

Compliments of Chris Holcomb

start HEALTHY

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Fetching Hope

*The healing power of
canine friends*

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Dear Readers,

There's nothing quite like the love of a pet. They bring so much joy to our lives, and owning one actually comes with some significant health benefits. This issue of Start Healthy celebrates all the ways our pets make us whole, including tips for dealing with their anxieties while we're away, a profile on dogs bringing joy to those who need it most, and insights from social media's favorite dog-training couple.

If you're dealing with destructive and upsetting behavior from your pet when you leave the house, you're probably not alone. Luckily, there are a few tactics you can employ to help ease their stress and yours. Find out how inside.

Dogs have heightened senses of emotion, making them perfectly adept at bringing healing and comfort to those in need. Be sure to read the heartwarming story in this issue that highlights the powerful work and impact one canine unit has on hospital patients.

Doug and Elizabeth Simpson, owners of Tenderfoot Training in Colorado, have perfected the art of natural dog training. Enclosed are their top tips for making use of their method with your own pet so you can form a lasting and loving bond.

We are looking forward to our upcoming webinar on July 30, where we will discuss the smart approaches to long term care planning for people at all stages. Please see the back inside cover of this magazine for more information. We hope you can join us!

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Dogonality: How to Train Your Dog

Trainers Doug and Elizabeth Simpson reveal how to truly understand your pet.

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how to

written by: matthew brady

Ease Pet Separation Anxiety



As much fun as spending time with your pet can be, the sadness of being away from them can be equally as strong. And this feeling can be even worse for them, with dogs being particularly vulnerable to it. Here are some ways to make the situation more manageable so you can both feel at ease during your time apart.

KNOW THE SIGNS

Before you can find a solution, you first need to recognize the problem. If your pet seems particularly nervous (pacing, whining, or drooling for dogs; meowing or crying for cats) or is exhibiting negative behaviors such as destroying items or having accidents, it may be an indication of separation anxiety.

TAKE PREVENTATIVE STEPS

Get them accustomed to being alone

This tip mostly applies to canines, who tend to be clingier, but may also help felines. Leave them to themselves for a short while to start (how short will depend on your current level of interaction), and gradually increase their solitary time. And don't make a fuss when you exit and return home. (For more details about this method, go to page 19.)

Keep comfort close

Make sure that your pet's favorite toys are easily accessible to provide not only familiarity and comfort but also a distraction to help them pass the time. Also, scatter about things with your scent, such as clothes or shoes, to make them feel closer to you.

Create calm

If your dog is protective of your home, you might want to keep your curtains closed to reduce their agitation. In contrast, cats often like surveying the outside world. If possible, give your pet their own room they can escape to, and consider leaving a soothing sound playing, such as white noise or music—just verify that they respond well to it before heading out.

Be sure to contact your veterinarian if you think your pet is struggling with separation anxiety.

start HEALTHY



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***FETCH**ing Hope*



Erin Shaffer and Becky

Erin Shaffer, a child life specialist at Prisma Health Children’s Hospital–Upstate in Greenville, South Carolina, offers a closer look at the hospital’s canine unit, FETCH (Friends Encouraging Therapeutic Coping and Healing).

Tell us about FETCH: The idea for the canine FETCH unit came from some of our specialists, who had heard about other hospital systems that were incorporating facility dogs. They did the initial research and were able to start with just two dogs in 2016. It’s since grown into a team of seven trained service dogs that each work alongside a handler to provide goal-oriented interventions. It’s made a huge difference for the patients and their families and the whole health-care system here.

How did you get Becky, your facility dog? I was a child life specialist here at Prisma Health from 2005 to 2017. I worked in pre-op surgery and was very interested in getting a facility dog when the FETCH unit started, but I ended up moving to Pennsylvania, where I coincidentally became a primary facility-dog handler at Penn State Health for Becky. When I had the opportunity, I moved back to Greenville with my family in 2022, and I was able to bring Becky with me to Prisma Health, where I utilize her in my current role in pre-op.

