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Water Polo Wins  
Gold Coast  
Championship

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from Within

Inside the Helmet  
of an NFL Player

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Tatjana Patitz is one of the “big five” supermodels who appeared in the 1990 music video “Freedom!’90” by George Michael. Her career trajectory was meteoric, and she was credited with expanding ideals of female beauty. She and a select group of individual-looking, business-minded, high-profile fashion models emerged and came to be known as the original supermodels. A photograph showing Tatjana with them laughing on the beach was taken by Peter Lindbergh for Vogue during this period. Simply titled “White Cotton Shirts”, the image, now regarded as an iconic fashion photograph, was accompanied by an article that singled out Tatjana for her “astonishing presence”, praising her “uncosmeticised womanliness, new and important” in the era. As I’ve come to know Tatjana Patitz over the years, what strikes me so profoundly is her emotional intelligence, her lack of vanity, her disinterest in fame or fortune, and her steadfast anchor to nature with its accompanying higher awareness of the world. We are thrilled to have Tatjana on our January 2020 cover with her accompanying cover story on page 60. She is a vital role model – enticing us to be humane and thoughtful in our choices.

Pepperdine Men’s Water Polo, under the head coach leadership of one of the world’s greatest Olympic water polo players, Terry Schroeder, has just clinched the 2019 Gold Coast Conference (GCC) Tournament – sending them straight through to the NCAA finals against Stanford University. It’s a feat of extraordinary proportions considering the adversity this team has endured. It also marks an historical achievement for Pepperdine (page 16).

Football players realize their dreams when they join the haloed ranks of the NFL. Immense pressure accompanies the glory, and an emotional roller coaster that few of us can imagine. Nelson Spruce, the gifted former wide receiver for Westlake High School, went on to achieve great things after his college football career – including being signed up with the Los Angeles Rams. His in-depth story entitled, “Inside the Helmet Capsule of an NFL Player” (page 20) is a rare look into the life of a professional football player.

2020 takes us into an important and exciting technological future. We wish you and your loved ones an extraordinarily special start to the new decade. May it bring out our best attributes - collectively.



*Diana*

Diana



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# PEPPERDINE ME

2019 GOLD COAST CONFERENCE

Photography by Sarah Otteman, Pepperdine University





# N'S WATER POLO

RENCE CHAMPIONS NCAA FINALS







Moment of reckoning



Kaden Kaneko



Jean Claude Marco



The team, President of Pepperdine, Coaches and Trainer celebrate in the water



Curtis Jarvis

**I**n 1997, Pepperdine Men's Water Polo, under the head coach leadership of one of the world's greatest Olympic water polo players, Terry Schroeder, won the coveted National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championship trophy. 22 years later, Pepperdine Men's Water Polo has just clinched the 2019 Gold Coast Conference (GCC) Tournament – sending them straight through to every player's dream – the NCAA Championships which are to be held at UOP in Stockton this year. It's a

feat of extraordinary proportions considering the adversity this team has endured. It also marks an historical achievement for Pepperdine.

It's come full circle: Merrill Moses, the goalkeeper of the 1997 Pepperdine NCAA championship winning team, is now Pepperdine's associate head coach. He and Terry Schroeder have shared an illustrious career together. While Terry was head coach of the USA Men's Water Polo team at the 2008 and 2012 Olympics, Merrill Moses was in both Olympic teams and they shared the elation of earning a silver medal in Beijing. That deep bond of mutual respect was so





Terry Schroeder, Merrill Moses, Mike Tragitt & A.J. Vander Vorste



Sean Ferrari



Chris Dilworth



Terry Schroeder diving in

Head coach Terry Schroeder embraces associate head coach Merrill Moses surrounded by the elated team



clearly evident as Pepperdine played its way to victory on Thanksgiving week 2019. Mike Tragitt's coaching contribution, and A.J. Vander Vorste's team training component were also vital to their success.

The players in Pepperdine's 2019 championship team are not only talented but mentally strong. John Claude Marco, the team's goalie, underwent hand surgery in the critical months leading up to this moment. "J.C. made some huge saves despite the adversity he's experienced in 2019", says Terry Schroeder. "He had a plate inserted into his hand when he broke his finger, but that didn't stop him from

stepping up in critical moments. I'm so proud of the great group of seniors (Chris Dilworth, George Mooney, Sean Thomas, Mate Toth and Marco Asic) on the team who have changed the culture. They've faced adversity with resilience and maturity. In the conference finals when Long Beach came back and gained all the momentum, the guys kept their mental composure and rose to the occasion to win the game. Our defense has improved tremendously over the past 10 games and this helped us to go undefeated in November. I love each one of these guys. This is a very special team" 🌊



Los Angeles Rams Wide Receiver Nelson Spruce Makes a Gain As Dallas Cowboys Defensive Back Dax Swanson Tries to Bring Him Down in the Fourth Quarter Between the Dallas Cowboys and the Los Angeles Rams at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.  
Image by Mike Nelson





# THE JOURNEY OF NELSON SPRUCE

## INSIDE THE HELMET OF AN NFL PLAYER

**A**UGUST 13, 2016. A day I envisioned for as long as I can remember, a day I had been preparing for my entire life, and a day that would end up sending my life onto a trajectory I never imagined. On this day I was suiting up to play in my first game as a professional football player in the National Football League.

The script could not have been written any better. Just a few months earlier I signed on to play with the Los Angeles Rams. It seemed too good to be true that the year I would be entering the professional ranks was the same year the Rams were moving back to Los Angeles after 20 years in St. Louis. And it was even more unbelievable that out of all 32 NFL cities, I ended up signing in my hometown. Ever since it was announced that the Rams would be coming back to LA, there was an excitement for football season in the city that I had never seen before. And when it came time for the team's first game back home in over two decades, the city showed up to see what the buzz was all about. By the time the game was ready to kickoff, a record-breaking 90,000 fans filled the Los Angeles Coliseum to watch their new hometown team's first preseason game.

Nerves are always high leading up to a game, but given the stage and situation, my adrenaline was pumping early and often on this gameday. Our opponents were the Dallas Cowboys, and it almost felt surreal walking out of the locker room tunnel for warmups and seeing players like Dez Bryant and Jason Witten, who I had been watching on TV for years. Finally, it came time for kickoff, but it still wasn't my time to take the field. As an undrafted rookie, I didn't expect to see any action until the second half. This was a new experience for me having been a starter my entire football life, but I managed to stay locked into the game until my number was called.



Playing at home in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum for the first time since 1979, the Rams got the victory in a defensive battle over the Dallas Cowboys

SPORTSPURSITS THE JOURNEY OF NELSON SPRUCE  
WESTLAKE MALIBU LIFESTYLE 01.20



Mid way through the third quarter my receiver coach told me I would be going in the next series. After what seemed like an eternity, the time had finally come to get some action. The first couple of plays were handed off to the running back so all I had to do was block, which was a good way to get into the game and calm my nerves. The game went on and nothing of much significance happened the rest of the third quarter, and I felt a little like the time was running out on my debut. However, as the fourth quarter began, our offense put together a good drive and crossed into Dallas' territory. A pass play was called in the huddle that made me the primary read for the quarterback. We lined up to snap the ball, and as I got into my route, there was a cluster of defenders to navigate as I crossed the field. I turned my head at the last second to see the ball already halfway to me. Instinct took over and I was able to elevate and secure the catch as I came rolling to the ground. That sequence of events is one that will

always be burned into my memory; not because it was some sensational catch, but because it was the moment that broke the ice for me and reassured me that I belonged on this stage.

A few plays later, the quarterback hit me for a short touchdown and a still fully packed Coliseum erupted. The next drive I took the field with a newfound confidence and quickly found myself at the receiving end of a few passes. By this point I was in the zone that every athlete searches for; when everything seems effortless and the game slows down. Our offense was moving down the field and the QB was trying to get me the ball whenever he could. Our drive was nearing the endzone when I caught what would be my last pass of the night. I made one defender miss and as the second was bringing me to the ground, I landed at an awkward angle on my knee. I felt it stiffen up as I got off the ground, but with so much adrenaline pumping, I paid little attention to it. I lined up for the next play and as I pushed off

The script could not have been written any better. Just a few months earlier I signed on to play with the Los Angeles Rams. It seemed too good to be true that the year I would be entering the professional ranks was the same year the Rams were moving back to Los Angeles after 20 years in St. Louis



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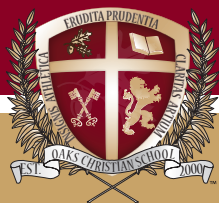


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Instinct took over and I was able to elevate and secure the catch as I came rolling to the ground. That sequence of events is one that will always be burned into my memory; not because it was some sensational catch, but because it was the moment that broke the ice for me and reassured me that I belonged on this stage



my left leg at the snap of the ball, my knee buckled and a sharp pain shot through it. I knew right away there was something structurally wrong with it, so I signaled to the sideline that I needed to come out of the game. The next play, the offense went onto score which capped our big fourth quarter comeback and gave the home crowd a game to remember. Everyone in the stadium was celebrating as the clock wound down, but I was on the medical table with the team doctors getting examined. They performed some mobility tests on the joint and I could tell by their reaction that something was definitely wrong. From what they could gather from the tests, the doctors told me there was most likely damage to my PCL, a rare injury but not season ending; around a 4-6 week recovery. Still riding an emotional high, the diagnosis did not really sink in with me. I limped off the field into the locker room in what was one of the happiest moments of my life as I waved to my family in the stands. Even with the injury to my knee, I felt like the night could not have gone any better. But the ride I was on would soon come crashing down hard and fast.

The next morning an MRI confirmed the diagnosis to my knee. I was coming back down to reality, but I still couldn't really believe the situation. In all my years of football, I never had an injury that forced me to miss more than a few days, much less a game. Now in my first NFL game, I suffered a freak injury that would force me to miss the most pivotal time of my football career. Playing football – a violent sport – for so many years – and never experiencing a significant injury is unheard of and takes a huge amount of luck. However, because of the fact I had never gone through the process of missing time and rehabbing a serious injury, I was unprepared for the road that lay ahead of me.

Later in the day I rejoined my team, limping onto the practice field with my leg in a brace. Teammates were high fiving me and congratulating me on the night before, but I was in some kind of mood I had never felt before. In the hours since the game, I had come falling down from the high of the success into a rabbit hole of doubt and insecurity. The new reality I was facing flooded my mind with negative thought after negative thought about the future. As training camp progressed, my normally focused and confident state of mind deteriorated quickly. As I watched practice the next few days from the sideline, I couldn't help but think my dreams of having an NFL career were in serious jeopardy. The days were long and miserable but having to go out on the field and watch others compete for a spot on the team was what I dreaded most.

The football field was always a place to which I could escape whatever stress or pressure I had going on in life. Overnight it turned into a place I never wanted to step foot on. As training camp dragged on, I felt progressively hopeless. For the previous twenty years, I had my head down, grinding for one single goal. Now with the realization that this might be taken away from me, I was left with nothing but fear and doubt about my future. My worries surrounding the game of football began to compound into something almost existential. Without football, I felt like my whole identity had shattered. I woke up every day to moods and thoughts that felt so alien to me and struggled to make it through each long day of training camp. I had gotten hurt in the first of four preseason games which meant I had to endure another three weeks on the campus of UC Irvine, where the Rams hold camp. Those three weeks seemed like an endless blur of meetings, standing around at practice, and rehabilitation on my knee. Interestingly, the physical rehab on the knee was the easiest part. However, I felt exhausted trying to stay mentally afloat day after day. By what felt like a miracle, I made it to the last day of camp; when

we would be finding out who was making the team. Despite all my worrying, I ended up making the cut onto the final roster. I should have been ecstatic; only a very small percentage of undrafted rookies end up making the team, but for some reason I couldn't feel much joy in this accomplishment. I was just happy to break training camp and get back to Thousand Oaks. It was convenient that the Rams practice facility for the season was in my hometown because I was hoping that being home would bring me some comfort.

We started the regular season, but I didn't find much relief. I was still finding no enjoyment in the day-to-day cycle of early morning rehab followed by meetings and watching practice. The only glimmer of hope that kept me working was knowing that in about a month, I could rejoin the team back on the field. Rehabbing an injury is a lonely time for any athlete. Having your own rehab schedule and not being able to participate in practice makes you feel isolated and somewhat useless. It also didn't help that my rehab process was taking a little longer than initially planned. After a few weeks I was able to progress into drills on the field, but I had no confidence in my knee. I was cleared by the doctors to start running and cutting on it, but something just didn't feel right. But I kept doing everything the trainers asked of me and finally was able to return to practice.

