

805 LIVING

DECEMBER 2010

OUR FAVORITE

Season
OF THE YEAR

PLUS:

festive and
fabulous gift
ideas for
everyone

PULSE

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805 | DECEMBER 2010



Take a journey down memory lane and develop a custom fragrance from a selection of 100 to 200 scented oils.

GIFTS THAT SAY "WOW"

Signature Scents

Creating signature perfumes isn't just for celebrities. At Sarah Horowitz Parfums in Westlake Village (sarahhorowitz.com), customers design their own personal formulas during >>



GARY MOSS

the “Blending Bar Experience.” Sensory-appealing selections are made from 100 oils, such as bergamot, jasmine, and sandalwood. At the end of the 30-minute session, clients walk away with a completely customized fragrance (\$45 minimum fee with a \$40 minimum purchase). It’s a “fantastic abbreviated journey,” says Marlene Stang, senior perfumer, who, in addition to owner Sarah Horowitz, leads customers through a more involved process called “Fragrance Journey,” which incorporates 200 oils and lasts 60 to 90 minutes. (“Fragrance Journey” prices range from \$350 to \$1,000.)

Shell Seekers

Oyster lovers rejoice: The hosts of Lost Isle Adventures in Morro Bay (lostisle.org) are devoted to satisfying sophisticated palates: They treat guests to leisurely tours along the back bay, where two Pacific Oyster farms are located. (Seals, otters, and double-breasted cormorants are apt to be spotted along the way.) Beginning in January, oyster barbecues, complete with sparkling wine, are available upon request at cruise’s end. Guests can enjoy the sustainable delicacies raw or grilled. A one-hour cruise is \$45 per person.

Make It Personal

Handcrafted treasures from Love Heals in Ojai (loveheals.com) start with the company’s online jewelry design studio, which guides guests through the process of

making customized necklaces, bracelets, and earrings. Antique-inspired pendants on woven strands result in meaningful statements. Custom jewelry can also be created at the Ojai boutique.

Sea-Worthy Splurge

Some things are just too good to pass up. A weeklong Athens-to-Rome Wind Surf cruise (windstarcruises.com) departs October 22, 2011, and will be hosted by Fabio Viviani, executive chef and owner of Café Firenze in Moorpark and the “fan favorite” during season five of reality TV show *Top Chef*. Passengers visit Milos and Monemvasia in Greece, as well as Messina, Amalfi, and Ischia, in Italy. An added plus: Viviani conducts a lecture and cooking demonstration while sailing the deep blue sea. Cruise fares are from \$2,599 per person.

Go Ahead, Feed the Animals

The Santa Barbara Zoo (sbzoo.org) is home to more than 500 animals, and that makes for many rumbling tummies. The “Foster Feeder” program allows sponsors to cover the cost of care for a favorite zoo animal for

Sensory-appealing gifts like creating unique, custom scents at Sarah Horowitz Parfums (far left), or learning how to cook from Café Firenze chef Fabio Viviani (top) while cruising to Greece and Italy (bottom) would warm even Scrooge’s heart.

one year; sponsorships start at \$25 and go as high as \$1,000. Private “Behind the Scenes” tours through exclusive areas (inaccessible to the public) provide additional animal-care information; a tour is \$500 for up to six people, \$1,000 for seven to 10 people. Want to be a “Keeper for the Day”? Participants get to work alongside zookeepers as they conduct daily tasks. Zoo members can do so for \$400, non-members for \$500 (participants must be 18 years or older and able to show proof of a negative TB test). Or opt for the “Backstage Pass,” an hour-and-a-half up-close encounter with up to three animals; \$150 for adult zoo members, \$200 for adult non-members, and \$75 for children from ages 5 to 17 (and who are accompanied by a paying adult).