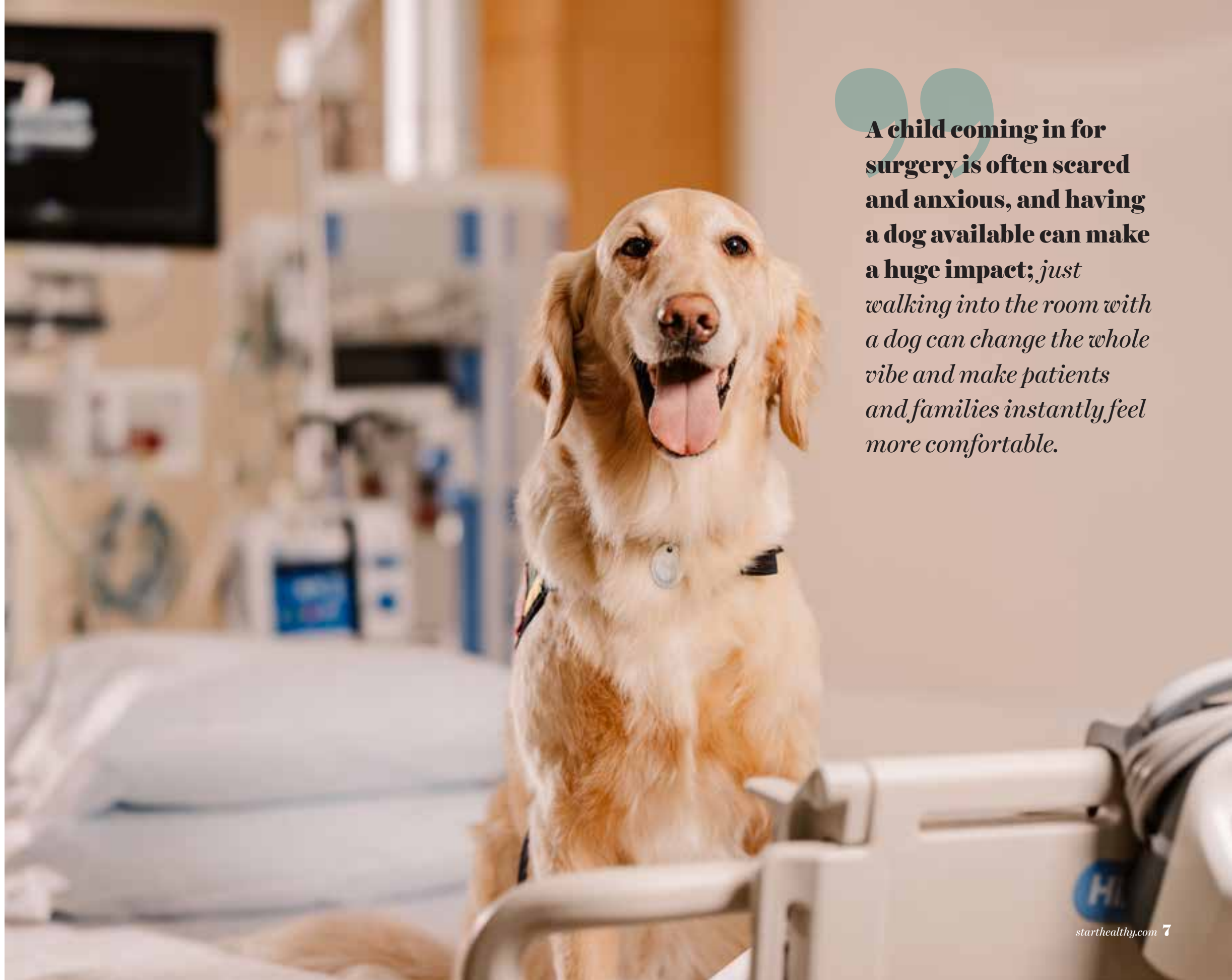
Are all the handlers hospital staff? Yes, our handlers have to be employed by the hospital system. We typically have a primary handler and a secondary handler. The primary handler’s role is to be the dog’s main caregiver. Each dog lives with their primary handler, so Becky lives with me and

my family and comes to work when I do. The secondary handlers can also work with the dogs, using them alongside their roles at the hospital; they just don't take them home at the end of the day.