Over a few days I eased my way back into practice, and for the first time in weeks, I was having fun doing anything related to football. The seventh game of the season, we flew to London and I was back practicing fully. My knee didn't feel one hundred percent, but I felt like I was heading in the right direction. During our second practice in London while I was running plays on scout team, I made a cut and felt a stabbing pain in my left calf. It surprised me but I didn't think much of it. I lined up again to run another route and right when I cut, the pain was back and worse than the first time. I told one of the trainers and they sent me to the training room. As I sat on one of the training tables the all too familiar feelings of panic and hopelessness set in. I was sidelined for the rest of the London trip and when we got back to California, I got another MRI, this time on my left calf. The image showed a tear in the calf muscle. The trainers explained to me this would keep me off the field for at least another month. The decision was made to put me on injured reserve which meant I would not be able to return to play for the rest of the season and I would focus only on getting healthy.

With the knowledge that I was done for the rest of the year, I fell into a funk again. After so much success and promise leading up to the season, the way things actually turned out were beyond frustrating. I felt like a zombie going through my daily routine of rehab at the facility. It was crazy to me that a game that once brought me nothing but joy now felt like it was sucking the life out of me. This period of time forced me to look for things outside of football with which I could connect and focus on. For the rest of the season and into the offseason, I focused not only on getting physically healthy but also on finding ways to cleanse my mind of the struggles from the past few months.

I felt like I had made some progress in both areas as I got ready to rejoin the Rams for my second season. My knee still didn't feel one hundred percent, and I still couldn't find the same burning passion I had for the game throughout my career, but I felt ready to attack the season. Everything went relatively smoothly leading up to the preseason games. Our first game was again against the Dallas Cowboys in the Coliseum. The atmosphere was not the same as the year before, but I felt like this game was just as important. It was my first time suiting up for a game in exactly a year and it was a big milestone for



Nelson Spruce scores a touchdown as he is tackled by Dallas Cowboys defensive back Jeremiah McKinnon  
Image by Ryan Kang



me on my journey back to where I wanted to be. I ended the game with five catches, but most importantly I went into the locker room healthy. Another healthy week went by and I got a little action in our second preseason game against the Oakland Raiders but nothing of much significance. I was gaining more confidence in my knee so the next week I decided to practice without an extensive tape job that I had been using every day to help stabilize the joint. Sure enough, on one of my first cuts I felt the familiar stabbing pain in my left calf. The little added instability in the knee forced the calf to overwork, and again I found myself sidelined for another month with a calf strain. At this point I knew my lack of availability to the team was becoming an issue, and with roster cuts coming in two weeks, I was worried my days as a Los Angeles Ram were coming to an end. At the end of August 2017, I was told I would be released from the team with an injury settlement. The fact that I was now jobless and not part of a team for the first time in my football life was another dose of uncertainty for me. However, there was a part of me that was ready to move on and get a fresh start. The dream situation that was presented to me a little over a year before had turned into a nightmare of injury and self-doubt.

With the regular season starting, I was forced to watch football from home while again going through the rehab process for my calf. A few weeks went by and I was ready to hit the field again, and my agent had a series of workouts lined up for me. All within about ten days, I flew from LA to New England, Jacksonville, and Washington D.C. to work out for coaches and scouts in hopes of signing with a new team. Nothing. I was getting a little discouraged and thinking my opportunities might be running out. My fourth try out was with the Chicago Bears, and finally after doing an on-field workout, they told me they were signing me to their practice squad. So mid-October I moved into the hotel that would be my home for the next three months and was excited to get to work with my new team. I quickly realized, however, the opportunity wasn't exactly what I expected it to be. My role as a practice squad member came to me as a rude awakening of what the NFL can be. In LA I always felt like I was being given a fair shot to earn a spot on the team. But on practice squad I felt like I was little more than a body giving looks to the guys that were actually playing on Sundays. I understood that there is a need for that, but I also felt like I had no real chance to develop and be a part



of their future plans. Even with this feeling, I came to work every day and started to feel a little better about my situation as I maintained my health and connected with new teammates.

As the season was coming to an end, I felt like I had paid my dues and was looking forward to the offseason where I would be given a real chance to compete. But of course, the day before I was set to go back home for a break, my agent called me and told me the Bears wouldn't be re-signing me. They told him they had concerns about my knee and calf going forward which was a shock to me because I finished the season healthily, and they didn't address any concerns with me in my exit physical. I was frustrated and confused and couldn't get home quickly enough.

Before the beginning of the 2018 NFL off-season program, I signed with the Kansas City Chiefs. It seemed like a good fit for me and I was excited that I would be starting from scratch from the beginning of team activities. A couple weeks went by and I was picking up the playbook quickly in our meetings. We started on field activities as an offense and I felt comfortable and confident. One day after our work on the field, someone in the front office came to my locker and told me to follow him upstairs. I sincerely thought they were bringing me up to get to know me a little better and tell me they liked the way I was progressing. They sat me down in one of the offices and got right to it; in the first sentence they spoke, they told me I was released from the team. I felt completely blind-sided. I had only been there for a few weeks, and for most of that time we were only training; no real football. I don't remember much else of what was said, but I remember them trying to tell me it was a numbers thing and they had to make room on the roster. I cleared out my locker and went back to my hotel, again feeling like I couldn't get home fast enough. There was a problem, though. I had shipped my car out the day before so I couldn't just jump on a flight. I loaded everything I had with me in the back of my car and started driving west.

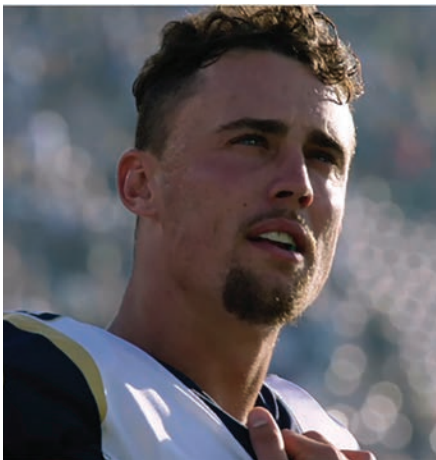
I got to Denver and planned on staying with some of my college friends until I figured out a plan. A few days into my stay, my agent called me and told me the Los Angeles Chargers wanted to bring me in for a workout. I hopped back in my car and hit the road. The 15-hour drive to their facility in Irvine gave me a lot of time to think. I almost had to laugh at the way my journey as a professional football player was unfolding. I had been released from three different teams in the previous few months and here I was driving halfway across the country with all my possessions - still hoping there was a team out there that would give me a real opportunity. I got to the Chargers' facility and after a good workout they told me they were going to sign me. It was still fairly early in the off-season program so I had a

good amount of time to make an impression. Training camp went by followed by the preseason games and when cuts came rolling around I felt like I had given everything I had, but it wasn't enough. I was released and once again jobless. I went through the usual routine of telling my agent the news and him telling me he would let me know what teams wanted to bring me in for workouts. However, this time the calls weren't coming. The 2018 season was eerily silent with nothing coming through. I was staying ready physically and mentally for a team to bring me in, but I had the feeling that this was it.

Toward the end of the year I was still unemployed but started to hear about a new opportunity that intrigued me. I was contacted by representatives that told me they were part of a group starting up a new professional football league. The Alliance of American Football would begin after the NFL season and give players like me an opportunity to continue playing the game at the professional level. As things started to get underway with the league it looked more and more promising. There were some talented players signing on to play and a lot of noteworthy coaches running the teams. I ended up on the San Diego team and as the season started, I began to reconnect with my passion for the game. It was nice being a featured part of the offense, a feeling I hadn't experienced for a few years. I felt my confidence growing each week. I was making plays on the field and felt myself growing as a person outside of football. Unfortunately, after the eighth game of the season, we were notified the league would be cancelling operations due to some financial issues. Once again I was unemployed but thought that my production in the new league was enough to get me another shot in the NFL. Over 50 players were signed to NFL rosters from the Alliance, but every time I called my agent, he had no news, which for me was bad news. The 2019 season started for the NFL and nothing came my way, but I felt more at peace with being away from the game.

However just as I thought my playing days might be at an end, another opportunity presented itself. In October of 2019 I was drafted to another upstart league called the XFL. We will begin practice in December leading up to the start of the season in February. This will be the sixth team and third league in my 4 years of professional football.

I could have never predicted the twists and turns of the past few years. There were days I would sit in disbelief - thinking about all the years of work I'd inputted - and the shattering journey I'd traversed. As much as it was hard not to focus on all the negativity surrounding my football life, I did step back and I realized the immense amount that the game has given me. I am at a place now where I can look back at the adversity and see how it has forced me to grow. I feel refocused and excited to keep playing this game, not because I need it, but because I can finally enjoy it again. 🙌



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# 2019 Invesco QQQ Championship Sherwood Country Club

Photography Getty Images

The 2019 Invesco QQQ Championship held November 1st – 3rd at Sherwood Country Club was won by Colin Montgomerie of Scotland who picked up a big win in the second of three Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs events on PGA TOUR Champions. Montgomerie and Bernhard Langer finished 54 holes of regulation at 14-under 202, going to a sudden-death playoff to decide the champion. Both players found the fairway with their tee shots, but Langer's approach shot found a nearly impossible lie in a greenside bunker. Montgomerie found the green. Langer then took four shots to get out of the bunker, including effectively hitting the same shot into a steep slope from the back lip three times. Langer took 6 on the hole, with Montgomerie being conceded a winning par after his birdie putt was left inside 2 feet.





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# Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Conejo Valley Stand up for Kids Gala Dinner & Auction

Photography by Studio 92 Photography

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Conejo Valley (BGCVCV) held a successful “Stand up for Kids Gala Dinner & Auction” on September 14 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village. The annual event, themed BELIEVE, showcased BGCVCV’s programs and services while also recognizing its many supporters. Founder and longtime leader, Cal Johnston, was honored with a tribute by his son, Board Chair of BGCVCV, Jeff Johnston, for his dedication and active participation in the BGCVCV since its inception in 2001. The Cal Johnston Service Award was presented to Amer Soudani who was instrumental in the construction of the Rocky and Lon Morton Club in Newbury Park. He also played a key role developing the John L. Notter Family Club in Thousand Oaks.



Members of the Boys & Girls Clubs Music & Performing Arts Program perform a dance number during the annual Gala



Cal & Marje Johnston are recognized as the 2019 Gala Honorees with the award presented by his son, Jeff Johnston. From left to right - Jeff Johnston, Cal Johnston, Marje Johnston and Dr. Crystal Nāone, President/CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Conejo Valley



Amer Soudani accepts the Cal Johnston Service Award from Gary Stephani, 2019 Gala Chair



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# Conejo Concussion Institute

The Conejo Concussion Institute (CCI) held its annual fundraiser on November 6, 2019. 100% of the proceeds from the evening's silent auction donations of local photographers, Scott Blatt, Glenn David and Tony Principe, and other local business donations, go directly to CCI whose goals are to provide concussion education to coaches, parents and athletes. Each year, 1.6 to 3.8 million concussions result from sports/recreation injuries in the United States. A concussion is a mild form of a traumatic brain injury induced by a blow or jolt to the head or body transmitting a force that causes the brain to balance or twist within the skull. Damage to the brain is microscopic strains or tears to the cells and other membranes. Although the collision sports of football and boys' lacrosse tend to cause the highest number, concussions occur in all other sports and have been observed in girls' sports at rates similar to or higher than those of boys' sports. Concussions can occur at any age, any gender, and in any sport. CCI also provides baseline testing to all youth athletes who have sustained head injuries. This is critical in the assessment of when it is safe for the athlete to return to play. Dr. Scott Blatt of Body Logic leads CCI and Neurosurgeon Ian Armstrong M.D. advises the CCI team while overseeing and supporting the injured athletes who require advanced intervention. At this year's event, Westlake High School's Noah Eubanks spoke about the successive concussions that have ended his soccer-playing aspirations, as well as what he has learned from the experiences.



Dr Scott Blatt attends to a Westlake High School Football player at the sidelines



Dr Scott Blatt attends to an injured competitor at the BMX World Championships in Medellin Colombia



Noah Eubanks



Neurosurgeon Ian Armstrong M.D. assists CCI when an athlete's injury is severe



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Chevrolet 2020 ZL-1

## CHEVY WITH A 'Z'

Taking a run at the famous high-plains wild ponies with a lean muscular animal named "Friendly." *By Larry Crane*

**C**ontrary to popular legend, Chevrolet was first to create a small, pretty, front-engined, four-seat coupe for the automotive galaxy; it was 1962. Created in a Detroit warehouse in something approaching cold war secrecy, the concept didn't reach the public eyes until early 1964 as "Super Nova," along with the Apollo space program. At the same New York Auto Show, Ford swept in with a high-spirited, earth-bound pony from the high plains called

"Mustang." The attendant mob scene told all. They wrangled 400,000 Mustangs into American family garages the first year!

