

Compliments of Charese John

AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

THE MAGAZINE CELEBRATING LIFE IN AMERICA

ISSUE 121



Charese John



What's Good The Art of Food Entertaining
IG: @ChareseJ

go with YOUR GUT

Eat well to feel well | **PAGE 10**

a riot of roses | **02**

the magic of moonbows | **48**



Front of Tear Out Card 1



Back of Tear Out Card 1

St-Germain Rose Spritz

INGREDIENTS
Mumm Brut Sparkling Rose
ST-Germain
Sparkling Water
Edible Flowers

My signature Spring recipe has three ingredients and one sexy garnish. It's super simple and can be prepared to taste! Please make sure bubbles are very cold!

ST-Germain Elderflower Liqueur 1 1/2 oz
Mumm Sparkling Rose - 3/4 of a flute or coup
Sparkling Water 1 1/2 oz
Lemon Zest Garnish & Edible Flower (Optional)

Enjoy...

The back of the card features a clean, white background with decorative floral illustrations in orange, red, and teal. The text is arranged in a vertical column on the left side, with the ingredients list and a short paragraph of text. The logo for Cherise J ENTERTAINING is located in the bottom right corner.



AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

Dear Bill and Judy,

Happy Spring, Friends!

The first day of spring is one thing and the first spring day is another. Spring is our annual reminder that transformation is not only possible but necessary.

Here at Charese J. entertaining our focus will be Re-Setting, Re-freshing, Re-thinking, & Reviving for the new season. Transitioning seasons is an exciting time because it represents change and change is always good. We are reminded of the beautiful cycle of life that we all experience.

This Springs' forecast is trending to a time where there is REAL intentionality in our gathering and hosting. Spending time with family and friends needs to be purposeful with an intentional focus. There are so many events we are pulled to attend; it is important to make every moment count! I always want to elevate each of my gatherings by creating experiences we rarely have and allowing my friends to be a part of the process. The takeaway is always, what an amazing time we had. Whether it's an Easter Dinner, a Birthday Brunch, or a Girls Night out... we hope to create an expectation of something experiential.

Included in this issue is my favorite essentials for spring hosting and entertaining... a few things that will spring you up! Nothing says spring like colorful plates, bright serving pieces and floral fragrances! What could be better.

The days are longer, and the temperature is on the rise leading us to a lighter and airy energy which we see reflected in soft and pretty colors. In this season of metamorphosis and new beginnings, I pray you all a beautiful Reviving!

Love,

Charese



Charese John

www.ChareseJentertaining.com

What's Good The Art of Food Entertaining
IG: @ChareseJ



AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

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A RIOT OF ROSES

written by **lauren kim**
photography courtesy of **portland rose test garden**



THE INTERNATIONAL ROSE TEST GARDEN OFFERS A BEAUTIFUL EXPANSE OF ROSES ON FOUR AND A HALF ACRES IN PORTLAND, OREGON.

CREATED DURING WORLD WAR I AS A SAFE PLACE TO PROTECT Europe's best blooms from wartime bombings, the International Rose Test Garden in Portland, Oregon's Washington Park is the oldest continuously operated rose test garden in the United States. It features more than 10,000 roses and at least 610 varieties of the beloved flower on four and a half acres. New roses are tested for attributes like color, fragrance, and disease resistance and added yearly to this colorful oasis, which welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

WHEN TO GO: The roses bloom from late spring to early fall, or approximately May to September, but you may want to visit during the Portland Rose Festival, which runs from May 26 through June 11 and features entertainment, carnival rides, music, parades, and food. The garden also hosts special events throughout the year, such as a festival on Valentine's Day with music, food, and wine tastings.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE: Enjoy spectacular roses of multiple colors, types, and sizes, along with views of downtown Portland and, on clear days, the Cascade Range and Mount Hood. Among the garden's offerings are the Shakespeare Garden with a bust of the famous bard, a Gold Medal Garden spotlighting over one hundred years of excellence in rose breeding, and a Rose Garden Store with rose-themed gifts, books, and gardening supplies.

PLAN YOUR VISIT: The garden is open daily, and admission is free. There is limited parking nearby, so you may want to take public transportation to Washington Park and then board its free shuttle, which runs a loop through its grounds and stops at the garden.



© Fisayo Che

Pictured: Fisayo Che

interview with **fisayo che** | written by **shelley goldstein** | photography **as noted**

THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF ELISAMAMA

LOS ANGELES-BASED ELISAMAMA, NAMED AFTER FOUNDER FISAYO CHE'S ONLY DAUGHTER, EMPOWERS NIGERIAN ARTISANS WITH JOBS WHILE CREATING BEAUTIFUL AND PRACTICAL CLOTHING FOR WOMEN AND KIDS.

Tell us a little about yourself:

I'm a busy mom of three whose weekly highlights are attending my kids' sporting activities and spending time with family and friends. While I was born in Europe and have called the US home for the last two decades, my familial roots are in Nigeria, making that culture an important part of my life. I have a graduate degree in health management and a decade-long corporate career in project management at a Fortune 500 Top 10 organization, which I balance alongside my work with Elisamama.

What was it like growing up in Nigeria?

While I've had a relatively geographically diverse life, Nigeria has always been the anchor of my upbringing. I had a typical middle-class life in Nigeria, growing up in the shadows of my parents, who modeled and taught me the value of hard work,

commitment, humility, and charity. Our home had a revolving door of family members and sometimes strangers that came to live with us. My parents valued and made it their life's mission to give people the foundation they needed to make a life for themselves through education or vocational training. Witnessing this growing up planted the seeds that decades later set me on the path to establishing Elisamama.

How did you come up with the idea for Elisamama?

It came from my experience as a busy mom committed to finding practical fashion solutions to support the many hats mothers wear. After having children, my body changed, life became busier, and I needed clothing that not only looked good but also served a deeper purpose. Over time, I realized I was not alone in this; other mothers like me desired clothing that was uplifting and provided the comfort and function needed to take on all that life demanded.

About that same time, I took a trip to Nigeria and had the opportunity to connect with women artisans who struggled to earn enough income to take care of their families. I wanted to empower them with jobs and build up the mothers there with joyful, one-of-a-kind, functional clothing.

How does your daughter inspire you in your business and your life?

The birth of my only daughter, Elisa, was the turning point that awakened

the desire to live a more meaningful and impactful life. It is no wonder my business was named after the moniker we fondly called her, Elisamama. She served as the primary inspiration for a lot of the designs we produced in our early years. She was the ultimate muse and quick to share her opinion, and she boldly vetted every product we made. The gusto and self-assuredness in her little five-year-old self also encourage me to live boldly and present the most authentic version of myself.

What has entrepreneurship taught you?

Becoming an entrepreneur has been the greatest transformational experience of my life. For most of my life, I had been largely self-reliant and tried my hardest to never put myself in the position of needing help. Entrepreneurship has completely flipped that—it has humbled me and taught me the power and value of community. The relationships I have formed in this journey have poured so much into me and made the proverb “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together” ring very true to me. Entrepreneurship has empowered me to speak up and never be afraid or hindered by the word *no*.

What is your relationship to fashion?

My relationship with fashion has always been rooted in its utility. In the case of Elisamama, the primary driver was my personal desire to give back to Nigeria, and fashion happened to be the most viable pathway to allow me to do that. Now, as I’ve grown Elisamama, my love for fashion has grown. I enjoy pushing the boundaries of style aesthetics and utility. It also excites me to see our customers feel joyful when wearing our clothing.



© Bablo Visuals



© Fisayo Che

Pictured: Fisayo Che

How did you select your team members?

We have fifteen team members on staff. When selecting team members, balancing skill sets and financial needs was something I had to contend with. In the early days of Elisamama, I brought on seamstresses whose stories deeply moved me, but their work was not up to par with the quality we required to provide value to our customers. At a certain point, I had to make the difficult decision to let them go. From that point on, I realized that the business’s success is actually what makes it possible to fulfill my passion for making an impact. We now have objective metrics in place that guide our hiring decisions to ensure that we do not allow my social goals to compromise the business.

