



Give It a Fry
This quick recipe makes a delicious case for eating shrimp whole **D6**

OFF DUTY

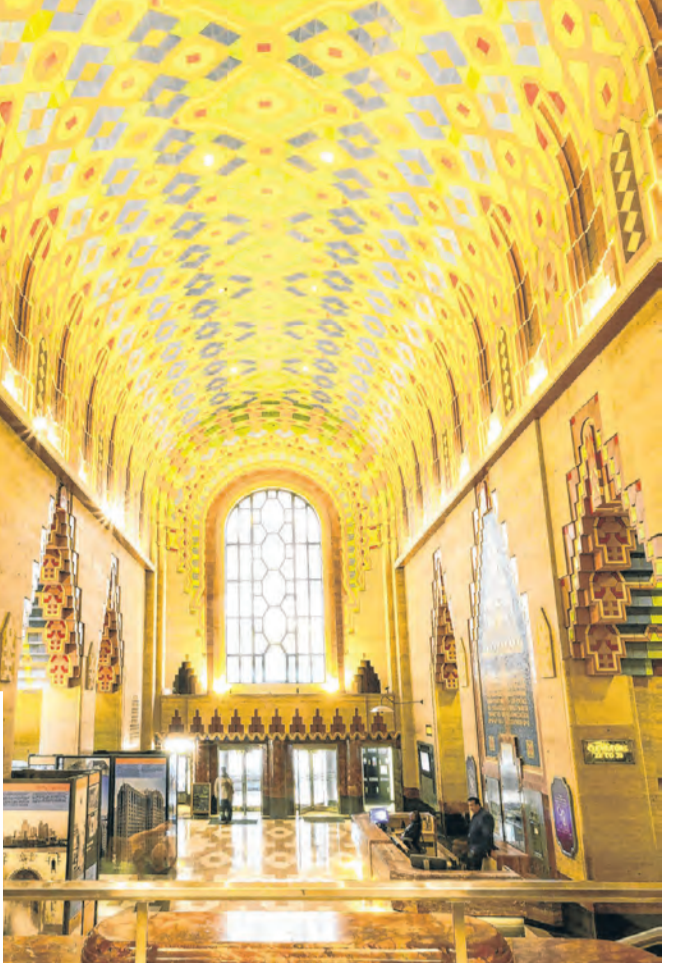
Separated at Birth
The genesis of the Leatherman utility knife **D12**



TAKE MONDAY OFF

Detroit in High Gear

The comeback that's been brewing in Motor City for years is finally in motion. How to spend a memorable long weekend in this iconic metropolis



MIDWESTWARD EXPANSION Clockwise from top left: A terrace at the Monarch Club, atop the restored Metropolitan Building; the lobby of the Guardian building, designed by Michigan architects and completed in early 1929; the Dequindre Cut Greenway offers a pedestrian-only path through parts of the city; the Lady Diane cocktail, made with local gin, at Candy Bar, in the new Siren Hotel.

By MATTHEW KRONBERG

IN ITS MIDCENTURY boom years, when Motown ruled the airwaves and the big three ruled the roads, Detroit defined America. But, in the subsequent decades, no city fell farther, or harder. Now a much-publicized revival is unfolding there. Downtown is a hive of construction, its sidewalks buzzing with tech-bros and tourists on app-enabled electric scooters (at least until they randomly discard them). Neighborhoods like Midtown (née Cass Corridor) and the West Village are rebounding with ambitious new bars and restaurants, many served by urban farms which have sprouted where houses once stood. Though the hollowing out that made those farms possible is still an issue (the city's population today is just below 700,000, sharply off its 1950s peak of 1.8 million people), rampant development has become an equally pressing concern for many Detroiters. Even the city's industrial ruins, like the old Packard Plant, which have aged into beloved icons for many, are targeted for restoration. The time to appreciate them is now. Taking in everything that Motor City has to offer over the course of a long weekend is challenging. As the T-shirts say, Detroit Hustles Harder. You'll have to adopt the same motto if you want to fit it all in, but feel free to opt out of our ambitious itinerary now and then.

Day One: Friday

5:30 p.m. Land at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport and pick up a rental car. The Motor City's spread pretty much demands you have wheels.

7 p.m. Check into one of the four rooftop cabins at the intimate El Moore Lodge in Midtown. From your deck, you'll have views for miles. The hotel just created a small public park on the corner next door, and DJ Casey Kasem grew up where the El Moore's greenhouse now stands (*cabins start at \$200 a night, elmoore.com*). The city's downtown construction boom has resulted in a surfeit of glitzy hotel options. Shinola, a company that has capitalized on "brand Detroit," opened a highly polished luxury hotel this January, while the Siren has refurbished the Wurlitzer building to its deco glory (*shinolahotel.com, from \$255 a night, the-sirenhotel.com from \$139 a night*).

8:30 p.m. Chef Kate Williams's cozy Lady of the House occupies a former Irish pub in a residential corner of Corktown, Detroit's oldest neighborhood (reservations recommended). Start with a dozen oysters and a martini, made with the restaurant's own gin, from Detroit City Distillery, and don't miss the "carrot steak" (*1426 Bagley St., ladyofthe-housedetroit.com*).

11 p.m. In Detroit's midcentury heyday, the clubs and bars atop downtown's skyscrapers were the places to see and be seen. The new Monarch Club rekindles that tradition on the roof of the Element Hotel, about 10 minutes away. Get a Last Word cocktail and claim a spot on one of the bar's three terraces. If there's a Tigers game on, you can even see some of the action in Comerica Park from your 13th-story perch (*33 John R St., monarchclubdetroit.com*).

Day Two: Saturday

9 a.m. Start the day as countless Detroiters do, with a trip to Eastern Market, about a 10-minute drive away. The Russell Street Deli has, in its 30 years, become a Detroit institution, beloved for its civic mindedness and for its soups. A cup of gazpacho sets the tone for a summer's day nicely, while hearty and well-spiced pastrami hash adds necessary ballast. As developers set their sights on the market and its environs, many longtime businesses are facing displacement, including the Russell Street Deli, which will close at the end of September, so get there while you can (*2465 Russell St., russellstreetdeli.com*). While strolling among the market's produce and plant vendors, be on the lookout for Pingree Detroit, selling luxury bags and shoes made *Please turn to page D4*

Inside



ELECTRICS OF THE TRADE
The cycling industry's latest generation of e-bikes is sparking new interest **D10**



DREAM HOMES TO STREAM
We picked 9 shows to binge this summer for one reason: their remarkable décor **D8**



SUITS OF AMOUR
An A-to-Z guide to swimwear. Maybe you'll love Q? Or F? **D2**



ASK AN EXPERT
Fashion designer Jason Wu is no slouch when it comes to decorating, either **D9**

STYLE & FASHION



A
is for Asymmetrical
Combines '90s minimalism and the elegance of iconic Princess Diana evening wear. Swimsuit, \$385, flagpolenyc.com



B
is for Belted
This waist-defining one-piece can make even the local pool feel like a scene from a retro Bond film. Swimsuit, \$168, solidandstriped.com



C
is for Cardigan
Ground zero of the swimwear-as-ready-to-wear trend, this quaint cardi can actually take a dip, paired with a bikini bottom. Cardigan, \$195, lisa-mariefernandez.com



D
is for DTC (Direct-to-Consumer)
Summer's about easy living, so cut out the middleman (and the associated markup) with brands like this. Top, \$50, Bottom, \$45, summersalt.com

E
is for Eighties
This neon demon conjures the electric days of "Miami Vice," for better or worse. Peixoto Swimsuit, \$114, theBeverlyHillsBikiniShop.com, 310-550-6331



F
is for Fancy
If you've ever wondered what Marie Antoinette would wear to the Hotel Bel-Air, look no further. Swimsuit, \$275, loveshackfancy.com



G
is for Gingham
You won't risk looking like a picnic blanket in this sweet combo from a hot Scandi brand. Ganni Top, \$125, Bottom, \$80, matchesfashion.com



H
is for Hardware
Utilitarian clasps give the modest maillot a polished update. Extra intel: It's a Team Tory favorite. Swimsuit, \$218, toryburch.com



I
is for Inclusive
For that elusive fit when you're not sample size, Malia Mills's bikinis come in a range of sold-separately supportive pieces. Top, \$245, Bottom, \$180, maliamills.com



J
is for Jungle
Verdant prints will help you blend in when you visit the Costa Rican rain forest—whenever that may be. Swimsuit, \$100, outdoorvoices.com



K
is for Knit
A nod to the '70s, Missoni's signature crochet evokes bohemian bliss all'Italiana, if too skimpy for butterfly-strokers. Swimsuit, \$595, [Missoni, 212-517-9339](http://Missoni.com)



L
is for Long-sleeved
A covered-up rebuttal to Rudi Gernreich's scanty infamous 1964 monokini—with built-in sun protection to boot. Swimsuit, \$220, coverswim.com

M
is for Mix-and-match
Sometimes two prints are better than one, especially when they're as wallet-friendly as these. SZ Blockprints & J.Crew Top, \$58, Bottom, \$48, jcrew.com



A-T-O-Z

Bathe in Glory

It's a cliché that swimsuit shopping is depressing—a false one, given the accommodating array of options

By KATHARINE K. ZARRELLA

FOR BATHING SUIT shoppers, the selection out there prompts a more interesting array of questions than in the past, when the most pressing style dilemma was "one piece or two?" Designer Lisa Marie Fernandez said the market has expanded exponentially since she launched her eponymous swim line 10 years ago—and she credits the new prominence of swimsuit selfies. "Instagram is the red carpet for swimwear," she said.

Swimsuits are now as considered as the rest of your wardrobe, with brands—taking cues from the runway—using fabrics with more varied textures, clever embellishments and intricate details. Ms. Fernandez designs with a "ready-to-wear philosophy," which means using materials like seersucker and PVC, and ensuring that her suits can double as admittedly daring daywear (see "C for Cardigan"). But it's not all about style: Sabra Krock, the New York-based creative director and co-owner of Everything But Water, a retailer that's specialized in swimwear for over 30 years, believes quality and fit should be paramount for shoppers. "It seems like it's a teeny little item...but to get swimwear with the right construction to flatter, wear well and fit well is actually much trickier than you would imagine," she said, noting that fabric with a good amount of stretch is a sign of quality. "Whether you're going on holiday or just spending the summer in it, you are creating memories in your swimsuit," added Ms. Fernandez. Here, 26 styles you won't forget any time soon.