Soaring Spirits

Indulging in a glider ride may be just the fix for lofty appetites. The mile-high scenic flight offered by Windhaven Glider Rides in Santa Ynez (gliderrides.com) takes passengers 5,280 feet above sea level to see the Santa Barbara coastline, Lake Cachuma, and the highest peaks of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Each two-seat glider is flown by an FAA-certified pilot. Age restrictions don’t apply and wheelchair-bound passengers can be accommodated. An important tip: Don’t forget the camera. The price is \$125 for a 15-minute flight, \$190 for a 22-minute flight, and \$245 for a 30-minute mile-high flight.

Bottoms Up

The pleasures of wine are vast and varied, and Paso Robles-based First Crush Winemaking Experience (firstcrushwinemaking.com) is devoted to sharing some of the winemaking process—from berry to bottle—with customers who are willing to get their feet (and hands) dirty. Participants of the 2011 Grape Escape Harvest Getaway will pick, crush, and stomp grapes that can ultimately become their own professionally styled wine. They’ll also get to create custom labels and enjoy wine and food pairings from local winemakers and chefs. (Getaways occur during fall weekends.)

—Cynthia House Nooney



For the Paint-Hearted

No Clean Up Required

Want to enjoy a fun bonding activity or commemorate a milestone? If so, Paint Jam Parties of Santa Barbara (paintjamusa.com) might be the answer. These turnkey events can be set up anywhere—at a park, a winery, or the beach, and they're designed to inspire creativity among all ages. Participants express themselves with big brushes and big colors.

"There's nothing intimidating about it," says co-owner Jana Brody. "No tiny palettes, no small brushes, just large canvases on which to let loose."

The idea for the business was based on co-owner Agnes Efron's experience while living in Hong Kong, explains Brody, where people gather at warehouses to paint together. "There's no land, no outdoor spaces to create, so artists meet indoors. This release from everyday life is called paint jamming. We want to provide the same type of opportunity here."

Brody points out that neither artistic experience nor talent is required. In fact, it's the adults, who've never painted before, whom she enjoys watching most: "It's rewarding to see them walk away with something after beginning with a blank canvas. Everyone has it in them to mix color."

As participants leave with their personal masterpieces, Paint Jam party hosts clean up. "That's what we're here for," says Brody. "We don't teach classes, we throw parties." —C.H.N.



Rock 'n' roll, raw sophistication, and smart style come together at Suemi Designs, where the art of accessorizing can be seen in industrial rings (left) and vintage-inspired leather bags (below).



Suemi Designs founder and jewelry designer, Rich Radenbaugh.

Rad Designer

While attending a friend's birthday celebration in a club in Las Vegas, Rich Radenbaugh received an on-the-spot cash offer for a ring he was wearing and had designed. "I was low on funds at the time, so that hundred dollars saved the day," recalls Radenbaugh, who hails from Agoura Hills. It also prompted him to pursue a new career.

Using proceeds from the sale of his motorcycle to create Suemi Designs, Radenbaugh began peddling his wares in Southern California, where he landed his first account with upscale boutique Lisa Kline in L.A. Soon after, actor Adrien Brody, then an Oscar nominee for *The Pianist*, appeared on a magazine cover wearing one of Radenbaugh's rings. "That was a great day! I got lucky," says the designer.

Nowadays, Radenbaugh's collection of handcrafted women's leather belts can be found at Madison in Westlake Village and Malibu (madisonlosangeles.com). His unique designs incorporate vintage ornaments and appeal to a wide audience—from 16-year-olds to suit-wearing professionals, says Radenbaugh, whose style sensibility is about blending rock 'n' roll with dressing well. A popular gift item? His unisex rings, which are available online (suemidesigns.com). —C.H.N.



RARE READS

Interior designer Kymberley Fraser couldn't believe her good fortune when a client asked if she could help find homes for his rare book collection. She says the client had amassed antique vellum books from the 16th and 17th centuries over the last 30 years during travels to Europe and was ready to "share them with the world." >>



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Antique vellum books are just one of the unique decorating finds that Kymberely Fraser showcases at A Beautiful Mess.