What type of clothing is Elisamama known for?

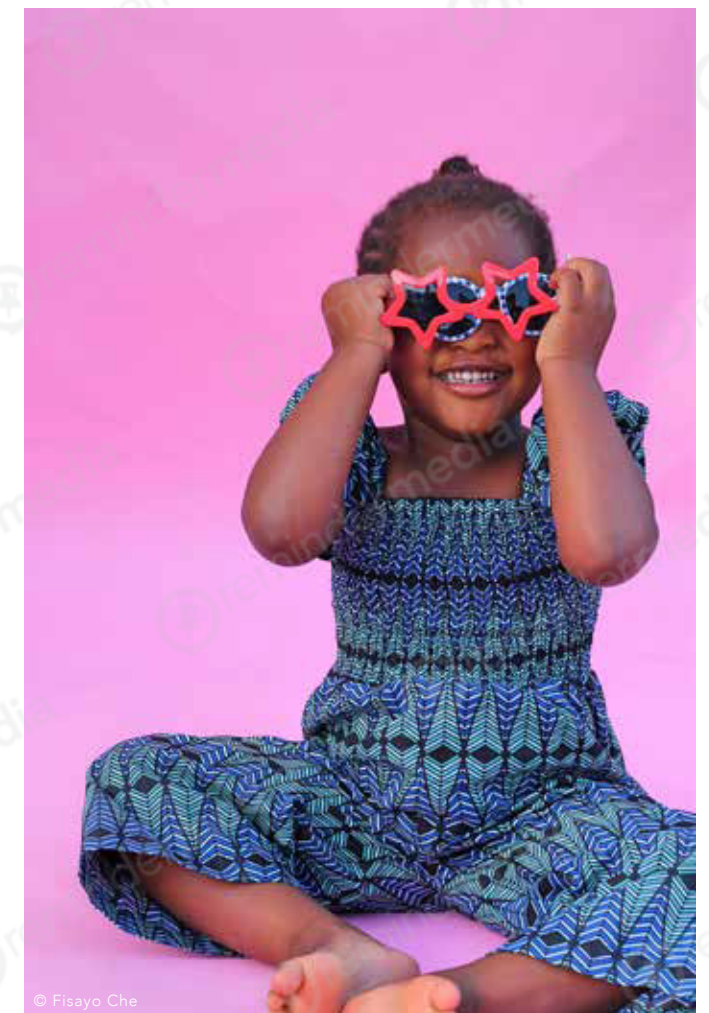
Who designs the clothing?

Elisamama is known for vibrant yet functional women’s and kids’ clothing using African-inspired prints. Our clothes are made with the modern mother in mind. We provide pieces that both look good and provide function and can transition across body types and activities. Our clothes are catchy and certain to garner you a ton of compliments. While I currently design all our clothes, our fabrics are a mix of those locally sourced in Lagos markets and custom-made prints using the tie-dye/batik process.

Will you talk about the process of getting your clothing into stores?

To be honest, most of our significant retail partnerships and key opportunities have come from the relationships we have built. The power of a supportive community is unparalleled—the people you know will be the ones to bring you into spaces and open doors.

“The birth of my only daughter, Elisa, was the turning point that awakened the desire to live a more meaningful and impactful life.”



© Fisayo Che

Pictured: Elisa

What was the first retailer to partner with you?

It was a small shop in Laguna Beach: Cleo. This was about a year in, and it meant a lot to see our clothes in a physical space. Saks Fifth Avenue was the first major retailer to partner with us; it was truly a surreal experience that still very much feels like a dream!

What do you wish more people understood about Nigeria?

The truth is, the common stereotype presented of Nigerians is generally not positive, but even more problematic, it is grossly incomplete. One of my goals through this work is to add more to the Nigerian narrative beyond what is conventionally shared. I am eager to showcase the full realm of Nigerians, highlighting our strength, character, resilience, heart, and work ethic. I am committed to telling our stories and showcasing our ingenuity, creativity, and optimism regardless of circumstance.

As challenging as life in Nigeria can be, the joy, pride, and confidence Nigerians have is unparalleled. It is often said that Nigerians are the happiest people in the world. I have no empirical evidence to back that claim up, but Nigerians

are indeed incredibly optimistic and proud people. In addition, I am eager to show that Nigeria is a place where products suited for a global audience can be produced.

What do you hope for your business in the future?

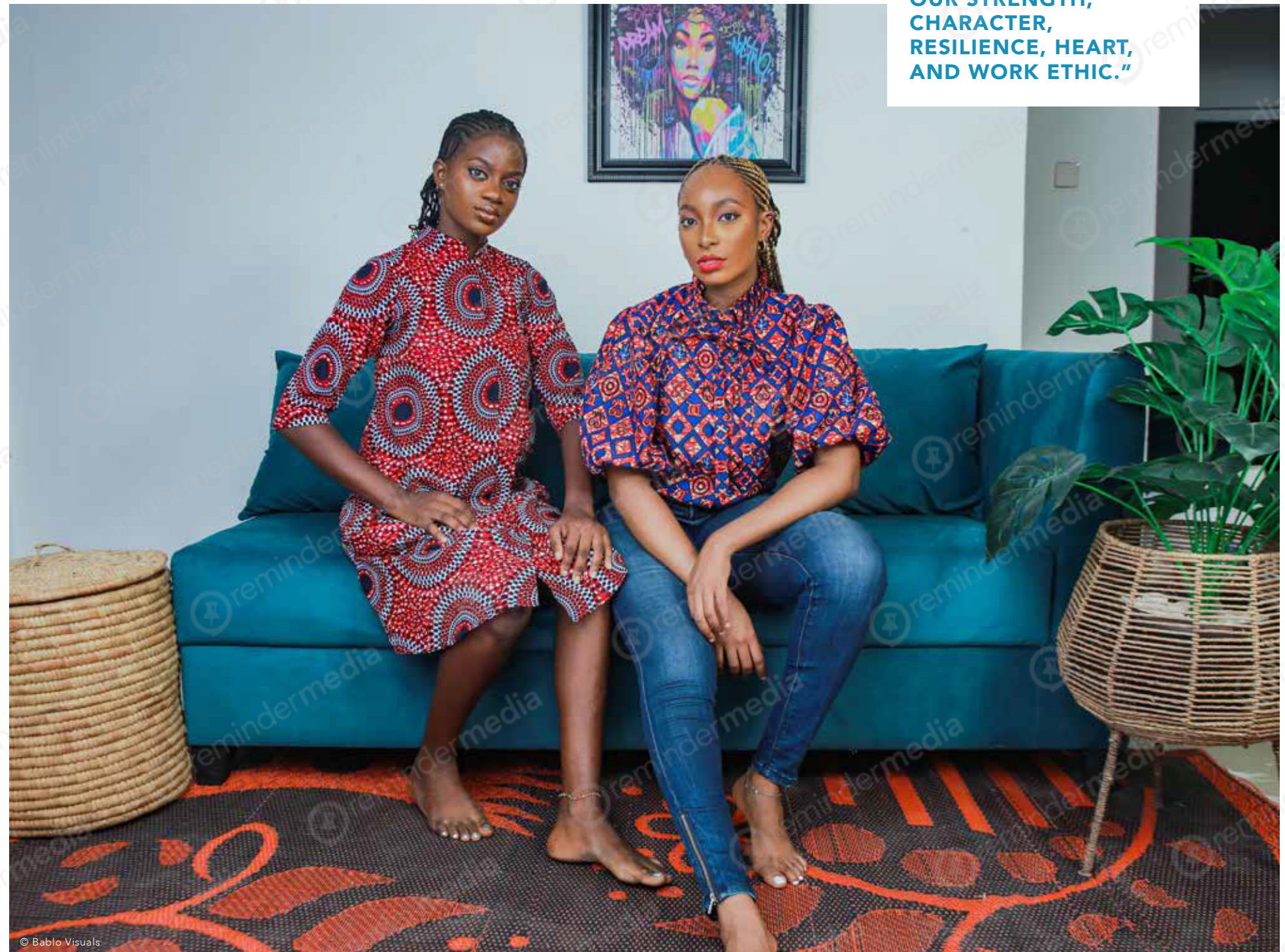
I want every Elisamama team member to have their basic needs fully met and also have enough financial security to build their lives and future. I hope to continue to extend the Elisamama presence through major fashion retailers as well as local and international specialty stores.