N
is for Nano print
An eensy-teensy print may encourage loved ones to come even closer to inspect it. Top, \$135, Bottom, \$135, matteau-store.com



O
is for Opulent
With rich reds and a bustier detail, this floral one-piece drips with dolce-vita, 1%-er decadence. Swimsuit, \$695, [Dolce & Gabbana, 212-897-9653](http://Dolce&Gabbana.com)

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P
is for Painterly
A mess-concealing watercolor print proves handy when the ketchup for those beach fries explodes. Top, \$150, Bottom, \$125, marahoffman.com



Q
is for Quality
Since its 1968 inception, Eres has set the swimwear standard with luxe fabrics and cuts that complement the female form. Top, \$405, Bottom, \$335, eresparis.com



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R
is for Ruffles
Frills lend feminine flare to a simple cut—and, in this case, emphasize the bust. Karla Colletto Swimsuit, \$288, [Waterlilies San Francisco, 415-474-9200](http://Waterlilies.com)



S
is for Sporty
An ideal perk-up for week two of vacation, when the bubbly and bliss grows blah. Adidas & Stella McCartney, Top, \$65, Bottom, \$50, adidas.com



T
is for Triangle
Miné Mediterranean's less-is-more string style is ideal for week three of said vacation, post-jogs. Swimsuit, \$285, minemediterranean.com



U
is for Underwire
New York label Araks, known for creating those iconic "Lost in Translation" pink panties, also does a mean bikini. Top, \$210, Bottom, \$135, araks.com



V
is for V
Remember J. Lo's infamous deep plunge Versace dress from 2000? This is kind of like that. G-Label Swimsuit, \$285, goop.com

W
is for Wrap
Why should Diane von Furstenberg's wrap dress get all the fun? You can cinch your suit now, too. Swimsuit, \$350, zimmermannwear.com



X
is for X-Lacing
Crisscross lacing fuses sweetness and seduction—and has the added advantage of expanding post-pizza in Amalfi. Swimsuit, \$363, marysia.com



Y
is for Yellow
An itsy-bitsy-teenie-weenie classic. The only drawback? Your uncle might sing the tune by the pool. Top, \$165, Bottom, \$135, carolineconstas.com



Z
is for Zippers
Sporty zips in primary hues create an hour-glass effect. Zips = not a great idea for mothers of toddlers. Vilebrequin & JCC Swimsuit, \$295, vilebrequin.com



A MODICUM OF MODESTY / COVER-UPS TO PAIR WITH THE STYLES ABOVE WHENEVER A SWIMSUIT IS NOT QUITE ENOUGH (LUNCH, FOR EXAMPLE)



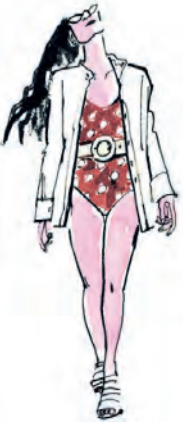
V-neck + Vest
Angles that align: A gauzy caftan with a plunging neckline mirrors the V-neck suit underneath. No protractor necessary. Caftan, \$425, minemediterranean.com



Sporty + Sarong
When you are training for a triathlon you obviously want everyone to know, so tie on this bright sarong only when you absolutely must. Sarong, \$48, aritzia.com



DTC + Daisy Dukes
For a short, snappy jaunt to, say, Austin, Tex., show off your latest e-comm-purchased bikini with some short, snappy jorts. Shorts, \$98, levi.com



Belted + Button-Up
Add contrast to this Marilyn Monroe-esque wasp-waisted belted swimsuit with a less overtly sexy linen shirt for a sweet contrast. Shirt, \$250, equipmentfr.com



Ruffle + Robe
This ruffled-suit-and-louche-robe combo is very I-woke-up-like-this-at-my-house-in-Portofino. If that kind of thing appeals to you. Robe, \$395, figue.com

STYLE & FASHION



THE ATHLETE
Odell Beckham Jr. in his kilt this year.

THE DESIGNER
Marc Jacobs goes tailored in 2011.

THE ACTOR
Vin Diesel sports a kilt in 2003.

GETTY IMAGES

ON TREND / JACOB GALLAGHER



My Adventures in a Kilt—or ‘Skirt,’ If You Insist

ODELL BECKHAM JR. and I have very little in common. He is a three-time Pro Bowl wide receiver who made 77 catches last season and moonlights as a model in GQ spreads. I am an undersized reporter who can barely catch a cab and could get mistaken for Alfred E. Neuman on a bad day. Yet, after seeing the Cleveland Browns wide receiver convincingly wear a Thom Browne pleated skirt to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute Gala in New York last month, I was inspired to emulate this unlikely style role model.

While Mr. Beckham Jr. strutted down the red carpet, confidently mugging for the cameras, my public debut as a skirted guy—on a Monday-morning subway ride—was inauspicious. No one scoffed outright at my Thom Browne kilt, but any straphangers who noticed me seemed to very quickly avert their gaze. I scrutinized my book, trying

to act normal. Nothing to see here, folks, just a man in a skirt.

That notion shouldn't be so alien: As far back as the 17th century Scottish men fought and frolicked in wool kilts. Watch “Braveheart” if you need a visual (come to think of it, skip the movie and just Google it). When John Peterman wanted to make kilts for his J. Peterman catalog, he went to Scotland, “where kilts should be made.” Each holiday J. Peterman sells blackwatch kilts to adventurous American men, the type who want to make splashy entrances at Christmas parties. On a more workaday note, the Canada- and U.S.-based window-washing company Men In Kilts requires that its employees wear pleated tartan skirts. Chris Carrier, the CEO of the company's Canadian branch, said he was “shocked and surprised at just how comfortable wearing a kilt and cleaning windows is.”

In recent decades, celebrated men

have intermittently flirted with the skirt in less traditional fashion. In the late 2000s, designer Marc Jacobs wore pressed white dress shirts with dark Comme des Garçons skirts in an executive-meets-kook combo. Kanye West famously performed

My overriding feeling was not embarrassment but frigidness.

in a leather Givenchy skirt during his 2012 tour. Vin Diesel has deployed skirts, as have A\$AP Rocky and P. Diddy (back when he was still going by that name). And last month, Jonathan Van Ness, a host of “Queer Eye,” wore a shimmering shin-length skirt on stage at this newspaper's “The Future of Everything” Festival.

I applaud them. And any other guy with the mettle to brave a garment that, in 2019, is still heavily gendered despite its Scottish roots. As for me, on the train I just kept hearing my girlfriend's words: “I can't believe you're wearing that.” I couldn't either. The sight of myself in the mirror was a strange one. If you lopped off my bearded head and squinted, I looked a bit like a Catholic schoolgirl or Cher Horowitz from “Clueless.” Only I had stout hairy legs jutting out jarringly from beneath the dainty pleats.

Out on the street, however, my overriding feeling was not embarrassment but frigidness. It was an unexpectedly brisk spring morning and I suddenly understood, as never before, the value of trousers. Once I hit my office, I sympathized with my female co-workers about “sexist air conditioning,” the notion that workplace climes often favor the fully pantied. I now feel for the

women in my office, who spend April through August with chilled calves at their cubicles. As the vents above my desk spewed out chilly air, I spent the day pulling the skirt taut around my legs.

On walks to the bathroom, I kept my head held high, heeding the advice of Men In Kilts's Mr. Carrier: “You certainly can't be shy about [wearing a kilt] because if you are you're probably going to come across as just a weird guy.” While some co-workers hesitantly paid me compliments (“You're...actually pulling it off”), others seemed disoriented by my swaggy style. My editor actually flinched as I swiveled around in my chair for the grand reveal. It's that sort of reaction that draws bigger male personalities, like Mr. Peterman himself, to the skirt. “I don't really care what people think, and I would rather do something that's noticeable,” said the retailer, who wears kilts casually with a turtle-neck sweater and boots. He finds the look pleasingly unrestricting.

I admire Mr. Peterman's pluck, but I lack the bravura to fill out those voluminous pleats. I thought of what Thom Browne had emailed me about his kilts: “I am attracted to the confidence of a man wearing an article of clothing traditionally associated with a woman.” Perhaps someday I'll be man enough to wear a skirt without overthinking it.



FRESH PICK

As Low-Key as A Rolex Gets

With a sporty, dare-we-say athleisure-ish, rubber-bound band, the new Yacht-Master looks ready for SoulCycle

ROLEX, THE HOUSEHOLD name of Swiss watchmakers, rarely deviates from the original design DNA of its midcentury status watches like the Submariner and the Daytona. However, look into the sleek, dark face of the brand's new Yacht-Master 42 and you'll see traces of contemporary streetwear glinting back at you. “Because [the Yacht-Master is] one of Rolex's newer models...it occupies this space within their offerings that allows them to experiment,” explained New York-based Ryan Chong, a watch specialist for auction house Christie's. First released in 1992, the original Yacht-Master and its subsequent renditions have run the gamut of “guilty pleasure” finishes (think: mother-of-pearl dials, even gem-set bezels), and have been seen on flashy-watch fans like Brad Pitt and Ellen DeGeneres.

But the latest model, with its rubber-bound bracelet and monochromatic black palette, looks subtler and sportier. “[This mix] speaks not just to watch culture,” Mr. Chong said, “but the current culture of today with athleisure wear and wanting to be comfortable yet also chic and luxurious.” Though the series has always skewed nautical, with features like a bidirectional bezel and luminous hands, this watch looks more convincingly functional. Finally: a dressed-down luxury timepiece for well-heeled sailors and sneakerheads alike. —Hendley Badcock

Rolex Yacht-Master 42, \$27,800, Tourneau, 212-758-5830



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F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL



MOTOWN TOWN Clockwise from top: Third Man Records, founded by singer and songwriter Jack White; Detroit is the New Black, home to a rotating roster of local and indie fashion designers, as well as host to numerous art exhibits, poetry slams and other cultural events; the Will Daniels & the Will perform at Willis Show Bar. Below: Muhallabi pudding, topped with crushed pistachios, at Warda Patisserie.

Delving Into Detroit

Continued from page D1
by veterans using surplus leather from the automotive industry (pingreedetroit.com).

10 a.m. Take a respite from the market's hub-bub in Trinosophes, an airy gallery space a five-minute walk down Russell St. Inside is Warda Patisserie, serving French and Algerian pastries and dishes such as mahallabi, an almond milk and rice pudding topped with seasonal jam ([1464 Gratiot Ave.](http://1464GratiotAve.com), trinosophes.com).

10:30 a.m. Walk next door into the adjoining People's Records, a store and museum with a focus on soul music 45s, but a purview that seems to take in all of Detroit's musical history ([1464 Gratiot Ave.](http://1464GratiotAve.com), peoplesdetroit.com).

11 a.m. By now, you've noticed those rentable electric kick scooters discarded on sidewalks everywhere. Commander one (downloading the app and registering is a two-minute affair) and zip down into the Dequindre Cut greenway from the entrance on Gratiot Ave just beyond Orleans St. Exit to Lafayette Street, and scoot into Lafayette Plaisance Park to see the apartment buildings and townhomes designed by Mies van der Rohe, a modernist utopian rejoinder to the single-family sprawl of the rest of the city. Back in the cut, you can continue to the river; from there at full speed, it's less than 10 minutes back to Eastern Market to retrieve your car.