What are the benefits of facility dogs? We always say our facility dogs are like tools in our toolbox. We utilize them with a specific goal in mind. In pre-op surgery, my job is to help patients and families understand the process. I work directly with the child, explaining to them at their developmental level what is going to happen while incorporating Becky alongside what I do. A child coming in for surgery is often scared and anxious, and having a dog available can make a huge impact; just walking into the room with a dog can change the whole vibe and make patients and families instantly feel more comfortable. I also use her for demonstrations, such as by putting an anesthesia mask or blood pressure cuff on her. Seeing a dog wear those things makes it a little less scary for children.

Similarly, I use Becky to encourage kids to take their medicine if they're having a hard time by demonstrating how she takes her "medicine" (which is just water or apple juice in a syringe)—this shows them it doesn't hurt and that if Becky can do it, they can do it too. She and I sometimes cotreat with other disciplines like physical therapy to help motivate the child to do what the doctors need them to do; with a dog, it can feel more like playtime and less like work.

Do the dogs only work with kids? Several of them, including Becky, work primarily with children and their families. But we do have some dogs that help in the adult population. For example, a chaplain, a certified orthotist, and a member of our psych department all work alongside specific facility dogs.



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Will you tell us about a time when Becky made a noticeable difference with a patient? When I was at Penn State Health, I worked with hematology-oncology patients, and there was one child who had a new brain tumor diagnosis. She was really having a difficult time adjusting to all the procedures and being sick all the time. When I would bring Becky into the room, it would instantly lift her up and bring her joy. We would often do medical play, where she'd handle the equipment or do a checkup on Becky. It helped her become more comfortable with that equipment while she was in the hospital since she could interact with it in a nonthreatening way.

Do you see differences in Becky's interactions with patients versus when she's at home? Definitely. At home, she's relaxed and loves food—she's always on when there's food around. [Laughs] I can also see how she adjusts her responses based on the situation. If she's in the ICU with a child who's intubated, she will get on the bed and lay still beside them. However, when she's at home, she's more active on our bed. She just knows how to act based on the needs of the room.

Do you think Becky enjoys her job? Dogs do need downtime and rest throughout the day; after all, your pet at home is probably sleeping most of the time while you're at work. But ours don't get a chance to do that. So in our training, they teach us to be mindful of their cues and give them time to take naps or even just a break, especially if they've been exposed to a more stressful experience. But overall, I think Becky loves to see people when she comes to work. It's like her coworkers are here, too, since she gets to play with the other facility dogs.

For more info, visit prismahealthupstategiving.org/fetch





This summer, Paris is adorning itself in colorful rings and international flags as athletes flock to the City of Lights for the world's greatest competitive celebration: the Olympic Games. Javelins will fly, cyclists and sprinters will blur their way to finish lines, and teams of top athletes will go head-to-head to win gold for their countries. Witnessing such displays of human excellence can be awe-inspiring—and may even fuel you to join the fun by picking up a sport yourself.

However, leaping full force into a new physical activity may not be the best course of action. After all, Olympians go through months of well-measured, intentionally planned exercise regimens before hurling themselves over high-jump bars or diving into pools from dizzying heights. So whether you want to become a workout warrior or have just a casual interest in stepping up your sports participation, be sure that you train the right way. Follow this guide to kick off your new athletic hobby, stay healthy as you develop your skills, and enjoy the most benefits from your routine.

Identify your aim

Unless you are a teenager in top form, it's likely too late to realize any Olympic ambitions, but you can still set lofty goals. Maybe you want to join a competitive sports league in your town, reach a measurable target such as lifting a certain weight, or feel a little more confident in your skin. Or perhaps you simply want to add some extra recreation to your life.



Reflect on what you want to get out of your new athletic activity: better health, entertainment, or a specific achievement. Identifying and embracing this motivation can help you stay active and stick to your goals.

Talk to your doctor—no, really

You may often hear this recommendation before starting a new exercise routine, but it isn't just a common legal disclaimer; it's solid advice that can help protect you from harm. Any sort of physical activity will apply stress to your body, so visit your doctor before you hit the gym, road, or field—even if you think you're in impeccable health—for their advice on what you can reasonably endure.

A family doctor or internist is a smart first contact. If you also have specialist providers in your health-care rotation, such as a cardiologist, physical therapist, or pain-management doctor, ask your primary care physician if you need clearance from these professionals as well.