While our products are currently our main offering, Nigeria offers another untapped resource, which is service. As the most populated nation in Africa, we have people who are willing to work and are simply looking for the opportunity. My hope is to follow the model Leila Janah established under Samasource with giving work. As a child of Indian immigrants, Janah employed impoverished people with a living wage in Africa and India. I hope to “give work” by offering clothing production and manufacturing services to other fashion brands.

All in all, my hope is for Elisamama to be a vessel for good in the lives we directly touch and in the joy we provide for those who experience our products.

For more info, visit elisamama.com

“I AM EAGER TO SHOWCASE THE FULL REALM OF NIGERIANS, HIGHLIGHTING OUR STRENGTH, CHARACTER, RESILIENCE, HEART, AND WORK ETHIC.”



© Bablo Visuals

recipes by **alana and lisa macfarlane** | photography by **haarala hamilton**

RECIPES EXCERPTED FROM *THE GUT-LOVING COOKBOOK* BY ALANA AND LISA MACFARLANE OF *THE GUT STUFF*, PUBLISHED BY PAVILION BOOKS.



GO WITH
YOUR GUT



When you fancy a spice hit, plus a whopper of a hit on the variety counter.

Serves 4

kimchi grain bowl

- 2 tablespoons tamari or light soy sauce**
 - 7 ounces firm tofu, sliced**
 - 1 tablespoon sesame oil or light olive oil**
 - 2 garlic cloves, sliced**
 - 1-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated**
 - 1/3 cup kale**
 - 3/4 cup precooked brown rice**
 - 1/2 cup precooked quinoa**
- TOPPING**
- 2/3 cup kimchi (homemade or shop-bought)**
 - 1/2 bunch spring onions, sliced**
 - 1 tablespoon sesame seeds**
 - Squeeze of lime juice**
1. Put half the tamari in a bowl, add the tofu and coat evenly.
 2. Heat a frying pan over a medium-high heat and add the oil. Add the tofu slices and cook on each side for 2–3 minutes until golden. Reduce the heat to medium, add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute. Remove the tofu from the pan and set aside.
 3. Add the kale to the pan with the remaining tamari and cook for 2–4 minutes until the kale has wilted.
 4. Heat the rice and quinoa according to the packet instructions and divide between two bowls.
 5. Top the rice and quinoa with the tofu, kimchi, kale and spring onions and sprinkle over the sesame seeds. Add the lime juice and serve immediately.



Lauren on our team originally made this after a cupboard raid when it was snowing and she couldn't get to the shops! A budget week-night dinner when your food stores are running low; keep a couple of tins of fish in the pantry, in case you're caught short in extreme weather conditions like Lauren.

Makes 6 fish cakes, serves 2-3

pantry fishcakes with celeriac slaw

- 1 medium potato (skin on), cut into 1-inch chunks**
- 1 medium sweet potato (skin on), cut into 1-inch chunks**
- 2 (3½ ounce) cans of salmon or mackerel, drained**
- 4 spring onions, sliced into rounds**
- 2 handfuls of fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- Zest and juice of ½ lemon**

CELERIAC SLAW

- ½ celeriac, peeled**
- 4 tablespoons milk kefir yogurt (homemade, or shop-bought)**
- Salt and pepper**

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a baking tray with baking paper.
- 2.** Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add both potatoes and cook for 20–25 minutes until tender. Remove from the heat, drain and steam-dry for 5 minutes. Roughly mash using a potato masher.
- 3.** Transfer the mashed potato to a medium mixing bowl, add the salmon or mackerel, spring onions, half the parsley and the beaten egg. Mix to combine and season well before stirring in the lemon zest and a squeeze of juice. Using your hands, mould the mixture into 6 fishcakes and transfer to the lined baking tray. Bake for 30–35 minutes until golden, turning halfway through cooking.
- 4.** While the fishcakes are in the oven, grate the celeriac and add to a bowl. Mix in the milk kefir yogurt, remaining parsley and a squeeze of lemon juice. Season to taste.
- 5.** Serve the fishcakes alongside the celeriac slaw.

Any leftover fishcakes and slaw can be stored in the fridge for up to 2 days.



An absolute winner with a cup of tea!

Makes 6

banana and raspberry cookies

- 2 medium, ripe bananas**
- ½ cup rolled oats**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 2 tablespoons nut butter, such as peanut, almond or cashew**
- Pinch of sea salt**
- 2 handfuls of raspberries (fresh or frozen)**

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F and line a baking tray with baking paper.

2. In a large bowl, use the back of a fork to mash the bananas, then add the oats, cinnamon, nut butter and salt and mix to combine. Finally add the raspberries and gently combine. Use your hands to roll the mixture into 6–8 balls, then transfer to the lined baking tray and press down into cookies.

3. Bake for 20–25 minutes until golden. Eat warm or leave to cool on a wire rack.

Once cool, store in the fridge for up to 4 days.

written by **bonnie joffe** | photography by **getty images, unless noted**

TALES *of* YORE

IF YOU WANT TO PERMANENTLY PRESERVE A LOVED ONE'S LEGACY, THERE'S NOTHING LIKE DOCUMENTING THEIR VERY WORDS. HERE'S HOW TO GO ABOUT IT.

I USED TO LOVE LISTENING TO MY DAD TELL

stories of the past. The experiences and events that shaped his life were so fascinating to me. My children had the good fortune of hearing his life's adventures, often resulting in heavy belly laughter. And because he was a bit of an eccentric, the delivery of his stories was never dull, and everyone who had the privilege of listening to him never walked away unamused.

I knew there were still so many more stories to be told and often wondered how much longer he would be around for everyone to enjoy his anecdotes and share his wonderful tales of yore. In hindsight, I wish I had recorded him telling his tales. Documenting a loved one in their own words is a remarkable way to honor their legacy, recount their life, and allow future generations to watch and hear them.



"IT'S NEVER TOO SOON TO START PRESERVING YOUR OR YOUR LOVED ONE'S MEMORIES."



CHOOSING A FORMAT

It's never too soon to start preserving your or your loved one's memories. And whether you're capturing them through video, audio recording, or journaling, as you take this trip down memory lane, it will become a timeless family treasure. These tips can help you decide which format will be the best way to document your memories.

VIDEOTAPING OR AUDIO RECORDING

Videotaping is often the best option for capturing your interviewee's authentic





“SOME PEOPLE PREFER TO PRESERVE THEIR MEMORIES BY WRITING IN A JOURNAL.”

self—it allows for facial expressions, voice tone and inflection, overall personality, and demeanor. But if they are not comfortable being in front of a camera, an audio recording can still be an effective way of documenting the stories to be shared.

WRITING OR JOURNALING

Some people prefer to preserve their memories by writing in a journal, reflecting and transcribing their recollections at their own pace. An

older person may need a rest from writing as it can become physically or emotionally tiresome. Although it's not quite the same as seeing your loved one's face on video or hearing their voice through an audio recording, written memories can also be meaningful. This format can also be easily copied and placed in a scrapbook or memory box for safekeeping.

PROMPTING MEMORIES

Because memories fade into the background, it can sometimes be difficult to recollect past events fully, but there are certain strategies you can use to prompt memories, regardless of the format you choose.

MAKE A LIST OF QUESTIONS

Prepare questions ahead of time, which can reduce the stress of trying to remember events on the spot.

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Avoid questions that garner yes-or-no answers. Begin with how, when, or why, and ask follow-up questions to gather more detailed information.

PERUSE THROUGH OLD PHOTO ALBUMS

Gazing at past photos is always a great way to prompt memories. As you look through these timeless pictures, be sure to ask questions about the place, time, and people in the photographs to help inspire your loved one to retell the events that correlated with them.

PLAY BACKGROUND MUSIC

Music can often jog one's memory, so consider quietly playing music from the era of the person being interviewed.