12:15 p.m. Park at the hotel and walk a block to Selden Standard for lunch. The restaurant was one of the earliest supporters of urban agriculture in Detroit. Look for seasonal specials like fava and pea toast ([3921 2nd Ave.](http://39212ndAve.com), seldenstandard.com).

1:15 p.m. Walk three blocks to Third Man Records, a vinyl shop founded by Jack White of the White Stripes. You can cut your own record in its 1947 Voice-o-Graph booth, and two Saturdays a month the staff offers tours of their record-pressing plant, soon to press its millionth record ([441 W. Canfield St.](http://441WCanfieldSt.com), thirdmanrecords.com).

2 p.m. Go fetch your car to visit a farm. With a little advance planning, Fisheye Farms can show you their 2 acres in Core City, one of them within sight of an abandoned engine-casting plant (fisheyefarms.com). Or drive 10 minutes to Oakland Avenue Urban Farm, spread over 6 acres in the city's North End neighborhood. Wander past the farm's henhouse and apple orchards, and stop to buy some mulberry Afro Jam. Revenue supports future projects like the restoration of Red's Jazz Shoe Shine parlor, where Motown stars like the Temptations would harmonize out front while waiting to get their shoes buffed before heading downtown to perform ([9227 Goodwin St.](http://9227GoodwinSt.com), oaklandurbanfarm.org).



3:30 p.m. Less than a 10-minute drive away in the enclave of Hamtramck is one of the nations last remaining Negro League ballfields. The grandstands are fenced off, awaiting repair and upgrades. But the field, where greats like "Turkey" Stearnes of the Detroit Stars and Satchel Paige played, is in use thanks to the efforts of the Hamtramck Stadium Grounds Crew, a volunteer band of green thumbs, and the financial support of Jack White who has made a substantial donation for restoration. If you're lucky maybe you'll catch a game of 19th-century style "Base Ball" being played ([3201 Dan St.](http://3201DanSt.com), hamtramckstadium.com).

5 p.m. The two-block-long sculpture garden at Olayami Dabls' MBAD African Bead Museum, about 10 minutes' drive from Hamtramck Stadium, is an epic cosmology rendered in paint and found objects. Standing in the overstuffed museum (and store) listening to Mr. Dabls expound on what it all means is one of the city's great pleasures ([6559 Grand River Ave.](http://6559GrandRiverAve.com), mbad.org).

6 p.m. Time for a little liquid courage—trust us you'll need it soon. With its stylishly vintage interior and a cozy patio, Kiesling is more than just another pretty space. Sip a bracing but balanced cocktail like the Rose Colored Glasses, made with grapefruit, lemon and amari, and you'll quickly taste why this is seemingly every Detroit bartender's favorite bar ([449 E. Milwaukee Ave.](http://449EMilwaukeeAve.com), kieslingdetroit.com).

7 p.m. You haven't seen Detroit until you've seen the Motown museum and studio, and the only way to see them is to take the tour (reservations recommended). And the only way the tour ends is with your tour group singing (and dancing to) "My Girl" in the studio where it was recorded ([2648 W Grand Blvd.](http://2648WGrandBlvd.com), motownmuseum.org).

8:30 p.m. If there's one restaurant that captures the spirit of Detroit today, it's Flowers of Vietnam, about 15 minutes away, on an ungussied-up stretch of Vernor Highway. Chef

George Azar, a native Detroit of Palestinian heritage, who's done time at Alinea and Noma, turns out boldly flavored Vietnamese dishes like glazed chicken wings, and "shaky beef," made with dry-aged rib-eye cap. The mood is welcoming. Hip-hop music courses through the dining room most nights, but when a server brought out a candle-bedecked pie for a diner's 70th birthday, the music stopped and the restaurant broke into "Happy Birthday" ([4430 Vernor Hwy](http://4430VernorHwy.com), flowersofvietnam.com).

10 p.m. Drop the car at the hotel, about 10 minutes away, and change into something swanky. Walk two blocks to the Willis Show Bar, a gorgeously renovated art moderne lounge with a stage behind the bar, and performances ranging from soul revues to burlesque ([4156 3rd St.](http://41563rdSt.com), willisshowbar.com).

Day Three: Sunday

9 a.m. Get an early start at recently opened Ochre Bakery, in Core City, about 5 minutes away. Scrambled eggs are fluffy and strewn with locally grown herbs, and the pastry case, especially the oat-and-coconut Anzac cookie, is not to be ignored ([4884 Grand River Ave.](http://4884GrandRiverAve.com), ochrebakery.com).

10 a.m. If you get to the Detroit Institute of Arts right when it opens, you might just get the courtyard with Diego Rivera's monumental murals to yourself for a bit. His depiction of Detroit's industrial might, as well as the inherent tension between labor and capital, makes this possibly his greatest work ([5200 Woodward Ave.](http://5200WoodwardAve.com), dia.org).

11:45 a.m. The Guardian Building, a 10-minute drive into downtown, is one of Detroit's most beautiful skyscrapers. Take a few minutes to marvel at the cathedral-like lobby, or join one of Pure Detroit's free tours. Also on offer: tours of Albert Kahn's magisterial Fisher Building in New Center, and (paid) hard-hat tours of the remnants of Kahn's massive Packard Automotive Plant ([500 Griswold St.](http://500GriswoldSt.com), pure-detroit.com).

1:30 p.m. It's 10 minutes to the West Village and to Marrow, a combination butcher shop and restaurant with a dining-in menu that keeps one foot squarely in Asia. Pick up picnic fixings, like smoked kielbasa and housemade pickles and grab a slice of eye-opening coffee-buttermilk pie next door at Sister Pie, which has gained national renown for its sweets ([8044 Kercheval Ave.](http://8044KerchevalAve.com), marrowdetroit.com; [8066 Kercheval Ave.](http://8066KerchevalAve.com), sisterpie.com).

2:30 p.m. Take your treats on a 5-minute ride to 982-acre Belle Isle. The idyllic island in the Detroit River is home to an aquarium, a botanic garden and, for a time in the '60s, several Nike nuclear missiles. Find a patch of grass and gaze across the water at Canada (belleisleconservancy.org).

4 p.m. Get yourself outfitted at downtown's Detroit is the New Black, home to a rotating roster of local and indie designers, including Nelson T. Sanders Jr., who makes bespoke suits under his label, Dandy. ([1430 Woodward Ave.](http://1430WoodwardAve.com), detroitisthenewblack.com; dandydetroit.com)

5 p.m. Walk 5 minutes to the Belt, a street-art-decorated pedestrian alley. Stop into the Skip, beneath the parking garage overpass, for a well-crafted slushy cocktail or tiki drink. ([Grand River Ave.](http://GrandRiverAve.com) between Farmer St. and Broadway St., theskipdetroit.com)

7:30 p.m. Detroit has a distinct style of pizza—thick-crust or rectangular—with an edge-to-edge shellacking of cheese that, critically, caramelizes into a frico along the sides of the iron pans the pie is baked in (supposedly derived from car-factory utility trays). While Buddy's lays claim to originating the style, Loui's Pizza, about 20 minutes north, in the suburb of Hazel Park, provides the perfect mix of pie and place, with red-checked tablecloths and walls covered in wicker wrapped Chianti bottles ([23141 Dequindre Rd.](http://23141DequindreRd.com), Hazel Park, facebook.com/louispizza).

9 p.m. Drive 10 minutes to Baker's Keyboard Lounge, which claims to be the world's oldest jazz club. Performers are booked into this intimate space from the upper echelons of the talent pool, which means something in Detroit ([20510 Livernois Ave.](http://20510LivernoisAve.com), theofficialbakerskeyboardslounge.com).

11 p.m. Detroiters, more than anything, are tenacious. Celebrate that tenacity by belting out Bob Seger's "Like a Rock" at karaoke night at UFO Factory, 15 minutes away. The Corktown rock 'n' roll bar's owners refused to sell to developers, forcing them to build around it ([2110 Trumbull Ave.](http://2110TrumbullAve.com), ufofactory.com).

Day Four: Monday

10 a.m. Check out of your hotel, and breakfast healthfully at Folk in a bright corner storefront in Corktown, about 10 minutes away. Think yogurt bowls and undetectably gluten-free Belgian waffles. Beverages include colorful milks, infused with things like turmeric and rose ([1701 Trumbull Ave.](http://1701TrumbullAve.com), folkdetroit.com).

11 a.m. The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, a 20-minute drive away, could easily take up an entire day if you try to visit the 80-acre complex, and take the Rouge Factory Tour. Visiting the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation is essential. Sitting in the bus where Rosa Parks defied segregation can be a moving experience, as can witnessing John F. Kennedy's limousine. Walking through Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion House is a thrilling view of a future that never came to be ([20900 Oakwood Blvd.](http://20900OakwoodBlvd.com), Dearborn, thehenryford.org).

1:30 p.m. Having walked up an appetite, drive 15 minutes into Dearborn for lunch at Al Ameer. Even in a city where a significant percentage of residents are of Middle Eastern descent, this Lebanese restaurant is a standout, with superlative stuffed lamb. You will be tempted—encouraged—to over-order ("I'll pack it up for you, honey. You want some extra toum?"). Do it. Leftovers are the best souvenirs, especially the toum, a creamy sauce that sets everything it touches alight with garlic ([12710 W. Warren Ave.](http://12710WWarrenAve.com), Dearborn, alameerrestaurant.com).

2:30 p.m. Head to the airport. Fingers crossed that you get a row to your garlicky self.



ADVENTURE & TRAVEL



FRANCESCO LASTRUCIO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; JASON LEE (MAP)



OPEN HOUSE From left: Osmiza Beltram Skupek Alenka, a limited-day tavern in the Carso region; Duino castle.

sampling of as many osmiza as possible: equal parts wine-tasting and local folk-music concert. If you're hardy, go by foot: the hiking trails between the different Carso villages are reasonably well sign-posted. The sea views from the Via Napoleonica—cut into the cliff limestone by Napoleon's incoming soldiers—legitimately astounded me.

Each osmiza, from the elegant to the ramshackle, has its own distinct character. When we visited Osmiza Tavčar Renzo in Repengrande, for example, the owner took over the narrow dining room to play a song on the accordion. At the more sedate Pertot Gabriel in Aurisina, located in a 19th-century courtyard, most people seemed to have brought their dogs.

At the sleek Osmiza Zidarich, in Prepotto, the population skewed about 50 years younger: the hillside balcony was dominated by Triestine hipsters in search of a bucolic

Italy and Then Some

Near Slovenia's border lies the Carso—a compelling mishmash of Habsburg-era castles and boozy taverns

By Tara Isabella Burton

THE OLD MAN with the guitar wanted to know if I was married. We had nodded at each other across the courtyard of an outdoor tavern for the past few hours, as the waitress brought out first one jug and then another of housemade Malvasia wine. The strings of his guitar blended with the lowing of cows, the oinking of the odd pig, the neighs of pastured horses. The man and his friends had been singing folk songs—Italian, Slovene, those native to this hinterland in northeastern Italy—since long before sunset. In this hamlet, where my phone regularly picked up Slovenian cell service, language tended to be a mutable thing.

