANCE ALWAYS KEEPS THE ENVIRONMENT IN MIND



Environmental stewardship is one of RTOERO’s main advocacy issues. Responsible use of resources, conservation, and protecting our air, land and water are critical to a sustainable future. We honour our commitment by printing *Renaissance* on ethically sourced paper and using plant-based ink to

ensure the magazine is produced using materials that are environmentally sound; in addition, more than 10,000 RTOERO members choose to go paperless, receiving only *eRenaissance*. Occasionally, we bundle other important information with your copy of *Renaissance*. We use a clear wrap made of a

compostable, 100 per cent biodegradable plant-based substance you can simply toss in your compost bin. If you’d like to change your *Renaissance* subscription preferences to receive only the digital edition, please email membership@rtoero.ca and the RTOERO membership team will update your subscription preferences for you.

We asked RTOERO member Steve Paul and writers Pauline Anderson and Martin Zibauer to tell us about their perfect summer day.



STEVE PAUL

Every Sunday and Wednesday, weather permitting, a small group of friends and I ride our motorcycles. We head out from Peterborough, and the destination will be about 200 kilometres away, depending on the route we take. That gives us an arc from Collingwood, Huntsville, Eganville to Westport. We avoid the Greater Toronto Area. We never use main highways and rarely use major roads. We are not in a rush. It’s a casual ride, with the occasional challenging road, giving us a sense of freedom with friends who enjoy each other’s company. (District 36 Peterborough)



PAULINE ANDERSON

My perfect summer day starts at the crack of dawn, watching the sunrise at my rented cottage, drinking in the peaceful surroundings. Then I head into town with my daughter to play tennis and stop at the butcher on the way back to pick up fixings for a barbecue. After relaxing in the hammock with a good book, I’ll take the canoe out for a glide on the lake, have dinner with family and play a few games, before turning in to get up early to enjoy another summer day.



MARTIN ZIBAUER

Maybe the virtuous Canadians prefer the character-building hardship of winter, but I’d rather drift through summer. The best summer day is long. It’s waking way too early because the birds won’t shut up, then walking to get breakfast in a city where shopkeepers sweep the sidewalk before opening. It’s sitting with friends who make me laugh, on a deck in the afternoon; maybe a nap and a game of lawn bowls during a perfectly still evening. More laughter, pints and staying out way later than I should. I don’t get much sleep in a perfect summer.

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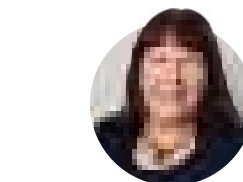


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RTOERO insurance plan

By members for members



by **Martha Foster**,
 RTOERO Chair

I'm going to shift the theme of this issue a bit, from Savour Summer to Savour Our Insurance Plan.

I am not going to talk about the plan itself but rather how it functions.

Our plan is RTOERO insurance. Many think it's Johnson insurance; it's not. RTOERO hires Johnson to advise us and to administer our plan. This is an important distinction: Our plan is run by members for members. A committee of 10 RTOERO members decides what will be covered on the plan and at what cost. These decisions are made based on requests from members and data from our consultants with respect to current and future costs.

The members who take on this task are dedicated people. They must take and pass, with at least a 70 per cent average, a five-part course offered by Dalhousie University. The committee meets five times a year for a day and a half, plus members may potentially serve on ad hoc committees and assist with the annual workshop for your district benefit representatives. Continued training and updating occurs regularly throughout the year.

When making decisions, the two primary considerations are always the needs of members and the financial stability of the plan. The committee would like to approve all requests from members, but before any decision is made, it must determine the long-term financial implications.

This team of RTOERO members, just like you, retired from the education community, and they have the same concerns that many of you do. They are an amazing group of committed people who have the best interests of you and RTOERO always at the top of their minds. Thank you, current members and past members, for guiding our insurance plan forward and ensuring that our health needs are well covered. 🧡

Here's to peace of mind — and that is worth savouring!
 Martha

My summer playlist

Celebrating those lazy, hazy days ...



by **Jim Grieve**,
 RTOERO CEO

I have always loved summer. There are few things better than spending time swimming, boating, hiking and, yes, even mowing the lawn. Summer is also the best season to enjoy playing, camping and travelling with your children and grandchildren.

The optimism that comes from beautiful weather, backyard pools or trips to a national or provincial park is infectious. (The post-COVID best kind.) That summer optimism sets us up for those glorious days of fall and helps to create the much-needed reservoir we can draw upon during the long Canadian winter.

I am writing this column in the middle of January, so believe me, I am already deep into that reservoir and longing for the missing sunshine, especially this year.

I don't know about you, but music has the power to put me in a special place. So here are 12 summer songs I'm playing now to put me in the warm-weather groove and let me "savour summer," even in the depths of winter.

You might well have your own summer favourites, but to give you a nudge, Muriel, the talented francophone leader in the directorate office, and I selected a bilingual playlist that we hope will set you up for a wonderful summer. De-selection was hard work!

- "Good Vibrations" — The Beach Boys
- "La bohème" — Charles Aznavour
- "Sun Is Shining" — Bob Marley and the Wailers
- "J'ai dix ans" — Alain Souchon
- "One Fine Morning" — Lighthouse
- "Le soleil donne" — Laurent Voulzy
- "Wipe Out" — The Surfaris
- "Fais-moi une place" — Julien Clerc
- "Times Like These" — Foo Fighters
- "Il est cinq heures, Paris s'éveille" — Jacques Dutronc
- "Smooth" — Santana
- "Tombé du ciel" — Jacques Higel

I wager, when you play all 12 tunes (old and new), you'll be transported to your favourite summer moments.

I bet you have personal summer playlists that go much deeper. So please send us your top five songs of summer (jgrieve@rtoero.ca) and we will publish the definitive 2023 RTOERO summer playlist. 🧡

Best,
 Jim

LEFT PHOTO, JASON GORDON. RIGHT PHOTO, PAUL ORENSTEIN

Mentally healthy living post-COVID-19

Preliminary results of an RTOERO Foundation-funded study suggest our ability to cope with stress may improve with age

by **Alison LaMantia**



The COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected older people, created a prime opportunity to learn from them about mentally healthy living strategies — what worked for them and what didn’t.

That’s what the RTOERO Foundation-funded project *Mentally Healthy Living after Social Distancing — A Study of Older Canadians* sought to find out. The Living Well research team, led by Gail Low, an associate professor of nursing at the University of Alberta, conducted a national survey of 1,327 Canadians aged 60 and older in August 2022, when the last public health restrictions were being lifted across the country. The survey was also completed by 1,110 RTOERO members.

The idea for the study came to Low as she coped with the first pandemic lockdown in her city. She recalls feeling restless, keyed up or on edge — which also turned out to be the most troubling anxiety symptom among the study respondents. “I recognized that finding out if others felt the same way, and how

they coped with it, was something I could do that potentially would help us learn from this shared challenge we were facing,” Low says.

The survey used an established 10-question test to measure anxiety. It also asked about 16 commonly recommended coping strategies to understand how people manage anxiety.

“What we have is a snapshot in time — it’s a description of what was happening at the end of last summer,” notes Low. “In general, the results show associations worthy of attention.”

Among the national sample, more than 40 per cent of respondents reported feeling not at all anxious or feeling minimal anxiety. On the other end, 22 per cent reported feeling severely anxious. The RTOERO results showed a similar pattern.

The respondents were then divided into four five-year age groupings, starting with 60 to 64 years, with the last group being 85 and older. A clear association stood out: Being in an older age group was connected with feeling less anxious.

“It could be because the older you are, the more life experience you have to draw on,” Low explains. “Perhaps they could take COVID-19 more in their stride than younger people.”

In general, people in the older age groups used fewer coping strategies compared to respondents in the younger age groups.

“The use of strategies generally declined around 75 to 79 years of age. Perhaps, at this point in life, people know what works for them.”

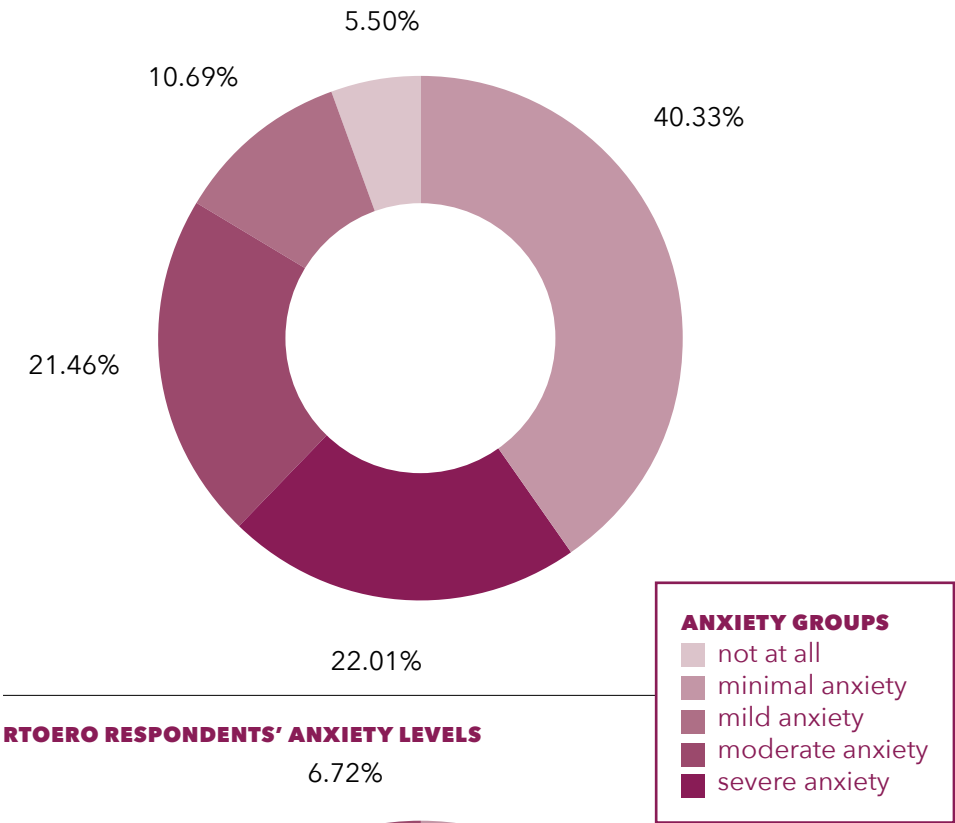
Another possibility the team wonders about is whether some of the strategies become automatic as we get older — like the need to remember that we are resilient. That strategy was more popular among the youngest responders, who noticed and reported it.

“Perhaps as people age, they know they are resilient. They don’t need to think about this or give themselves a reminder,” Low says.