“Be sure to ask questions about the place, time, and people in the photographs to help inspire your loved one to retell the events that correlated with them.”



INTERVIEWING TIPS

Whether you're interviewing your loved one or asking them to do a self-recorded interview, make sure the environment is comfortable and relaxing.

PROVIDE PROPER LIGHTING

The room should be well-lit and the lights should not be shining in the interviewee's eyes if it's a videotaping session. It's generally best to conduct these types of interviews when the sun is lower during the early morning or evening hours.

RECORD IN SEGMENTS

You may be able to complete the recording session all in one sitting. However, if you are interviewing an older parent or relative, it may be best to keep the interview to no more than one hour, pause, and then reconvene later.

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

If you have decided to play background music, be sure to keep the volume low. Also, turn off all televisions and minimize the number of people in the room.



© Hannah Busing

“The room should be well-lit and the lights should not be shining in the interviewee’s eyes if it’s a videotaping session.”

CATEGORIZING QUESTIONS

Break down the interview questions into categories. Keep the conversation as relaxed and natural as possible to help make it easier for recollecting past stories and events. Here are some examples of questions you may want to ask:

LEGACY

What life lessons have had the most profound impact on you, and what lessons do you want to pass on to future generations?

Who inspired you the most and why?

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

Who in your life helped shape the person you are today?

FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS

How did you and your spouse meet, and where and when was your first date?

What was your favorite adventure that you did together?

What family traditions did you enjoy most as a child?

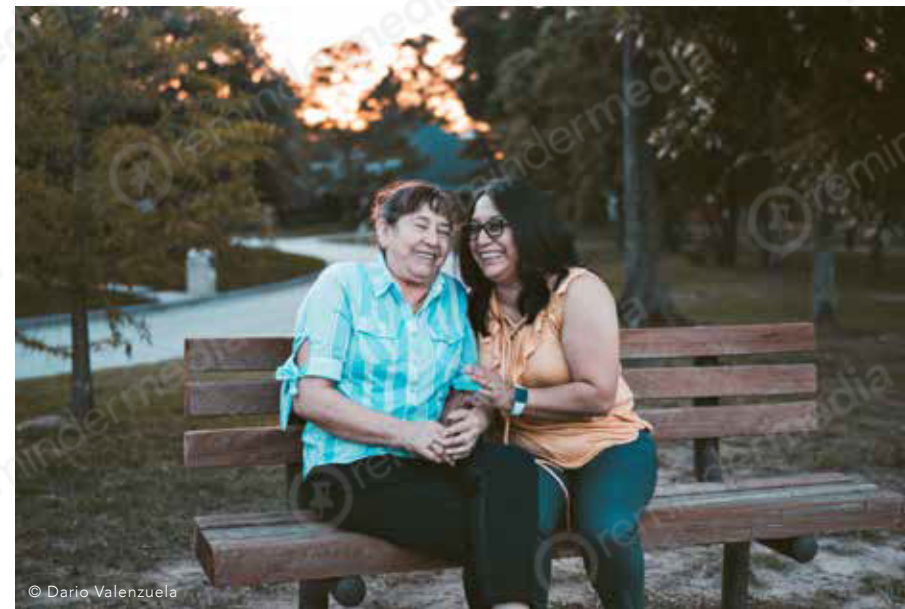
Is there a particular event or story that sticks out most in your mind?

HISTORICAL EVENTS

What historical events did you experience, and how did they impact you?

What was the social, political, and economic climate at the time?

How did those events make you feel?



© Dario Valenzuela

There are many ways to document a life story. Hence, as you think about a cherished older person in your life, consider the type of story you want to document. Websites like storyworth.com, storii.com, lastly.com, and desktop-documentaries.com are great tools to help create meaningful life stories. Encourage younger people to get involved and ask questions—you never know what will be revealed! It’s also a perfect opportunity to make this into a fun family project, bring the family together, and connect through the power of storytelling while creating a priceless family heirloom.

COZY LIVING IN A GRAND LAKE HOUSE

interview with **layton campbell** | written by **shelley goldstein** | photography by **Michael Blevins**

DESIGNER LAYTON CAMPBELL DIVULGES HOW HE CREATED A CASUAL YET ELEGANT OASIS ON LAKE NORMAN NEAR CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA.



Where did you grow up? What was your first introduction to the idea of interior design?

I was born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina. As a boy, I would help my mom rearrange the furniture and select fabrics when she would redecorate the house. I always had a passion for textiles—both clothing and furnishings.

How did you know design was meant to be your career? What did that path look like?

I went to college at UNC-Greensboro for music and vocal performance. After graduating, I moved to New York City to pursue a career in musical theater and worked in that world for seven years.

I grew weary of the constant travel and decided to shift direction to my other love, interior design. I went to Parsons School of Design for two years before moving back to Charlotte, where I worked as a design associate for a small design firm for three years. In 2004, I opened JLayout Interiors and have been growing my business since. Creating environments that clients live and make memories in is the greatest reward by far.



How would you describe your design aesthetic?

My design aesthetic cannot be pigeonholed, as I love to work with many genres and color palettes and in many locales. My philosophy is that when architecture, client, and environment come together, the outcome is harmonious.

When you are designing, what element do you usually begin with?

I always start with the client and their lifestyle. We determine a direction for style, color palette, and functionality. Then I study the architecture of the project, taking into consideration the location. I usually start with the bones of a space, including interior features

that are part of the structure, and then I figure out the flow of color. After that, the layering begins.

What were your goals in designing the Lake Norman house?

My goal for the project on Lake Norman was to bring the outdoors in—from the color palette of the lake

“The dining room showcases a Martin Kline encaustic in an original frame that once displayed a Picasso.”

and surrounding landscape to the connection of living spaces that have the beauty of opening the interior to the exterior. I also wanted the design to reflect a casual but elegant style, creating a private oasis for relaxation and entertaining.

What are the challenges of designing such a huge space?

The clients wanted a home they could live in as a couple but also welcome their large extended family and friends. The biggest challenge was to create a home that would feel cozy but was grand in scale.

What inspired the color palette?

Much of the house is a neutral tone to keep the focus on the architectural details. This allowed me to accent with soft colors and textures throughout.

Given that your clients are big art collectors, how did that factor into your design? What are a couple of art pieces that stand out in this house?

Art is the most personal reflection a client can display of themselves. It can be the standout moment in a room or help blend everything together. Nothing makes a more important statement than art in a space. The dining room showcases a Martin Kline encaustic in an original frame that once displayed a Picasso. The foyer boasts a Rebecca Ward piece created with acrylic, dye, and strings. The moment one steps into the house, they know it is going to be a special experience.

What furnishings did you custom-design for the space? Do you have long-standing relationships with makers?

I designed the enormous cocktail table in the living room. I incorporated walnut veneer and acrylic supports. The table facilitates a conversation area



by connecting the two sofas facing each other, as well as the swivel chairs that can pivot out to views of the lake. I have the privilege of working with many artisans and craftspeople who bring my vision and ideas to life. I love collaboration.

How did you approach the many windows in the house? Was it difficult trying to balance privacy with lake views?

Luckily, the architecture of the house was designed so that the back of the home only has lake views, which made it easier to utilize sheers in the main areas. In the primary room and

guest suites, I stacked the blackout window treatments completely off the window frames so as not to impede the views. But when closed, they still afford privacy.

How did you design around the large stone wall and fireplace in the all-season room?

I used furnishings to soften the monolithic feature, opting for an abstract hand-knotted rug of wool and silk, velvet on pillows, and a soft chenille on the sofa. Then I layered the room with textures ranging from rattan to metal.

“I DESIGNED THE ENORMOUS COCKTAIL TABLE IN THE LIVING ROOM. I INCORPORATED WALNUT VENEER AND ACRYLIC SUPPORTS.”



Will you talk about the special wallpaper in the bedroom?

The hand-painted mural on grass cloth is by Phillip Jeffries and entitled *Beyond*, and that is exactly what I wanted for the huge niche in the primary suite. It evokes the feeling of floating on air and becoming one with your surroundings.