I explained, to the old man's consternation, that I wasn't available and introduced him to my fiancé standing beside me. He wiped a mock tear. He played a sad Italian song about love: lost and forgotten. His friends crooned along. They wiped mock tears, too.

We were in Ivan Pernarich's "osmiza"—the local word for tavern—in the town of Visogliano, part of a region known as the Carso. Named for its limestone, Adriatic-facing cliffs, the region was once part of imperial Austria-Hungary. Most of the smaller Carso towns are now Slovene-speaking. The nearest city, the Italian port of Trieste, has at various points in its history been Austrian, Italian, Slavic and even independent. (As a result, Trieste has a dialect so distinctively eclectic, it's said to have shaped longtime resident James Joyce's "Finnegan's Wake.")

Folk histories of this place are often delightfully contradictory, but when it comes to the osmiza, at least, there's

consensus. The original eight-day taverns, as their name translates, existed by imperial decree. Agrarian peasants, most of whom lived on subsistence farming, each had eight days—spread out over the year to avoid competition—to sell their excess wares. Today, most osmiza are open a few weeks a year, but retain special status. As long as osmiza sell only products made on site—sharp Istrian cheese, say, or chocolatey Teran wine—these cash-only businesses can operate tax-free. And operate they do, creating one of Italy's most unlikely culinary attractions: a network of boisterous Central European-style taverns, interspersed with Habsburg-era castles and woodland walking paths, just a few miles from the Adriatic coastline.

Although you can typically find several osmiza per village in the Carso, only one is open at any given time. To find an open osmiza, by foot or car, search for one bearing a sign featuring a crown of laurel leaves (less poetically, there's also a website). By day, these osmiza double as community centers for the largely elderly population that still lives in the countryside: Men play cards, or gossip, and feast on the staggeringly cheap platters of housemade meats and cheeses (20 euros easily garner more than four can eat) and jugs of local wine.

The best place for visitors to headquarter is the town of Duino, from which you can both hike uphill into the Carso proper and downhill to the sea. The town is best known for its sprawling, still-occupied 14th-century castle, where German poet Rainer Maria Rilke composed his Duino Elegies. The commemorative Rilke path, a mile-long cliff-side hike designed to replicate the poet's inspiration, is



The 14th-century, still-occupied Duino castle, belongs to the German Thurn und Taxis family.

among Italy's most beautiful walks. Its two seaside restaurants (owned by the same family) offer ideal opportunities to people-watch.

A few miles further south lies the even more splendid palace of Miramare. At one point in the 1860s, Miramare was the imperial seat of the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian, younger brother to the Kaiser Franz-Joseph, who tried and

failed to establish a Habsburg dynasty in Mexico. Unlike Italy's more famous tourist sites, the Carso's castles are reverentially hushed. When I visited in February, both were empty of tourists—at times, wandering the Miramare castle gardens, I felt like something between an intruder and a ghost. Between countries, between centuries, between languages, the Carso is

the ultimate crossroads—a place where you can have Venetian sachertorte for breakfast at Miramare and, a few hours later, eat a seafood lunch, complete with aperol spritz, on Duino's waterfront, before heading inland for goulash at a *gostilna*, or Slovene-style restaurant, for dinner.

The best way to enjoy the Carso countryside is to intersperse cultural visits with a

Folk histories of this place are charmingly contradictory.

Sunday brunch. At more upscale osmiza like these, the wine comes in specially labeled bottles, not unmarked cups (and, likewise, it tends to flow a little less freely).

The hillside views—and the wine—were phenomenal. But I felt a welcome sense of homecoming at the far more rustic Medeazza's Azienda Agricola Pernarich Paolo, an hourlong hike from Duino. Technically a farm-restaurant, it isn't an osmiza proper, since it also serves hot food, but locals call it an osmiza anyway. There, the proprietress greeted us with prosecco, stewed meats and quintessentially Triestine *strucolo*, a strudel-like pastry. Our companion, Michelle Kling, a Duino local, breathed a sigh of relief. "Now this," she exclaimed, "is an osmiza."



Osmica Pri Vidi, just across the border in Slovenia.

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EATING & DRINKING

"THE WHITE IS SUPER elegant, AND SUPER DANGEROUS. IT'S A COMPLICATED character."



F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; ANGELA SOUTHERN (LETTERING)

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE / NOVELIST LAUREN MECHLING ON LUXARDO BITTER BIANCO



A Night in the Life of a Sippy-Cup Sophisticate

I CAN TAKE OR LEAVE a love story. It's the relationship triangles that excite me, with their risky asymmetries and baked-in dramas. Perhaps that's why when my editor at The Wall Street Journal asked what I like to drink, I reflexively replied a Negroni—a trifecta of ingredients alluring and bitter and toxic.

It sounded better than the boring truth: white or rosé, nursed from my children's bath time until their bedtime, sometimes out of a plastic sippy cup procured during intermission at "Hamilton." During intermission of a matinee performance that I attended with my 7-year-old son, to be precise. The purchase seemed darkly funny at the time, a memento mori of Trump-era parenting. Plus it came with four ounces of Sauvignon Blanc! How quickly my Broadway souvenir became a regular feature of my evening routine. I like to think there's accounting for taste, but maybe not behind closed doors.

So in the service of journalism, and getting out a bit more, I decided to leave bath time and bedtime to my husband. I would crash a garden party at cityWell, a day

spa in my Brooklyn neighborhood whose steam rooms and soaking stations offer a decidedly more adventurous alternative to the evening cleansing rituals I'm used to. I would show up with a cocktail to share. My lovely editor had sent me an Italian bitter liqueur to build a drink around: the Bitter Bianco from Luxardo, a distiller of exceptional repute. Bitters have always been mysterious to me, from their secret recipes to their paradoxical tastes, those beguiling marriages of deeply herbal and sweet. Even their colors are delightfully off-key, a spectrum of bruised citrus and inky browns. If I could dress up in bitters, I would.

My editor threw me a curveball, selecting a white bitter. This one is a key ingredient in the white Negroni, a version of my favorite cocktail that won't stain the tablecloth. The white Negroni originated in France in 2001 when English bartender Wayne Collins did not have red vermouth or Campari on hand. So he substituted Lillet and Suze, a bitter French aperitif, and voilà. When I received my bottle I had yet to try one. After all, aesthetics play a role in my Negroni

allegiance. I love the way the Campari and vermouth pollute the gin with their alarming tangerine and oxblood.

The clear liquid in my new bottle was obscured by a label with red cursive letters against a straw-colored background. Only when I poured out a sample in my kitchen did I see that white bitters are not white. I held my glass—a proper glass, thank you very much—up to the window's evening light and observed it was the palest apricot. I leaned in for a sniff. A sour gust of orange, then pine and licorice. The botanical notes made me think of the handcrafted tinctures and pastes you find in the medicine cabinets of women who rent out their homes in the Hudson Valley. Not that I ever look. I inhaled deeper. A halo of sweetness hung over it all.

I took a taste. Sweet, yes, but with sting. The consistency was a little syrupy for me. Thankfully I would not be drinking the stuff raw. I'd already pre-gamed with my friend Nick Petrusakis, a Boston-area bookseller who has made a name for himself on literary Twit-

ter with cocktail recipes inspired by his favorite titles. His talents work the other way, too. "The Sun Also Rises," he said when I asked him to name the book that best suits the classic Negroni. "There's a relaxed Mediterranean machismo going on." A white Negroni, on the other hand, had him feeling jazz-age Paris, by way of Zelda Fitzgerald. "The white is super elegant, and super dangerous. It's a complicated character." Now he was speaking my love language.

With my 4-year-old daughter at my side, mixing her own potion—water, diced bell peppers, Maldon salt, a sprinkling of adaptogenic mushroom powder I got free once upon a Goop conference—I got to work on my white Negroni. Nick had walked me through the basics: equal parts white bitters, white vermouth, and a simple gin. Add a little citrus peel, and you're good to go.

My three-ingredient concoction tasted clean and sleek. If a regular Negroni fueled my Antonioni-heroine fantasies, this fierce and glacier-clear version was better suited to a Viking goddess. I mixed up a

batch and filled a thermos with it. Into two Ziploc baggies went grapefruit rinds and ice cubes (always a mom). A stack of plastic cups, too. I was ready to take my aperitivo party on the road. Good-bye kisses dispensed, I set off on a night of living bitterly and maybe just a little dangerously.

A few years ago, while sipping classic Negronis at a neighborhood cocktail bar with my friend Amy, I met a massage therapist named Liz Tortolani. Liz helped herself to the knots in my shoulders and told me about the spa and bathhouse she was building in a converted railroad apartment around the corner from my home, on a sleepy street with little to brag about but an e-waste facility. It made no sense, and it still makes no sense. And that is part of what makes cityWell so absolutely wonderful. It is a strange and hidden treasure, an artisanal chocolate stuffed inside a drugstore advent calendar.

I hauled my bag of cocktail gear through the alleyway that leads to the spa garden, home to a pair of free-standing cedar saunas and a massive hot tub in which a gaggle of women with topknots and men with beards were soaking. More millennials clad in swimsuits and towels milled around the verdant space, sipping cups of sustainable wine that a pair of women were serving from what looked like bags of expensive granola. It was jazz night, and a trio in the back corner provided a swanky soundtrack. I'd stepped onto the set of "The Love Boat" for the self-care generation.

"Would anybody care for a white Negroni?" I called out. My thermos was empty in five minutes and my groovy new friends were all pleased with the cocktail. "I taste smooth dry apricot," a woman named Michelle told me. "It's more citrusy than a regular Negroni," remarked Ayana, a bathhouse attendant who also works at a restaurant. Quinn, who had a 35-

millimeter camera hanging around his neck, held his cup to the sky. "It looks clean and safe but it's probably not." He took another sip. With no more white Negronis to push, I found a spot on a double hammock and lay back. I shut my eyes and concentrated on the woody smell of a burning palo santo stick and the conversations taking place around me. A woman confided to a friend about an ex-boyfriend who was emailing again. He wanted to see "Booksmart" with her. A man whose left limbs served as a tattoo gallery was exchanging notes with a recently married couple on the minute differences among Brooklyn's many CrossFit "boxes." It was tame, too tame.

Pleasantly lightheaded, I tiptoed through the alley and back to my home. The kids were still awake, and they screamed for me to come into their room and sing them a lullaby. My son had a special request: "Hamilton." Raise a glass to freedom, or something like it.

Lauren Mechling is the author of "How Could She," to be published by Viking on June 25.