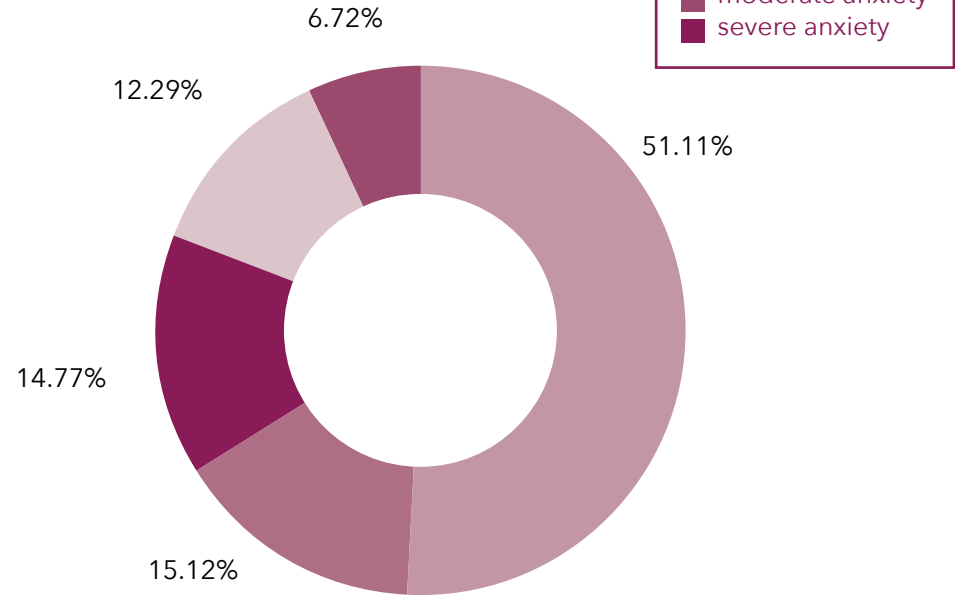
What didn’t differ across age groups was the impact of general health on stress and anxiety. Respondents in good or good

PHOTO: ADAM KAZ

NATIONAL SAMPLE OVERALL ANXIETY LEVELS



RTOERO RESPONDENTS' ANXIETY LEVELS



to excellent health had lower anxiety scores compared to those who rated their health as poor or fair. This was the case for both the national sample and the RTOERO respondents.

So, what were the best coping strategies? The six that appeared to have the best anxiety-lessening effects were staying active, dealing with problems in a structured way, eating healthily, getting proper rest and sleep, decreasing other sources of stress in life, and remembering resilience.

“We found there was not a single magic bullet for everyone,” Low notes.

“How people deal with significant events can vary a lot. It’s about finding what works for you.”

The team is currently working on publishing the findings. They’re also working with a chef to pair the results with another useful tool: easy-to-make, healthy recipes. Among the 16 stress-coping strategies are themes that relate to food preparation — including dealing with problems in a structured way, decreasing other sources of stress in life and, of course, eating healthily. The cookbook will be available through the RTOERO Foundation. 🍴

The Geriatric Anxiety Scale uses the following 10 items. Respondents were asked how often they’d experienced these common symptoms of stress and anxiety in the previous week and responded using a scale where 0 was not at all and 3 was all of the time.

1. I was irritable.
2. I felt detached and isolated from others.
3. I felt like I was in a daze.
4. I had a hard time sitting still.
5. I could not control my worry.
6. I felt restless, keyed up or on edge.
7. I felt overly tired.
8. My muscles were tense.
9. I felt like I had no control over my life.
10. I felt like something terrible was going to happen to me.

The study asked which of the 16 coping strategies respondents were using at the time of the survey. The strategies were based on advice from the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health:

1. I accepted that some anxiety and fear is normal.
2. I sought credible information, i.e., from the World Health Organization, Health Canada, a provincial ministry of health, a local public health unit.
3. I found a balance by staying tuned in (to news stories about COVID-19), but knowing when to take a breather.
4. I brought an intentional mindset to unplugging (from all electronics, including phones, tablets and computers).
5. I dealt with problems in a structured way.
6. I remembered that I am resilient and was careful with the “what ifs” (asking “what if” questions).
7. I challenged worries and anxious thoughts.
8. I decreased other sources of stress (in my life).
9. I practised relaxation and meditation.
10. I sought support (from loved ones).
11. I was kind to myself.
12. I ate healthily.
13. I avoided substance use — including smoking, vaping and alcohol.
14. I had a moderate caffeine intake.
15. I got proper rest and sleep.
16. I stayed active.

Rethinking healthy aging

Being “older” begins long before you become a senior

by Patricia Ogura



Canada’s population is aging — in fact, seniors are the fastest-growing demographic.

But gaps in our health-care and social policies make healthy aging difficult for many Canadians.

RTOERO, together with our members and partners, advocates for the changes to public policy we urgently need to create a Canada where we all can age safely, securely and healthily. One of our key areas of advocacy focus is healthy aging.

Current policies and services often focus narrowly on physical health. Instead, we need to rethink what healthy aging means: ensuring opportunities for active lifestyles, social inclusion, mental health supports, age-friendly communities and strategies for coping with change.

Good health in later years is a lifelong project. Apart from genetics, many conditions influence health profiles. Social determinants, for example — access to housing, food security, adequate income, supportive communities (think accessible transportation, for instance) and meaningful social connections create the foundation of healthy aging.

The impact of biases, inequality and

privilege on healthy aging starts well before older age. According to the World Health Organization, “A large proportion (approximately 75 per cent) of the diversity in capacity and circumstance observed in older age is the result of the cumulative impact of advantage and disadvantage.”

Advocacy isn’t easy. Creating real and lasting change needs action, not platitudes. That’s why RTOERO collaborates with like-minded organizations such as CanAge, which shares the same goals, values and determination to entrench the rights of older Canadians to enjoy full and connected lives.

Laura Tamblyn Watts, CanAge’s founder and CEO, is a lawyer and advocacy dynamo who has devoted decades to working on issues critical to seniors’ well-being.

Being “older” begins long before you become a senior, says Tamblyn Watts. “We are the culmination of all our experience, all of our opportunities and challenges, too ... being a person of colour, an immigrant, a person managing within low income or low socio-economic status. You may be a woman,

a gay man, a person raised in poverty. All things come together to shape your identity, and surprisingly, it may shape what your health and well-being is going to be in future years.”

Tamblyn Watts believes we need to “take a life course approach” to advocacy and think about the whole person. Advancing issues essential to well-being throughout life boosts the probability of healthy lives in later years.

RTOERO and Tamblyn Watts are committed to making Canada age-inclusive and to fighting ageism. We’re concerned about social isolation among older people, which can lead to depression, dementia and physical disorders.

“There’s an old saying that ‘age is just a number,’ yet all too often it needlessly drives a wedge between generations due to ageist preconceptions,” says Tamblyn Watts. “The truth is that when younger and older people come together, everybody wins.”

To that end, CanAge helps establish intergenerational channels and programs across Canada to bring people of different ages together for the benefit and appreciation of all.

CanAge intergenerational projects: canage.ca/intergenerational

CanAge’s *Policy Book* identifies six different action arenas:

- Violence and abuse prevention
- Optimal health and well-being
- Infection prevention and disaster response
- Caregiving, long-term care, home care and housing
- Economic security
- Social inclusion

Under each section are projects for which we can lend support or initiate activity in our homes and communities. CanAge *Policy Book*: canage.ca/advocacy/policy-book

Helpful resources

RTOERO advocacy programs: rtoero.ca/vibrant-voices
CanAge website: canage.ca/advocacy

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The veg debate

Why some vegetables are healthier cooked

by **Fran Berkoff**, registered dietitian

Summer’s finally here, and our markets and gardens are brimming with produce at both their peak taste and nutritional high point.

Nothing beats the taste of a freshly picked vegetable — think biting into a juicy, plump tomato fresh off the vine. (OK, technically tomatoes are a fruit but ...)

Well, I hate to rain on your parade, but some of these fresh vegetables actually deliver a bigger nutritional boost after being lightly cooked.

For example, while tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant linked to a lower risk of some cancers and with heart-healthy properties, the lycopene in tomatoes does its job best after the tomato is cooked or processed. So, value tomato paste, tomato sauce, tomato juice and even ketchup for their lycopene richness. And since we absorb lycopene better when it’s eaten with a fat source, don’t hesitate to lightly sauté juicy cherry tomatoes and garlic in olive oil before tossing with pasta.

It’s not just tomatoes that add more

healthy compounds when cooked. Here are a few more:

Spinach, beet greens and chard have all the goodness of leafy dark-green vegetables, including their high calcium content. However, the calcium is not easily absorbed because the greens contain a load of oxalic acid, a natural compound that binds and blocks the absorption of calcium in the gut. When you cook your greens, however, the heat breaks down the bond, making the calcium more available for your body to absorb. In addition, cooking also breaks down some plant cell walls, releasing some more of the important nutrients.

Toss baby spinach leaves into a tomato-based pasta sauce or your hot cooked rice. Sprinkle a soup with chopped raw greens or add sautéed Swiss chard to your scrambled eggs or omelettes.

These dark greens are also a good source of iron. But the iron from vegetables is non-heme iron, which is not as well absorbed as the heme iron found in animal products such as lean red meat. However, having a source of vitamin C

such as orange juice, berries, red peppers or melon at the same time will boost your absorption of this non-heme iron. When a raw spinach salad is on the menu, add strawberries or orange slices.

Carrots are a great source of carotenoids, antioxidants that give them their bright orange colour. They’re also low in calories and rich in beta-carotene, potassium, fibre and more. Surprisingly, cooking carrots until tender increases the concentration of their carotenoids, compared to eating them raw. Make a carrot or mixed vegetable soup, roast them, add to stews, or grate and add to pancakes or muffins.

Mushrooms are also better cooked than raw because cooking boosts their antioxidant activity. Fortunately, most of us prefer sautéed mushrooms anyway! Wrap them in foil and heat them on the barbecue.

So, should you give up enjoying fresh vegetables altogether? Nope! Just consider eating more cooked vegetables. There is solid evidence that eating lots of vegetables guards against high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, eye problems and some cancers. These benefits come from their cache of vitamins, minerals, fibre and protective plant chemicals. So, snack on raw carrots and peppers during the day or have a summer salad, but be sure to include some lightly cooked vegetables on your daily lunch and/or dinner plate. 🥗

PHOTO, FORTY FORKS

Sunscreen redux

What you need to know to enjoy summer outside

by **Pauline Anderson**



We all want to savour every moment of summer’s sunny days, don’t we?

Whether you’re playing tennis, going for a swim or walking your pooch to the park and back, you should apply sunscreen. Seriously.

Wearing sunscreen protects against skin cancer, the most common of all cancer types. Health Canada estimates that about a third of all new cases of cancer are skin cancers, and rates are on the rise.

Skin cancer results when ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun damages the DNA of skin cells. The sun’s UV rays are strongest between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The most common skin cancers are basal or squamous cell carcinomas, which tend to develop later in life on areas like the face, neck and hands that have long been exposed to the sun. Luckily, these cancers progress slowly and are usually easily removed with surgery.

The rarer malignant melanomas are more likely to develop earlier in life and on almost any part of the body. These

progress rapidly and can be fatal.

Our skin starts to get more fragile and delicate in our 60s. In addition to protecting against skin cancer, sunscreens help slow down the thinning of your skin.

There’s no magic-bullet sunscreen. That said, research shows that wearing sunscreen not only reduces the risk of skin cancer, but also helps prevent premature aging.

There are two main types of sunscreen: physical, also known as mineral, that contain oxide and/or titanium dioxide and are a good option if you have sensitive skin because they’re less likely to cause skin reactions; and chemical, that contain avobenzone, oxybenzone, octocrylene, homosalate, octisalate and octinoxate.

Both offer protection, but in different ways. Physical sunscreens work by creating a barrier on the surface of the skin, which acts as a mirror, reflecting both UVA and UVB rays. Chemical sunscreens absorb UV rays.

Recent research shows that the active ingredients found in chemical sunscreens are absorbed into the bloodstream, and while that sounds scary, experts say more studies are needed to determine if this poses a health risk. In the meantime, they stress that the findings don’t mean the ingredients are unsafe and recommend continuing to use sunscreens for protection.