What is your favorite part of the house?

The all-season room. It has such a good balance of earth and water with all the stone facades that open to water views and outdoor living. There is also a beautifully designed small kitchen and grilling space complete with an indoor and outdoor bar.

What are your best tips for a high-end look on a budget?

If you are going after a high-end look for less, opt for classic lines that are not trendy. Try to source different materials for the space to create layering, such as a combination of soft fabric, metal, and wood finishes that have depth, as well as natural elements like rattan and bone.

What do you most value in clients and collaborators?

I think clients that really listen and trust me have the best outcome. Sometimes a designer will push you out of your comfort zone. Those are often the most rewarding design elements in a project.

What inspires you?

I am an avid traveler; everything about travel inspires me—from the culture and architecture to the food and geography in general. Nothing broadens the mind and soul more than travel.

When do you feel most in your element?

Easy. I am happiest when I am at my place in the Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains sitting on the deck, drinking a glass of wine, and taking in the panoramic view.

For more info, visit jlaytoninteriors.com

Architect: Richard Hamm, Houston, TX
 Builder: Kingswood Homes
 Hardline Design: Louise Leeke of Kingswood Homes



AN OASIS IN THE HEARTLAND

written by **lauren kim** | photography courtesy of **fontenelle forest**

TRAVERSE THE LUSH DEPTHS OF NEBRASKA'S FONTENELLE FOREST TO ENJOY HIKING, BIRDWATCHING, ZIP-LINING, ABUNDANT WILDLIFE, AND WILDFLOWERS.

BORDERED BY THE MISSOURI RIVER AND nestled in Bellevue, Nebraska, just minutes from downtown Omaha, is Fontenelle Forest, a lush 1,500 acres of woodlands, prairie, and wetlands. In this vast natural preserve, you can escape the pressures of urban life and hike for miles, zip-line through the treetops, and watch migratory birds as they soar above the trees. This peaceful destination offers something for visitors of all ages.

Experience history, art, and fun. The forest's lands, once the floor of a sea filled with a multitude of marine creatures and later traversed by glaciers millions of years ago, were settled by tribes of indigenous people. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark crossed the forest in 1804 as they explored territory acquired by the United States through the Louisiana Purchase from France.

Eventually, the forest became home to New Orleans fur trader Lucien Fontenelle, his American Indian wife, Bright Sun, and their son, Logan Fontenelle, an Omaha chief and the forest's namesake. Today, Fontenelle Forest is a National Natural Landmark and a National Historic District that can be explored with the help of a map from the forest's nature center or on a self-guided tour of the History Trail, which is a little more than a mile long. Just off the trail, you can visit memorial markers for Logan Fontenelle and his mother. The forest hosts a variety of events throughout the year, such as astronomy events and book clubs, and has its own art museum, the Baright Gallery, which regularly hosts



exhibitions. If you'll have little ones in tow on your visit, they can explore Acorn Acres, which has a tree house to climb, a small stream to dip their toes in, and musical instruments to play made out of wood and other natural materials.

GO ON A HIKE

The sights and sounds of the city will start to fade away once you blissfully set foot on Fontenelle Forest's seventeen miles of hiking trails, where you can meander through deciduous forests, flood plains, and grasslands. This protected forest offers opportunities for both day-trippers and serious hikers, and its approximately one-mile-long, ADA-certified Riverview Boardwalk, from which

you can spot wildlife and glimpse the Missouri River and downtown Omaha and beyond, accommodates both baby strollers and wheelchairs. You can trek deep into Fontenelle Forest for a day of exploration or enjoy a short walk on one of its gentle, flat trails.

Fontenelle Forest also has a variety of ecosystems to explore. Its Northern Floodplains feature sandy trails through wetlands with river views, its Northern Uplands offer mostly moderate slopes and approximately two and a half miles of hiking through tranquil forest, its Southern Uplands present steep climbs with ravine and waterfall vistas, and its Southern Floodplain has a level boardwalk that crosses wetlands and cottonwoods and

has views of the Great Marsh. You can set out on your own for a hike or join a naturalist-led guided one, such as a sunset, star-studded constellation or a full-moon tour after regular park hours complete with a bonfire and s'mores. If you visit spring and summer, you may be rewarded with views of the locale's three hundred colorful species of wildflowers.

APPRECIATE BIRDS AND WILDLIFE

Located along the Missouri River's migration flyway, Fontenelle Forest is a birder's paradise and one of Nebraska's best spots to see many species of migratory birds in May. The forest hosts almost 250 species of birds and is one of the best birding areas for warblers, a type of songbird, in the

"YOU CAN TREK DEEP INTO FONTENELLE FOREST FOR A DAY OF EXPLORATION OR ENJOY A SHORT WALK ON ONE OF ITS GENTLE, FLAT TRAILS."

United States. As you go deeper into the forest, you may enjoy a chorus of birdsong, and if you bring a pair of binoculars, you may get closer views of hummingbirds and woodpeckers and wildlife like beavers, amphibians, turtles, rabbits, and deer. The Raptor Woodland Refuge, part of the forest's



nature center and located thirty feet above the forest floor, mimics these majestic birds' natural habitats and provides an opportunity to see and learn about bald eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, vultures, and other predatory birds.

GET AN ADRENALINE RUSH

The lofty heights of the forest aren't just for the birds, as its TreeRush Adventure Park and KidRush Adventure Park offer the opportunity to explore from up to fifty-five feet in the air on bridges, zip lines, and swings. For children ages four to six, KidRush has two fun trails just a few feet from the ground, while TreeRush has seven exhilarating courses for visitors who are at least seven years old. TreeRush Adventure Park's trails offer a two-to-three-hour experience high up in the forest canopy and include more than ten zip lines coded for difficulty, from beginner to expert. The most challenging courses boast bird's-eye views of downtown Omaha and the Missouri River, while TreeRush offers Glow in the Park evenings where you can climb and zip-line after dark while listening to music among sparkly string-light-filled branches.

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

There is a small fee to enjoy Fontenelle Forest, but for members of this natural area, admission is free. No pets are allowed in the forest. There is no charge for parking, and you can get trail maps and rent binoculars, power scooters, wheelchairs, and strollers on a first-come, first-served basis at the Visitors Service desk. And with Fontenelle being open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day, it's an adventure just waiting to be had in America's heartland.

For more information, visit fontenelleforest.org



“TreeRush Adventure Park’s trails offer a two-to-three-hour experience high up in the forest canopy and include more than ten zip lines coded for difficulty, from beginner to expert.”



The Art and Heart of Soil

written by **shelley goldstein** | photography by **karen vaughan**

SOIL SCIENTIST KAREN VAUGHAN COMBINES HER LOVE OF COLOR, SOIL, AND EDUCATION TO CREATE WATERCOLOR PAINTS AND NEW PATHWAYS TO LEARNING.

© Aaron Kittredge



“Vaughan’s fascination with soil colors stems from her work as a pedologist. Color is one of the tools soil scientists use to figure out what’s going on in the ecosystem below ground.”

WHEN SOMETHING IS A PART OF OUR environment for a long time, we often stop noticing it. This is why people rearrange their furniture and begin to see their house as new again or return from a weekend of camping with a renewed appreciation for hot showers. Scientist Karen Vaughan feels the same way about soil. “Maybe it’s because it’s below our feet or because soils are ubiquitous, but people don’t realize how important it is. You sort of forget about it because it’s everywhere.” Her mission in her roles as a scientist and a maker is to bring awareness to the beauty and wonder of soil.



Vaughan grew up in Rhode Island near the ocean, and she remembers frequenting the beach to get four-dollar lobsters straight off the boat. Her education and career took her all over the country, including Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Idaho, Utah, and California. Now an associate professor at the University of Wyoming, Vaughan is inspired by the state's rugged landscape. "Wyoming has influenced everything about my soil art practice," she says. "It's dry here and there isn't much vegetation covering the ground, so people can go out and see the quote-unquote Badlands. I use the quotes because they aren't bad lands. They're amazing lands. They may not be doing what you want them to do in terms of growing lush vegetation, but they're salty and barren and beautiful."