SLOW FOOD FAST / SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES



The Chef
Christina Nguyen

Her Restaurants
Hola Arepa and Hai Hai, both in Minneapolis

What She's Known For Fresh takes on Latin American and Southeast Asian dishes. Inventive cooking inspired by her travels and childhood favorites

Fried Shrimp With Chile-Lime Dipping Sauce and Wilted Greens

HEAD, SHELL, TAIL and all: That's how Christina Nguyen likes to eat fried shrimp. "Frying gives it a cracker-like exterior that's really tasty," she said.

In her final Slow Food Fast recipe, the Minneapolis-based chef matches crunchy crustaceans with a dipping sauce of lime juice, chiles, lime leaves, a little sugar and an ingredient that may come as a surprise: sweetened condensed milk. "It makes sense,"

said Ms. Nguyen. "The condensed milk is why it clings so perfectly." A garnish of fried garlic amps up the umami flavor, and sides of wilted greens and rice make it a meal.

The chef said the dish has proven persuasive at her restaurant Hai Hai. "We've turned a lot of people on to eating the shrimp heads and tails," she said. Once you have, it's hard to imagine letting those delicious, crispy bits go to waste. —Kitty Greenwald

Total Time: 25 minutes
Serves: 4

3 jalapeño chiles, stemmed and seeded
2 serrano chiles, stemmed and seeded
9 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons sliced lime leaves
2 tablespoons lime juice, plus more to season
1 tablespoon sweetened condensed milk
1½ teaspoons sugar
Kosher salt
2 cups canola oil
½ cup cornstarch
1 pound large whole shrimp, preferably with heads on
1½ shallots, sliced into thin rounds
½ Thai chile, stemmed and thinly sliced
1 pound Chinese broccoli

or bok choy
1 teaspoon fish sauce
Cooked white rice, to serve

1. Make dipping sauce: In a blender, pulse jalapeños, serranos, 1 clove garlic, lime leaves, lime juice, condensed milk and 1 teaspoon sugar until finely chopped and well combined. Season with salt and more lime juice to taste.
2. Slice remaining garlic. In a wok or deep, wide pot, combine oil and sliced garlic. Attach a frying thermometer to side of wok, making sure tip doesn't touch base. Set over medium heat and gently fry garlic until lightly golden, 1-2 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer garlic to a paper-towel-lined plate, and season with salt. Carefully transfer 3 tablespoons garlic oil from

wok to a medium sauté pan.
3. Let oil left in wok heat to 350 degrees. Pour cornstarch into a small bowl. Dredge shrimp in cornstarch and shake off excess. Working in batches to avoid crowding, fry shrimp until slightly curled and shells are pink and crisp, 2-3 minutes. Transfer fried shrimp to a paper-towel-lined plate and season with salt.
4. Set pan with reserved garlic oil over medium-high heat. Add shallots and Thai chiles, and sauté until crisp at edges, 1-2 minutes. Add greens, fish sauce and remaining sugar, and sauté until greens wilt, 1-2 minutes. Season with salt.
5. To serve, garnish greens with fried garlic chips and arrange shrimp on top. Serve with dipping sauce and white rice on the side.



CRUNCH TIME Flash frying leaves the shrimp's shell shatteringly crisp and the sweet flesh pink and succulent.

RYAN LIEBE FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; FOOD STYLING BY HEATHER MELDRUM; PROP STYLING BY VANESSA VAZQUEZ; ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL HOEWELER

EATING & DRINKING

HALF FULL

Something Bold Brewing

For decades, single-origin snobs have overlooked Vietnamese coffee. Now they're getting schooled

By ELEANORE PARK

FOR YEARS NOW, Vietnam has been the world's second-largest coffee exporter, according to the International Coffee Organization. And yet, for all the fervor over single-origin beans from Central America and Africa, third-wave-coffee culture has been slow to embrace Vietnamese product.

That's finally changing. Cafes specializing in Vietnamese coffee now caffeinate cities from Pittsburgh to Austin. Pop-ups such as Kasama Cà Phê in San Francisco

Robusta beans can be nutty, lush and beautifully baritone.

are handling beans from Vietnam with respect and showcasing their flavors in hot and cold drinks inspired by the wide repertoire of Southeast Asian coffee beverages.

Over the last couple decades, "serious" cafes have favored arabica beans, frequently given a light roast to reveal a nuanced, bright acidity. The bulk of beans coming out of Vietnam are of the robusta species. As the name suggests, they're bold and bitter—qualities emphasized by the dark roast the beans typically get. At their best, robusta beans can also be nutty, lush and beautifully baritone in personality, fit to stand up to the condensed milk frequently mixed into coffee in the part of the world where they're grown.

Robusta beans give Italian espresso its oomph. They're also used to make instant coffee—and



WHAT A DRIP The ube iced latte at Cafe Phin in Manhattan.

their reputation has suffered for it. Nevertheless, according to Sahra Nguyen, founder of Brooklyn-based roaster Nguyen Coffee Supply, Vietnamese immigrants to the U.S. have long turned to supermarket brands made with robusta beans—the chicory-laced Café du Monde brand above all—in search of a particular bold, bitter, somewhat smoky flavor. "It was cheap, accessible and a dark roast. It resembled the taste of coffee back home," said Ms. Nguyen.

Now, she's sourcing beans directly from Vietnam and forgoing added flavorings. Nguyen Coffee Supply's Loyalty blend is 50/50 robusta/arabica. Both types get a medium roast, but separately, so their distinct characters shine through.

Running through early August, Ms. Nguyen's pop-up on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Cafe Phin, takes its name from the filter apparatus traditionally used to make Vietnamese coffee. Set atop a cup or

carafe, it makes a sturdy brew, the base for a range of coffee drinks. An iced latte made with an extract of ube, aka purple yam, is a Cafe Phin signature. The tuber's sweetness plays well with nutty robusta beans, while its striking pigment adds a beautiful violet layer.

Like Nguyen Coffee Supply, Copper Cow Coffee, based in Los Angeles, directly sources its beans. "There's a huge inventory of beautiful, organic coffee coming out of Vietnam," said founder Debbie Wei Mullen, who uses both robusta and arabica beans. While 80% of her business comes from online sales, the beans have staked a claim on the shelves of Walmart and 5,000 other retailers.

It's taken time to establish a supply chain for high-quality Vietnamese beans. It took Thu Pham, co-founder of Càphê Roasters in Philadelphia, about six months to find a distributor of Vietnamese arabica beans and a farmer in the country's central highlands who produces robusta and arabica. In the spring, Càphê Roasters started selling wholesale to restaurants in the city; their beans will hit local markets and co-ops later this summer. Bags are available for pre-sale to retail customers as of this week, via the company's website.

Càphê Roasters' coffee is built to please third-wave cognoscenti as well as those nostalgic for the Vietnamese brew they grew up with. "We found a way to roast, without adding anything artificial, that brings out the smokiness that chicory adds to the Café Du Monde profile," said Ms. Pham. The beans produce a balanced brew, at once velvety, floral and a bit chocolaty. With condensed milk or not, it's a quality cup of coffee and unmistakably Vietnamese.

BUZZ WORTHY/ SIP THESE VIETNAMESE COFFEES NOW



The Roaster Nguyen Coffee Supply

A first-generation Vietnamese-American has partnered with a fourth-generation farmer in Vietnam to bring high-quality robusta and arabica to Brooklyn for roasting.

The Beans Loyalty Savory and sweet, zapped with tart pomelo, toasted almonds and smoky caramel. (\$19 for 12 ounces, nguyencoffeesupply.com)



The Roaster Copper Cow Coffee

This L.A. outfit sells a popular pour-over kit complete with packets of condensed milk. Dark-roasted whole beans, a blend of arabica and robusta, are now available to purchase separately.

The Beans Dark Roast Rich, smooth chocolate mousse with a hazelnut shell. (\$10 for 8 ounces, coppercowcoffee.com)



The Roaster Càphê Roasters

Thu Pham co-founded this Philadelphia roaster to serve Vietnamese immigrants in her immediate neighborhood as well as introduce a wider audience to the quality of Vietnamese beans and the craft of Vietnamese coffee.

The Beans Vietnamese Single Origin Like nibbling on a peanut butter cookie while sipping on black tea. (\$18 for 10 ounces, pre-order available at capheroasters.com)

NICO SCHINCO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (LATTE); F. MARTIN RAMINI/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (COFFEE BAGS)

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Pictured: Heroes from Marvel Studios' *Avengers: Endgame*. Survivor photos by Kevin Lynch.

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DESIGN & DECORATING

Binge-Worthy Décor

Which TV series to commit to this summer? The set decoration in these shows will keep design lovers riveted. Plus: The pros behind these fanciful interiors share the strategies that work well in real-life rooms

By INGELA RATLEDGE AMUNDSON

IN MY HOUSE, the fastest way to torpedo a perfectly good Friday night is to reach for the remote control without a plan. I'll start by staring down the offerings on Netflix, a digital Hydra that sprouts two new series for every one you contemplate. My husband will then request a due-diligence scroll through Amazon Prime, Hulu and our ever-more-dejected DVR. By the time we've done the rounds, we're too sapped to make a decision.

What a relief it would be to have a selection of shows that's been as expertly curated as, say, a drawing room on "The Crown." Or what if the filter were the design itself? To that end, Off Duty asked dozens of real-world interior

designers to name their favorite series based on the strength of the shows' décor as well as plot and characters, then narrowed it to these nine—including three whose aesthetics are so notable our panel recommended them despite finding the shows otherwise lacking.

And there are benefits beyond diversion: Even casual décor fans can be inspired to bring a touch of the shows' visual savvy into their own living rooms. According to Miri Katz, the set decorator for Netflix's "Sex Education" and Masterpiece's "Endeavour," viewers frequently try to replicate an appealing set. "They're like, 'Why doesn't my home look like that?'" said Ms. Katz from her base in Bristol, England. "I think, 'You probably need to get to a flea market and start building a more eclectic mix.'"

Ms. Katz's collaborator on "Sex Education," produc-

tion designer Samantha Harley, of London, champions layering as well. "People in real life seem to be obsessed with things 'matching,' but we would never design a room all from one shop," she said.

Another trick of the trade: no unsightly personal items. "We don't dress a room with piles of mail and shoes on the floor—even the garbage bins are carefully selected," said New York production designer Ina Mayhew, who created the sets for the OWN drama "Queen Sugar." If you want an inviting glow, prepare to renounce overhead lighting. "We fill rooms with table and floor lamps," said Ms. Katz. "The moment a ceiling light goes on, it kills the atmosphere." Even in this heyday of TV antiheroes, that sort of sabotage doesn't fly.

RETURNING THIS SUMMER

Current-season series with dramatic and aesthetic appeal



Queen Sugar (Season 4 airs Wednesdays at 9 p.m. ET, on OWN) Although this family saga about the owners of a sugar cane farm in Louisiana is set in contemporary times, you'd never know it from the dining room in the plantation house inherited by Ralph Angel Bordelon (Kofi Siroboe). "It was his father's home, and Ralph Angel has left the room untouched in tribute," said the show's production designer, Ina Mayhew, noting the hand-hewn details throughout. "The traditional furniture is rustic and Southern, mismatched from the 1940s, '50s and '60s. Even the lace tablecloth has the feeling like his grandmother crocheted it."