So, you know you need to wear sunscreen, and you land on mineral or chemical. But standing in the sun-protection aisle, with shelves and shelves offering myriad brands, making a choice can be daunting.

The first thing to consider is a product’s SPF — sun protection factor — which tells you how long you can stay in the sun before you start to burn. An SPF 15 means you can stay out 15 times longer without burning than you could if you weren’t wearing sunscreen.

If you’re planning to spend a lot of time outside, choose a water-resistant SPF 30 or higher. And reach for a product labelled “broad spectrum,” which protects against UVA and UVB rays, both of which increase skin cancer risk.

Apply sunscreen generously and evenly at least 15 minutes before going out in the sun (in the case of chemical barriers), and reapply it every two hours, and more often if you get wet or towel off.

Sunscreen efficacy expires, so check the expiry date, and if it’s beyond its best-before, toss it.

And don’t forget your other sun protectors: hat, sunglasses and, depending on how easily you burn, T-shirts or pants with a UPF — ultraviolet protection factor — rating for clothing. Canada doesn’t have standards, but clothing companies may use U.S. or international standards on their labels to indicate the UPF. Look for a UPF of at least 30, which offers good protection.

And don’t forget to apply a lip balm with SPF! 🍷

PHOTO, IMTM PHOTO

Sunshine fitness

Staying active is easy, fun and free in parks across the country

by **Ylva Van Buuren** Illustrations by **Jori Bolton**



Families with kids have known

forever that neighbourhood parks are great places to meet up with friends and have fun.

“But there are so many great activity choices for older adults in parks too,” says Trevor Pickett, a professional trainer in Nova Scotia who’s the founder of Offbeat Fitness. And bonus: You can hang out with friends while you’re at it!

Exercise is good for your physical health, says Pickett, and when you do it with friends, there are mental health benefits, too, plus you’re more likely to make exercise a habit. “Any activity that you can make social is one way of finding that entry point to enjoyment,” he says. And as we all know, enjoyment can be key to sticking with it, he adds.

Being outdoors in nature is good for you, too. “Parks are great places to connect with one another and nature for mental and physical health,” says Mash Salehomoum, a Vancouver project manager for Park People, a national non-profit charitable organization that works to advance city parks as essential spaces to connect people to each other and the rest of nature.

Convinced? Here are five ways to get started ... and unleash your inner child!

TABLE TENNIS: Municipalities and community groups are increasingly installing permanent table tennis tables made of stone and cement in parks. Table tennis (aka Ping-Pong) players use small rackets to hit the lightweight ball back and forth across a table divided by a net. The ball must bounce once on each side before it is returned. Tables are first-come, first-served, and you need to bring your own paddles and balls. To find a table, google “table tennis near me.” Ping Pong in Vancouver, for example, provides a map of locations.

SWIMMING: More than one-third of the 5,000-plus aquatics facilities throughout Canada are outdoor pools, according to Statistics Canada. Whether you’re doing the crawl, breaststroke or side stroke, swimming lengths is great cardiovascular exercise that uses every muscle group. Contact your municipality about public swim times at outdoor swimming pools — and join others in the pool who love to swim, too. You might even make a fitness buddy.

PLOGGING: Combine jogging (or fast walking) with picking up litter for a great way to give back — to yourself and the earth. “Nature has been proven time and again as a benefit to mental health,” says Raechel Wastesicoot, internal and Indigenous communications manager at the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Head to a neighbourhood park or ravine with gloves and a reused bag for the litter — easy peasy. Plog with a fitness buddy or join a walking group such as the seniors’ walking program launched by Park People in Vancouver in March. 🌿



CHIN-UPS AND MORE: Outdoor equipment maker Trekfit designs and installs strength-training circuits in parks, and “all of us could benefit from some form of resistance training as we age,” says Pickett. Equipment consists of pull-up bars, step benches, monkey bars, balance beams, hurdles and more. Safety information is posted, as well as “easy” and “difficult” descriptions of exercises like squats, chin-ups and step-ups. Here’s a park locator: trekfit.ca/en/locator

COURT SPORTS: Tennis is a mainstay at many parks, and now pickleball is becoming popular, too. Pickleball court lines are often added to tennis courts in different colours. Both activities are an energetic way to have fun, get fit and challenge yourself at any skill level. Play is on a first-come, first-served basis with a time allotment of usually 30 minutes. Bring your own rackets and balls. Contact your municipality to find out where public courts are located. Here’s an example in Calgary: tinyurl.com/3hzrjebc



Trevor Pickett
Professional trainer

EXERCISE RX

Trevor Pickett, a professional trainer in Nova Scotia, recommends that older adults who have been inactive for a while check in with their doctor before starting a new exercise program. Otherwise, Health Canada recommends 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous cardio exercise per week — for example, half an hour of activity five days a week. (And sessions of 10 minutes or more are fine!)

WARM-UP

Always warm up before you start by moving your body (marching on the spot, for example, or walking around) for three to five minutes at a low intensity; or follow this routine with Pickett: youtube.com/watch?v=b-edgCzkANg.

COOLDOWN

Keep moving your body at a lower intensity than you’ve been exercising at for three to five minutes. For example, go for a walk, says Pickett. Stretching the muscles you used is a good idea, too.



Meditation al fresco

Experience a whole new kind of me time

by **Brooke Smith**

Want to enjoy every minute of the season? Meditate outside.

Summer always seems too short, doesn't it? We welcome June, and the next thing you know it's September. But you can make the most of the season by pausing your make-every-minute-count, fear-of-missing-out life and enjoying five to 10 minutes of meditation outdoors each day.

There's a reason why many meditation centres are found in the country, often surrounded by fields and forests. When we meditate in nature, we respond to the natural world — and experience a whole new kind of me time.

PHOTO, TATYANA SOARES

"The mind is such a powerful thing that when you use visualization in meditation, it really does help to take you out of the current state."

Melinda Jaramillo

Why meditate

We live busy lives and often burn the candle at both ends. Not good, for mind or body.

"In meditation, we focus on the 'monkey mind' — that racing mind that's always wanting to think," explains Melinda Jaramillo, a yoga teacher with Yoga Tree in Toronto. Meditation quiets that monkey mind so we experience a sense of detachment.

It's hard to focus on that sense of detachment when we're always thinking, *What's next?*

"Meditation teaches us that there is no 'what's next,'" says Jaramillo. "It's right here and now."

Where to meditate

Find a quiet spot in a park. Sit by a stream or a river. Often, meditation is combined with an outdoor yoga class. "I've done a yoga/meditation class in a garden," says Jaramillo. "It's quite impactful, because not only are you meditating and in nature, you're taking in all the sights and sounds, the fresh air, the birds singing. It's just a completely encompassing experience."

If you're surrounded by high-rises and can't get to a green space, create your own nature. Meditate on your balcony or your porch — you'll still feel

the warmth of the sun and smell the scent of your potted flowers or garden.

If you want to calm your monkey brain but can't sit still, try an outdoor walking meditation. "It's an opportunity to be out in nature and to clear any racing thoughts and come back to a sense of awareness," says Jaramillo.

Benefits

Studies have shown that meditation offers a range of mental health benefits, including a reduction in stress, decreased anxiety and depression, and increased efficiency.

Meditation outside offers physical benefits, too. According to one 2019 study, spending at least two hours a week in nature has a profound effect on health and well-being, including your breathing. A 2016 study examined the relationship between local greenery and mortality risk. The study found that those exposed to more greenery in their neighbourhoods were 34 per cent less likely to die from respiratory illnesses.

And chances are, meditating outside will help you sleep better, too. Sunshine and fresh air can shorten the time it takes you to drop off and can improve your quality of sleep.

How to meditate

Ditch the usual indoor meditation accessories like a yoga pillow or bolster. And forget the lotus — cross-legged — position.

Instead, sit or lie down on the grass or lean against a tree. Walk along the beach or through a forest.

And if you're far from green pastures? Try visualization as you sit on your balcony or your porch. See yourself walking down a winding path in the woods, experiencing the smell of wild flowers and the chirps of birds and feeling the dappled sunlight on your shoulders. Or picture yourself walking along a sandy beach, listening to lapping waves and feeling the gentle breeze ruffle your hair.

"The mind is such a powerful thing that when you use visualization in meditation, it really does help to take you out of the current state," says Jaramillo.

You can also repeat a mantra (a positive word or phrase) in your meditation, whether sitting or walking. Say it out loud or silently in your head.

"I think there's great power in savouring the summer, even more so when you're meditating, because meditation teaches us to be in the moment," says Jaramillo. "The more we can enjoy the moment and relish those magical summer feelings, the more we appreciate them." And maybe this year, summer might not fly by. ☘

Family



Here's how to make yours memorable

by **Sue Horner**

SOURCED 3D BALLOONS, GORITZA

Family reunions are a long-standing tradition that may have new inspiration since the pandemic.

RTOERO members are happy to bring a large group of people together, the classic family reunion with potato salad and pictures in the park. But our members are just as likely to call an intimate gathering of close family a reunion.

Either way, they know the value of having someone plan ahead, take the lead and work with others to make a reunion happen.

Donelda Schwartzentruber (District 16 City of Toronto), née Stiles, organized the first-ever Stiles family reunion in 2022. The spark? Realizing her father's family of 14 had all passed away, and she was the glue connecting the descendants.

"Many of my first cousins have no idea who some of the others are, and they're spread out from coast to coast," she says. "I'm the one who knows where everyone is. I thought, if I don't connect them, who will?"

In mid-2020, Schwartzentruber discovered that their home town of Brussels, Ont., was holding its 150th anniversary on the Civic Holiday weekend in 2022. She had already been working on the Stiles family tree, so she had email addresses and details of births, marriages and deaths. It seemed the perfect time to gather the family. She met with about seven

other cousins to plan the reunion. On the outskirts of Brussels, she found and booked a hall with a kitchen, a ball diamond and an area for barbecuing. Visitors were responsible for their own accommodations.

The event drew 64 people from across Canada. Games for kids included baseball, tag and throwing hoops over bottles. People could guess how many jelly beans were in a jar, and prizes went to family members who came the farthest distance or whose birthday was closest. Adults assembled a float for the town parade and contributed food for lunch. Some toured the Stiles family home. All received the detailed family tree Schwartzentruber had created.

“Afterwards, my mom said, ‘Donelda, this needs to become a yearly thing,’” Schwartzentruber says.

Carolyn Gotay (District 42 Mainland British Columbia) revived a dormant family tradition with a Zoom reunion early in the pandemic. She knew that one arm of her family had regularly held a reunion when her mother was a child. The Imhof family originally came from Germany and settled in Pennsylvania with other German-speaking immigrants. Gotay’s grandfather, Adam, was the oldest of six siblings. As the years went by and the “Stupendous Six” passed away, the reunions petered out.