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Fraser, proprietor of the new A Beautiful Mess antiques store in Agoura Hills (3finegrains.com), is passionate about antiques and textiles and can't get over the exquisite color of these books with covers made from pigskin or calfskin. "The colors are creamy and luminous because of the way the skin has aged. The handwritten scripts on some of the bindings are beautiful too," she says.

As far as the contents, subjects include theology, history, poetry, stories, and music. Most are handwritten on cotton paper in Latin, French, or Italian. Each tome is individually priced, ranging from \$160 to \$7,500. —C.H.N.

Holiday Helpers for the Un-Fun Stuff

Need an extra hand (or two) during the holiday season? The Domestic Assistants of Ventura (thedomesticassistants.tumblr.com) aren't the slightest bit overwhelmed by to-do lists: "We're game for anything," says Daniel Richman, who, along with his wife, Jennifer, fulfills requests this time of year for holiday shopping assistance, gift wrapping, organizing, and other pressing chores.

Richman says they created their business to help make customers' lives easier. They've landscaped, cleaned house, organized rooms and storage units, and completed move-ins and move-outs. "There's no task we're afraid to tackle," he adds.

The pair got started by helping friends; word about their handy teamwork soon spread among wider circles. A strong referral network has sealed their reputation as trustworthy, dependable, and hardworking. "The Domestic Assistants are excellent organizers and enjoyable to be around," says repeat client Anthea Adams. "Their affordable rates [\$20 per hour] keep me coming back for more." —C.H.N.



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Basket Series
Vase (2010) by
Eric Dandurand
of Harmony
Glassworks.



Shopping in Harmony

Plan a trip to the tiny Central Coast town of Harmony (population 18) just off Highway 1 for artisan holiday gifts for nearly everyone on your list. Stop by **Harmony Pottery** (805-927-4293) for gorgeous handmade dishes and unique art pieces. Walk across the street to **Harmony Glassworks** (harmonyglassworks.com) for an array of jewelry, decor, art, and large-scale furniture installations like sinks and coffee tables from a variety of glass artists. Take a glassblowing lesson (\$125; arrange in advance) or buy a gift certificate for that artistic soul on your list. Sample the wares at **Harmony Cellars** (harmonycellars.com) and pick up a bottle or two for emergency gift-giving. Once you've seen all there is in Harmony, pop up to Cambria—just 6 miles up the road—for charming boutiques and delicious lunch spots (cambriachamber.org). —*Mallory McCreary*

LAST-MINUTE ENTERTAINING FOR HARD-TO-FEED FOLKS

There's a new line of ready-to-bake vegan and gluten-free cake mixes from Los Osos-based Wholesome Chow (\$5.25 per package; wholesomechow.com), which aren't just easy but *gourmet-delicious* as well. There are popular mixes—vanilla, chocolate, cornbread—and decidedly sophisticated choices—chai, lavender, chocolate chai, chocolate lavender, and lemon poppy seed—that turn into decadently moist, luscious concoctions worthy of the finest drop-in visitors, vegan or not. While the flavors certainly have year-round appeal, adding a holiday twist is easy:

- Add frozen blueberries (Hanukkah) or raspberries (Christmas) to the Luscious Lavender mix for festive muffins or quick breads.
- Add extra chocolate chunks to the Decadent Chocolate mix and top with a glaze of 1 cup sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla extract, ½ cup cocoa powder, 2 tablespoons plus 2 to 3 teaspoons of soy or almond milk, and ⅛ teaspoon peppermint extract. Once glaze has set, top with crushed candy canes.
- Soak ½ cup dried cranberries in enough golden rum or orange liqueur to cover, then drain and add to the Chai Spice mix; top with a dried-fruit compote or a glaze made with powdered sugar and the remaining liqueur.

The best part: Aside from the quick prep and the delectable end results, there's absolute freedom to lick the beaters since the mixes don't use eggs.

—M.M. ■

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