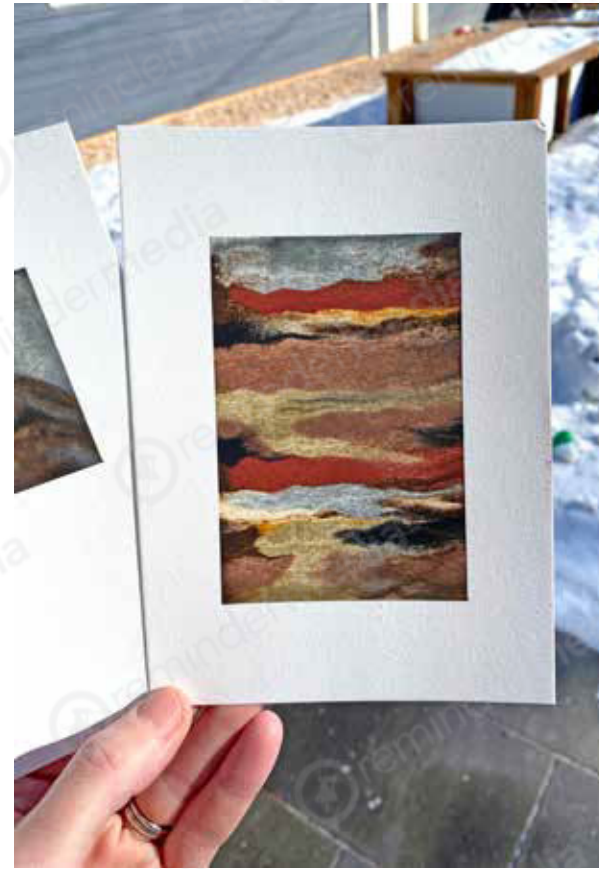


It's no wonder Vaughan is enamored of soil—her research background is in wetland soils, mineralogy, and pedology. If you're unfamiliar with the term, pedology is the study of soil formation, meaning it looks at how climate, organisms, relief (like slope and aspect), parent materials (the geologic or organic precursors to soil), and time influence how soil forms across a landscape. In addition to studying soil, Vaughan says she enjoys creating art: "I love doing things with my hands. I love to weave and knit. I like the feel of natural fibers. So I started creating soil profiles by felting or weaving tapestries of them, and then I started dyeing those fibers with natural materials."

For example, bright-red soil might point to iron concentrations. The artist and the scientist halves of Vaughan were intersecting and forming an idea. "I would see these absolutely beautiful soil colors and think 'I wish everyone could see these.' I get to dig these holes and be underground and spend time with soil, and other people don't," she shares. "So how could I take these colors and bring them out to the broader community? That was how these watercolors came about."

She had acquired some beautiful soils from Wyoming and Utah and some bold soil colors from Tennessee and used them to create watercolors and crayons. "It was a natural partnership between soil and art," Vaughan explains. The watercolors are all made with at least 50 percent soil—some are 100 percent. Vaughan collects the soil herself and then adds another natural pigment or a nontoxic synthetic pigment. The pigment and soil are then combined with a watercolor





“Soils will settle depending on the surface area of the particles, so sand settles first, followed by silt, and finally clay.”

medium, which is her own proprietary mixture of water, acacia gum, vegetable glycerin, honey, and clove oil.

Her watercolor-making process uses a combination of scientific principles and patience. Once Vaughan finds the color of soil that she likes, she saturates it, essentially flooding it with water, and then mixes it up. Then it's poured through a series of sieves designed to remove organic matter. Soils will settle depending on the surface area of the particles, so sand settles first, followed by silt, and finally clay. Using Stokes' law (which gives the settling velocity of spherical particles), she calculates ninety seconds for the sand to settle. After pouring off the silt and clay, she'll leave the jar overnight to let the water separate out. Then the clay and silt are poured into a baking sheet to dry in the sun or the oven. Once it's dry, the mixture is ground up with a mortar and pestle and mulled with the watercolor medium for a half hour to an hour.

Vaughan's watercolors are a family endeavor. Her husband, Rob—also

trained as a pedologist—cuts and carves all the wood palettes for the paints. And her two children help make boxes or package palettes. Each color name is inspired by a place or the mineral that's responsible for the color. Early on, the packaging was minimal, but Vaughan's innate desire to educate eventually kicked in, and she realized she was missing an opportunity to dispense valuable information. Now she includes well-designed info cards that walk customers through the soil and pigment and watercolor media so they know what they're using.

It was the same goal of education that birthed Vaughan's first Instagram account about soil science. She shared photos from research labs and courses she taught at the University of Wyoming, and she was amazed to have even a couple of thousand followers. A few years later, she teamed up with another soil science professor named Yamina Pressler to start a soil science education outreach and art organization. The handle they chose was [@fortheloveofsoil](#). When her interest in soil-based watercolors

grew, Vaughan started a new account, appropriately named [@theartofsoil](#).

With over 71,000 followers, it has taken on a life of its own. “I was blown away by its success, how much joy I get out of it, and how much fun it is,” she admits. “I love seeing the community grow and ask interesting questions from their different backgrounds.” The people following the account, including pedologists, geologists, soil scientists, ecologists, artists, gardeners, and makers, vary widely. Vaughan is delighted by this, explaining, “It's fascinating to me that people who are seemingly dissimilar in terms of their professional pursuits are developing relationships through this account.”

At her core, Vaughan is an educator, a leader, and the kind of person whose own excitement and interest in the natural world spills over and fills the cups of others. And she understands how sacred this planet is. “The way we frame ourselves as humans is so important,” she concludes. “Some of us think of ourselves as separate from the natural world, but every single thing we do makes an impact. There's a lot of gloom and doom about the planet, but I prefer to think about actionable items. What can we do to make sure we're doing the best for this planet and future generations? We're all learning. We're all figuring it out. We all want what's best for this world; we just come at it from a different perspective.”

For more info, visit [theartofsoil.com](#) or [@theartofsoil](#) on Instagram

Editor's Note: Permits must be obtained to collect soil on public lands (and permission on private lands).