“Then my cousin Cathy, my sister Pam and I connected on [genetic testing site] 23andMe,” Gotay says. The reunion in Pennsylvania was back on; that is, until the pandemic scuttled the plans.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

“Share the work – set-up, food, clean-up – OR rent a location. Just make sure the location is accessible for everyone in the family. Keep the food choices simple. A barbecue works well and people can bring their own food. Have activities that will get people out of their chairs and mingling; even in families, people have cliques they prefer to sit with and interact with.” *Allison Sears (District 20 Frontenac, Lennox & Addington)*

“Cruise ships or a resort are good ways of having an intergenerational holiday or gathering. Everyone can do a favourite activity separately and then gather at meals to share daily stories or experiences.” *Betty Donaldson (District 47 Vancouver Island)*

“Plan in advance, prepare as much as possible beforehand, and keep it simple!” *Marisa De Angelis (Actively employed member)*

“Get out the old photo albums and try to ‘recognize’ relatives not seen for several decades.” *Albert Peter Braekevelt (District 38 Lambton)*

“Invite all members, even the ‘difficult’ ones. Have great music – a live band if possible – lots of games, have it catered and hold it in an off-site public rented space.” *Alfred Guidolin (District 12 Norfolk)*



Gotay kept in touch, and the cousins worked to find relatives and gauge interest in a Zoom reunion.

“We didn’t have a list of email addresses, but I’m a researcher and used to ferreting out information,” Gotay says. “Pam is great at

networking, and Cathy was in touch with a lot of the family. Together, we came up with a good roster of relatives of our generation and our parents’ generation.”

They booked a Zoom call for 1.5 hours. They used SurveyMonkey to gather “fun facts” about people and came up with 10 questions to get the conversation going, like who was named after the original six and who played an instrument.

“We ended up with 25 participants,” Gotay says. “We connected a lot of people who had never met, and others who hadn’t seen one another for a long time. People shared memories, and we learned about traditions our mother had told us about, like Moravian sugar cake. It turned out to be even more fun than Pam, Cathy and I had hoped.”

Reunions don’t have to be big to be meaningful, but the same principles apply: looking for opportunities to meet and planning ahead.

Agnes Sebastian (District 11 Waterloo Region) had a small in-person gathering in June 2022. Her son Tristan lives in B.C. and was going to be home for a week, so Sebastian planned ahead. She hosted 22 family members for dessert and coffee, setting up both inside and outside.

She also took the lead on a cousins’ reunion in the summer of 2021. She was born in Austria, and a cousin was visiting from Vienna. Sebastian invited all the cousins in Canada to a barbecue while the Austrian family was in town.

She ended up with 16 people, from Vancouver Island, Toronto, Waterloo and Vienna. Local guests were invited to bring chairs and an appetizer or dessert. They set up outside Sebastian’s home for a casual area to connect and chat.

“What makes reunions memorable is getting people to talk,” Sebastian says. “Sometimes to get people mingling, I’ll ask someone to come and help me, and then they can go back to the group and talk to others.”

Honey Thomas (District 39 Peel) also considers a “reunion” to be a small gathering of friends or family who “rejoice at the opportunity to see one another.” In her case, a recent joyous occasion was introducing her new granddaughter to her cousins on Boxing Day 2022.

“There were eight of us, including the newborn, and we all took turns holding the baby,” Thomas says. “This was also our Christmas/Hanukkah get-together. We typically do elements from all the ethnic backgrounds in the family: German, French, English, Ukrainian, Polish, Jamaican, Jewish — so the children will know and love all their backgrounds.”

Family meals are normally potluck, or they order in. The family will all pitch in, the older grandkids set the table, and various people do cleanup together. Children may watch a movie later or play board games that they set up to teach the others after dinner.

Thomas adds, “Don’t kill yourself preparing a gourmet feast so that you’re too tired to enjoy it — people are there for each other, not to be part of a *House & Garden* spread. Keep it simple. It’s family, not the Queen!”



FAMILY REUNIONS ARE A LONG-STANDING TRADITION, BUT THE ONE HELD BY THE BAKER FAMILY OF ST. THOMAS, ONT., MAY TAKE THE (SHEET) CAKE.

Believed to be Canada’s longest consecutively running family reunion, it’s taken place on the third Saturday of every June since 1898 to celebrate the arrival in Canada of William and Mary Baker and their 10 children in 1897. In 2020 and 2021, of course, assorted Bakers got together on Zoom.

At its core, the annual reunion is a day filled with family fun, catching up and memorabilia, Jay Baker told Global News. He’s a descendant of the Baker family and one of about 10 relatives who make sure the reunion lives on.



Clockwise from top left, sisters Pamela Cook in California and Carolyn Gotay in Vancouver make reunion plans with cousin Cathy Chidzik in Pennsylvania.



Donelda Schwartzentruber, second from right, enjoys catching up with four of her cousins at the Stiles family reunion in 2022.



Fred and Rosey Guidolin

Sure, I'm game!

Summer's the perfect time to slow down and stretch your comfort zone
by **Stuart Foxman**

Research shows that people who seek different experiences live healthier, happier lives. But we're creatures of habit, right? Think of your hobbies, the shows you settle in to watch, the breakfast cereal you eat every morning. But stretching your comfort zone serves your well-being in mind, body and soul. Here's how to get your game on.

PHOTO, THOMAS BARWICK

Try a new activity

Even if you have lots of interests, it's easy to get in a rut, doing the same old thing. So broaden your horizons. Ever consider salsa dancing, tennis, volunteering at your local hospital or taking a kickboxing class?

Anything new has an inherent benefit, says Brian Lambier, a certified retirement coach in Calgary. "It's about that sense of awe, which we can lose as adults. Kids have awe, because there's a lot of firsts they haven't done yet."

You gain confidence from trying something new, says Lambier. The goal isn't to find a new hobby, though you may. Attempting new activities can become a hobby in itself.

New activities can trigger our brains to release dopamine, providing a jolt of satisfaction and reward. In one study, published in the journal *Nature Neuroscience*, researchers used GPS data from the phones of 122 participants to track their movements over three to four months. Every two days, the participants also answered questions about their moods.

The researchers found that when people's days had more variety, as measured by the number of new locations they visited in a day and the diversity of their experiences there, they reported more positive feelings. Those emotions lasted into the next day as well.

There's nothing wrong with leaning on familiar pastimes to stay busy, but it's important to find new stimulation too, says Lambier. The activity doesn't matter; the novelty does.

**“It’s about that sense of awe,
which we can lose as adults.
Kids have awe, because there’s
a lot of firsts they haven’t done yet.”**
—Brian Lambier

Eat a new food

It’s trite but true: Variety is the spice of life. And that goes for the variety of spices in your diet, as well as flavours, cuisines and food combinations.

Considering that we eat 1,095 meals a year, plus snacks, many people have a surprisingly limited palette for their plate. Sure, there are foods we hate, but there are many others that we might love if only we tried them.

So check out a restaurant that specializes in fare you’ve never eaten, pluck a new fruit or veggie from the produce section, or get adventurous in the kitchen.

“It’s refreshing,” says Lloyd Sudeyko, coordinator of the Food and Nutrition Management program at George Brown College’s Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts in Toronto.

That’s true in many respects. When a diet is more varied, you can get nutrients that you might miss if you eat the same thing all the time. Maybe you’ll get inspired about cooking again. You might also learn about other cultures through their food, or make travel more meaningful by eating local.

You don’t have to become a gourmet chef or a gastronome. Pair a standby main dish with a new side dish, says Sudeyko. If you love chicken, put

a twist on your go-to recipe. Or when you have dinner out, try a restaurant that offers a tasting or small-plates menu — a great opportunity to sample something new, and maybe seriously tasty. Just go ahead and spice things up.



Ann Clement,
RTOERO member

PHOTOS, JASON GORDON

Explore a new genre

Half of adult Canadians read or listen to a book at least weekly, and one-third do at least daily, according to BookNet Canada. Their study also found that the older we get, the more we set aside time to read. But frequency doesn’t necessarily mean variety. Many of us binge on specific genres — crime, for example, or biographies or historical fiction. The same often holds true for the TV shows and movies we watch.

Exploring new genres invites you to discover a fresh set of storytelling structures, concepts and perspectives, says Travis Croken, co-chair of the Canadian Authors Association and an Ottawa writer. “It flexes different ideas of your imagination.”

Each year, Croken runs a reading challenge. It’s not about how many books people read, but about the range of genres and topics they explore.

Does your fiction list include fantasy, literary, mystery, horror, thriller, sci-fi, romance, magic realism, short stories, graphic novels, adventure, historical fiction, young adult and the many sub-genres of each? Do you venture deep into the umpteen classifications of non-fiction? Or read poetry and plays? Do you seek authors from varied backgrounds and cultures?

The next time you’re in your local bookstore or library, ask staff what they read. Or head to a different stack than you usually do and explore the titles. Check bestseller lists — *New York Times*, for example, or *Globe and Mail* rankings. You might broaden your perspective on an issue, find new inspiration or escape, or even become a fan of something you’ve long overlooked.

“Books open new worlds to us,” reminds Croken.



Al Leontarakis,
RTOERO member

Attend a never-gone event

Have you ever been on holiday and stumbled into a street festival? You didn’t expect it and it ended up amazing. Why not have the same openness at home?

It’s about “moving into a place of ‘yes’ and having a curious, expansive mindset,” says Kate Dack, a registered clinical counsellor and certified retirement coach in Victoria.

There’s something to “the joy of breaking out,” says Dack. Never been to the ballet, but pretty sure you won’t enjoy it? Well — you don’t know till you go, and you might well be surprised. Not a sports fan? Take a pal to a baseball game ... you don’t know, right? A classical music aficionado? Take your grandkids to a concert of their choice — bet it won’t be the symphony! Attending events taps into your social needs too.

Unfamiliar outings also offer the element of surprise. That matters. A study reported in the *Journal of Neuroscience* used MRI scans to measure changes in brain activity in response to different stimuli. In this experiment, all stimuli were enjoyable. But among participants, the brain’s pleasure centre lit up more when the sequence of stimuli was unpredictable. The researchers stated that we react more strongly when pleasures are unexpected.

That has its own payoffs. So trigger your curiosity, and maybe you’ll activate more joy and pleasure in your life.



Eve Pospieszynski,
RTOERO member



Michael Salvatori,
RTOERO member

Keep learning

What if you could take a supplement — natural, no side effects and widely available — that could stimulate your brain, enhance memory, boost immunity, delay the symptoms of disease, increase self-esteem, elevate your mood, reduce stress and maybe lengthen your life. These are just some of the physical and psychological benefits of lifelong learning, as many studies demonstrate.

Taking up new activities and outings, or trying new foods or reading new genres, involves learning. So does taking classes in schools or community centres, learning to play a new instrument, learning a new language, trying a new craft like woodworking or painting, following talks or how-to videos on YouTube, or countless other formal and informal learning opportunities.

A few things can stop us, says Robert McGray, an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., and president of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education. Maybe you think you can’t teach an old dog new tricks. Or you don’t think you’ll actually be very good so you don’t join the choir. Perhaps you’re afraid of looking foolish so don’t sign up for the clown class.

Throughout life, learning is often a means to an end: obtaining credentials, getting ahead in a career or mastering a skill. But learning is also its own reward. McGray calls it “a cultural feat,” where we become links in a chain of people who understand and convey ideas.

“We’re never really alone even in the most solitary act of learning,” he says.

HOW DO YOU ESCAPE THE SAME OLD, SAME OLD?

The familiar feels safe and it’s easy because you have done it/lived it so many, many times before.

“Fear keeps us in our comfort zone,” says Allen Lycka, co-author of the book *The Secrets to Living a Fantastic Life*.

The Edmonton physician-turned-writer, podcaster and syndicated radio host says we begin to grow at the edge of our comfort zone only when we challenge ourselves. “A little veer from your path isn’t that dangerous,” he notes.

The unknown can delight and motivate. One study reported in the journal *Neuron* found that we learn only in a state of uncertainty. Researchers call it “optimal anxiety.”