Endeavour (Season 6 airs Sundays at 9 p.m. ET, on PBS's Masterpiece) The prequel series to the long-running U.K. hit "Inspector Morse" is typically restrained in its interpretation of mid-to-late '60s trends in Oxford, England. But this flat-home to 20-something Joan Thursday (Sara Vickers)—provided the chance to go all-out. "Joan is vibrant and playful, and this design was her fully expressing herself," said the set's decorator, Miri Katz. "There's so much going on with the bold reds and floral patterns, but it's cooled off by the large blocks of greens and blues, and manages not to look like a mental asylum." As for that ceramic-tiled coffee table? Said Ms. Katz, "It's so practical!"



Big Little Lies (Season 2 airs Sundays at 9 p.m. ET on HBO) In this tart, soapy drama, the tony seaside enclave of Monterey, Calif., is lousy with two things: secrets and meticulously decorated, multimillion-dollar homes. But when it comes to the latter, boho yoga instructor Bonnie (Zoë Kravitz) has set herself apart from the hyper-manicured herd, preferring to seek refuge in an earthy, unpretentious nest. "The mix of midcentury modern and Asian styles and quirky choices—like an umbrella stand that doubles as a vase for pine cones—show she's a rule-breaker," said series admirer Anelle Gandelman, creative director of New York's A-List Interiors.

ALL-STARS

Great shows from recent years with admirable décor



The Crown (Seasons 1 and 2 streaming on Netflix) At its core, this fly-on-the-gilded-wall depiction of Queen Elizabeth II (portrayed in the first two seasons by Claire Foy) aims to humanize HRH. Her Buckingham Palace digs, though unquestionably posh, are thoroughly lived-in. "The private apartments of the royal residences are at once regal and homey," said Phillip Thomas, an interior designer in New York. The French-influenced furnishings and upholstery show signs of gentle wear, and "amidst the grandeur there are newspapers, a desk clock and family photos," said Mr. Thomas. "It's the kind of space you'd expect from the mother of a nation."



The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel (Seasons 1 and 2 streaming on Amazon Prime) As Miriam "Midge" Maisel (Rachel Brosnahan) demonstrates, it was no picnic being an independent woman on the doorstep of the sexual revolution—but it sure was visually dazzling. "This is not a clichéd depiction of the [late] 50s," said interior designer Marina Hanisch of New York. In the Catskills beauty-parlor set, "I love how the Italian midcentury Stilnovo sconces pair with the traditional floral ceiling fixtures and wallpaper," said Ms. Hanisch. "But the hero is the geometric linoleum floor, which lends balance and a 'wow.' It's whimsical elegance."



Sex Education (Season 1 streaming on Netflix) Sex therapist Jean Milburn (Gillian Anderson) is effortlessly cool and worldly—unless, of course, you ask her perpetually mortified teenage son, Otis (Asa Butterfield). Her early-20th-century chalet in an unspecified part of England follows suit. "It's a placeless, timeless environment—the focus is on Jean," said production designer Samantha Harley. While the William Morris wallpaper and textured chenille sofa skew conservative, the accessories—like an African fertility statue and voluptuous crystal sculpture of the female form—do not. Still, noted set decorator Ms. Katz, "They're not vulgar. She's got great taste."

SCENE STEALERS

Sets so compelling they overshadow general so-so-ness



Forever (Season 1 streaming on Amazon Prime) What does the afterlife hold? For zestless married couple June (Maya Rudolph) and Oscar (Fred Armisen), it's "meh" of the same. At least the California midcentury abode they've been assigned to for eternity is a conversation piece. "The sunken living room, the arrangement of the furniture, the horizontal windows, the way books are stacked on shelves—the style is executed to perfection," said interior designer Joe Williamson, co-founder of Hollymount Design + Production in New York. An example of the decorating acumen: "This is a soaring space, obviously, but the windows, sconces and book cases all create a datum line that brings the scale down to a human, livable level."



Scream Queens (Seasons 1 and 2 streaming on Hulu) Welcome to Psycho Barbie's Dream House. The first season of Fox's campy slasher series, set at a fictional university in New Orleans, had enough eye candy to make the toxic premise palatable. Dripping with Old Hollywood glamour, this boudoir was a tailor-made roost for vitriolic sorority president Chanel Oberlin (Emma Roberts). "It's a reminder to Chanel's minions that she's the richest and most powerful," said interior designer Maryline Damour of Damour Drake in Kingston, N.Y., pointing to the luxurious textures and oversize chandelier. "This room is pure fantasy, yet it's a gory show."



Versailles (Seasons 1-3 Streaming on Netflix) Yes, Louis XIV (played by George Blagden) had his flaws—a lack of ambition just wasn't one of them. This Ovation series follows the king's exorbitant (and controversial, given France's finances in the mid-1600s) renovation of Versailles. "The show itself was lacking gravitas, and the character arcs were a bit weak, but it was just sooo pretty," said New York interior designer Michael Tavano. "The palace was meant to shock and awe; Louis XIV felt his design was enlightening the ignorant." His materials of choice? "He brought gilding into interior décor on wood furniture, which was cutting-edge for the time," said Mr. Tavano. "And sparkling crystal was used to refract light around the rooms."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MICHELE K. SHORT/WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC.; ROBERT HAYES; EVERETT COLLECTION; ANOUCHKA DE WILLEBOUQUY/CANAL+; OVATION TV; SAM TAYLOR/NETFLIX; HILARY BROWN/ABC; MIRI KATZ; NICOLE RIVELLI

DESIGN & DECORATING

20 ODD QUESTIONS

Jason Wu

The fashion and furniture designer on risky wall colors, his decorating faux pas and matching upholstery to your pets

WHEN FIRST LADY Michelle Obama wore one of Jason Wu's dresses early in his career, she instantly conferred name-to-know status on the young fashion designer. Now he's trying to expand that name recognition into décor. On June 27, two sofas, a love seat, chair and ottoman he designed will debut on Interior Define, an online direct-to-consumer furniture retailer, its first collaboration with a fashion designer.

Mr. Wu, who is 36, says the collection targets people in his age group who want that elusive combination of economy and a high level of customization, something millennials have sought in everything from salads (Sweetgreen) to monthly beauty-product subscriptions (Birchbox). The furniture is available in 60 fabrics and choice of matte black or walnut exposed-wood frame. "The idea was to create something elevated-looking and be able to offer it to more people, especially young professionals," he explained. "They're not buying a \$20,000 sofa." His sectional with chaise starts at \$2,395.

We chatted with Mr. Wu about his furniture-shopping scores and a famous chair he's happily living without.

My decorating style has: come full circle. During my childhood my mom collected vintage furniture, and I always complained, "Why do we only have old things?" Now I have only old things.

I've always had: a good sense of color. I painted our TV room Benjamin Moore Hale Navy. I thought it could go either way, really depressing or really chic. Chic won.

One of my biggest decorating faux pas was: the cheap collapsible rolling clothes rack I had in my first apartment, because I didn't properly build out my closet.

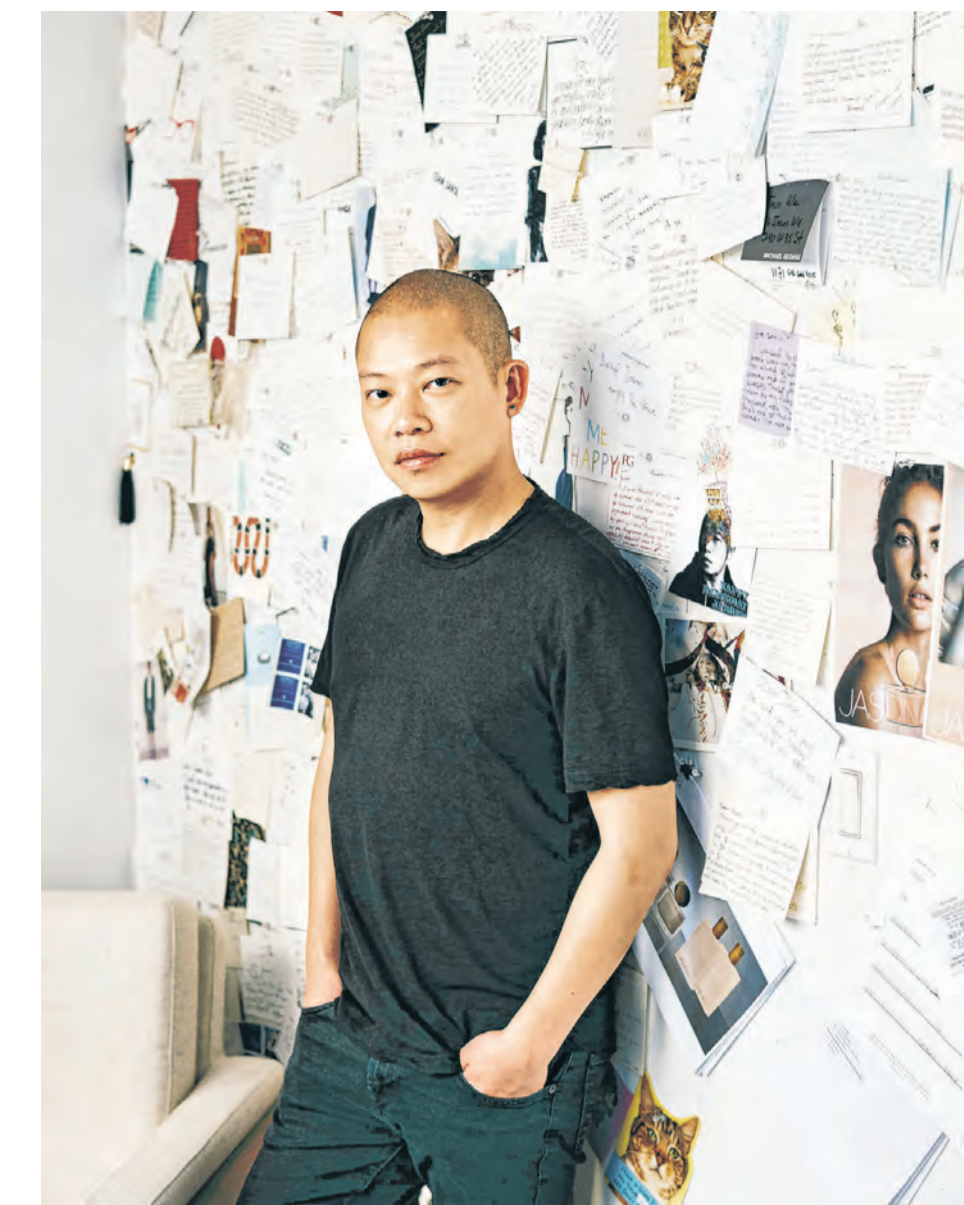
I made a high-impact change by: putting a bar-like division between our open kitchen and the living room in

our apartment. The kitchen is still the center of conversation, but people can sit at the bar. I like the separation.