Chevrolet was two years late to market with its car bearing a singularly unexciting name: "Camaro" is loosely translated in a French-English dictionary as friend, pal, or comrade. Ironically, Bill Mitchell, VP of Design for General Motors at the time, called the first production Camaro "a committee car"; many executives had included themselves on the team. They delivered 220,000 during year one. It took five years





2020 ZL-1 interior



2020 ZL-1 badge





1964 Super Nova concept



Gen 2 Camaro Z/28

for Mitchell before he could oversee creation and completion of the second-generation design. He was vocal about his pleasure at finally having all the proportions and details right — and exciting. The 1970 Z/28 with its split front bumper and Ferrari-like face and roof remains a collector's choice Camaro.

Forty years later we have gone from a "That's cool" Z/28 family sports coupe with its iconic 302 cu.in. small block (5 liter) delivering 290

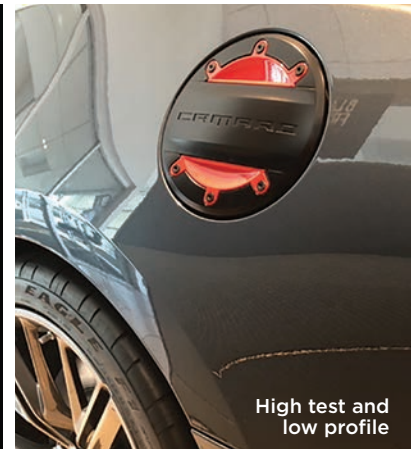
horsepower (and two SCCA Trans Am racing championships!) to an "OMG" generation 6 Camaro ZL-1 with an explosive-delivery 6.2-liter (372 cu.in.) supercharged, all aluminum Chevy small-block delivering 650HP and 0-60mph in 3.5 seconds. Descriptions of the 2020 ZL-1 do sound like exaggeration — let's call it hyperbole — but one cannot overstate the visceral effect of this new Camaro, a twenty-first century dual-purpose (road and track)

GT car. That hallowed description could never have been expected to describe what would become possible; underpinning the latest edition are fully independent suspension with electronically adjustable elements that balance ride and grip from predetermined settings, for a day on your favorite road racing circuit or touring at a level of comfort and quiet civility the original users of that sobriquet could not have imagined — including a sound system to seamlessly deliver the spiritual essence of Coltrane or the logarithmic explosion of Black Sabbath heavy metal, but that might interfere with the rhythmic cadence of your light metal Chevy small block LT4 engine as backup.

Today's ZL-1 Camaro is comfortable/radical with breathtaking (no, really) acceleration, a 6-speed manual gearbox that can tell the engine to match down-shift revs with the stick-selected ratio or a programmable 10-speed automatic that can be controlled by



ZL-1 Instrument cluster



High test and low profile



Headsup display



ZL-1 Aerodynamics





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Hennessey Exorcist

paddles behind the steering wheel or allowed to select ratios on its own to match what you are doing with your right foot. It is quicker in every situation than you could be with the manual gearbox and it can, with a light pressure on the throttle pedal, make its way to a high cruising speed in a tall-enough ratio to let you think it's making gas.

Keeping much of this performance under control is accomplished by wide 20-inch diameter wheels filled with disc brake rotors of 15.35-inches in front and 14.4-inch rear gripped by massive Brembo 6-piston calipers on the front and 4-piston units on the rear. The very best of racing hardware is suddenly important when you find yourself approaching 4-lanes of stopped traffic at cruising speed.

The difference between track-time and travel-time are neither simple nor, presumably, related — or weren't, until 2000 when a cadre of Canadian racer-scientists calling themselves 'Multimatic' developed a spool-valve damper (shock absorber) with an hydraulic system known as a DSSV (dynamic suspension spool valve). The elegantly accomplished system was first recognized for its control of suspension responses to race track surface anomalies and extreme



Exorcist topping 200

loading. Newman-Haas racing won the 2002 CART championship with it and the entire paddock noticed. The light, effective and reliable units were soon mandated on a number of open-wheeled racing series. The Red Bull Formula One team won four consecutive World Championships (2010-2013) and credited DSSC for its contribution to the cars' effectiveness. Several Formula One teams continue with versions of the units today. And so does the 2020 Camaro ZL-1 development team. The result is a track-capable car to drive to New York in comfort. Even more effective is the 1LE performance package, but forget the drive to New York.

There is now a plethora of remarkably

inexpensive super cars masquerading as family sedans for sale in American dealerships. The most widely publicized is the Challenger-based Dodge "Demon" with its aspirational 840 horsepower. John Hennessey of Sealy, Texas took up the challenge and produced the obvious counterpoint: Demons be damned, he calls his 1000hp ZL1 1LE "The Exorcist." In the supercar lexicon Hennessey famously makes fast cars faster. This one raises the bar to 0-60 mph in 2.1 seconds and logs a quarter mile in 9.57 seconds at 147 mph. The Exorcist lists for around \$120,000, which is virtually double the price of Chevrolet's own ZL-1. Contact Hennessey Performance for your Exorcist. 🌿





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# Gardening 20/20

*Grow with the Latest Trends*

*By Model Gardener Kelly Emberg*



**W**hen I first started gardening, I was delighted with my metamorphosis.

Planting a seed, then witnessing it grow and provide with abundance, truly impacted my life! Changing the world “one seed at a time” became my mission. If I could inspire just one person to grow edibles, then that would snowball into a limitless number of gardeners motivating more to do the same. The planet and humankind would be healthier. There’d be less illness, fewer doctors’ visits; chronic illness would

end gradually - making life more enjoyable and affordable; the masses would listen to nature and honor her.

...OK, I might have been slightly over optimistic about my potentiality, but if I shoot for the moon and miss, there’s a good chance I can land amongst the stars!

It is hard to believe we have just welcomed 2020! So many triumphs in the gardening and food industries have transpired in the last decade, all because of you! So give yourselves a pat on the back. I mean it! Without the consumer’s insistence for better food, we would still be stuck with attractive, yet vitamin deficient, hormone infused, genetically modified and pesticide and chemical laden diet. Even

most of the fast food companies are now using the organic word or Non-GMO as a selling tool these days. Who would have ever believed that would happen 10 years ago? We have demanded transparency with labeling; we’re passionate about protecting the planet and we’ve realized that everything we do, no matter how small, impacts our great earth! We celebrate organic farmers, recognizing the sacrifice and struggle they endure doing it the right way.

We have come leaps and bounds in the last decade, but what’s next?

## GARDENING TRENDS FOR 2020 SAVE OUR SOIL

Erosion, deforestation, and commercial





**Healthy Soil**



**Regenerative gardening**



**Planting potted cactus**

farming have already washed away one-third of our topsoil. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization warns that if we continue on this course, we will lose it all by 2050. A new movement called regenerative gardening is regenerating and rebuilding soil for organic gardening. This nourished soil becomes a giant carbon sponge. Plants suck excess carbon dioxide out of the air. Most atmospheric carbon passes through plants during photosynthesis, turning carbon, sunlight, and water into sugars and carbohydrates. Plant roots release carbon-rich sugars to feed organisms in the soil. Then the organisms make nutrients in the soil available to the plant.

Regenerative agriculture offers a hopeful solution for addressing climate change, through its potential to isolate carbon in the soil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere.

**New & Trend Worthy:** Globally, people are moving away from factory farming and towards regenerative practices while profiting. A new certification is in the wings as a response to customer demand. Studies say fifty percent of U.S. consumers would buy a brand if it were committed to the environment.

**Must watch:** There is a great documentary called “Kiss The Ground” which is a must-see for those who want to know more about what we all need to do to save our soil.

**Kudos to You:** General Mills will advance regenerative agriculture practice on 1 million acres of farmland by 2030! Can I hear a halleluiaah?

**GROW INDOORS**

Younger generations are keeping the houseplant trend growing with no end in sight. With less space, time, and money, people fill their homes with plants to clean the air, reduce stress, enhance creativity, and connect them with nature. Use houseplants to inject life into the space and cheer up small rooms.

**New & Trend worthy:** Get your light right! There’s an app - “Plant Light Meter”. Simply point your phone towards the light source to see how much light is available. Brilliant!

**Indoor trending plants:** CACTI AND SUCCULENTS are drought-tolerant and indestructible. They add a trending, modern element to your room. Greater percentage

consumers are purchasing houseplants compared to perennials, shrubs, or trees.

**Kudos to you:** Studies have proven that indoor plants improve concentration and productivity (by up to 15 percent!), reduce stress levels and boost your mood.

**DIYING & REPURPOSING**

When gardening, one will inevitably repurpose things for practical purposes. For instance, I have used plastic milk and juice bottles to protect my seedlings from snails and rabbits. While repurposing isn’t a novel idea, resurgence has spawned in response to the negative environmental impact from a growing consumer market. People are finding new ways to renew, repair, reuse, and recycle.



Repurposing, shoe pots

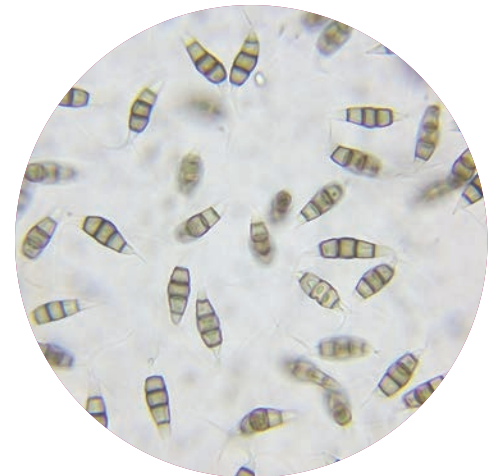




Wheelbarrow Planter



Honey Bee



Pestalotiopsis Microspora

**New & Trend worthy:** Young couples are focused on finding sustainable ways to host wedding celebrations by repurposing decor, not letting food or florals go to waste, and sourcing locally grown food for their menus.

**Try this DIY:** Turn clunky, work boots into inventive pots for plants. Revamp old wheelbarrows into impressive planters. Browse the Internet for a plethora of DIY ideas!

**Kudos to you:** REPURPOSED MATERIALS - Weston Ault, owner of this Denver Company specializes in repurposing old industrial equipment. A matchmaker for unloved stuff finds creative new uses for cast-offs. This process is not only good for the buyer and the environment; it's also helpful to manufacturers who would otherwise have to pay to remove their junk.

#### SAVE THE POLLINATORS

Pollinators vital to keeping the world's crops thriving are under major threat from disease, loss of habitat and other stressors like Roundup. The trend is to grow bee-friendly plants that flower at different times of the year, to provide pollen and nectar for bees, attract butterflies and other beneficial insects. With the right bee plants, one small

urban garden can attract forty to fifty species of native bees!

**New & Trend worthy:** More and more manufacturers are producing environmentally-friendly weed killers. Yay!

**Plant these for the bees:** Bees are wildly attracted to California poppy, Goodwin Creek lavender, Borage, Russian sage and marjoram.

**Kudos to you:** DOCTOR KIRCHNER NATURAL WEED KILLER - A sustainable, biodegradable, and non-toxic solution, making it safe not only to pets and humans but also to the environment and it is bee-friendly too.

#### THE FUTURE OF FUNGI

Together with bacteria, fungi are responsible for breaking down organic matter and releasing carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, and phosphorus into the soil and the atmosphere. Fungi are essential to many household and industrial processes, notably the making of bread, wine, beer, and certain cheeses. There are many ways Fungi will impact the next decade to come.

**New & Trend worthy:** Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine practitioners have historically used adaptogenic mushrooms but now these mushrooms are going mainstream, aiding in immunity, cognitive health and stress relief.

**Must See:** The movie "Fantastic Fungi" looks at the science and uses of mushrooms, and we learn about the growth habits of these odd-looking objects, which are neither strictly plant or animal.

**Kudos to you:** In 2012, Yale students came across *Pestalotiopsis microspora*, a mushroom from the Amazon which consumes polyurethane, the key ingredient in plastic products, and converts it to organic matter. It also can live without oxygen, which suggests enormous potential for feeding on, and thus cleaning up landfills in our future.

No matter what your views are with global warming, we should take care of this earth and our bodies. The condition of our planet absolutely affects our health! There are simple things like, composting, recycling, or repurposing or planting bee-friendly plants that we all can do. Or hey, I know... just plant one seed because it might change your life and maybe even the world!...It did mine! 🍄

Enjoy your New Year!

*Kelly Emberg, the model gardener*  
For more gardening tips, follow me on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube & Twitter.  
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# Short Stories About Big People

By Bob Eubanks

Hello there, it's time for more short stories about big people.