Be up front with your intentions. Inform your health-care provider that you're beginning a new fitness program and need their blessing. (Don't be surprised if they seem thrilled with your news; according to the CDC, only half of adults engage in enough physical activity to help reduce or prevent chronic health conditions.) Ask for a preventative physical exam, and then request a review of your medical history, family health history, and any current symptoms. You may need to undergo further testing, such as a cardiac stress test, depending on your unique health needs.



Once your health-care provider determines what you can safely handle and where you should set limits, take their advice to heart. Regardless of how well you may feel, some conditions, like diabetes or asthma, can make overdoing sports participation dangerous. If your doctor recommends against certain activities or degrees of activity—for example, training every day—listen to them. Being practical now is better than risking injury later.

Train like a beginner

Don't force yourself to contend with the pinnacle of athletic performance at the jump. Start with small, reasonable goals rather than Olympic-sized ones. If you want to participate in a half-marathon, for instance, build a plan that includes shorter

runs that progress in length until you can endure the full route. Or if you want to become a skilled tennis player, begin by growing comfortable with a racket and practicing the basic footwork. Working toward these smaller goals will help form the foundation of your future victories.

Always train safely

Remember to warm up for a few minutes before you begin exercising, stay hydrated during your practice, limit your sun exposure, and cool down for a few minutes after you finish. Listen to your body, and stop if you experience pain or serious discomfort. As Healthline says, "Working out harder and faster is not necessarily better. Taking your time to progress through your fitness program can help you



maintain your routine in the long term and make the most of it." Step up the intensity or frequency of your activity in intervals, but stay attuned to what your body can handle.

If you want to go a step further, work with a fitness coach or sign up for beginner classes in your area. A professional can help you challenge yourself safely and polish your skills more quickly.

Keep at it

Track your progress in a fitness app like Apple Health or Samsung Health, and take note of your improvements as they happen. You might notice your endurance increasing and your abilities refining. With enough commitment, you may see your three-point shots falling a little easier on the basketball court or your overhand volleyball serve becoming harder to return.

However, if results aren't coming as swiftly as you'd like, have patience. It's natural to feel frustrated or discouraged when you experience obstacles to your success. As a swimmer, for instance, you might find that the butterfly

stroke is difficult to nail and drains your energy quickly. But instead of holding yourself to the standards of top athletes or comparing yourself to peers with more experience, reflect on your own improvement and focus on your successes, even if they are as simple as showing up to practice three times a week.

Whatever you do, continue working at it as often as you can. Progress may be slow, but it is achievable.

Enjoy the process

Finally, remember to have fun. You're choosing this activity willingly, so if you feel that a sport tests your endurance limits too rigorously or has lost its luster, don't feel forced to prolong your involvement any further. There are many ways to be healthy and active—in fact, research suggests that even basic recreational activities like walking can be excellent forms of exercise.

You may not earn medals for these events, but living an active, healthy lifestyle centered on activities you love is more valuable than gold.

Dogonality:

how to train your dog

interview with: *doug and elizabeth simpson*

written by: *lauren kim*

photos by: *getty images, unless noted*

Doug and Elizabeth Simpson of Tenderfoot Natural Dog Training in Boulder, Colorado, aim to help people develop deeper relationships with their dogs through natural communication. Here they share how to train yours and understand their unique personality—or “dogonality.”



photo courtesy of: *doug and elizabeth simpson*

How long have you been training dogs? *Elizabeth:* Practically all our lives. We both had experience working with various animals, and when we got married, we immediately filled our home with them. Our methodology can be used with all sorts of animals, including cats, horses, dogs, birds, and llamas, because they all speak the same language.

What is “dogonality,” and how does it affect training? *Doug:* It’s a dog’s personality—whether they’re an introvert or extrovert, tenacious or sensitive. Once you know your dog’s dogonality, you can target their training. For instance, you can focus on teaching a reactive dog impulse control or a boisterous one how to be calm and patient.

Would you describe your dog-training philosophy? *Elizabeth:* It’s founded on love, trust, and respect. We focus on relationship training, which requires setting rules and boundaries like a parent does with a child. Loving your dog is easy; gaining their trust and respect requires continuously earning it for the duration of your relationship. That relationship will fall apart if you don’t build these essentials. Our Tenderfoot 3-Step drills teach our clients the leadership and relationship skills they need to create better connections with their dogs.