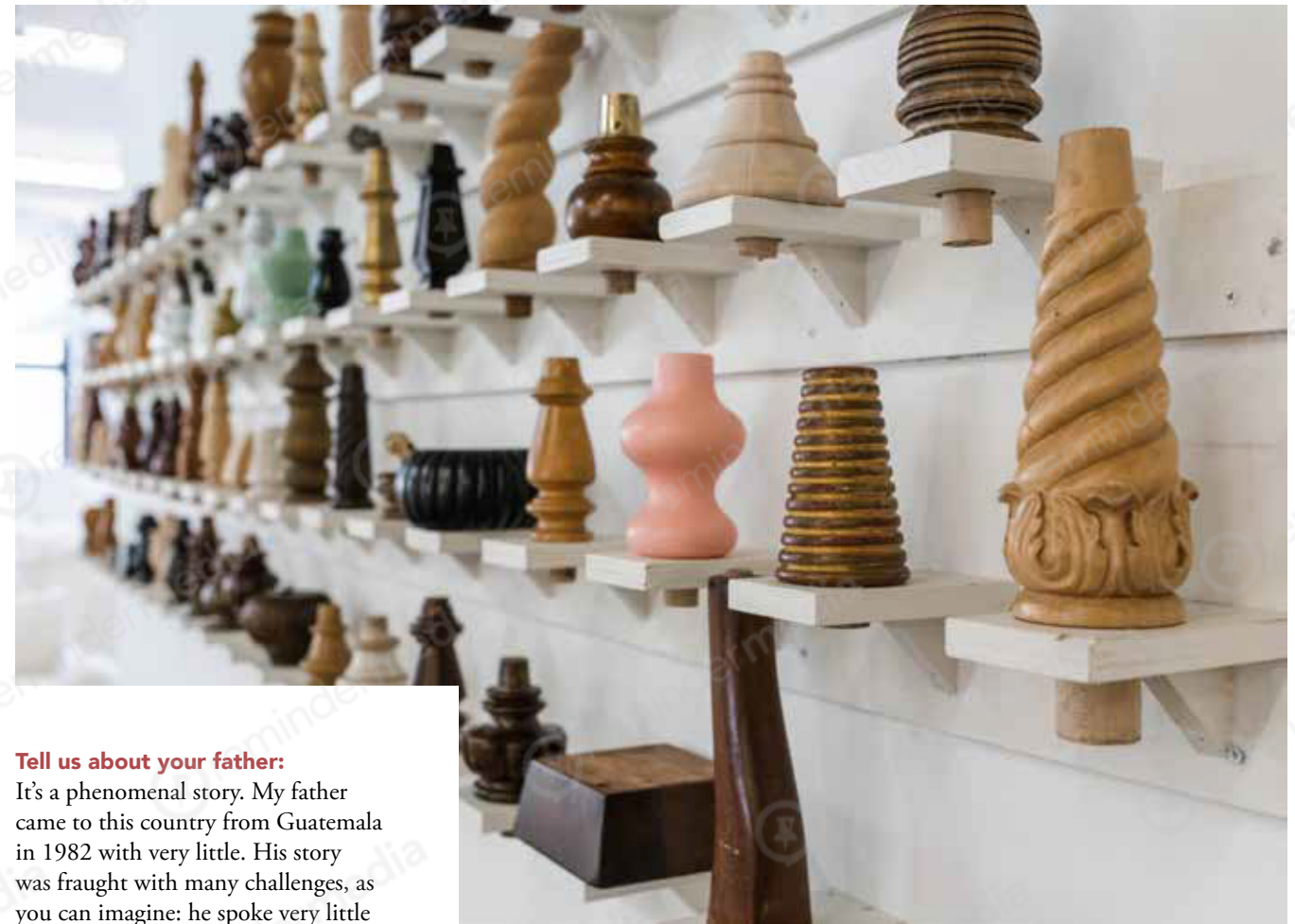




LUTHER QUINTANA JR., OPERATIONS MANAGER AT LUTHER QUINTANA UPHOLSTERY, DISCUSSES THE QUALITY AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL THAT ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH THE COMPANY HIS FATHER FOUNDED THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD

interview with **luther quintana jr.**
written by **matthew brady**
photography by **laura chang quintana**



Tell us about your father:

It's a phenomenal story. My father came to this country from Guatemala in 1982 with very little. His story was fraught with many challenges, as you can imagine: he spoke very little English and had very few resources. Within five years, he decided that he wanted to start his own business. From there, he built one of the most highly regarded upholstery shops in New York City and possibly the country.

What have you learned through the business?

Patience. It's a very intense industry. We make high-end luxury custom furniture for a very demanding clientele, which includes some of the most well-known names in architecture and interior design. I grew up seeing my dad always wake up very early to go to work and come home late. We follow his lead—we work very hard, and we're very passionate about what we do. The best part? Every day I get to

talk about furniture and work with my best friend, my dad.

What inspired you to take this career path?

During my first week of college, the financial collapse of 2008 happened. It was a dark time for the upholstery industry. We had very little staff and very little capital. My father said, "I need your help, and I can't pay." From that moment on, it was a no-brainer—I wanted to grow this business. I finished college because it was a dream of mine and my parents, but I then dove headfirst into our company. Luckily, we did ride out

that storm. It was tough; it took about seven years to fully recover.

Where do you get your materials? How much do you handcraft?

We procure our springs and other materials here or overseas. We get a couple of thousand feet of lumber from Pennsylvania or Massachusetts, cut our frames from them, and then add jute webbing, springs, and burlap. We do the entire frame fabrication and upholstery process ourselves from start to finish.

“We carefully and precisely screw, glue, and bolt everything together—even things underneath that the client will never see.”

Are your clients mostly based in the New York tristate area or across the country?

The tristate area has always been our bread and butter, but because of Instagram and media, we now have clients from coast to coast. Charleston, South Carolina, has been a surprisingly fertile hub of interior designers for us.

What are your most popular styles?

It ebbs and flows, and it depends on the home and the interior designer. Some of our designers are modernists and others East Coast traditionalists, so we gear them toward the school of furniture that fits. If they're modernist, I like to show them something with a square arm and exposed legs, but if they're traditionalist, I'd want to show things with a scrolled back and scrolled arms, like English rolled arms, and maybe an ornate skirt.

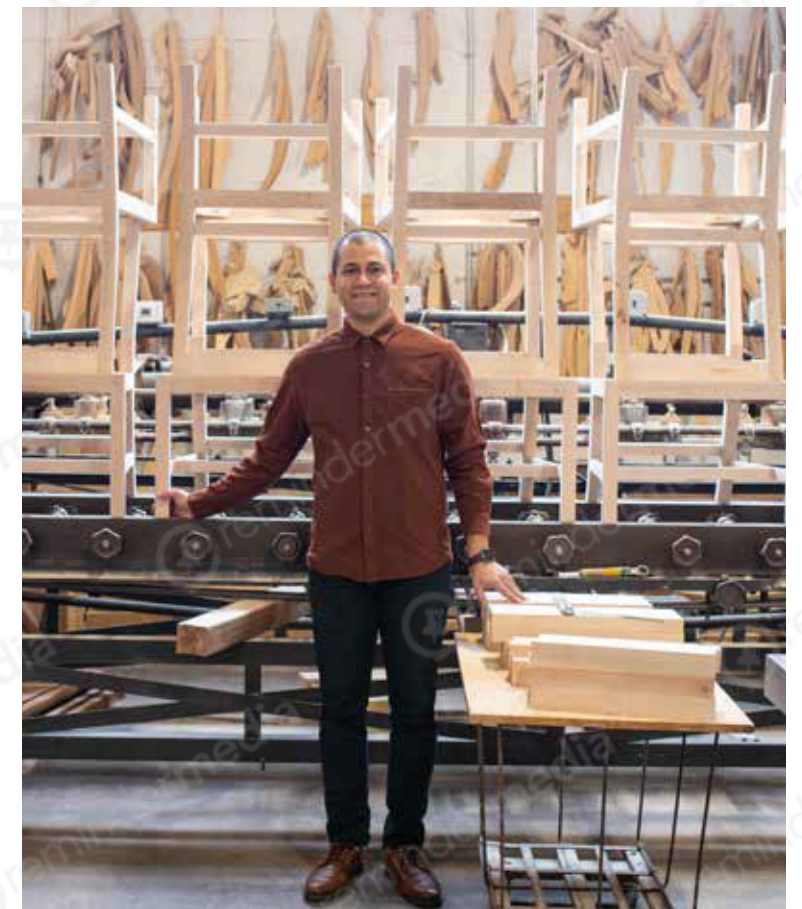
What is your process?

Once I provide a proposal and get a deposit, I usually set up a meeting to discuss every specification. After that initial meeting, it's pretty much

a go. We start cutting frames and laying fabrics, and the client procures trucking. When they place an order, the home is probably halfway built or renovated, so they're not that demanding in terms of time. We can set wait times anywhere from twenty to twenty-four weeks, which fits perfectly for clients because they can budget appropriately.

How do you get new clients?

We don't advertise. Not a single dollar. We do donate some pieces to some of our clients' charitable events, but that's because we love to help. For example, one client, Miles Redd, does *Design on a Dime* every year in New York for homeless shelters. It's a no-brainer for us because he's an amazing client and person, and it's a great way to help contribute to a worthy cause. But, otherwise, we've had thousands of orders, and all our clients are through word of mouth. I'm always very grateful for that.





"WHATEVER OUR CLIENTS ASK, WE MUST DELIVER. PERFECTIONISM, PASSION, AND QUALITY ARE THE FORCES THAT DRIVE US."

What percentage of the business is reupholstery?

Reupholstery accounts for about a quarter to a third of our business. It used to be a lot more, but because of the boom in real estate and new construction for high-end homes, a lot of our business is custom upholstery. That said, one of the coolest, most gratifying parts of my job is when a product we made eight years ago comes back for reupholstery—that means that the client and homeowner have used our product to its maximum and they're ready to have it refreshed and used for another eight to ten years.