Well, the holidays are over and I'm sure you've made some New Year's resolutions. I know I have. Are you ready? 1) Drink 48 ounces of water every day. 2) Slow down on Linder Canyon – the cops are waiting. 3) Try to get the publisher of this wonderful magazine to put a guy on the cover ;-)

Good luck with your resolutions!

In the first part of November last year, Lake Sherwood hosted the big Invesco QQQ Championship Golf Tournament. I remember playing in a tournament down in Texas. My partner was pro-golfer Corey Pavin. He's a really good guy and one heck of a golfer. In fact, he used to take lessons at the Spanish Hills Country Club in Camarillo.

Anyway, I hit a pretty good drive on a long par 5. When it hit the ground, I yelled, "Go honey, go baby." Pavin almost had a meltdown. He jumped all over me, put his hand over my mouth and said, "Don't ever call a golf ball a female name. It will be all over the press."

I guess the PGA has taken a lot of heat for making the golf ball feminine. From then on, I called the ball "Fred."

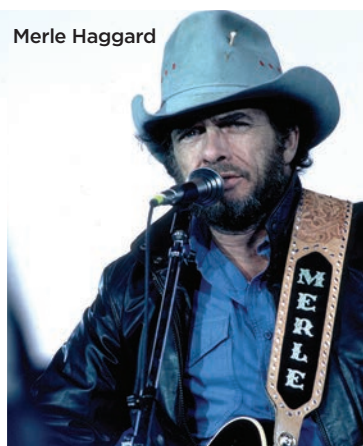
I once had a funny conversation with the glamorous actress Zsa Zsa Gabor. I was bragging about losing weight. She told me that she never wanted to lose weight. She said fat was more attractive than wrinkles. You know what? She's right.



Corey Pavin

As you probably know, I produced country music star Merle Haggard's concerts for over ten years. What an incredible artist he was! What you might not know is that his love life had more than a few unusual moments.

His first wife's name was Leona. Merle had Leona's name tattooed in big letters on his arm. That marriage didn't last, but guess what? His fourth wife's name was Leona, so that tattoo was perfect. Also, his second wife was one of the bridesmaids at his third wedding. Merle was quite a guy!



Merle Haggard

I'll leave you with this one... I have a friend whose wife accused him of cheating. She found some letters that he'd hidden. She looked him in the eye and said, "I'll never play Scrabble with you again."



Zsa Zsa Gabor

Well, there you have it. More short stories about big people. I'll see you next time. 🍷

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# Australia's Jack Robinson Wins 2019 Vans World Cup of Surfing

The 2019 Vans World Surfing Championship has just been held on the Hawaiian island of Oahu on the famed North Shore. Australia's Jack Robinson found some incredible barrels at Sunset Beach, and earned the best Final heat total in Sunset history – claiming for himself the last spot on the World Surf League Men's 2020 Championship Tour. Robinson also became the 2019 Vans World Cup of Surfing Champion.

PHOTO: WSL / KEOKI

Robinson was chaired up the beach by North Shore mainstays Tai Van Dyke and Kai Mana Henry, along with Volcom's Matt Bemrose.



PHOTO: WSL / HEFF

Robinson found every good barrel in the Final through expert wave knowledge



PHOTO: WSL / KEOKI

Jack Robinson feeling on top of the world after a massive victory



# The Donkey Hide Crisis



**F**or thousands of years, donkeys have long been the “helping hooves” of humankind. They are the original “beasts of burden”, and the developing countries of the world today still heavily rely on donkey power for their survival. These strong and intelligent animals can live for over 50 years, and they have incredible memories. They can recognize areas and other donkeys they previously visited or met – 25 years later. Unlike horses, they are not easily startled and they display their bravery in situations that would scare most animals. For 600 million people (8% of the world’s population) in some of the poorest places in the world, 100 million of working equines are the backbone of communities and their best means of survival.



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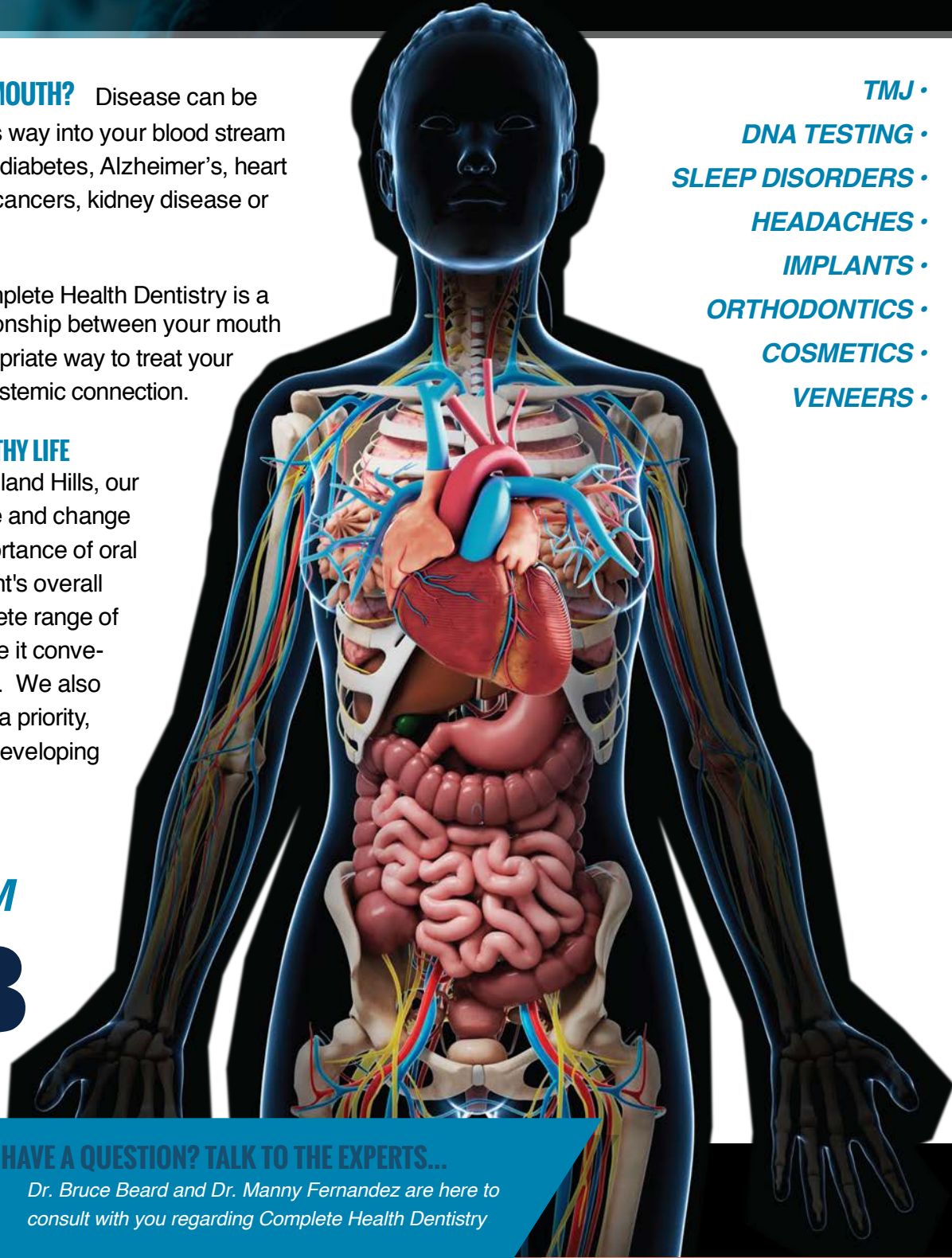
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#### THE GROWING DEMAND FOR EJIAO

Because of the prolific use of donkeys in the poorer, less developed countries of the world, the continent of Africa, in particular, has become a target for the latest pandemic: the Donkey Hide trade. In the last two years, it has reached unprecedented levels due to the growing demand for “Ejiao”, a gelatin produced from donkey hides and used in traditional Chinese medicine and beauty products. The demand is putting global donkey populations at risk and threatening the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on them. From providing access to water to strengthening agricultural supply chains, donkeys are critical to the survival of many communities around the globe.

By losing a donkey, many lose access to water, to earning money, to the ability to send their children to school, to putting food on the table—all setbacks that can plunge an already poor family even deeper into poverty.

China’s donkey population has rapidly reduced over the last decade due to the increasing demand for Ejiao; in fact, reports indicate that the donkey population of China has reduced by 50%. Donkeys are difficult to breed on a large scale due to their low reproductive rate, and as a result, China has turned to global markets to fuel its demand for donkey hides. Africa is at the center of the donkey trade with insufficient regulation, inhumane slaughter, donkey theft and cross-border smuggling, all creating a crisis across the con-



By losing a donkey, many lose access to water, to earning money, to the ability to send their children to school, to putting food on the table—all setbacks that can plunge an already poor family even deeper into poverty.



continent. While some countries have banned the export of donkey hides, in others like Kenya where slaughter is legal, the escalating rate of depletion is now unsustainable and donkey populations are in decline.

The spotlight is on Kenya, where the donkey population has decreased to critically low levels. Last year alone, 159,631 donkeys in Kenya were slaughtered for their skins. Over 60 donkeys a week were stolen from people who depend on them for daily life and to make a living. The current rate of theft, smuggling and slaughter has the potential to kill more than 1,000 donkeys every single day. At this rate, donkeys will vanish from Kenya by 2023.

While Africa remains the primary source of both legally and illegally-sourced donkey skins to China, the trade is spreading across the globe. The trade of donkey hides now poses a threat to various countries in South Asia and Latin America.

The treatment of donkeys in this process is often gruesome; they are being stolen, horrifically mistreated and cruelly slaughtered—sometimes in the brush or street just outside their owners' property.

#### THOSE MOST AFFECTED BY THE DONKEY HIDE TRADE

The impact of the donkey hide trade is particularly felt by women and children. Millions of women across the world depend on working donkeys to help them with their domestic tasks, such as fetching water each day. Without donkeys, many women have no choice but to walk long distances to procure water, which they must carry home on their own back.

Often, the decision to sell a family's donkey lies with the male head of household. Without working donkeys, the burden of domestic chores significantly increases for millions of women. The additional time and effort required to secure water, firewood or food limits a woman's ability to attend community gatherings, seek educational opportunities or secure extra employment.

In addition, children often assist with domestic chores and the impact of a lost or stolen donkey places a larger burden on young people. Many children are forced to miss school in order to support their parents at home, and the reduction in household income that results from losing a donkey means that many families can no longer afford to pay school fees.



#### HOW THE DONKEYS SUFFER

The slaughter of donkeys is inhumane with significant welfare violations resulting from the transportation of donkeys for trade. According to a study conducted by Brooke, 10% of the donkeys suffer bite wounds or die in transit. Market collection points are also areas of poor animal welfare with 84% of the respondents noting that there are no welfare provisions in the holding pens. Donkeys are sometimes left to starve as it is believed to be easier to remove the hide from a thin donkey.

The welfare concerns occur with the legal trade, but the conditions of illegal trade are far worse. Humane slaughter is often not observed, especially in illegal bush slaughters. And, those donkeys who remain within communities also suffer as they are shared among everyone to carry the additional loads left by those who have been slaughtered. This causes exhaustion, wounds and increased risk of injury.