Maybe start by shaking up your everyday habits. Get up earlier than usual, introduce yourself to someone new at the dog park, take a different route for your walk or car ride.

Believe it or not, it’s like training yourself to escape your routine.

When that fleeting maybe-I-should thought crosses your mind, make a snap decision and turn that maybe into sure-why-not. If you just can’t act on impulse, be deliberate and schedule time in your calendar for something out of the ordinary.

Every time you try something new, you become more comfortable with discomfort. So do something every day that scares you at least a bit. Maybe you’ll love it, maybe you’ll hate it. But you’ll always learn from it.

And here’s the thing about comfort zones: They don’t have defined borders. So make yours a whole lot bigger. ☘

PHOTOS, JASON GORDON

What to eat when you’re in ...

Best hometown cuisine from coast to coast

by **Martin Zibauer**

illustrated by **Tom Froese**



Saskatchewan

Calgary

Winnipeg

Quebec

Newfoundland
and Labrador

Toronto

● **VICTORIA**
CEDAR-PLANKED SALMON

Pacific salmon grilled, in a traditional Indigenous technique, on a cedar board
—Winnifred Procyshen (District 47 Vancouver Island)

● **THUNDER BAY**
PERSIANS
Deep-fried dough topped with a thick layer of pink berry icing
—Thérèse Beaupré (District 2 Thunder Bay)

● **WINDSOR**
WINDSOR PIZZA DELIVERED FROM CAPRI PIZZERIA

Unique pizza styles from Southwestern Ontario
While nearby Chatham, Ont., is the birthplace of pineapple pizza, Windsor has its own favourite pizza style. The pepperoni is shredded, the cheese is local Galati mozzarella, and the mushrooms must be canned.

“In high school, going to Volcano Pizzeria after a dance was quite the big thing! I have pizza whenever I visit.”
—Annette Webber (District 11 Waterloo Region)

Annette’s insider tip
Windsor isn’t just a pizza city: “Go for authentic Mexican food at Grand Cantina.”

● **LAKE ERIE**
FRESH PERCH DINNER

Pan-fried or deep-fried fish and chips along Ontario’s south coast
—Alfred Guidolin (District 12 Norfolk) and Anita Minov (District 14 Niagara)

● **ALGOMA DISTRICT**
WILD GAME DINNERS AT CHARITY EVENTS

Wild-caught game donated by local hunters for fundraising dinners
“Deer, moose and fish are staple menu items, with duck and even raccoon or beaver. Bear is good in sausages but can be quite strong, as is beaver. Canada goose is best slow-cooked.”
“The dinners reflect our hunting-and-outdoors lifestyle. A recent one here in Blind River supported our junior hockey team. Unfortunately, these dinners are becoming rare, but they’re worth looking out for.”
—Paul Astles (District 3 Algoma)

Paul’s insider tip
“We do occasionally dress up in the north – I happened to be wearing white tie last week – but for a wild game dinner, dress casually.”

● **SUDBURY**
PULLA FROM LEINALA’S BAKERY
Cardamom-flavoured braided loaf with Finnish roots
“Pulla is a slightly sweet, special-occasion bread, a treat from Leinala’s Bakery. Postwar immigration – from Finland, Italy, Poland and other places – brought many food traditions to Sudbury. Leinala’s is part of that. I love the dense, dark-brown potato bread too. One slice, never two, because it’s so filling.”
—Lucie Lapalme Cullen (District 4 Sudbury, Manitoulin)

Lucie’s insider tip
Porchetta sandwiches (crusty Italian buns loaded with dill- and herb-seasoned slow-roasted pork) are another long-time Sudbury specialty.



● **KITCHENER-WATERLOO**
SCHNITZEL FROM METRO RESTAURANT

Pork, veal or chicken cutlet, pounded thin, then breaded and fried
“Schnitzel is a little slice of heaven, and the Metro is a lovely, warm family-run place. Go at lunch; it’s easier to get a table. I like the pork schnitzel with jaeger sauce, served with sweet red cabbage.”
—Brenda Moen (District 11 Waterloo Region)

Brenda’s insider tip
“Try the hole-in-the-wall restaurants near the universities, catering to international students. The signs outside may say ‘subs’ or ‘burgers,’ but sometimes there’s a secret menu of foods the kitchen staff prefer to eat.”

● **OTTAWA**
BEAVER TAILS IN BYWARD MARKET

Fried yeast dough with your choice of sweet topping
“The deep-fried dough has all these crevices to hold whatever’s on top. Cinnamon and sugar is classic; I like a squeeze of lemon juice too.”
“Another Ottawa specialty is from House of Georgie Sorento’s – pizza with a ladle of gravy on top. Sounds weird, but it’s delicious.”
—Alain Dubé (District 27 Ottawa-Carleton)

Alain’s insider tip
“The best poutine I’ve ever had is across the river in Gatineau, at Pataterie Hulloise.”



● **ACADIA**
GUÉDILLE AU CRABE AND PETS DE SOEUR

Crab rolls and sweet pastries from the francophone Maritimes
“Acadian cuisine relies on local seafood and seasonal food, and summer savory is a favourite herb because it’s easy to grow. For me, guédille au crabe is a food for June – crab season in my part of New Brunswick. Pets de soeur, which means ‘nuns’ farts,’ are rolled pie dough, baked in a cinnamon brown-sugar syrup. Delicious. And very bad for you.”
—Chi Chi Godin (District 16 City of Toronto)

Chi Chi’s insider tip
Acadian meat pies, similar to Quebec’s tourtières but chunkier, freeze well. “I bring about 10 back every time I visit.”



● **HALIFAX**
DONAIRS
Spiced ground beef in a flatbread wrap, served with a sweet-and-sour condensed milk sauce
—Sandy Sinden (District 50 Atlantic)

WHAT IS REGIONAL CUISINE, ANYWAY?

“I think of Canadian regional cooking as a series of cultural layers on top of great ingredients,” says Elizabeth Baird, *Renaissance* food editor, bestselling cookbook author and Order of Canada appointee for her promotion of our food heritage. Her lengthy ingredient list includes seafood from both coasts – salmon, capelin, cod – along with wild berries, wild game and maple. “Maple syrup is a good example,” Baird says. “Maple products were being made by Indigenous people long before Europeans arrived. Then the French introduced

metal implements that made it easier to boil down the sap. And so, maple syrup has become essential to Québécois cooking, and a trip to the *cabane à sucre* is an annual tradition for many Montrealers.”
Favourite hometown dishes are the foods we celebrate with, often at local festivals like Ontario’s Best Butter Tart Festival in Midland, Baird says. “These festivals are more than just entertainment or tourism. They celebrate both the foods we love and the people who have the skills to make them.”

TREATS ONLY THE LOCALS – MOSTLY – KNOW ABOUT

- ◆ **Quebec’s** *pouding chômeur* (literally, pudding of the unemployed: a dollop of batter baked in a pool of caramel)
- ◆ **Winnipeg’s** dill and honey sauce ◆ **Calgary’s** ginger beef ◆ **Toronto’s** sushi pizza

- ◆ **Newfoundland and Labrador’s** *toutons* (small, flattened rounds of fried bread dough topped with a dab of butter and drizzled with molasses) ◆ **Saskatchewan’s** Saskatoon berry perogies

Canadian summer holidays

Get out on the road again and dig even deeper into the fabulous corners of Canada

by **Doug Wallace**

Over the past couple of summers, vacationing Canadians got a great taste of the treasures right in our own backyard, reacquainting ourselves with all the wildlife and natural beauty Canada has to offer. This summer, keep that spirit alive with one or two of these exciting escapades.

QUEBEC Îles de la Madeleine

You don't have to go to the Caribbean to find a secluded white-sand beach. Quebec's Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence offer several kilometres of white sand and sandstone cliffs, a peaceful retreat of eight major islands. Visitors discover the archipelago by hiking and biking the trails; taking to the sea with fishing, kayaking, windsurfing and boat tours; and learning about the region's Mi'kmaq ancestry.

Must-do: It's impossible to visit Îles de la Madeleine and not become engrossed in the area's art galleries, craft studios and ceramic workshops. As well, you get in on some of the best home cooking you have ever tasted.

Best route: Air Canada flies to the islands during the summer, and the regional PAL Airlines makes regular flights in from destinations in Eastern Canada.

TOURISMEILESDELAMADELEINE.COM



PHOTOS, MATHIEU DUPUIS/LE QUÉBEC MARITIME

TOP RIGHT PHOTO, TRAVEL ALBERTA/MIKE SEEHAGEL
BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND Greenwich Dunes Prince Edward Island National Park

Northwestern P.E.I. is the site of a protected area of wetland and surrounding parabolic dune system. Home to all sorts of critters, the extensive Greenwich Dunes Trail system includes three routes, all doable in a day. The best-known, the 4.4-kilometre Dunes Trail, starts off in the woods, moves to a wooden boardwalk and then a floating boardwalk over a pond, and climaxes at giant sand dunes and an amazing beach. The interpretive centre covers the region's geology and history, including 10,000-year-old evidence of human inhabitation.

Must-do: Go all out for the day and drive an hour south of the Dunes to Point Prim, a peninsula on the south coast, to check out P.E.I.'s oldest lighthouse.

Best route: The Greenwich trailhead is a one-hour drive northeast of Charlottetown.

TOURISMPEI.COM



ALBERTA Dinosaur Provincial Park

Canada's biggest badlands are also its most fecund fossil fields for dinosaurs. See fossils in the wild via the guided interpretive programs of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Ongoing palaeontology and research projects bring out the explorer in everyone. There are trails to hike and tours to take on this nature reserve, too, with camping just a short hop away.

Must-do: This road trip is a two-parter. The town of Drumheller is home to the Royal Tyrrell Museum collection of dinosaur fossils, one of the most complete in the world. It's also where you'll find a giant model T. rex. Climb inside and take in the surrounding badlands from its jaws.

Best route: Fly to Calgary and drive 1.5 hours east. ALBERTAPARKS.CA, TRAVELDRUMHELLER.COM



MANITOBA
Churchill

The best place in the world to see polar bears is very popular during summer months. The isolated community of Churchill in northern Manitoba has been a polar bear gathering place for close to 4,000 years, archaeology suggests. This rugged region is a treasure trove of natural history and wildlife wonder: See droves of beluga whales who have headed into Hudson Bay to mate, and watch polar bears play-fight or ... actually fight. Summer temperatures here average a pleasant 20°C.

Must-do: Make time for a full-day jet boat tour to renowned Hubbart Point, a cape northwest of Churchill, where polar bears take their own “summer vacation” to lounge around on the rocks.

Best route: Fly from Winnipeg to Churchill via Calm Air, anchoring your trip to the schedule of one of several tour companies.