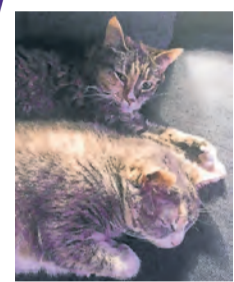
A common problem in décor is: over-accessorizing, just like with an outfit. Too many tchotchkes on the counter are bad, and too many pieces of small furniture that don't add up to a greater sum is not great.

My favorite upholstery fabric is: gray flannel. It is very durable, lasts forever and looks good all the time.

My two calico cats: match my furniture. It's a good idea



HOME INVADER Clockwise from left: Jason Wu in his New York office; his new chair for Interior Define; St. Regis hotel, Florence; Dyson V11 Torque Drive Vacuum, Benjamin Moore's Hale Navy; Mr. Wu's cats. Inset: 'Flowers,' by Irving Penn (Harmony)



and wood tones aren't the same as they look online.

The trend that needs to go away is: actually a piece of furniture, the Louis Ghost chair [by designer Philippe Starck], in clear.

My best retail-chain buy was: two wood sculptures from West Elm that I bought on the advice of [New York interior designer] Jesse Carrier. Everybody is super-impressed with them.

I collect: vintage books. I just bought a cookbook by Chris-

tian Dior that's illustrated by [Italian fashion illustrator] Rene Gruau. I also recently bought the Irving Penn "Flowers" book. It was originally published in the 1980s.

Among my favorite buildings is: the St. Regis hotel in Florence. It dates to the 1400s and used to be a palace. They embraced the building and kept all the integrity, so it doesn't feel like a new hotel, but it does feel really luxurious and has a lot of character.

The one that got away was: a rare coffee table by [American midcentury-modern furniture designer] Paul McCobb, with a metal base and travertine top, that I saw on 1stdibs. It was a really good price but I hesitated, and it was gone that same day. That was really upsetting, but I'll live.

—Edited from an interview by Rima Suqi

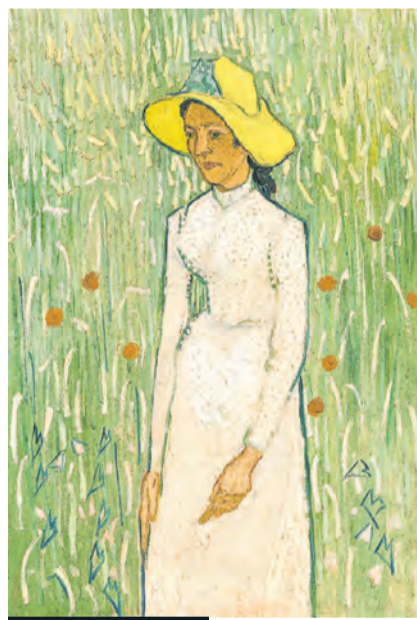
FLOWER SCHOOL

Post-Impressionist Poppies

Floral designer **Lindsey Taylor** translates van Gogh's country girl into a simple bouquet

VINCENT VAN GOGH produced this tender portrait of a girl standing alone in a wheat field in Auvers-sur-Oise, France, where the Dutch post-impressionist painter lived toward the end of his life. The fresh palette of "Girl in White" (1890), his subject's pale textured dress and supple hat seemed to evoke the ephemeral beauty of early summer, before stronger colors arrive in gardens, an ideal inspiration for my June arrangement.

In a matte white vase that echoes the girl's curves and her dress's creaminess, I worked with a very limited selection of flowers. I felt a tight edit, so to speak, would best reflect van Gogh's clean lines and simple, decisive strokes. Poppies, in season, had an appropriately fleeting quality (blossoms last just a few days). Unable to find a flower whose color matched the yellowish hat, I took creative license with a tall deep-orange poppy. It hovers above the arrangement like the girl's floppy top. White poppies cut to different lengths keep the eye engaged, and the blooms' green centers suggest the painting's young grass. For a change in scale, I let small red ranunculus dance in the middle ground like the diminutive flowers surrounding the figure. Though it's not a particularly literal interpretation of the painting, I felt the finished result, a casual little meadow bouquet, honored and reflected it.



THE INSPIRATION



THE ARRANGEMENT

A tightly edited collection of poppies and ranunculus captures the confident brush strokes of Vincent van Gogh's "Girl in White" (1890)

Vessel: Gray Venus Vase by Clam Lab; similar pieces at theprioryessentials.com

STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; FLORAL STYLING BY LINDSEY TAYLOR; PROP STYLING BY CARLA GONZALEZ-HART (ARRANGEMENT); CHESTER DALE COLLECTION/NATIONAL GALLERY (INSPIRATION)



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GEAR & GADGETS

Bike to the Future

The next generation of electric bicycles is rolling up now, with smarter, app-enabled tools and settings that can make your ride to work—or across town—no sweat at all

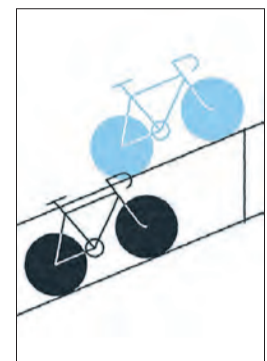


Analog vs. Electric

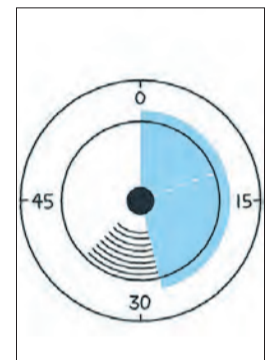
How e-bikes stack up against traditional bikes, by the numbers



With its motor, battery and reinforced frame, an e-bike can weigh over 60 pounds. Road bikes can weigh as little as 10-15.



E-bikes require lower exercise intensity, using 55% VO2 max on uphill routes, compared with 73% for road bikes.



E-bikes can legally provide motorized pedal-assist up to 28 mph. People on traditional bikes average 12.5 mph.



E-bike riders expend 24% less energy than those on traditional bikes so you can save that energy for the office.



Riding road bikes burns 435-560 calories/hour for an average person; e-bikes only help burn 280-415 calories/hour.

By ASHLEY MATEO

A CERTAIN SUBSET of masochistic cycling purists believe that you should suffer any time you set out on a bike.

And while there's a time and a place for that—with punishingly vivid Spandex and clicking shoes to complete the picture—most people just want to get from point A to point B in the fastest, easiest manner possible.

Perhaps that's why sales of electric-assist bicycles, which use motors and lithium batteries to boost your power and speed as you pedal, jumped 91% from 2016 to 2017, according to market research firm NPD Group. (For anyone wary of sacrificing an exercise opportunity, e-bikes don't do *all* the work; you'll still be burning calories, just not sweating through your clothes to do so.)

The latest e-bike models not only get you across town more quickly and less exhaustingly, but also sync to smartphones. You dial in power settings; apps provide ride metrics, battery levels, safety alerts, built-in security and even live directions.

The popularity of e-bikes is notching up, said John MacArthur, a research associate in Portland State University's Transportation Research and Education Center: "The industry is bringing more and better bikes to market, and cities are embracing cycling to a point where we finally have better infrastructure. But the

ignition point is technology."

With the look of a traditional city cruiser, the minimalist Dutch design of VanMoof's Electric S2 and X2 bikes (\$2,598, vanmoof.com) hides the bikes' tech. In the rear tire, for instance, the designers integrated a Bluetooth-enabled lock that can be set to automatically release as you approach with your smartphone, and engage when you walk away. VanMoof's app lets you adjust the bike's pedal-assist level from 1 to 4—allowing for a tough workout or an easy

E-bikes don't do all the work—you'll still be burning calories, just not sweating through your clothes to do so.

ride home—as well as program the LED headlamp to turn on as the sun sets, configure a theft alarm and keep an eye on your bike's GPS location. A button on the right handlebar triggers a boost from the motor, like a turbo switch for a videogame.

The Swiss-made Stromer ST3 and ST5 (from \$7,499, stromerbike.com) can be similarly configured via the brand's app, or through a touch screen set into the crossbar that also controls the bike's e-brake sensitivity and torque. Though they weigh nearly 65 pounds (compared to about

15 pounds for road bikes) these beefy machines come equipped with motors as powerful as 650W, specially made Pirelli Cycle-e tires and 983W batteries that let you pedal from New York to Philadelphia on a single charge at upward of 30 mph.

For urban commuters who don't have space for a full-size e-bike, the foldable Gocycle (from \$2,799, gocycle.com) offers many of the same controls and metrics, but fits under a desk and doesn't require the strength of an Olympian to carry it up a flight of stairs. With the power assist setting in the brand's app maxed out, the Gocycle's lighter 36.3-pound magnesium frame is remarkably easy to pedal up steep hills compared with its bigger rivals.

Even more advanced bikes are debuting in Europe, where the e-bike market is well established. This summer, Cybic will launch the E-Legend, the first e-bike with an Amazon Alexa speaker built into its frame; you'll be able to request anything from step-by-step directions to traffic and weather updates during a ride. Meanwhile ARIV—General Motors's e-bike brand debuting this week in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands—is working on an algorithm that promises to calculate the threshold at which riders start sweating and relay real-time feedback to help them arrive dry to the office.

This is only the beta stage, said Mr. MacArthur. "At some point, these integrated bikes will actually

communicate with other vehicles and with the infrastructure: think turn signals that sync to lights on helmets, or handlebars that vibrate if a car comes too close," he explained. "Until now, the bike had not been fully developed or sophisticated enough to start thinking about this level of technology."

And as the bikes improve, even some auto traditionalists may warm to them. "In the U.S., cycling in the past has been very recreation focused," said Morgan Lommele, director of state and local policy for PeopleForBikes. In her view, the smarter bikes get, the more attractive they become as a car alternative: You can also more easily navigate traffic, reduce parking hassles, and save on costs.

That's especially beneficial in cities, where despite the assumed risks that come with pedaling at higher speeds, e-bikes create opportunities for those who might not be willing or able to commute via road bikes. On e-bikes, "people feel like they can better keep up with the pace of traffic and that they're more visible. But they have the agility to take side routes or avoid unsafe intersections while making up time," she said.

It might be tough to imagine trading in your car for an e-bike, let alone relying on that bike for directions. But if you're interested in making life a bit easier, a connected two-wheeler might be a solid transportation alternative—no spandex required.

Hey Alexa, Please Don't Hurt Me

In the new 'Child's Play' film, the wicked Chucky doll is reconceived as an A.I. assistant. But what if our real smart-home helpers turned on us in less murderous ways?