Doug: Don’t base training on food, painful devices, or fear. You shouldn’t do anything to your dog that causes pain; it’s

not a good way to learn, and you'll lose a lot of trust. When your dog wants to jump, bolt, or chase, they should defer to you before they react. And then, when they do what you ask, they'll naturally be rewarded with an influx of feel-good chemicals like serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin.

You say not to base training on food. Does that include treats? Elizabeth: Yes. You are the treat—your warmth, loving touch, and kind tones mean the world to

your dog. When animals interact, they don't give each other treats for a job well done; that is a human construct. Instead, they have relationships that establish who's the leader (decision-maker) and who are the followers. When you're more present with your dog, they'll look to you for answers.

Doug: It is OK to give them a treat now and then. But you don't want to be a vending machine by doing so all the time. If your dog is working for food instead of for you, they might not listen if you don't have food in your hands.

It sounds like dog owners also need training themselves. Doug: They do—it starts with them.

Elizabeth: Dogs can't change their behavior unless you change yours. Everything they do reflects your dog-owner

relationship. For instance, if you want to teach them patience, you must have patience too.

When is it best to start training a dog? Doug: As soon as you get them.

Elizabeth: You must establish ground rules when you welcome them into your home. Knowing what they can and can't do will help them feel safe.

You don't recommend adopting more than one puppy at once. Why? Doug: Having two puppies is basically ten times the work of having one dog. It's better to adopt one puppy and wait up to a year before getting another one. If you already have a well-trained dog before bringing home another one, your older dog can teach the younger one.

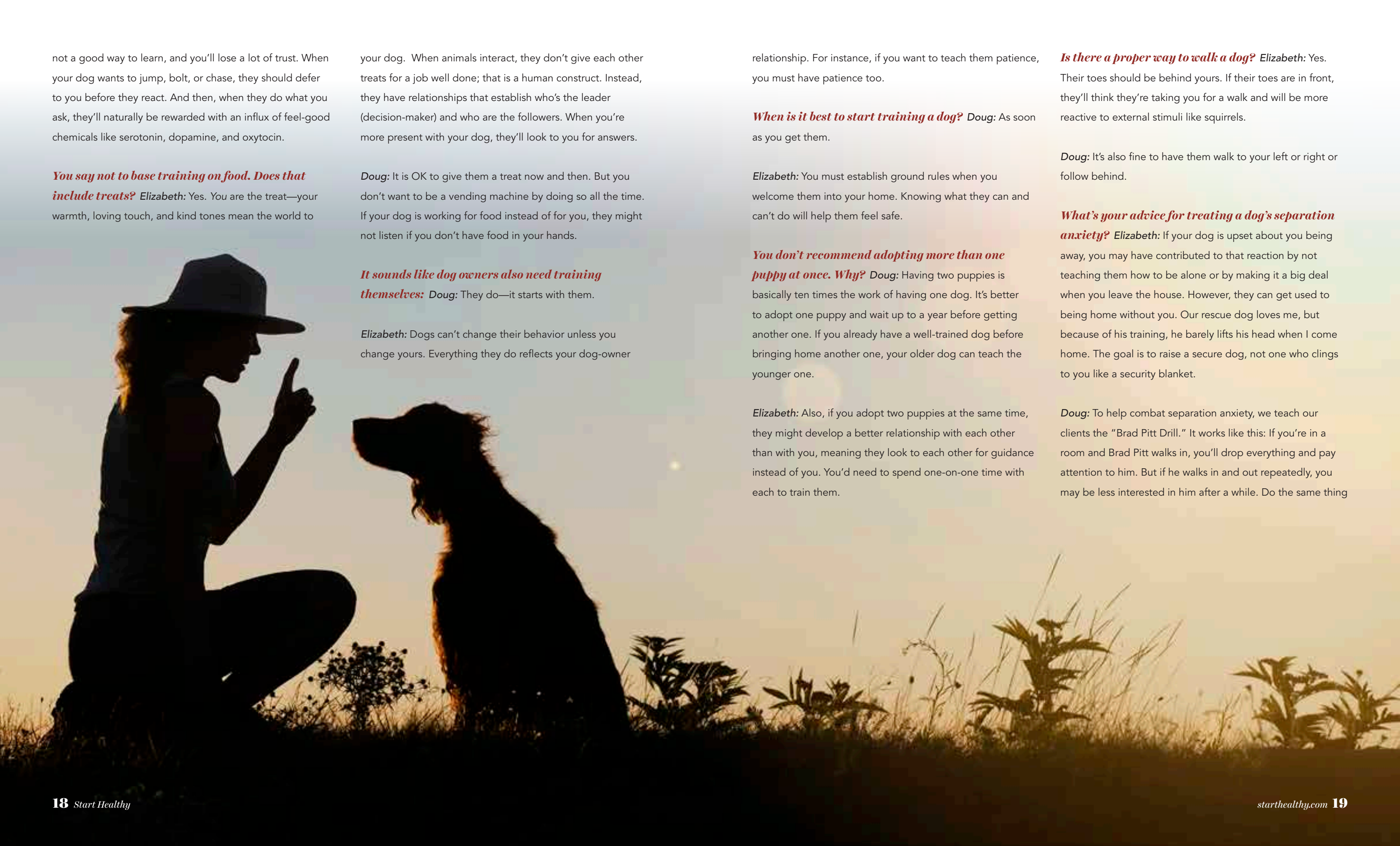
Elizabeth: Also, if you adopt two puppies at the same time, they might develop a better relationship with each other than with you, meaning they look to each other for guidance instead of you. You'd need to spend one-on-one time with each to train them.