#### WHAT WE CAN DO

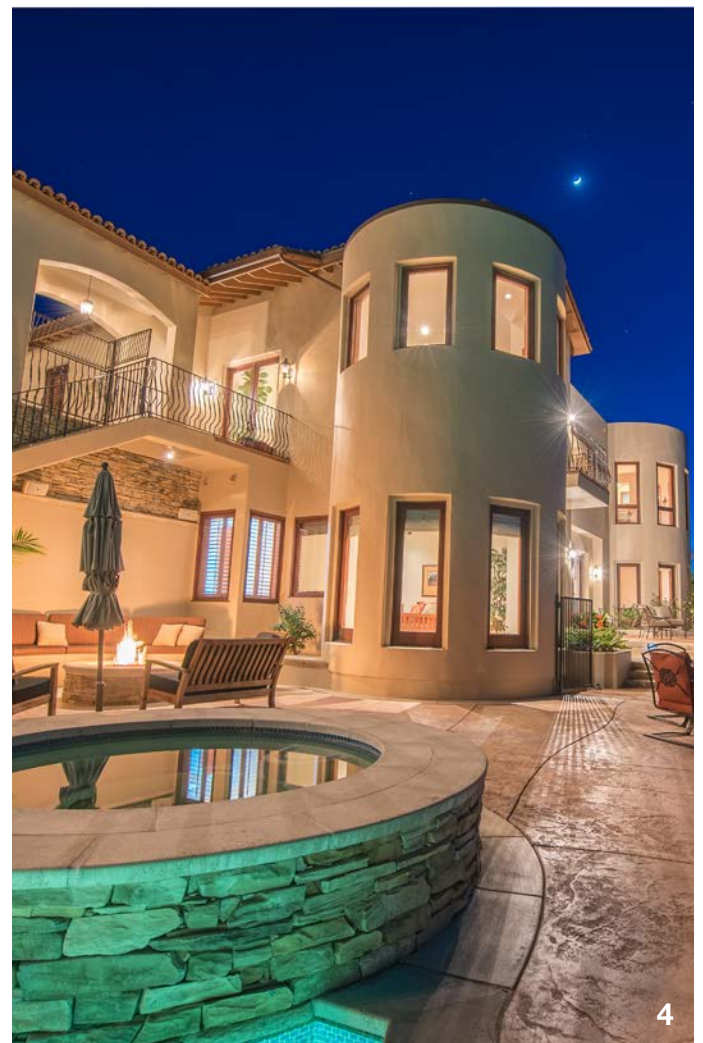
Emily Dulin, Executive Director of Brooke USA says, "we must do something—we must ban the trade of donkey skins, crack down on smuggling, and protect these donkeys." Brooke USA is supporting its sister organization, Brooke, in its call for public action by advocating for changes in local and national laws, protecting the innocent donkey owners, and safeguarding the donkeys. Brooke already has a team working on the ground in Kenya. Brooke USA is addressing this crisis by raising funds in support of Brooke, and it is also asking friends and supporters to share information as much as possible to garner attention for the impending crisis. The mission of Brooke USA is to significantly improve the welfare of working horses, donkeys and mules and the people they serve throughout Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Americas and the Caribbean by raising funds and responsibly directing them to the areas of greatest need. 🌱

**For more information, visit [www.BrookeUSA.org](http://www.BrookeUSA.org).**



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**RYAN SHIMP**







### PROPERTY DETAILS

**1.** 400 Calle Maduro, Camarillo offered at \$5,950,000 **2.** 5756 Hidden Brook Court, Westlake Village sold for \$2,697,500 **3.** 4011 Skelton Canyon Circle, Westlake Village offered at \$1,775,000 **4.** 31573 Saddletree Drive, Westlake Village sold for \$2,725,000 **5.** 901 Ocean Drive, Oxnard offered at \$3,395,000 **6.** 2514 Renata Court, Thousand Oaks offered at \$939,000 **7.** 1498 Outlook Circle, Westlake Village sold at \$2,200,000



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# Tatjana Patitz

## THE QUALITY OF NATURAL BEAUTY

German-born, Swedish-raised Tatjana Patitz achieved international prominence in the 1980s and 1990s representing fashion designers on runways and in magazines such as *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vogue*. Tatjana is one of the “big five” supermodels who appeared in the 1990 music video “Freedom! ’90” by George Michael, and is associated with the editorial, advertising, and fine-art works of renowned photographers Herb Ritts and Peter Lindbergh. In his book, *10 Women*, Lindbergh wrote, “I admire Tatjana because she always stays herself. She’s very soft, but at the same time she’s very strong and knows how to stand up for what she thinks, and it’s always very enriching to be with her. It’s impossible not to admire her and over the years not to be just a little bit in love with her.” Tatjana credits Peter Lindbergh, in particular, for her meteoric success in the industry, and she recently paid her respects to him at his funeral service in Paris on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**PHOTOGRAPHY: ÅSA TÄLLGÅRD**  
**BEAUTY DIRECTOR/MAKEUP ARTIST: RIKU CAMPO**  
**HAIR: LOUISE MOON**  
**STORY BY DIANA ADDISON LYLE**











In the 2015 book *Models of Influence: 50 Women Who Reset The Course of Fashion*, Nigel Barker reflected on Tatjana Patitz's modeling career during the height of the supermodel era in the 1980s and 1990s, writing that Patitz possessed an exoticism and broad emotional range that set her apart from her peers.

*Harper's Bazaar* wrote, «Indeed, Patitz's features almost confuse. Like Garbo or the Mona Lisa, the inexplicable gifts of line and luminescence defy definition.» Vogue Editor-in-Chief Anna Wintour stated that Tatjana Patitz has always been one of her favorite models. Tatjana's work bridged the eras of the exhibitionist 1980s and the minimalist 1990s in an enduring way, as Barker concluded, «The most lasting images of her are when she was really looking like herself.»

Tatjana's work in Europe led her to New York where she worked for *Vogue*, *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*. The December 1985 issue of *Vogue* featured Irving Penn's photograph, «Colored Contact Lenses», showing Tatjana wearing contact lenses over closed eyelids. The image would later be featured in the 1992 book «On The Edge: Images from 100 Years of Vogue» as one of the iconic photographs of the era.

In 1986, Tatjana appeared on two covers of the Italian edition of *Vogue* and continued to be featured in editorials in the American and British editions of *Vogue*. Tatjana appeared in campaigns for Calvin Klein photographed by Bruce Weber, and in 1987 for Revlon's «The Most Unforgettable Women in the World» campaign - photographed by Richard Avedon. Avedon also photographed Tatjana for her first cover of *American Vogue* (May 1987), which is regarded as one of the definitive covers of the 1980s.

During this period, Tatjana met Los Angeles-based photographer Herb Ritts with whom she shared another significant and enduring collaboration in fashion, fine art, and commercial work, like a muse playing any role he suggested. Ritts said of Patitz, «She's not a typical, commercial beauty, but when I shoot her, I'm never bored. Her looks have power, strength, intensity.»

As the decade progressed, Tatjana's career escalated and she was credited with expanding ideals of female beauty. She and a select group of individual-looking, business-minded, high-profile fashion models emerged and came to be known as the original supermodels. A photograph showing Tatjana with them laughing on the beach was taken by Peter Lindbergh for *Vogue* during this period. Simply titled «White Cotton Shirts», the image, now regarded as an iconic fashion photograph, was accompanied by an article that singled out

I was very lucky to start working with Peter Lindbergh early on and after that my life was on a fast track



Tatjana for her “astonishing presence”, praising her “uncosmeticised womanliness, new and important” in the era.

In another 1988 *Vogue* article titled «Tatjana: Million Dollar Beauty», Tatjana’s creative team shared their impressions of her: “In pictures, her sensitivity is what comes through; something delicate, fragile, exciting. It’s a strange mixture of lazy sensuality and moments of intense emotion,” said John Casablancas, president of Elite Model Management. “It’s hard to get a bad picture of Tatjana. She’s very photogenic, which is very rare, and she looks different in every light,” added photographer Patrick Demarchelier. “While some models develop one look, she has many.”

Tatjana was subsequently awarded with consecutive covers of *US Vogue* - two months in a row. It was an unprecedented achievement for a model of that time and an innovation for the recently revamped *Vogue* under the leadership of new Editor-in-Chief, Anna Wintour. This period was the zenith of Patitz’s career, known as “the era of Tatjana” in the fashion industry - a whirlwind time when she seemed destined to walk away with the title of supermodel herself.

In the final months of 1989, Tatjana was photographed with other top models in two portraits that would become key images of the supermodel era of the 1990s:

Animals are sentient beings like us. They have emotional intelligence, feelings, friendships and families. To think that Humans are “better” is ignorant. I have learned so much from being around animals and in nature

Tatjana with Brightly and Ameada













“Stephanie, Cindy, Christy, Tatjana, Naomi, Hollywood, 1989” by Herb Ritts, and Peter Lindbergh’s cover of the January 1990 issue of British *Vogue*.

In 1990, *Elle* captured the essence of Tatjana with these insightful words:

“Like other famous beauties before her, Tatjana Patitz possesses a certain extraterrestrial quality, an aura of exquisite otherworldliness only too effortlessly capable of freezing mere mortals in their tracks; a cool customer who knows what she wants and knows how to get it. Rarely have blonde hair and blue eyes managed to look quite so exotic – with her trademark world-weary gaze and her loose-limbed aristocratic bearing. Patitz often seems as if she’s just been awakened from a divinely decadent dream.”

Tatjana’s prolific modeling career has spanned almost 40 years. She has appeared on over 200 magazine covers worldwide, including seven covers of American *Vogue* and thirteen covers of British *Vogue*. French, Italian, German, Spanish, and Australian editions of *Vogue* have also featured her on their covers and in editorials. She remains in demand, periodically returning to the runway for select designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier and Chanel.

As I’ve come to know Tatjana Patitz over the years, what strikes me so profoundly is her emotional intelligence, her lack of vanity, her disinterest in fame or fortune, and her steadfast anchor to nature with its accompanying higher awareness of the world. She is educated, up-to-speed on important climatic, environmental and political issues, and compellingly vocal when it counts. Her words are infused with understanding, empathy and compassion.

When her regal, six-foot frame glides into a room, she does not seek the limelight; rather, she gravitates to people with whom she’s shared deep, long-standing friendships, and she’s an acutely conscientious listener. This principled beauty has her priorities in order and this is most evident with Jonah, her 16-year-old son, who enjoys top priority status from his mom.

Watching Tatjana with animals is a particular treat. They sense something vitally special in her: her deep understanding of their sentient natures and their importance on this planet. Tatjana’s horses and dogs seek her presence – always – and they show their deep affection and gratitude for the way in which she loves and cares for them. Her humanitarianism is evident in every aspect of her life.

Our gorgeous January 2020 cover shoot strongly reflects the

essence of Tatjana Patitz. Out came her dusty, well-worn riding boots, together with her comfy pants. Her horses, Aleada and Brightly, followed her without being led; her dogs, Gatsby and Tilly, gamboled at her feet. French *Elle* photographer, Åsa Tallgard, arrived on set with a basic camera and a continent of visual artistry. Tatjana did not effect a single pose. We simply stalked her with our cameras as she set about enjoying a day in the sun with the animals she loves. Her happiness was evident in her unrestrained laughter elicited from the simplest, most natural little elements. What a perfect way to welcome in 2020 - perhaps, a pertinent, gentle reminder to all of us that it is in nature that we are far more likely to find our peace and contentment. Moreover, if we really sit up and notice – there is so much we can learn from our animal friends.

**Q: You were born in Germany but grew up in Sweden from age 7 – 17 with your parents, sister and brother. Describe your life in Sweden and what you loved about it.**

**TATJANA:** I grew up in Malmo and what I loved about it is that it was close to beaches and nature. I spent a lot of my free time at the stables after school. My childhood was free and independent in many ways.

**Q: At age 15 you were “discovered”. You were a finalist in Elite Models’ “Look of the Year” competition and you won a contract to Paris. Your experience of modeling at that tender age was a good one. Describe those years.**

**TATJANA:** I was very naïve when I first arrived in Paris. My life in Sweden was sheltered compared to what I was exposed to entering the modeling industry, and all I can say is thank god for my agent who was my guardian angel and protector. That said I was also very lucky to start working with Peter Lindbergh early on and after that my life was on a fast track.

**Q: Two years later you moved to New York where you lived in a models’ apartment. Describe your life in New York and what you thought of the city.**

**TATJANA:** I don’t remember how long exactly I lived in a models’ apartment before I got my own place but it wasn’t that long, more like an interim place really. It was a busy place, us girls in and out going on ‘go sees’ and jobs.

Becoming a mother changed the way I looked at the world. With that a “mama bear” was born. And for me, personally, I was not interested to hand my son off to a nanny and continue working as much as before. My priorities shifted and I wanted to raise him and be there for those precious moments



**Q: You were immensely successful in the industry and have enjoyed a career in modeling for over 35 years. To what do you attribute that success?**

**TATJANA:** I have to say even though I worked very well in Paris for various magazines, the person that I have to thank is Peter Lindbergh. He booked me for French Vogue and that story catapulted my career to a world-wide stage and it shifted into a whole other gear.

**Q: Your son, Jonah, is 16 years old. Having him was a new and much-anticipated chapter in your life. How has your role as Jonah's mom and protector given you an extraordinarily special dimension in life?**

**TATJANA:** Becoming a mother changed the way I looked at the world. With that a "mama bear" was born. And for me, personally, I was not interested to hand him off to a nanny and continue working as much as before. My priorities shifted and I wanted to raise him and be there for those precious moments. Parenting can be hard as well, of course, and there are sacrifices I made but it is a gift. I love being a mom; I love children and having them is such an opportunity to learn and share.

**Q: In our discussions, you mentioned that Jonah's peers have dreams of becoming "rich and famous". You are famous and you've made a good living from modeling. Having experienced both (although wealth is relative), what have you learned and what is your advice to the next generation who aspire to be rich and famous?**

**TATJANA:** Yes, some kids just want to be famous without realizing that it comes with a pretty big price tag. I always say when I hear it, how about doing something that you're really passionate about? How about doing something for humanity that could even be for the greater good?