How much is upholstery a form of art?

Very much so. Everything we do is custom, so it's very rare when we make the same thing over and over or for an extended time. For example, our upholsterers start with a frame and then make the piece what it is, whether it has a scroll arm or a square arm, scroll back or square back, or a cushion that's Turkish corner, kiss pleat, or box borders. The fabric will vary, too: some fabrics have very large prints and others a tiny repeat pattern. They could be plain, or maybe they have stripes. It's never exactly the same, so it's almost like a commissioned piece of artwork every time we get an order. In fact, it goes beyond art: it's also math and science.

What does the quest for perfection mean to your company?

Nothing can be truly perfect, but we strive for the absolute best custom upholstery any client can get. When you go to a big-box store, the cords and other adornments are out of proportion: they're too big and tend to be sloppy. If the cord isn't crisp and neat, it can throw off the whole piece. So we make sure that even the most minute detail is crisp by

using painstaking, time-consuming techniques such as Greek stitching, where you have to sew the whole edge twice over to give it fine detail. Also, as I mentioned earlier, we carefully and precisely screw, glue, and bolt everything together—even things underneath that the client will never see. We also get hit with every form of style, from modernism to traditional, art deco to Bauhaus, and even postmodern furniture.

We do everything, and we're expected to be good at everything. Whatever our clients ask, we must deliver. Perfectionism, passion, and quality are the forces that drive us.

Does this say a lot about your staff?

Yes. Our staff, especially on the upholstery side, is very versatile. They're amazing because they can handle anything on our clients' checklists. And they love what they do. You can go into some workplaces and see that people just want to clock out, but in our company, everyone's very happy. Every Friday after work, people go out to have a couple of beers and have fun. It's a beautiful thing.

Do you think your dad will ever retire?

No, he will be doing this to his last breath. He still loves being here working every day, even at age sixty-five. I've just been lucky to have had a front-row seat on his incredible journey.

For more info, visit lqupholstery.com

THE MAGIC OF MOONBOWS

written by [matthew brady](#) | photography by [getty images](#)

RAINBOWS ARE A UNIVERSALLY WELCOMED weather-related phenomenon, colorful symbols of joy and hope. But have you ever encountered their nighttime cousin, the moonbow?

Created by the light of the moon being refracted through water droplets in the air, these rarities can be found at places like Corbin, Kentucky's Cumberland Falls State Resort Park (pictured)—one of the few places in the world where they appear regularly—and Yosemite in California. Bring your camera, though, for the full experience; the human eye often sees moonbows as white-gray, but cameras can usually capture their colorful prism.



My Favorite Essentials for Spring Entertaining

A FEW THINGS THAT WILL SPRING YOU UP... "QUIET LUXURY"

Hand Soap

- Peony & Blush Suede Hand Wash - Jo Malone
- Luxury Exfoliating Hand Rinse - Diptyque
- Billie Hand Soap & Lotion Bundle - Harlem Parfum Company

Spring Cookbooks

- *My America* by Kwame Omwuachi
- *Afro Vegan* by Bryant Terry
- *Martha's Entertaining: A Year of Celebrations* by Martha Stewart

Good Eats

- Smokey Sweet BBQ Sauce - SERG DC (DCity Smokehouse)
- Put it On Everything RUB - SERG DC (DCity Smokehouse)
- Truffle Honey - The Truffliest

Good Drink

- Mumm Napa Brut Rose Sparkling Wine
- Sparkling Brut Rose Hawke's Bay NV 750 - McBride Sisters Collection
- Bourbon - Woodford Reserve - (Mint Julip Season)

For the Table

- Pink Vintage Etched Pitcher - Williams & Sonoma
- Pink Waterfall Coupe Glasses, Set of 4 - Anthropologie
- Abi Dessert Plates, Set of 4 - Anthropologie

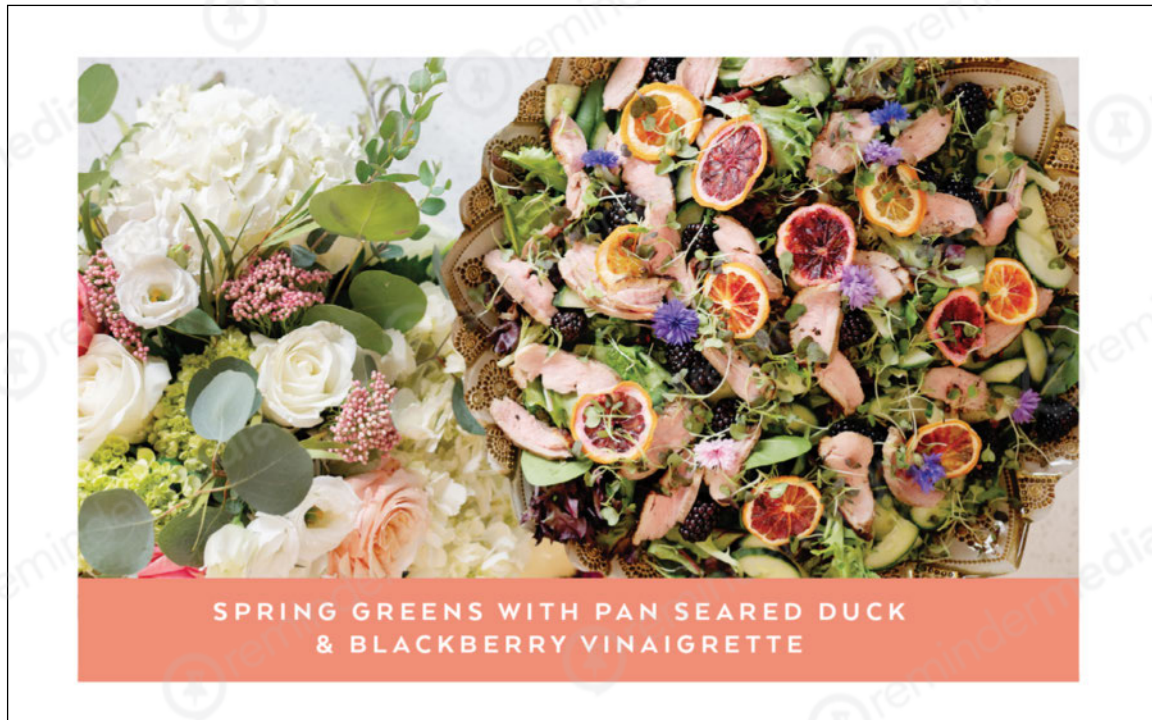
Candles

- Harlem Candle Company "Vintage Garden" Luxury Candle
- Voluspa Blackberry Rose Oud Embossed Jar Candle - Nordstrom

ENERGY FOR SPRING 2023...
"EVERYTHING IS COMING UP ROSES"



Front of Tear Out Card 2



Back of Tear Out Card 2

Spring Greens with pan Seared Duck & Blackberry Vinaigrette

2 -Duck Breast 5(oz) each
1/2 Pound Fresh Salad Greens
1-Pint of Black Berries
1-Blood Orange (dehydrated) you can purchase
from specialty grocery
Edible flowers for garnish
AeroFarms Micro Rainbow Mix Spouts for garnish

FOR THE DRESSING
1 1/4 cup fresh blackberries
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
2 1/2 teaspoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon ground pepper

Add everything except the oil to a small saucepan and place it over low heat. Stirring a bit, cook just to dissolve the sugar and warm the mixture, about 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and use the back of a fork to macerate the blackberries. (! like keeping them partially intact.) Gradually whisk in the oil and blend until it's completely emulsified.

Duck Preparation, Score the skin of the duck breasts and season with salt & pepper. Place duck on a cool non-stick frying pan over a medium heat, duck, skin-side down, and cook for 5 mins or until the skin is crisp. Turn-over and brown the underside for 3- 5 minutes. Let duck rest and then slice thinly. Place Salad greens in serving bowl, sprinkle blackberries, place sliced duck over salad greens. Drizzle vinaigrette and garnish with edible flowers, orange slices & sprouts.

Enjoy!



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