Is there a proper way to walk a dog? Elizabeth: Yes. Their toes should be behind yours. If their toes are in front, they'll think they're taking you for a walk and will be more reactive to external stimuli like squirrels.

Doug: It's also fine to have them walk to your left or right or follow behind.

What's your advice for treating a dog's separation anxiety? Elizabeth: If your dog is upset about you being away, you may have contributed to that reaction by not teaching them how to be alone or by making it a big deal when you leave the house. However, they can get used to being home without you. Our rescue dog loves me, but because of his training, he barely lifts his head when I come home. The goal is to raise a secure dog, not one who clings to you like a security blanket.

Doug: To help combat separation anxiety, we teach our clients the "Brad Pitt Drill." It works like this: If you're in a room and Brad Pitt walks in, you'll drop everything and pay attention to him. But if he walks in and out repeatedly, you may be less interested in him after a while. Do the same thing





with your dog—step outside, wait ten seconds, and then come back in without acknowledging them. Do this a few times more, lengthening how long you're away each time. Eventually, you can come and go without upsetting them.

What's your best training secret? Elizabeth:

We teach people how to read their dog. Eye contact, breathing, stance, the ears, the mouth, the tail, focus, energy, intention—it all matters.

Doug: When you understand your dog's body language, you can predict their actions and will know, for example, that they're going to jump before they do.

For more info, follow them on Instagram

@tenderfoot_training

or visit **tenderfoottraining.com**

or **facebook.com/tenderfoottraining**



simple, scrumptious Summer Recipes

recipes by: leah su quiroga and cammie kim lin photography by: molly decoudreaux



© (Serious) New Cook by Leah Su Quiroga and Cammie Kim Lin, Rizzoli New York, 2022. All photography ©Molly DeCoudreaux



For new cooks, the kitchen can be intimidating. But these recipes from *(Serious) New Cook* are designed to make the process easier—and the results delicious. Try them out this summer to delight both family and friends.

lemon-apple Fizz

MAKES 2 MEDIUM OR 3 SMALL GLASSES

Nothing beats a cold, fizzy, homemade drink when you want a refreshing thirst-quencher. This Lemon-Apple Fizz is about as refreshing as it gets! Sweet, bright, and herbaceous, it's topped off with a splash of soda or seltzer that adds to the refreshing zip, each tiny bubble really bringing out the flavor.