**Q: You have great empathy for animals and a deep understanding of their abilities and emotional intelligence. For the people whose cultures or upbringings give them a different perspective on animals - what do you most want them to understand about animals?**

**TATJANA:** Animals are sentient beings like us. They have emotional intelligence, feelings, friendships and families. To think

that Humans are "better" is ignorant. I have learned so much from being around animals and in nature. There is always a balance, even though it can be delicate.

**Q: You are deeply concerned about Climate Change. Describe your concerns and what we all need to do to stop the impending catastrophe.**

**TATJANA:** Greed is the biggest enemy in moving forward on climate change and that really worries me. Going to Mars and spending all that money to see if it would be possible for human life to thrive there is a joke to me. There is no oxygen and breathing is our number one priority. In my opinion, there is no planet B. Invest in clean energy and curb this horrible addiction to fossil fuels.

**Q: You said something beautiful - that unconditional, universal love will always prevail - and that it is the most powerful and healing force in life.**

**TATJANA:** Because LOVE is all there is.

**Q: You recently lost your brother. How did you cope with the stages of grief?**

**TATJANA:** It was one of the hardest times in my life, and I'm still grieving to some degree. You have to be gentle with yourself through the grieving process and I also recognize that everyone is different. Their experience of grief might be different from mine.

**Q: Favorite food dish EVER?**

**TATJANA:** Thom Ka soup - which is a Thai coconut soup with tofu.

**Q: Best Mom/Son activity?**

**TATJANA:** At this age, being in the same room and catching up on things. LOL!

**Q: No 1. choice in movie of all time?**

**TATJANA:** Love too many, hard to answer with just one.

Fame and fortune come with a pretty big price tag. I always say when I hear it (discussions on how to become rich and famous), how about doing something that you're really passionate about? How about doing something for humanity that could even be for the greater good?







**Q: Ideal day in the life of Tatjana?**

**TATJANA:** Being out in nature.

**Q: Your most recent birthday wish for yourself when you blew out the candles?**

**TATJANA:** Grateful for everything in my life and getting another jaunt around the sun.

**Q: Your most decadent indulgence?**

**TATJANA:** Chocolate.

**Q: One of the most beautiful places in the world where you were entranced by what you saw?**

**TATJANA:** I love natural places. It can be by the ocean, in the forest or the mountains.

**Q: Special memory you have of one of your favorite modeling destinations?**

**TATJANA:** Kenya left a big impression on me and is definitely one of the most memorable places I have ever visited and experienced.

**Q: Of all the acclaimed photographers with whom you've worked, what characteristics and abilities make a particular one "brilliant" at their craft?**

**TATJANA:** It's really about the whole person and who they are. It's really that and their vision.

**Q: Your greatest hope for the world and your son's generation?**

**TATJANA:** That they inherit a healthy planet doing what they love with love for the greater good. 🌱

Greed is the biggest enemy in moving forward on climate change and that really worries me. In my opinion, there is no planet B. Invest in clean energy and curb this horrible addiction to fossil fuels









Actress Téa Leoni as Secretary of State Elizabeth McCord in two scenes from *Madam Secretary*





# On Holding Our Heels, Head and Standards High<sup>1</sup>

By Magda Pescariu

Reading Michelle Obama’s memoir *Becoming* recently, I came across her story of bonding with Queen Elizabeth II over sore feet during her first dinner at Buckingham Palace, in 2009. Describing what was perceived as a breach of royal protocol, Michelle Obama revealed the reason why she put her arm around the Queen’s shoulder. She said the monarch commented on how tall she was and suggested her shoes (a pair of black Jimmy Choos) must be painful. The First Lady acknowledged that her feet hurt, to which the Queen admitted that her feet, clad in black pumps, hurt, too, and reciprocated the gesture as they stood side by side. The story offered an insight of unexpected authenticity and matter-of-factness: two women in positions of power able to talk about “blessedly normal subjects” and connect over a grumble about their uncomfortable yet de rigueur fashion choices. I pondered the idea from a different angle – has the way powerful women express themselves changed in the last decade? And how has the fashion industry managed to adjust to the ever-shifting social paradigm?

I brought up both subjects in a conversation I had with costume designer Amy Roth, whose credits include films like *Motherless Brooklyn*, *Top Five*, *Two Night Stand*, and *Indignation*, as well as the TV shows *Mercy*, *Deception*, and *Madam Secretary* among others. The interview took place in November, around the time *Motherless Brooklyn* opened in movie theaters and *Madam Secretary* went into its sixth and final season.

**WML:** Thanks for being with us today, Amy. I confess that, besides chatting about your most recent work, I’d like to get your mindset on two very actual and controversial topics. First, about **how women in power (or just powerful women) choose to show, not tell their pull nowadays, and how the #MeToo paradigm informs these choices.**

**AR:** (laughs) Well, my question to you would be, what women in power are we speaking of?

**WML:** Let’s talk, for instance, about your costume design work for the CBS’s political drama *Madam Secretary*, something that you’ve done for the last six years. You changed the way powerful women are portrayed and perceived in terms of fashion style and managed to set new rules in Washington feminine power dressing. Watching the show’s main character’s style, a famous line from Margaret Thatcher kept coming to my mind: **“Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren’t.”** Please comment on the way you dressed Téa Leoni’s character (Secretary of State Elizabeth McCord) and her style choices.

**AR:** Much too often women believe that they have to dress like men in order to show their power, or be perceived as powerful.



Queen Elizabeth II and Michelle Obama, Buckingham Palace, 2009  
(Photo by Daniel Hambury, AP)

<sup>1</sup> “Keep your heels, head, and standards high.” — Coco Chanel





Gugu Mbatha-Raw (L) and Cherry Jones in a scene from *Motherless Brooklyn*



Téa Leoni (L) and Bebe Neuwirth in a scene from *Madam Secretary*

Personally, I think that the more we manage to preserve our femininity and exude confidence while in a position of power, the more we build into the fabric of society the idea that the ability to lead and exercise good judgment in serious matters is not a matter of wearing pants.

**Today there is a certain shift in both projecting and perceiving power.** Women accede to leading positions without skipping a fashion beat, and they think power dressing in terms of practicality, casual elegance, progressive thinking, and healthy sensitivity. Jackets are shed, sleeves are rolled up; accessories are symbolic and non-gender-specific. None of the choices made for *Madam Secretary* was meaningless – the show reflects the new reality.

We dressed Téa like a person you could actually meet in real life. We used strategically the colors that attract attention – red and white, like women in power use every day. I firmly believe that when women dress in colors, defining a soft silhouette, underlining their femininity – they present a forceful image of power that men find threatening. **We realize nowadays that once they command the spotlight, women have a lot to say and they are beautiful doing it. We shouldn't be ashamed by this power.** Truth is nude bras are depressing and blah. Whereas a black lace bra speaks volumes in a language of confidence and zest – it's Fashion 101.

**WML:** Your most recent work for film is costume designing for Edward Norton's *Motherless Brooklyn*, an adaptation of Jonathan Lethem's novel in a film noir that took Norton 19 years to bring to life. *Motherless Brooklyn* reaches back in time to explore racism and New York City's history of the '50s, while it also brings us urgently back to right now – the movie could be construed as a Trump parable. **How did you do approach costume designing for *Motherless Brooklyn*?**

**AR:** We had to portray an African American woman in her twenties, not married, a professional - so we speak about a feminist character in the '50s. Fortunately, actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw is the perfect choice for Laura Rose. She is not only a true lady in life, but also a powerful woman without having to say it. We've been careful in dressing her in sync with her times, realistically, in the working style of the '50s – but her performance elevated everything to a brand new level.

**She is the strongest character in the movie, in fact; the man doesn't rescue her, not at all.** A black woman and a white man - they end up falling in love as equals. **Creating realistic portraits for the characters drew the audience toward our story and made it believable.** When I first read *Motherless Brooklyn*, I was impressed with the dire circumstances our country faced at that time. The fact that as a costume designer I could create a period piece and depict the story realistically, as bleak as it truly was (instead of looking back at it through rosy eye-glasses) – was meaningful and it was lots of fun.

**WML:** The other topic I mentioned came up in fall, when the **Spring-Summer 2020 collections** were introduced to the world. They offered plenty of excitement in both fashion and scandal. **Gucci**, for instance, **displayed**



Téa Leoni in *Madam Secretary*



Gugu Mbatha-Raw in *Motherless Brooklyn*

Photo editing by Dumitru Andrei | Photo Credits: Courtesy of CBS (for *Madam Secretary*) \* Warner Bros. Pictures – Glen Wilson (for *Motherless Brooklyn*) \* Splash News (Sienna Miller) \* NPR.org (Melania Trump) \* Gucci.com (Ayesha Tan-Jones) \* Storyline PR, Marilyn Lintel (Costume Designer Amy Roth)



straight-jackets as “fashion” on models carried down the runway on a conveyor belt, prompting a silent protest from model Ayesha Tan-Jones. Other brands blundered on cultural appropriation, showed aspects of white supremacy and privilege, racism or nationalism. Of course, nothing was really new. Sometimes big fashion brands go for the old “there is no such thing as bad publicity” philosophy and behave, as a critic aptly described, “like that drunk uncle at family functions constantly making inappropriate remarks and lewd actions, but always apologizing afterwards trying to make it ok”.

On the other hand, some of the fashion industry’s biggest names claim that an over-the-top, demagogic **political correctness threatens to become a social “tyranny”**, as it stifles creativity and innovation. Saint Laurent’s Anthony Vaccarello told AFP on the eve of Paris fashion week that a “witch-hunt atmosphere” has taken over the industry, making it “impossible” to even have an opinion that goes against the mainstream.

My question is, **in a society increasingly confused between the pressure of political correctness gone awry and the embarrassment of culturally tone-deaf creative episodes, can fashion uphold its relevance?**

**AR:** If we talk about PC in terms of sexual harassment, I think that women want to be able to focus on their lives without any distraction that is so emotional and time consuming. Is it going to the extremes these days? Most likely. However, when things



Sienna Miller,  
New York, 2019

Ayesha Tan-Jones,  
Gucci SS20 Show

Melania Trump,  
Texas, 2018

have been bent so far in one direction, it will definitely take a lot of time, scrutiny, recognition, and stretching to the opposite direction, in order to finally reach the balance point. **It is difficult to decide what is “too far” for a group of people when you are not part of that group.** The best you can do is to give them a voice and listen unbiasedly to what they have to say. Because I work in an industry defined by diversity, a diversity of minority, as well as defined by a long-standing bro-culture, I think **we cannot afford to cherry-pick our moments of judgment or tolerance.** We need to act at all times with the big picture outlook. There’s poison in the water and we are thirsty as hell.

I think **fashion will always be relevant.** It is, first of all, a great way to express ourselves. And even if the fashion statements we make are not loved and appreciated by everyone else, and other people voice through fashion their completely different views, **fashion helps us see beyond the insincerity and inauthenticity** brought about by the PC pressure. That’s diversity, after all.

**WML:** You mentioned expressing our views through fashion and **Sienna Miller** came to my mind – an example of fashion furthering a political cause with the perfect design. As Britain struggles to resolve years of Brexit drama, Sienna Miller voiced her opinion loud and clear when she stepped out in New York

last November wearing a “**EUUnify**” hoodie by the Berlin art initiative König Souvenir. The actress turned a street style moment into a striking political statement, as the EUUnify sweatshirt features the colors of the EU flag and a broken circle of stars.

**AR:** And I immediately thought of **Melania Trump** and the jacket she wore during a trip to a migrant detention center in Texas. The message emblazoned on the back - “**I really don’t care. Do U?**” – would be fun when you read it in a Zara store. You’d say, yeah, I don’t really care about what other people say about me, I love myself as I am, what matters is who we really are... It’s such a fun, positive message. But when you wear it to visit a place where people have been displaced from their homes - I can’t comment on the audacity of that, but I think it gave us a window to see into her soul, and we saw it was vacant.

To me, **style is a state of mind.** It is also something **coming from within.**

**WML:** Your **best fashion advice?**

**AR:** *(laughs)* **Wear comfortable shoes.** You can look great, but if your feet are killing you, everything goes to hell.