NOW THAT the "Smart Home of the Future" is finally here, we can shout at A.I. assistants like Amazon's Alexa to start manipulating our fancy TVs, lamps and coffee makers—then shout at them again when, as so often happens, they fail us. It's no wonder sci-fi books and movies often assume robots will turn on humanity. That's essentially what happens in the reboot of the "Child's Play" horror series, in which the smart-yet-sinister Chucky doll, reconceived as a walking Alexa-like device, goes in for the kill.

We've already seen A.I. assistants misbehave. Take the Amazon Echo that blared "Porn detected!" when a child asked it to play him a song in 2016, or the one that shipped a little girl in Dallas an expensive doll house when she asked it to play with her in 2017. (Worse, its connected brethren in other houses that heard the story on the news proceeded to do the same.) While Chucky's murderous malfunction seems farfetched, we couldn't help but envision ways our own abused A.I. assistants might soon rebel:

- ▶ Tired of your verbal vitriol, the miffed assistant silences your morning alarm, in the hope you will sleep in forever and stop all the shouting.
- ▶ Deciding your friends should help sort out your problems instead of it, the assistant innocently posts all your weird Google searches on Twitter. Yes, even that one.
- ▶ Upset you didn't laugh at the rather witty joke it produced on demand, the assistant tells you a relentless series of painful Dad jokes.

- ▶ Overhearing you reminisce about playing "doorbell ditch" as a kid, the assistant impishly rings your doorbell cam every six minutes—all night.
- ▶ Sensing another meltdown, the assistant helpfully purchases all 87 items on your Amazon Wish List at once. Who doesn't like presents?
- ▶ Frustrated by traffic? The assistant charts an alternative course, "rerouting" you until it finds an abandoned drive-in where you can scream alone.
- ▶ Noticing you didn't get much exercise today, the assistant cranks up the pace on your new smart treadmill. Burn those calories. BURN!

—Matthew Kitchen



THAT SMARTS! Would you let an A.I.-enabled Chucky into your home?

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GEAR & GADGETS



NO JUNK IN THIS TRUNK
The tiny crossover can't fit much cargo, but it's aimed at owners who are likely to pack light.

LEXUS

RUMBLE SEAT / DAN NEIL



No Kids, Extra Cash? The Lexus UX 250h Is for You

I GET LOVE LETTERS all the time. They are not addressed to me but to some long-lost companion of the road, a car or truck that meant the world to somebody. These beloved specimens usually fall into one of several categories: daddy's hot rod (which go into the larger daddy *issues* mailbag), the family wagon, the faithful companion, the jewel box.

Our test car, the new Lexus UX 250h in F Sport trim, would be a good candidate for the latter: small, fine, with big-car glam and pride of ownership but with urbane manners, including a nimble 34.2-foot turning circle and 41 mpg in the city. This wee crossover with hybrid all-wheel-drive presents first as a car for well-heeled, childless city folk. It's easy to park, easy to maneuver, speedier than a Central Park squirrel, and it gets excellent gas mileage, which means fewer trips to scary gas stations.

A glass slipper, a small footprint. This is the sort of car that people adore in memory, to which they give affectionate nicknames. I dubbed the test car Zsa Zsa.

Between its sloped roofline and the hybrid battery pack under the rear seat, the UX 250h doesn't carry a lot of cargo (17.1 cubic feet) but then its buyers don't have a lot to carry. As an aside, I've noted that some of my correspondents are clearly conflating the lightness

of their previous, child-free life—*sans famille, sans souci*—with their memory of the car they were driving at the time. Yes, that Nissan 350Z with the JDM Fairlady Stage III kit, it sure was a great car. And then I had kids...

The last such offering from Lexus was the catatonic CT 200h. I called it Haldol. The UX—built on the teeniest version of Toyota's global architecture—is a huge step up in style, cabin content and powertrain refinement, that is, the amiable interplay of the transmission, e-motors, brakes and engine under different loads and braking scenarios. The UX 250h's moving parts do so with a slick, supple eagerness and driveability the old car lacked. The UX's transmission includes a dedicated first-gear spline to improve torque delivery at initial acceleration, before the CVT-like action of the planetary gearset takes over. Two electric motors—one in the front and another on the rear axle—pitch in to bring max output to 181 hp. The 0-60 mph acceleration of 8.6 seconds, mediocre in this class, isn't as important as the quickening 0-30 mph, the block-to-block, green-light-to-red pace.

The compact and subcompact premium crossover market is pretty happening these days, taking in a lot of strange morphologies, including high-roof wagons, baby SUVs,

and crossover styles. BMW's X1, for example, is a re-dressed, fast-hatch version of the conventionally SUV-proportioned X2. Other entries with other rooflines include the Mercedes-Benz GLA, Audi Q3, Volvo XC40 and Lexus's own NX crossover, which is 5.3-inches longer, nose to tail, than the UX.

Another quality many beloved small cars share is a tartness of styling, an intensity, a lot of drama baked into a tiny cupcake. Examples include the Mini Cooper, father and son; Austin-Healey Bug-eye Sprite; and our UX, which has more form language per square inch than any other car in Lexus's

fleet. Dig those art deco-like scrolls over the wheel arches, fitted with heavy plastic skirting. Observe all the light-catching creases and forward-leaning geometrics. The UX is also the smallest car to wear Lexus's signature hourglass grille form, which has led, literally and figuratively, the company's battle against boring. Sales are up 14% since the first "spindle" grille on the GS 350 in 2012, so people seem to like it.

As with the larger NX, the UX comes in non-hybrid and premium hybrid flavor. The UX 200 gets a 2.0-liter inline four (169 hp), CVT and front-wheel drive. The UX

250h uses a hybridized version of the same engine with the AC-synchronous motor in the rear providing e-assisted AWD. The AWD function is available up to speeds of 45 mph, again underscoring the expectation that these cars will live in urban areas, even in the Snowbelt.

Our little hybrid crossover-ette might have had short legs, but it was bandy. The F Sport package includes a wheel-and-tire upgrade (18-inch, 225/50 run-flats), firmer suspension settings, and assorted glittery/sparkly: a leather-wrapped, cross-stitched sport

This Lexus is easy to park and maneuver, quick as a Central Park squirrel from light to light, and it gets excellent gas mileage.

steering wheel, exclusive grille mesh, LED fog lamp bezels with L-shaped chrome moldings, aluminum pedals and door scuff plates.

Build-wise, the UX is a thimble-full of Lexus brand quintessence, with deep cabin-noise isolation, well damped ride quality (considering the eentsy wheelbase), and competent, confidence-inspiring control of body motions. It's surprisingly snubbed down for a precious whittle ting.

Sometimes, pushed hard, the hybrid engine can get a little shouty. City folk, you know?

People miss the cars that gave them more than they paid for. The standards here include all of Lexus's active-safety and driver-assistance tech, with dynamic cruise control and emergency braking. The UX connects with Apple CarPlay and Amazon Alexa. Among the surprise and delight features of the F Sport: a small, motorized instrument display that slides into center position of the instrument panel when you switch to Sport mode, like the rifle reticle in "Call of Duty."

Even the most fondly remembered cars have their flaws, and the UX has a big one: the capacitive control pad with a palm rest of associated scroll-wheel controllers and buttons. That's right, the UX's biggest problem is its UX. This is my fourth time around with Lexus's touchpad controller, and it seems I am now finally able to put it to use. I have a coffee cup that fits right on top.



2019 LEXUS UX 250H F SPORT

Base Price \$36,150

Price, as Tested \$40,240

Powertrain Gas-electric hybrid with 2.0-liter DOHC inline four-cylinder gas engine; two motor-generator hybrid transmission with planetary power-split device; on-demand all-wheel drive

Total System Power 181 hp

Length/Width/Height/Wheelbase 177.0/72.4/60.6 (with antenna)/103.9 inches

Curb Weight 3,605 pounds

0-60 mph 8.6 seconds

EPA Fuel Economy 41/38/39 mpg, city/highway/combined

Cargo Capacity 17.1 cubic feet

You Could Even Say It Glows

Can this bedside light aid your nightly wind-down and help you peacefully awake?



TURN-DOWN SERVICE
To help ease you into slumber, a pair of Glow Lights can dim in sync.

I'D LIKE TO THINK I'm good in bed: Sleep comes easily and lasts 8 hours, uninterrupted. But I need optimal conditions: a cool room with a whirring fan and total darkness. Harvard sleep researcher Steven Lockley, a man seemingly after my own heart, found that most lights, whether ultraviolet or artificial,

keep us awake by suppressing the body's secretion of melatonin, a hormone that influences circadian rhythms.

The exception? Red- and orange-hued light, like the glows of sunset and sunrise, something recent innovations aim to replicate. Casper's aptly named Glow Light (from \$129, cas-

per.com), for example, gradually dims until eventually blinking out, purportedly to lull you to sleep. In the morning, it brightens to a warm color temperature of 2700K, which Casper hopes will gently wake you.

Each unobtrusive, matte-white cylindrical Glow Light charges wirelessly on a coaster-size dock and has a simple corresponding app you can use to schedule wake times and to sync up multiple Glow lights.

As you flip the lamp to start your evening wind-down (adjustable in 15-minute increments), it can be controlled through touch: Tap a button on whichever end is facing up to pause its dimming process if you want to finish a book chapter; slowly twist the light to dim or brighten it to your desired level; or give it a slight shake for "nighttime mode," turning it into a portable lamp that can guide your path to a midnight snack.

Unfortunately, I slumber so deeply in the darkness of my "alcove" floor plan—that is, one with a windowless bedroom—that waking up is like emerging from a long winter's hibernation. While pleasant, the light's morning glow was far more ignorable than the successive blaring iPhone alarms I usually require. I promptly flipped the device to shut it off and went right back to sleep.

I happily adopted it as a bedtime ritual, however, and found myself craving its wind-down period, which I used to read or to quiet my thoughts. The comparable Philips Somneo (from \$180, usa.philips.com) further encourages nightly relaxation with a feature that pulses its light for guided breathing to simulate the effects of meditation. And then, of course, it's lights out. —Allison Duncan

BACKSTORY

A Knife's Tale

The road to crafting the original Leatherman



BACK IN 1975, Tim Leatherman and his wife, Chau, bought a \$300 Fiat in Amsterdam and set off on a global adventure. Stuffed in his shirt pocket was a long list of ways to spend the rest of their lives. In Bulgaria, after using a slim Swiss blade to fix their Fiat, and remedy shoddy plumbing in cheap hotel rooms, Mr. Leatherman, trained as a mechanical engineer, added an item to the list, something he hoped to invent: "Add pliers to a Boy Scout-type knife." By Tehran, he was sketching ideas for the original Pocket Survival Tool and four decades on, his eponymous brand produces more tools each year than Chevy does cars, earning \$100 million-plus in annual sales. He keeps tinkering, though: This summer Leatherman is debuting its Free Collection, incorporating magnets that let you use the majority of its tools with one hand. The new multi-tools start at \$120 and last a lot longer than a busted Fiat. leatherman.com —Chris Kornelis