measure

- Lemon, 1 large and juicy or 2 if small and/or dry-ish (Meyer lemon is especially good in this!)
- Apple juice or cider, 2 cups
- Honey, 1 tablespoon (or substitute sugar or agave)
- Fresh basil, 3 leaves (or use fresh mint)
- Ice
- Seltzer, club soda, or sparkling water, a splash per glass

make

- 1. Prep the lemon:** Slice two nice rounds of lemon and set aside to use as a garnish. Then, squeeze the remaining lemon into a blender. (One good way to strain out the seeds is to squeeze it over a small strainer—but you can use whatever you have, including your fingers!)
- 2. Combine:** To the lemon juice, add the apple juice, honey, basil leaves, and a handful of ice.
- 3. Blend:** Pulse until the ice is crushed and the basil specks are uniformly small. Taste it, remembering that it will get diluted a bit with the soda. If it's too sour, add a bit more apple juice or honey; if it's too sweet, add a bit more lemon juice and ice. Re-blend.
- 4. Serve:** Fill your glasses with ice and add the lemon-apple juice blend, stopping $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the top. Garnish each with a slice of lemon. Top with seltzer, club soda, or sparkling water. Clink glasses with a friend—*(Serious) New Cook* Principle #4: share!—and enjoy. Cheers!

savory Puff Daddy Minis

SERVES 4 TO 6

Puff Daddies aren't only delicious in sweet preparations, and this savory version proves it. With shredded Gruyère and fresh herbs, these Savory Puff Daddy Minis could be served as a snack or a side, or even with a green salad for a light brunch.

measure

- Butter, 2 tablespoons unsalted, for greasing (if you only have salted, reduce the salt to just a pinch)
- Whole milk, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, slightly warmed (15 seconds in the microwave or a few minutes sitting in a measuring cup in a pan of hot water will do the trick)
- All-purpose flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup
- Salt, $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon
- Eggs, 3 large, at room temperature (warming briefly in a bowl or pan of hot tap water—perhaps alongside the milk—works well)
- Cheese, 1 to 1½ ounces Gruyère, cheddar, goat cheese, or Parmesan, finely grated
- Fresh herbs, 1 tablespoon finely chopped (chives, garlic chives, thyme leaves, and savory—alone or in combination—are great options)

make

- 1. Prep:** Preheat your oven to 400°F. (And if it hasn't come all the way up to temperature by the time the batter is ready, that's okay!) Then, use your fingers to butter the bottom and sides of 4–6 ramekins fairly heavily. Place all of the ramekins on a baking sheet and set aside.
- 2. Make the batter:** Into a blender, put the milk, flour, salt, and eggs (in that order, to reduce the amount of flour that gets stuck to the blender cup) and pulse a few times, until nearly smooth. Scrape down the sides to make sure all of the dry ingredients have a chance to blend in, and pulse a few more times. The batter should be thin, frothy, and free of lumps. Pour it into a 4-cup measuring cup or pitcher. Add the grated cheese and chopped herbs, and whisk or stir to combine.
- 3. Bake it:** Carefully pour the batter into the buttered ramekins, dividing it equally, and place them in the oven (even if it hasn't preheated all the way). Resist opening the door to peek for at least the first 10 minutes. At that point, start peeking for doneness (but make sure your peeks are quick!). It will probably take somewhere between 15 to 25 minutes total, depending on your oven, your ramekins, and the temperature of your ingredients. Remove the mini-Puff Daddies from the oven when they are super puffy and golden brown all over. If you're lucky, some of them will have "popped," or levitated out of the ramekin. Serve immediately—either directly in the ramekins (easiest!) or carefully remove each one after running a knife around the inside edge of the ramekin to loosen it.



Herby Tomato Salad SERVES 4 TO 6

with super simple vinaigrette

When tomatoes are in season, they don't need much more than a super simple vinaigrette—olive oil, acid (think lemon juice or vinegar), and some salt. Herbs and red onion add color and complement the tomatoes' natural sweetness, and there you have it: the perfect summer tomato salad. It's lovely for lunch with a nice piece of crusty bread or as a side for grilled or fried meats, or even simply prepared fish.

measure

- Red onion, ½ small, sliced
- Salt
- Red wine vinegar, a few tablespoons (or substitute 1 lemon or sherry, white wine, or even balsamic vinegar)
- Fresh herbs, ½ bunch (basil and/or parsley would be great)
- Tomatoes, a big bowlful (2 full baskets cherry tomatoes or 4 or 5 large heirloom tomatoes, or a combination, which is even better; you don't have to measure them, but if you want to, let's say 3 to 4 cups halved or wedged)
- Olive oil, a few tablespoons
- Cayenne pepper (optional)
- Garlic (optional), 1 clove