CHURCHILL.CA, TRAVELMANITOBA.COM



ONTARIO
Niagara Falls

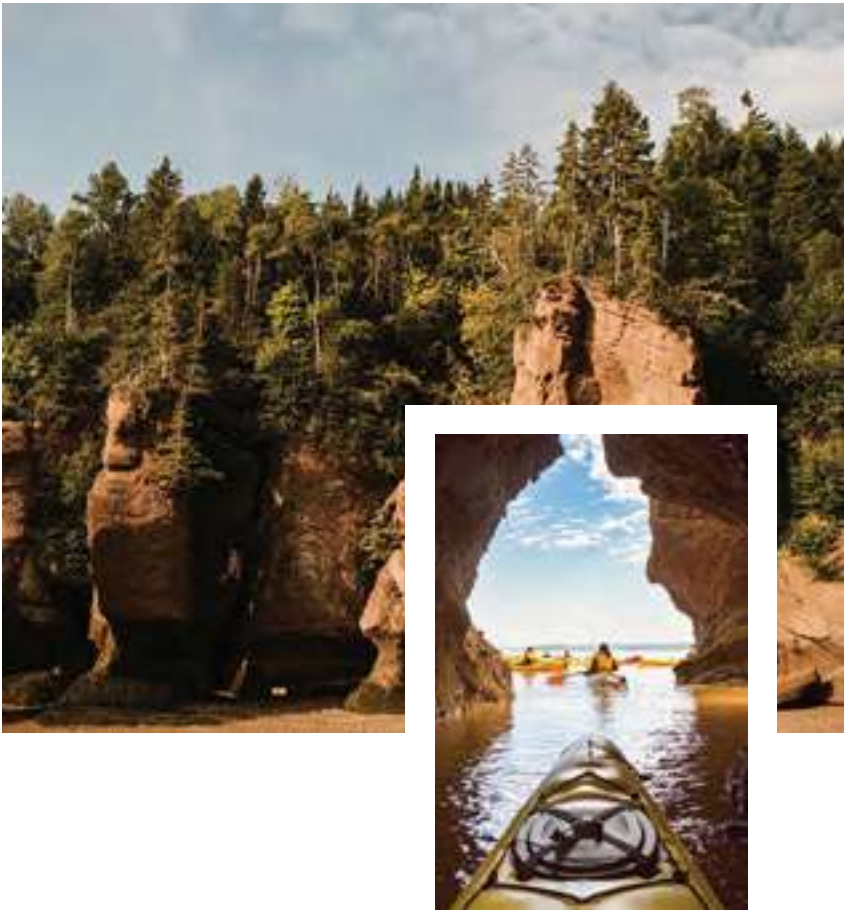
The Honeymoon Capital of the World is way cooler now than it's ever been. Visitors can check out new Indigenous Niagara tours, the highly rated Botanical Gardens and ephemeral Butterfly Conservatory; zip-line beside the falls; or take a helicopter ride over the falls or jet boat ride within the Niagara River's natural whirlpools. And don't forget the Niagara SkyWheel.

Must-do: The Niagara power station has been transformed into a museum by day and an immersive light show at night. An unused tunnel was recently turned into a walkway from the station to a new viewing platform at the foot of the falls.

Best route: Daily sightseeing tours from Toronto run the gamut, but stay overnight if you can, to get a real feel for the place without having to rush.

NIAGARAFALLSTOURISM.COM

TOP PHOTO, COURTESY OF TRAVEL MANITOBA. BOTTOM PHOTO, DOUG WALLACE



NEW BRUNSWICK
Hopewell Rocks
Bay of Fundy

Created by tidal erosion beginning more than 300 million years ago, the Hopewell Rocks consist of more than 20 sea stacks that appear and disappear every six hours in the Bay of Fundy, thanks to the world's highest tides. These gypsum and limestone formations along two kilometres of coastline look like enormous flowerpots. Self-guided tours deliver well-groomed trails, secluded vistas, natural forest and ocean-floor access – but be sure to check the tide schedule beforehand. Allot time to see both the high- and low-tide environments to appreciate the height and range of the tidal cycle. And pack a picnic.

Must-do: An interpretive centre provides info on geology, tides and wildlife, which can include shorebirds, raccoons, groundhogs and porcupines, with the occasional deer, moose and coyote. There are also opportunities for rafting and kayaking.

Best route: Drive about two hours east from Saint John.

THEHOPEWELLROCKS.CA
TOURISMNEWBRUNSWICK.CA

BRITISH COLUMBIA
North Vancouver Island

While whale-watching may seem like a cyclical game of Hit and Miss, Vancouver Island has always been the spot with the best odds. Campbell River, Port Hardy and, in particular, Telegraph Cove are the focal points for marine adventure in these parts. You can spot resident orca whales year-round and humpback whales May to September. Large groups of white-sided dolphins, porpoises, sea lions and harbour seals are also on the marquee.

Must-do: Enjoy bear-watching, kayaking, birding and surfing. Plus, the sunsets here are beyond words.

Best route: Fly into Campbell River from Vancouver Airport, or take the ferry from Horseshoe Bay north of Vancouver to Nanaimo and make the pleasant drive north.

CAMPBELLRIVER.TRAVEL
VANCOUVERISLANDNORTH.CA

TOP PHOTOS, COURTESY OF NEW BRUNSWICK TOURISM AND JOSH MARIO JOHN
BOTTOM PHOTO, COURTESY OF NORTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND TOURISM/CASSANDRA CASLEY



Be smart and stay safe

“When travel advisories say ‘high degree of caution’ – are they crying wolf?”



Countries many of us travel to — Mexico and Jamaica, for example — may appear on the Government of Canada website (travel.gc.ca) as places to visit with a “high degree of caution.” This is mostly due to crime and other issues outside the tourist zones, so you know what kinds of crime to watch out for, where. Think theft and assault, as well as scams and fraud, and public demonstrations.

Three simple words: Do your research. What are other travellers reporting? What does your travel agent have to say? Find out where the dangerous parts of town are. I think nothing about walking around many foreign cities at night, whereas others are cab-only after dark. Consider that almost every destination has rough neighbourhoods — Los Angeles, Miami, Winnipeg — and plan accordingly. There’s always going to be an element of uncertainty when you travel — that’s half the fun — but when it comes to your safety, three more words: Use your head.

SAFETY TIPS FOR FOREIGN CITIES

Always visit the ATM during daylight hours and in pairs, so one of you can keep watch. Be wary of anyone offering to assist you with your transaction. Don’t carry around a giant wad of cash.

Watch your belongings in crowded areas like malls, transit stations and busy street corners. It never hurts to dress plainly so that you don’t stand out and pose a target for criminal activity. For example, no fancy watches or jewellery, even expensive sneakers.

Pay attention when someone else is handling your credit card or debit card.

Always use your phone in a safe place. Drivers on motorbikes have been known to swing by and snatch smartphones out of tourists’ hands on the sidewalk.

Use authorized taxi services only — no hustlers at the airport entrance. Though kidnappings seem like something you’d see on a TV show, rogue cab drivers have been known to drive people out of town and threaten to leave them there unless they give the drivers cash.

Avoid demonstrations and large public gatherings.

Don’t walk on empty streets at night.

Be wary of anyone knocking on your hotel room door, unless you’re expecting housekeeping or room service. Keep in mind that crooks target hotels in many cities, because they think hotel guests must be wealthy.

Remember: You’re more likely to be harmed if you refuse to cooperate with robbers. Just hand over your wallet, keeping the encounter as short as possible. 🙏



Doug Wallace
Editor & publisher, TravelRight.Today, and your in-the-know friend for travel tips and trends.

PHOTO: INK DROP

Savour summer’s bounty

Six super fresh and easy warm-weather recipes

by **Fran Berkoff**, registered dietitian



WALDORF CHICKEN SALAD LETTUCE WRAPS

Lettuce wraps are the perfect summer meal. Here, a chicken salad filling gets a Waldorf twist using deep-purple Coronation grapes, toasted walnuts and celery.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ONTARIO.CA/FOODLAND

- Serves 6
Makes about 3 1/2 cups/875 mL filling
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) diced cooked chicken breast (about 2)
 - 1/2 cup (125 mL) Coronation grapes, halved
 - 1/2 cup (125 mL) finely chopped celery
 - 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced nectarine
 - 1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped toasted walnuts
 - 3 tbsp (45 mL) mayonnaise
 - 2 tbsp (25 mL) minced red onion
 - 1 tbsp (15 mL) grainy Dijon mustard
 - 6 large green or red leaf lettuce leaves
 - Salt and pepper

In a medium bowl, combine chicken, grapes, celery, nectarine, walnuts, mayonnaise, onion and mustard. Cover; refrigerate until ready to serve.

To assemble, divide chicken mixture evenly on each lettuce leaf; sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Wrap and roll the lettuce leaf around the filling.

Recipes and photos courtesy of Foodland Ontario. For more summer recipes, visit ontario.ca/foodland/foodland-ontario.



WARM CARAMELIZED CORN DIP

A summer favourite, corn blends with sweet smoked paprika for a tasty dip. Smoked paprika is the secret spice of Spain and is available in bulk stores and spice aisles. Serve with corn tortilla chips for dipping.

- Makes 3 cups (750 mL)
- 4 large cobs corn
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) butter
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 green onions, minced
- 2/3 cup (150 mL) reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) water
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tsp (10 mL) smoked paprika
- 2 tsp (10 mL) fresh lime juice
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) pepper
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) diced field tomatoes
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) minced fresh coriander leaves

Slice kernels from corn cobs to make 4 cups (1 L). In large skillet, melt butter over medium-high; cook corn, undisturbed, for 3 minutes or until starting to brown. Stir and cook for 2 minutes longer or until deep golden brown. Stir in garlic and green onions; cook for 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low; stir in mayonnaise, water, cheese, paprika, lime juice, pepper and salt until smooth. Cook, stirring, until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon into shallow serving dish, sprinkle with tomato and coriander. Serve warm or at room temperature.

SWEET CHERRY SCONES

Specialty coffeehouses offer a selection of delectable scones, yet cherry scones are a snap to make at home – and at a fraction of the cost. Serve hot with butter or honey.

- Makes 12
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) whole sweet cherries
- 2 cups (500 mL) all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) granulated sugar (approximately)
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) baking powder
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) cold butter
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) milk
- 1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla

Pit cherries and coarsely chop; drain on paper towel. In large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Using pastry blender or fingers, work in butter until in small bits. Stir in drained cherries. Make a well in centre. Stir together oil, milk and vanilla; pour into well and stir just until firm dough forms.

Turn out onto lightly floured surface. Knead three times. Divide in half; pat each half into 3/4-inch (2 cm) thick 6-inch (15 cm) circle. Cut each into 6 wedges.

Lightly grease or coat baking sheet with cooking spray. Place scones slightly apart on sheet. For sparkle, sprinkle tops with 1 tbsp (15 mL) more sugar. Bake on rack above centre of 450°F (230°C) oven until golden, 10 to 12 minutes.



SWEET CHERRY SCONES PHOTO, CRAIG BRADFORD



STRAWBERRY MAPLE YOGURT BARK

This frozen treat resembles chocolate bark in appearance – hence the name – but is more like ice cream. Dotted with fresh strawberries, nuts and chocolate, it is a cool and refreshing snack that is quick to prepare and to eat.

- Serves 8
- 1 container (750 g) 0% Greek plain yogurt
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) vanilla
- 1 cup (250 mL) sliced strawberries
- 3 tbsp (45 mL) white chocolate chips
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) chopped pistachios

Line a rimmed 15- x 10-inch (38 x 25 cm) baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside.

In a medium bowl, stir together yogurt, maple syrup and vanilla. Spread yogurt mixture on prepared pan into rectangle about 1/2-inch (1 cm) thick. Scatter strawberries on top. Sprinkle with chocolate chips and pistachios. Freeze until solid, about 2 hours.

To serve, let sit at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes until slightly thawed. Break or cut into pieces and enjoy immediately. To store, place pieces in sealed freezer container or freezer bag; freeze for up to a month.

Variations: Try your own combinations with other chopped nuts or seeds, coconut, semi-sweet chocolate chips or granola and Ontario blueberries or raspberries.