**WML:** An advice worthy of a Queen.

If anyone knows of a better premise for always thinking on our feet, ladies, I’m all ears. 🍀



Costume Designer Amy Roth

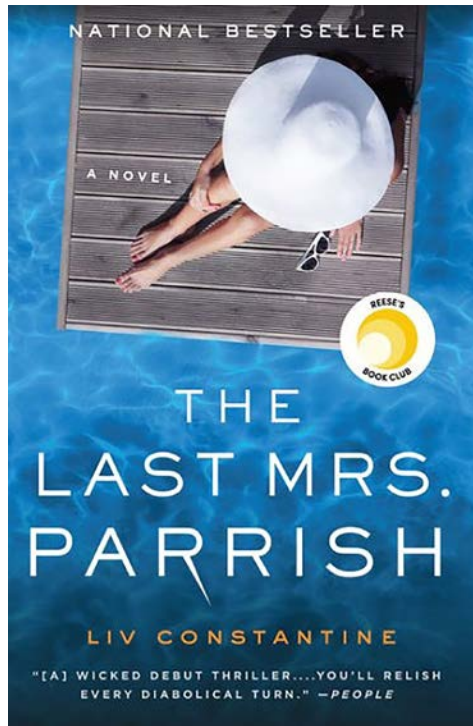


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# TRANSFORMING ORDINARY SPACES

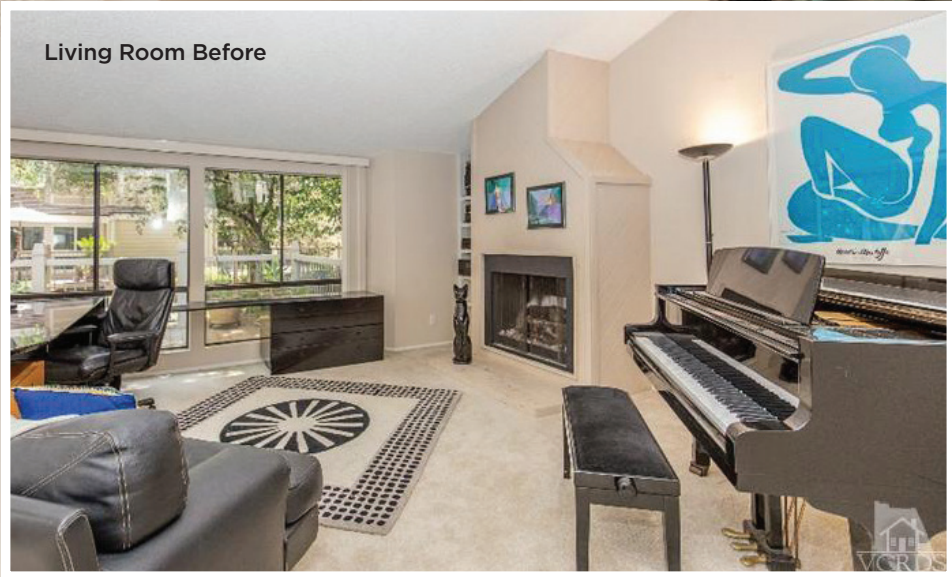
Ever since Suzy Graham - the dynamically talented owner of Bricks & Beams Home Décor - moved to Westlake Village, she wanted to live by the lake. When the opportunity presented itself to buy this fairly ordinary townhouse, she moved with speed in purchasing it because she could see its potential so clearly. Suzy was able to envision how to transform something ordinary into a place that could feel like home. Her inspiration was an East coast brownstone and she set about the transformation with vigor and imagination.

Bill Waesche Photography @bwaesche

Living Room After







Living Room Before





**S**ays Suzy, “I changed everything! This was an original unit so it needed a lot of updates and touches of character. When I walk through homes with my clients, I ask them about their desires and how they best would like to enjoy their space. I then try to get creative and present them with unique ideas they may not have come up with on their own. For me in this small space, I wanted to achieve the same result. Therefore, for instance, rather than have a formal dining room (on Pg 87) I decided to enclose this room, add black textured grass cloth to the walls, and turn it into a media room. It is the one



Suzy Graham





Transformation of the Fireplace area

When I walk through homes with my clients, I ask them about their desires and how they best would like to enjoy their space. I then try to get creative and present them with unique ideas they may not have come up with on their own.

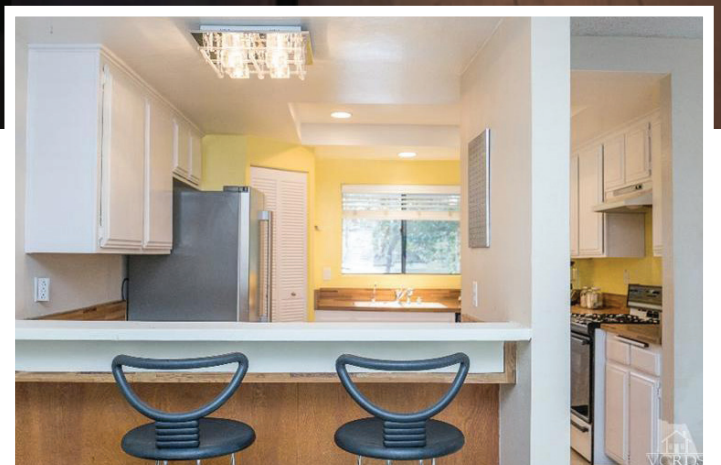


Kitchen After



room in the home that is used the most, unlike a formal dining room!”

“Not every remodel is a full remodel”, says Suzy. “I have the privilege of going into many homes and businesses in our community. Some of them have been full transformations like the recent full transformation of Mediterraneo restaurant at Westlake Village Inn, and others have been a single room remodel. The fun part for me is that I get to see



Kitchen Before



Media Room After



Dining Room Before



all the pieces come together after much planning, selecting, ordering and of course construction! In this particular project it was rewarding since every room needed to be updated, so it gave me an opportunity to get very creative with the space.

Suzy emphasizes, “What is important for everyone to know is that every home – no matter how big or how small – has the potential to be something really special.” 🌿

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- Master Suite with Sitting Area, Fireplace and Balcony
- Custom Pool and Spa
- Basketball Court
- Massive Manicured Lawns
- Located in the Heart of North Ranch on a Cul-De-Sac

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**BluesailEstate.com**  
**\$1,899,950**

- Located in Guard Gated Westlake Island
- Tremendous Water Front Location
- Panoramic Views
- Nearly 2,800 Square Feet
- 4 Bedrooms plus 3 Baths
- Upstairs Bonus Room

- Open Concept Living Room, Dining Room and Step Down Family Room
- Two Fireplaces
- Master with Vaulted Ceilings and Fireplace
- Rare Private Pool and Spa
- Private Dock and Boat

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**PathfinderEstate.com**  
**\$1,699,950**

- Single Story Floor Plan
- Nearly 3,300 Square Feet
- 4 Bedrooms plus 3.5 Baths
- Bonus Room
- Vaulted Ceilings
- Stellar Location in North Ranch
- Backs to the Arroyo

- Remarkable Setting
- Custom Pool and Spa
- Mature Landscape with 5 Oak Trees
- Detached 200 Square Foot Cottage
- Massive Manicured Lawns

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**474LakeSherwoodDrive.com**  
**\$5,995,000**

- Approx. 6,600 sq ft French-inspired home, magnificent views of Lake Sherwood
- 4 beds, 6 baths
- Beautifully landscaped grounds, expansive shoreline, private dock
- Family room, gourmet kitchen, breakfast room
- Formal living room & dining room
- Upper level master suite
- Additional 3 bedrooms, private baths
- Game room/theater, 3800-bottle wine cellar
- Infinity pool & spa, grassy play yard, vineyards, sports court, approx. 300 ft-wide premier lake lot



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Email [TeamNickiandKaren@Compass.com](mailto:TeamNickiandKaren@Compass.com)  
Nicki LaPorta 805-390-6591  
Karen Crystal 805-625-0304

Nicki CalBRE #012233940 / Karen CalBRE #01346860 / Compass DRE #01991628

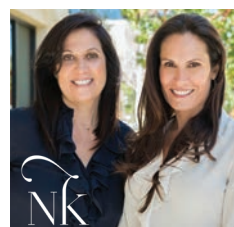




**2100TrenthamRoad.com**  
**\$4,895,000**

- Approx. 5,778 sq ft new contemporary, light-filled masterpiece on Lake Sherwood with panoramic views
- 4 beds 4.5 baths plus gym & elevator
- Great room, dining room, office, loft, elevator and smart lighting control

- State-of-the-art kitchen features Wolf range, carrera marble & custom second back kitchen
- 32" telescopic sliding pocket doors blend indoor/outdoor lifestyle
- Private dock: swim, boat, fish, kayak, paddle board

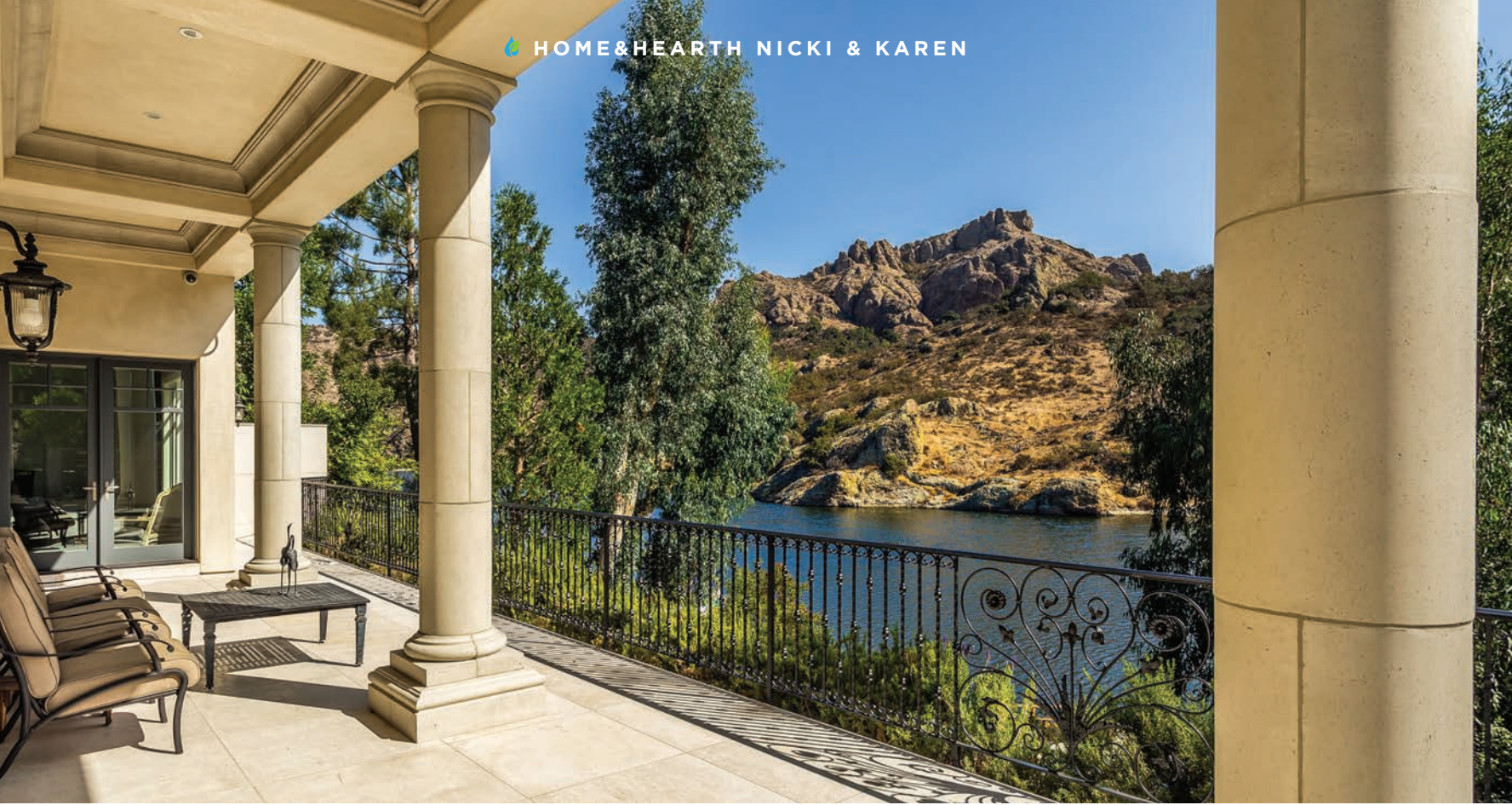


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**2112TrenthamRoad.com**  
**\$5,995,000**

- Approx. 7,782 sq ft luxury lakefront living in Chateau Sherwood
- Built 2016, designed by Ron Firestone
- Spacious, light-filled living
- Solid French white oak flooring
- Venetian handmade chandeliers
- 4 large bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms plus gym/sewing room
- Gourmet kitchen w/ Italian cabinetry
- Private boat dock, 10 HD security cameras



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**946WStafford.com**  
**\$3,995,000**

- Approx. 6,250 sq ft Estate, elegant remodel design in prestigious Lake Sherwood
- Chef's kitchen, double island, top appliances
- Breakfast room, family room w/ fireplace
- Wall length pocket doors, large patio, BBQ, fireplace, expansive grassy yard