FRESH GREENHOUSE PIZZA

This summer-fresh pizza can be assembled faster than it takes to preheat the oven or wait for delivery.

- Serves 4
- 1 ready-made pizza dough, about 1 1/3 lb (650 g)
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) shredded Italian blend cheeses
- 2 tomatoes, sliced
- Half sweet yellow pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) pepperoni slices, about 2 oz (60 g)
- 12 whole fresh basil leaves

Lightly grease a 15- x 10-inch (38 x 25 cm) baking sheet. Press or roll out dough to fit pan. Evenly sprinkle pizza crust with 3/4 cup (175 mL) of the cheese. Arrange tomatoes on top; top with yellow pepper, pepperoni and remaining cheese.

Bake on middle rack in 450°F (230°C) oven for 20 to 22 minutes or until crust is lightly browned and cheese is melted. Sprinkle with basil leaves.

FRUIT SALSA WITH VANILLA CREAM AND CINNAMON WEDGES

Quick and easy, this dessert highlights juicy, sweet Ontario berries. For a dinner party, serve in stemmed glasses. The vanilla cream can also be served as a dip with seasonal fruits.

- Serves 4
- 1 cup (250 mL) chopped strawberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) blueberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) raspberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) chopped pitted sweet cherries
- 1 tsp (5 mL) grated orange rind
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) light sour cream (5% M.F.)
- 1 1/2 tbsp (20 mL) packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla
- 1 whole wheat tortilla (small)
- Cinnamon
- 4 stemmed sweet cherries

In a small bowl, combine strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, cherries and orange rind. In another small bowl, stir together sour cream, brown sugar and vanilla until sugar dissolves. Lightly brush one side of tortilla with water; sprinkle with cinnamon to taste. Cut into 8 wedges. Place on paper-towel-lined microwaveable plate; microwave on high for 1 minute and 30 seconds or until crisp. In 4 dessert glasses, layer fruit salsa and vanilla cream, repeating once. Serve with cinnamon wedges and garnish with stemmed cherry. **Variation:** Add 1 tbsp (15 mL) toasted coconut to the vanilla cream. 🍌



Chef-crafted sauces and seasonings

Shortcuts to hassle-free home cooking

by **Andrew Dobson**

Zing Pantry Shortcuts works in collaboration with chefs and food creators across North America to bring the secret sauce to your home cooking. We especially love Zing because it is a women-led, South Asian immigrant-owned company.

Zing’s most popular products include Hakka-ish Chili Crisp, Buzz Hot Honey and Mogambo Spiced Garlic Spread. The team recently launched Sacha-ish by Pay Chen, a familiar face and voice on TV and radio across Canada. Chen is Taiwanese-Canadian, and Sacha-ish is inspired in part by her memories of hot pot, where dipping sauces like *shāchá jiàng* were always a feature at the family dinner table. It offers the perfect flavour bomb for stir-fries, as well as grilled steaks and as a sandwich spread.

Ships across Canada and available in specialty gourmet food stores. cookwithzing.com



Prep-ahead meals
Cook It Wild by Chris Nuttall-Smith is the perfect companion for Canadians who love to cook outdoors. The food writer and *Top Chef Canada* judge has jam-packed this cookbook with 80 delicious recipes that elevate camping or cottage cooking — or backyard barbecuing, for that matter — beyond steaks, burgers and hotdogs. Dividing each recipe by prep location — home and away — means you’ll get most (if not all!) of the cooking done before a trip even begins, so you simply drop fully prepped ingredients into a pot or onto a grill and just like that, you’re dining on Cumin Lamb Kebabs with Fresh Chapatis, the simplest high-summer Cherry Tomato Pasta, or showstopping Sweet-Tangy Ribs. Available at Chapters-Indigo. chapters.indigo.ca



LOL microwave cleaner
The Angry Mama is an affordable microwave cleaner that makes it easy to quickly wipe away food spills and stains in just minutes. The LOL kitchen gadget uses steam to clean and disinfect the interior of your microwave using a simple combination of vinegar and water. The steam explodes out of the little lady’s head, giving you reasons to giggle next time you have to deep clean your kitchen! amazon.ca

Handcrafted gift baskets
Saul Good Gift Co. is our go-to when purchasing the perfect present for the foodies in our lives. Saul Good sells gift baskets called the Toronto, Vancouver and Quebec City, which feature local gourmet products made in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec. In the summer months, cute concepts like the Trinity Bellwoods Picnic, Summerhill Charcuterie, Stanley Park Picnic and Gastown Grazer make a delish gift for those looking to snack on gourmet treats in the sunshine. itsaulgood.com

PHOTOS ON LEFT, COURTESY OF COOK WITH ZING. TOP RIGHT PHOTO, COURTESY OF PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE CANADA. BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO, AMAZON.COM

Summer drinks to savour

Beat the heat with these summer chillers

by **Charlene Rooke**



For golf: Duffer drinks
“Sandbagging” is downplaying your abilities to win a round of golf. It has inspired a bubbly, citrusy gin drink enjoyed in many Canadian clubhouses — now captured in a can, as Sandbagger hard seltzer (sandbagger.ca). For those with less game, Triple Bogey Brewing Co. offers a full range of Canadian craft beers, including light and non-alcoholic brews (triplebogey.com). If you swing a club like a champion, try its Half and Half, a spiked play on the legendary Arnold Palmer’s favourite mix of half lemonade, half iced tea.

For camping and paddling: Outside the box
For a backcountry drinks hack, remove the cardboard from, say, a boxed wine, and chill the tough, airtight plastic bladder in a cooler or right in the lake or river. Ideal to tap out of the spigot: Le Vieille Ferme three-litre boxes (look for the rooster illustration) of white and rosé wine and Cottage Springs four-litre boxes of Vodka Water in flavours like iced tea and raspberry lime.

For backyards and picnics: Quick chillers
Single-serving cans and bottles chill fast and eliminate the need for cups. Pop the caps off adorable stubby bottles of lightly sparkling Cosmopolitan or Lemon Drop cocktails from Duchess, a woman-led brand founded in Vancouver (duchesscocktails.com) — just add a compostable straw for a perfect afternoon. Pixie Petite Rosé Spritzer cans from Ontario winery Rosehall Run incorporate soda water for a refreshing pre-mixed drink that rings in under six per cent alcohol (rosehallrun.com). Renowned Nova Scotia winery Benjamin Bridge not only makes single-serve cans of its low-alcohol Piquette, a fizzy wine-based drink long enjoyed by French vineyard workers; it also offers a Piquette Zero with no alcohol at all (benjaminbridge.com).



For tennis: The Honey Deuce
The official drink of the U.S. Open, this cocktail refreshes after a match or while watching a Grand Slam.
1 1/4 oz Grey Goose vodka
3 oz fresh lemonade
1/2 oz raspberry liqueur

Garnish: Skewer of frozen honeydew-melon balls

Method: Chill a Collins glass by placing in refrigerator/freezer or fill with ice water for 5 minutes. Remove (or empty) the glass and fill with ice. Add vodka, top with fresh lemonade, then add raspberry liqueur. Garnish with skewer of one or multiple frozen honeydew melon balls. (Tip: Place honeydew melon in freezer before using the melon baller.)

Anytime: For a non-alcoholic summer beverage
Long summer days call for a drink that keeps you feeling fresh, hydrated and perky. WakeWater, made by Ontario’s Iconic Brewing Company, is a flavoured, caffeinated sparkling water, “for when the day isn’t done but you feel like you are.” It gets its kick from green tea (each can has 85 milligrams of caffeine, about the same as a 10-ounce Tim’s) and contains no sugar or sweeteners. Try lemon, grapefruit, blackberry or pineapple quenchers.

LEFT PHOTO, PINAK KUMAR. RIGHT PHOTO, COURTESY OF GREY GOOSE



Freedom road

Being me – no permission needed

by **Steve Paul** (District 36 Peterborough), as told to **Martin Zibauer**

“Every Sunday and every Wednesday in the riding season, I ride my motorcycle with a small group of guys. We take back roads from Peterborough, maybe 400 to 500 kilometres, up to Algonquin Park or Muskoka, or towards Renfrew or down to Prince Edward County.

“I enjoy the sense of freedom I get on my bike. You have to be really in tune with the road and what you’re doing, and your problems just disappear — a happiness/contentment/peace of mind takes their place. It’s a great way to enjoy a nice day, and you always have the option of stopping somewhere, getting off the bike, and relaxing.

“In 2014, I rode alone across Canada and the U.S., stopping at as many capital cities as possible. I got to 62 of 65: Iqaluit and Honolulu aren’t reachable by motorcycle, and the highway to Juneau was blocked by a landslide. I visited each of the capital buildings, as a kind of touchstone. Some were nice to look at and others I wouldn’t give a nickel for. But it was very interesting to see the differences in all the capital cities.

“I’m retired, and I’m no longer married. So I have no constraints, except for my three kids. Travelling alone means I can do what I want, if and how I want. It’s very selfish, in a positive sense. On the other hand, when you stop, get a campsite and have dinner, you are by yourself. You can’t rehash the trip with anyone else.

“I also take riding trips with other people, but it’s essential to choose someone you’re compatible with — I’m doing 12 days through Quebec this summer with a friend. We enjoy each other’s company.

“On bike trips, you meet a lot of people, which I like. When I was in the States, the people I actually talked to most were policemen and security guards — the government buildings were like airports, with metal detectors and heavy security. They wanted to know who I was, why I was there and whether I was carrying a gun. With that question, I always pointed to the maple leaf on my jacket and explained that we don’t carry weapons. I really tried to get U.S. security and police to

PHOTOS, STEVE PAUL

“You have to be really in tune with the road and what you’re doing, and your problems just disappear.”

Steve Paul



On the road, clockwise from top left: Roman aqueduct, Segovia, Spain; town square, Rothenburg, Germany; Susten Pass, Switzerland; Château de Chambord, Chambord, France.

understand the difference between Canada and the U.S.A.

“But even in my riding gear, I wasn’t seen as a threat. My white hair gives me an easier time.

“That trip took 80 days, and I covered 42,000 kilometres. The longest day was 16 hours’ riding and just shy of 1,200 kilometres, from Whitehorse to Hazelton, B.C. It would have been shorter, except I came up against a hunting lodge I couldn’t afford to stay in and grizzly sightings that convinced me not to camp outdoors.

“My 2015 trip through Europe was shorter — only 70 days — and about half the distance. I visited 17 countries, and you can’t drive 10 kilometres in Europe without coming across something of interest. One day in France, on a secondary road, I saw an interesting spire off to my left. So I turned around and went back to find the road in. I came across an empty, derelict old chapel — much bigger than a chapel, really more a cathedral. It was a 13th-century ruin, called L’Abbaye-Nouvelle.