- 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, separate guest quarters with private entrance
- Master suite with sitting room, kitchenette & mountain views from 2 balconies



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**3886CresthavenDrive.com**  
**\$2,795,000**

- Approx. 5,030 sq ft 5 bedroom Cape Cod-style remodeled North Ranch home on 1.86 acres
- Open floor plan, light, airy, casual living
- Gourmet kitchen, attached breakfast room & family

- Formal living room & dining room; office/library; guest room
- Grand entry staircase
- Master Suite, spa bathroom finishes, fireplace, huge walk-in closet.
- Upper level 3 secondary bedrooms & 1st floor Guest
- Pool, spa, firepit, breathtaking mountain views

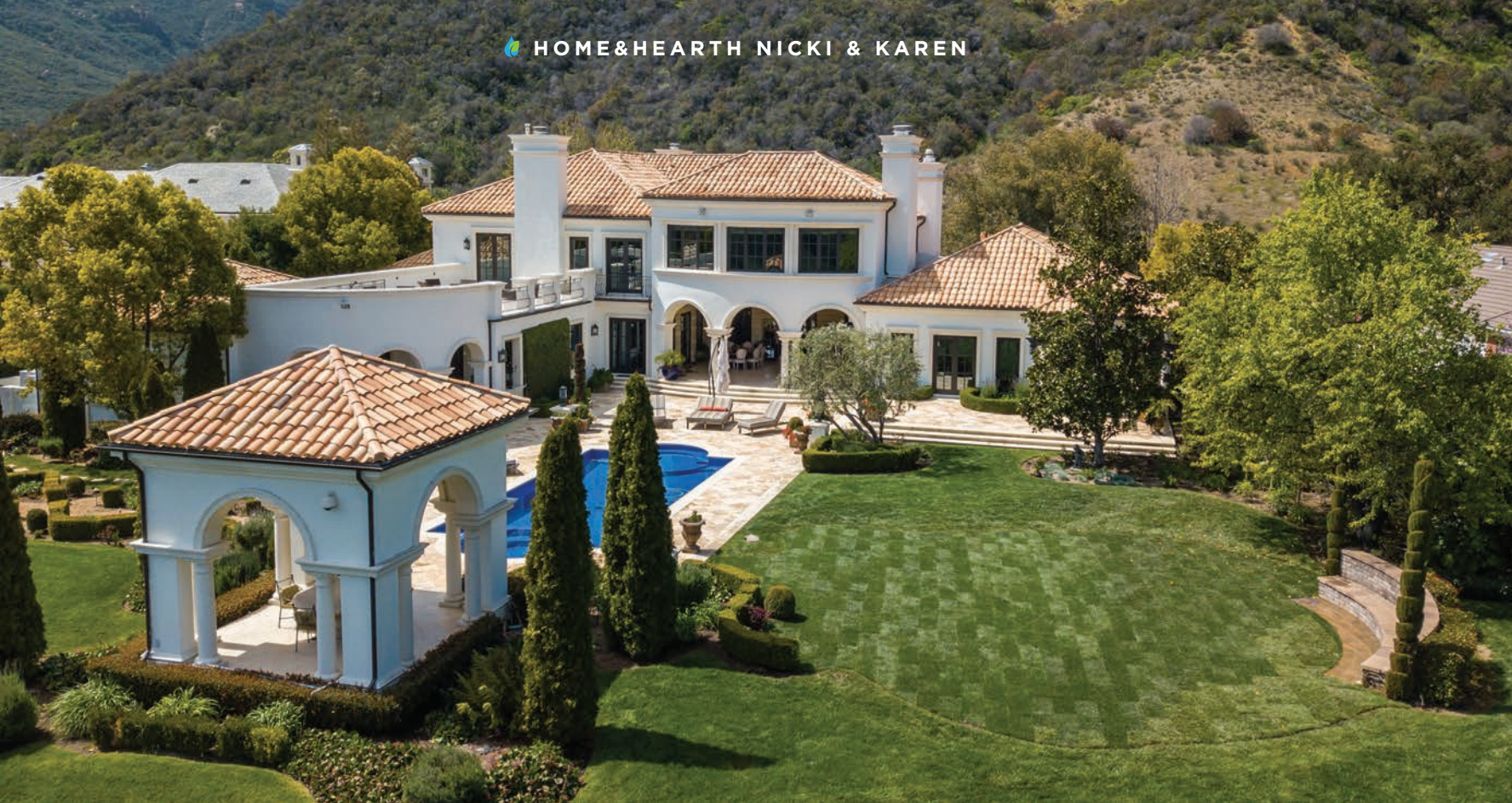


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**2658Ladbrookway.com**  
**\$6,995,000**

- Approx. 8,380 sq ft Guard Gtd Lake Sherwood Italian Villa, premier acre lot, unobstructed views
- 4 Beds, 8 Baths, grand 2-story entry, Game Room & Theater
- Great room w/ soaring ceilings, magnificent fireplace

- Gourmet kitchen opens to family rm
- Grand formal dining room, temp controlled wine wall
- Pool, pavilion, outdoor kitchen, gardens, spectacular covered patio w fireplace, fire pit + massive manicured lawns
- Main floor master suite



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# Taxes and Relocating in Retirement: What to Think About Now

**Y**ou could call it an unintended consequence of the 2017 tax law: People in high-tax states may have one more incentive to relocate in retirement.

The law capped allowable state and local tax deductions, including property tax, at \$10,000 (for individuals and married couples, filing jointly). “As a result, people who live in states with high taxes, such as New Jersey, New York or California, may no longer be able to deduct all of their state taxes paid on their federal return,” says Vinay Navani, CPA and shareholder at WilkinGuttenplan. Because of that, some are finding that they owe more in federal income tax.

“If you live in a high-tax state and are considering relocating in retirement, it could make financial sense to move to one that would reduce your tax liability,” Navani adds. Taxes are one of the many

financial considerations you’ll want to weigh as you plan ahead to cover your expenses in retirement.

A lot of people looking to reduce their month-to-month retirement expenses gravitate toward states without an individual income tax. Currently, seven states belong in that category: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming. New Hampshire and Tennessee don’t tax personal wages, but they do tax some investment income.

Of course, there are plenty of other reasons for people nearing retirement to explore relocating, says Bill Hunter, director, Personal Retirement Strategy and Solutions, at Bank of America. “You may want to move closer to family, or live in a warmer climate, for instance. But the financial implications of your choice should play a large role as you begin to plan your retirement budget.”

Before you start scanning the real estate listings for Fairbanks or Fort Worth, here are a couple of other tax-related factors you might want to think about.

## YOUR COST OF LIVING COULD BE HIGHER IN A LOW-TAX STATE.

“You can’t look at relocating in a tax vacuum,” notes Navani. Look at the overall prices in the area where you’re considering relocating—everything from utilities to groceries to health-care costs.

## LOW-TAX STATES CAN MAKE UP FOR LOST REVENUE IN OTHER WAYS THAT COULD IMPACT YOUR BUDGET.

Several of the states without an individual income tax compensate by implementing higher state sales or other taxes, including taxes on necessities such as gasoline, or charging more for state services such as driver’s licenses or car registrations. Those hidden costs could have a real impact on your budget.

“One way to get a clearer idea of the tax implications of relocating is to ask your tax professional to run a projection of what your tax picture might look like in the new location,” Navani suggests.

In addition to consulting a tax expert, be sure to consult with your financial advisor for help in managing the costs of relocating, as well as your bigger financial picture, Hunter adds. “Speaking with an advisor can help give you a sense of how your expenses and income could shape your lifestyle if you decide to move.”

Source: World Population Review, “States With No Income Tax 2019”



**For more information, contact Merrill Financial Advisor Ray DiBartolomeo of the Thousand Oaks, California office at 1.805.381.1473 or [ray.o.dibartolomeo@ml.com](mailto:ray.o.dibartolomeo@ml.com).**

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# NORTHERN ITALY

LAND OF THE DOLOMITES

NARRATION & PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT BLATT & LISA BERCH







N

orthern Italy is a majestic region that is mesmerizingly beautiful and less traveled than southern Italy. The Dolomites are in northern Italy, slung across the border of Austria between the two Italian provinces of Trentino and Alto Adige. They cover some 350,000 acres. It's an expansive region, encompassing 18 major peaks and a number of charming mountain towns.





### **CORTINA D'AMPEZZO**

We began our trip in the quaint town of Cortina d'Ampezzo, which is a great central place to start. It is a ski resort in northern Italy and part of the Dolomiti Superski area, which encompasses the Falzarego Pass, with its downhill runs. Sites from the 1956 Winter Games held in Cortina include the Ice Stadium and the Eugenio Monti bobsleigh run. A number of world winter sports events are held here. Cortina will co-host the 2026 Winter Olympics with Milan.

### **TRE CIME AND RIFUGIO NUVOLAU**

The Tre Cime di Lavaredo is one of the Dolomites' iconic hikes.

Three massive rocky prominences rise up from the rolling scenery of the Dolomites, surrounded by amazing views and, during the summer months, wildflowers. This is a relatively easy hike and is great for active kids, so if you are here on a family vacation and want to add a Dolomite hike to your Italian itinerary, this is a great one to consider.

As we hiked this region we were blown away by the beauty. We reached Rifugio Nuvolau where we spent the night at a mountain hut <https://www.caicortina.org/rifugio-nuvolau>. It is open from June to late September. The peaks lie on the border between the Italian provinces of South Tyrol and Belluno.

St. Magdalena Village in Funes Valley in South Tyrol





Varenna is a humble, rustic, quiet little town that is far less touristy. It offers a more authentic window into the life of Como Lake locals. In my opinion, it is the prettiest of all the Lake Como villages.

(BELOW) Town of Varenna on Lake Como







Chiesetta di San Giovanni in Ranui in Funes Valley in South Tyrol





### SOUTH TYROL

Another region we hiked is South Tyrol in north-east Italy. We stayed in a German-speaking village with breath-taking views of the Dolomites. The ski resort of Kronplatz (Plan de Corones) has trails and slopes, plus a cable car to the top of Mount Kronplatz.

### ACTIVITIES

**Landscape Viewing:** The pictures don't do justice to actually being there. Its beauty is stunning.

**Hiking:** The hiking trails in these regions are some of the best in the world, mostly because of the dramatic topography and immense beauty. If hiking is something you enjoy, this area will exceed your expectations.

**Biking:** There are well-laid-out bike routes in the area. Hundreds of cyclists ride through these passes.

**Old Churches:** There are so many beautiful old churches in this region with hundreds of years of history attached to them.

**Cultural Experiences:** Each valley has its own language and culture – be it Italian or German. The food changes with the predominant language, creating an extra interesting cultural experience.

### LAKE COMO: 5 BEST TOWNS

We took a water taxi across exquisite Lake Como, which sits at the foot of the Alps. George Clooney has a lakeside residence on Como. The Y-shaped lake has long been topping lists of the best places to visit in Italy, and for good reason. The lake is not only a gorgeous natural wonder, but its banks are lined with picturesque old towns and villages that offer fairytale scenery, gorgeous lake-front promenades, and exceptional views. It's a perfect spot for a romantic getaway.

Traveling from Varenna to Bellagio on our boat taxi on Lake Como







Scott Blatt

We did over-night stays at **Bellagio** and **Varenna** – both charming stopover towns. Bellagio is set against the foothills of the Alps and is beautiful and glamorous with an array of restaurant choices. Varenna is a humble, rustic, quiet little town that is far less touristy. It offers a more authentic window into the life of Como Lake locals. In my opinion, it is the

prettiest of all the Lake Como villages.

**Mediavine** is stunning with amazing panoramic views. You can spend time walking the picturesque streets, strolling along the waterfront promenade, admiring the Villa Melzi gardens, swimming in the lake or kayaking along its surface. Whilst you are in Mediavine, do make sure you sit down for a meal at La Grotta. It

was a local recommendation and we loved it. If you have transport, you might like to book a table at Trattoria Baita Belvedere which has lovely views over the lake. Hotel Du Lac is a very popular family-run hotel with some rooms with balconies and other rooms with lake views.

**Menaggio** is another attractive resort on the western shore of Lake Como. It is a perfect spot for outdoor enthusiasts who may be tempted by wind surfing and water-skiing on the lake.

**Lenno** is a quiet village worth a visit. It has the sumptuous Villa del Balbianello, one of the greatest villas on the lake. It is famous for its gardens and for being the setting on one of George Lucas' Star Wars movie scenes: Star Wars Episode II – Attack of the Clones (2002).

This was one of our most memorable trips, for sure. Book your trip. You won't be disappointed. 🌿







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