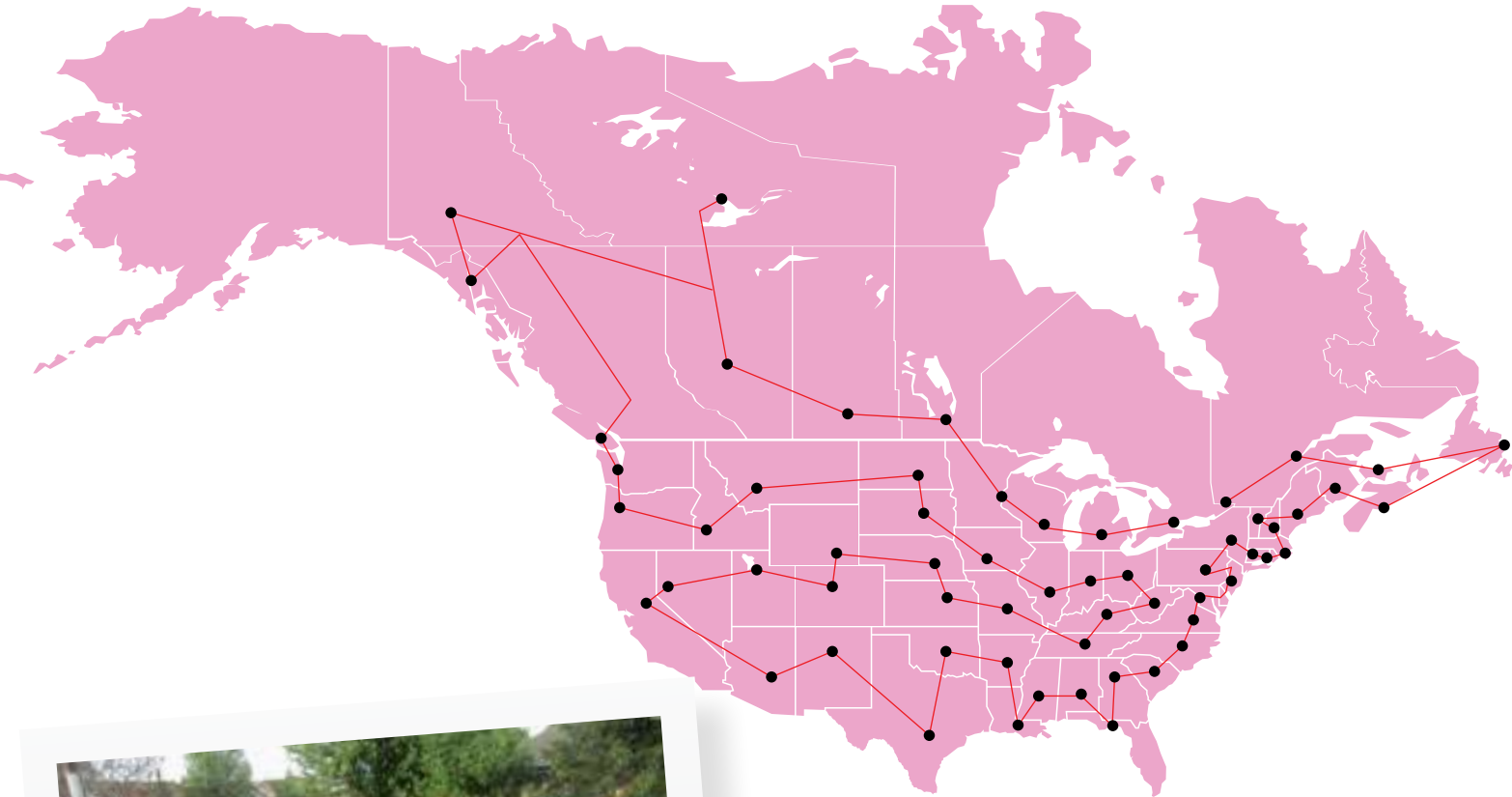
“That was the day I was heading from the Loire Valley towards Lourdes and Spain. I stopped for the night in a little village. On the hotel restaurant’s menu, I saw duck, which I had not eaten in forever. Even though it was a bit more expensive than I like, I sat down, ordered my meal and a half-litre of wine. The meal was absolutely exquisite, and it was just luck that I happened to ride into that little community and stop at that little hotel.

“You can’t get lost on a bike; there’s always another road to try. The only time you get lost is if you’re trying to stick to a route you’ve planned too carefully. I always know I’m going from A to B and the general direction I’m heading. I just don’t know which road I’ll take to get there.”

GETTING STARTED

When Steve started riding a motorcycle, 60 years ago, getting a motorcycle licence required only a short written test, and no road test whatsoever. “I learned on the road, by riding and

UNITED STATES & CANADA



Paul with his grandson Sawyer
– a future biker?

talking to other riders. But that’s not how anyone should learn now,” he says.

He started with a small 90cc Honda — as much as he could afford as a 17-year-old — but within about three years he’d upsized to a 160cc and then 750cc. “My mom was a little worried,” he says. “She had been a nurse and was certainly aware of the risk of injury. And, at that time, we didn’t even wear helmets, but I’ve always been a careful, two-wheels-on-the-asphalt kind of rider.”

You can learn to ride a motorcycle at any age, Steve believes, “as long as you’ve got your health, your vision and you can remain aware on the road.”

Here’s how Steve recommends you start:

- Get a good helmet, riding boots that cover your ankles, riding gloves and a riding jacket. Pants don’t have to be leather; strong nylon mesh will also protect you.
- Don’t get a powerful bike that’s way more than you can handle. Get a used motorcycle that you can lift if it falls on you. And if you fall, that’s part of learning.
- Know what you and your bike can do. “I don’t ride off-road because my bike’s not built for it,” Steve says, “and I’m not built for it.”
- Take classes, which are available through colleges and private companies. And keep learning no matter what your experience level. A couple of years back, Steve took a riding course, “just to have someone review my skills. I wanted to correct any bad habits I had picked up.”
- YouTube videos can offer good tips. Steve recommends the channel MCrider. “Kevin, the host, stresses that if you’ve got the skill and the strategy — in other words, you know what to do under the circumstances — you can ride with a fair degree of safety. I agree.”

PHOTO, COURTESY OF STEVE PAUL

The art of cutting your losses

You can’t avoid market losses, but you can minimize them

by Lesley-Anne Scorgie



PACK MORE MONEY INTO THE PORTFOLIO

As long as your portfolio is properly diversified and has solid fundamentals (my first point), reframing your money mindset to envisioning losses and a down-market cycle as an opportunity to snap up great discounted assets is healthy and should pay off in the long run.

So, once you’ve refreshed your portfolio risk level (and your advisor has subsequently rebalanced the investments within it), consider adding even more money to your portfolio. This is a great way to benefit from the full market recovery and put your savings to work.

This strategy works well if you’ve got the flexibility in your budget and/or you have sizable savings not earning a strong rate of return.

DEALING WITH LOSSES, AND THEN CUTTING THEM

Losing money can make you feel like a failure. And that can prevent good financial decision-making. You’ve seen this before, I’m sure — investors hanging on to horrible stocks, clinging to the hope that things will get better ... but, they get worse.

Losing money with your portfolio will happen from time to time. Knowing when to cut your losses, though — that’s the key. It can be better to take the loss (which can be reflected as a capital loss in your tax filing if it is within a non-registered account) and reinvest your money in an investment that is better positioned for growth longer term.

Set your sights on a goal for the investment at the outset. When you know your target for your return and how much you’re willing to lose, you can take profits when you reach the target earnings and hit the sell button when you’re unwilling to incur further losses.

As with most things in life, boundaries keep our decisions healthy. Your investment advisor can help you set these boundaries, and stay on top of changing market conditions.

The market’s been volatile. Did you sell at the wrong time — the *really* wrong time? Have you suffered losses because you bought investments that tanked?

Here are a few solid strategies to get your portfolio back on track.

START WITH A REVIEW OF YOUR RISK COMFORT LEVEL

If it’s been more than 24 months since your investment provider has had you answer a series of questions about your comfort level with risk OR you’ve experienced a life change — retiring or losing a spouse or getting remarried — you need to review your risk comfort level today.

Most people nearing retirement or in retirement will score in one of three categories: balanced (approximately half of your portfolio is invested in high-quality fixed-income securities, and the other half is invested in dividend-yielding shares); moderate (approximately three-quarters of your portfolio is invested in high-quality fixed-income securities, and one-quarter is invested in low-risk high-dividend-yielding shares); or

conservative (approximately 90 per cent of the portfolio is high-quality fixed-income securities, and the other 10 per cent is in lower-risk high-dividend-yielding shares).

It’s commonplace to have between five and 10 per cent of the portfolio held in cash at this stage of life.

A good advisor will shift your portfolio to lower-risk investments over time, in an effort to protect your assets. So don’t be surprised if, after you review your score, your advisor recommends a shift in your investments to align better with your life stage. They’ll also keep your investments diversified so you won’t end up with all your eggs in one basket.

Investors who are aligned with their long-term risk ranking do make more money in the long run. Like everyone else, they will ride the ebbs and flows of the market but are well positioned to experience the full benefits of the investment market recovery. When your portfolio is out of sync with your investment risk preferences, you’re statistically more likely to earn less money on your investments.

PHOTO, TRIPLE T3DSIGN

Making music

We asked: Do you play in a band?



I am part of a musical group called Vocalmotion.
Alexander Grant-Henderson (District 39 Peel)

Yes — a five-piece classic rock band.
Alfred Guidolin (District 12 Norfolk)

I have sung in a semi-professional chamber choir for over 20 years. We perform many well-known (and some more esoteric) classical works but also more popular music: show tunes, old standards and gospel.
Anita Minov (District 14 Niagara)

I play French horn in a Thorold concert band and the Niagara Peninsula Orchestra.
Barbara Allman White (District 14 Niagara)

The Chirpy Chicks — we play for seniors.
Charlene Frenette (District 49 The Prairies)

I play in a town band. In fact, I led the town band for 50 years!
Clare French (District 9 Huron-Perth)

Two bands: I’m a member of a county ukulele band and also play guitar in a local pick-up band. Eclectic music choices: folk, ’50s and ’60s, country, bluegrass, etc.
David Huether (District 19 Hastings and Prince Edward)

My husband and I play together. I play the electric keyboard and sing. We do mostly folk, Irish and sing-along music at retirement and nursing homes.
Deborah Cauley (District 28 Region of Durham)

Pick-up band — guitar. Folk songs from the 1950s and ’60s.
Edward Blackmore (District 8 London, Middlesex)

Yes, saxophone in one band, bass clarinet in two others. The music ranges from classical to popular to blues and jazz.
Gale Bassett (District 16 City of Toronto)

Yes — founder and co-leader of Samba Squad, a percussion band. I play bass drum.
Janet McClelland (District 16 City of Toronto)

Now that a rock jam session has begun again at a local bar, I’ve started attending and playing with the local rock ’n’ rollers. I sing and play guitar with harmonica accompaniment, too.
Jerzy Dymny (District 47 Vancouver Island)

A uke band for the past seven years.
Cathy Edmunds (District 49 The Prairies)

Guitar hacker right here ... music from our era: Eagles, Stones, Who, Supertramp, Jimmy Buffett, etc.
John Gallaughier (District 14 Niagara)

Yes, three groups. I sing in an a cappella group of four singers; in one other group I play keyboards and sing pop/rock music; and the third is a rock adult choir.
Kimberley Stone (District 24 Scarborough and East York)

I am in Women in Song from Blind River, Ont. We released our first album last year, called *Life of a Woman*, and our music is available on most streaming platforms. I am a singer and play guitar in the band.
Lois Jones (District 3 Algoma)

I have been playing in a rock band for the past five years. We play live regularly around the city.
Paul Gastaldin (District 39 Peel)

Our band, Telegraph Narrows, plays covers of blues, jazz, pop, country and rock! Plus some originals written by my husband and me. I am called “The Boss,” meaning I have the time to send out emails and compose set lists and arrange gigs. I sing lead and add percussion.
Renay Weissman-Stanners (District 19 Hastings and Prince Edward)

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