make

- 1. Macerate the onion:** Put the sliced onion into a small bowl and cover with a hefty pinch of salt and the red wine vinegar, then give them a quick massage with your fingers. Set aside to rest for at least 10 minutes.
- 2. Prep the herbs:** Pick off the leaves and give them a wash and spin in a salad spinner. (Alternatively, you can give the herbs a rinse and then pick the leaves onto a clean towel to dry.) Roughly chop or tear them and set aside.
- 3. Cut the tomatoes:** Using a very sharp knife (or perhaps easier is a little serrated knife), cut the cherry tomatoes through the stem spot. This makes for the easiest cutting and the prettiest halves. For larger tomatoes, core and cut them into large chunks. Give them a light sprinkle of salt, remembering that it's always best to season as you go. That's how you build interesting layers of flavor. Place the tomatoes, along with any tomato juices on your cutting board, into a large bowl.
- 4. Assemble, taste, and adjust:** Add the onions and half of the macerating vinegar to the tomato bowl. Add the herbs and drizzle generously with the olive oil. Toss gently, then taste. Does it need another pinch of salt? Add it! More acid to brighten the flavor? Spoon in more of the macerating vinegar. Or is it too acidic? Add another drizzle of olive oil. Too salty? Add another handful of unsalted tomatoes or herbs. Like it spicy? Add a pinch of cayenne pepper or crushed, minced garlic. It should be juicy and bright, making it an ideal partner for crusty bread or a variety of meat dishes.

nectarine-plum **Crisp**

SERVES 6 TO 8

You can only get terrific stone fruits—peaches, plums, and nectarines, for example—well into summer, during peak growing season. We eagerly buy bagfuls, knowing they'll get devoured fresh, be transformed into the most delicious jams, and make their way into baked goods that just scream summer—like this Nectarine-Plum Crisp! The simple crisp topping provides a great contrast for the juices of summer. Serve it hot or cold, alone or with a dollop of whipped cream. Just enjoy it while you can.

measure

- Nectarines, about 3 large
- Plums or pluots, 2 or 3 large plums, or as many as 8 to 10 small ones (any juicy variety; not the Italian prune plums)
- Granulated sugar, ½ cup
- All-purpose flour, ¾ cup
- Light brown sugar, ½ cup packed
- Salt, ½ teaspoon
- Butter, 6 tablespoons unsalted, cold and cut into small pieces
- Quick-cooking oats, ¾ cup (or substitute whole rolled oats)
- Pecans, ½ cup, chopped (or substitute walnuts)

make

- 1. Prep the fruit:** Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cut the nectarines and plums into ½-inch-thick slices. They don't have to be pretty or perfect, so just cut around the pit if it's not a freestone (a variety whose fruit pulls right off the pit neatly). You should have about 5 cups total. We prefer slightly more nectarines than plums, but use what you've got! Place them in a large mixing bowl and sprinkle ¼ cup of the granulated sugar over them, tossing to coat. Dump into a 9 by 13-inch baking dish and set aside.
- 2. Make the topping:** In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, brown sugar, the remaining ¼ cup sugar, and salt until combined. Add the cold butter and use your fingers to coat the butter in the flour. Then, pinch little pieces of the butter between your fingertips, creating flour-coated bits that resemble dry oatmeal. Add the oats and pecans and rub it all together to combine.
- 3. Top the crisp:** Sprinkle the topping over the prepared fruit. You want it to be at least a bit clumpy, so if it is completely loose and sandy, take some small handfuls and squeeze them together to form some little clumps.
- 4. Bake it:** Set the baking dish on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet in order to catch any drippy juices, then bake for 45 to 60 minutes, until it is golden brown on top and has been bubbling around the edges for at least 5 minutes.



hosting a healthier

SUMMER BARBECUE

written by:
alexa bricker

It's time once again to break out the patio furniture, fire up the grill, and welcome friends and family to your home for outdoor get-togethers. These gatherings can be the highlight of the year for many, but, as host, you may struggle to find a balance between prioritizing fun and ensuring the well-being of your guests.

With some forethought, though, you can throw a laid-back summer soiree everyone will enjoy—and won't need the rest of the weekend to recover from. Use these tips to guarantee that your guests leave feeling content, healthy, and happy.

Food and drinks

Ask anyone, and they'll tell you that food and drinks are the heart of every great barbecue. Fortunately, it can be surprisingly simple to put a healthy spin on summer classics.

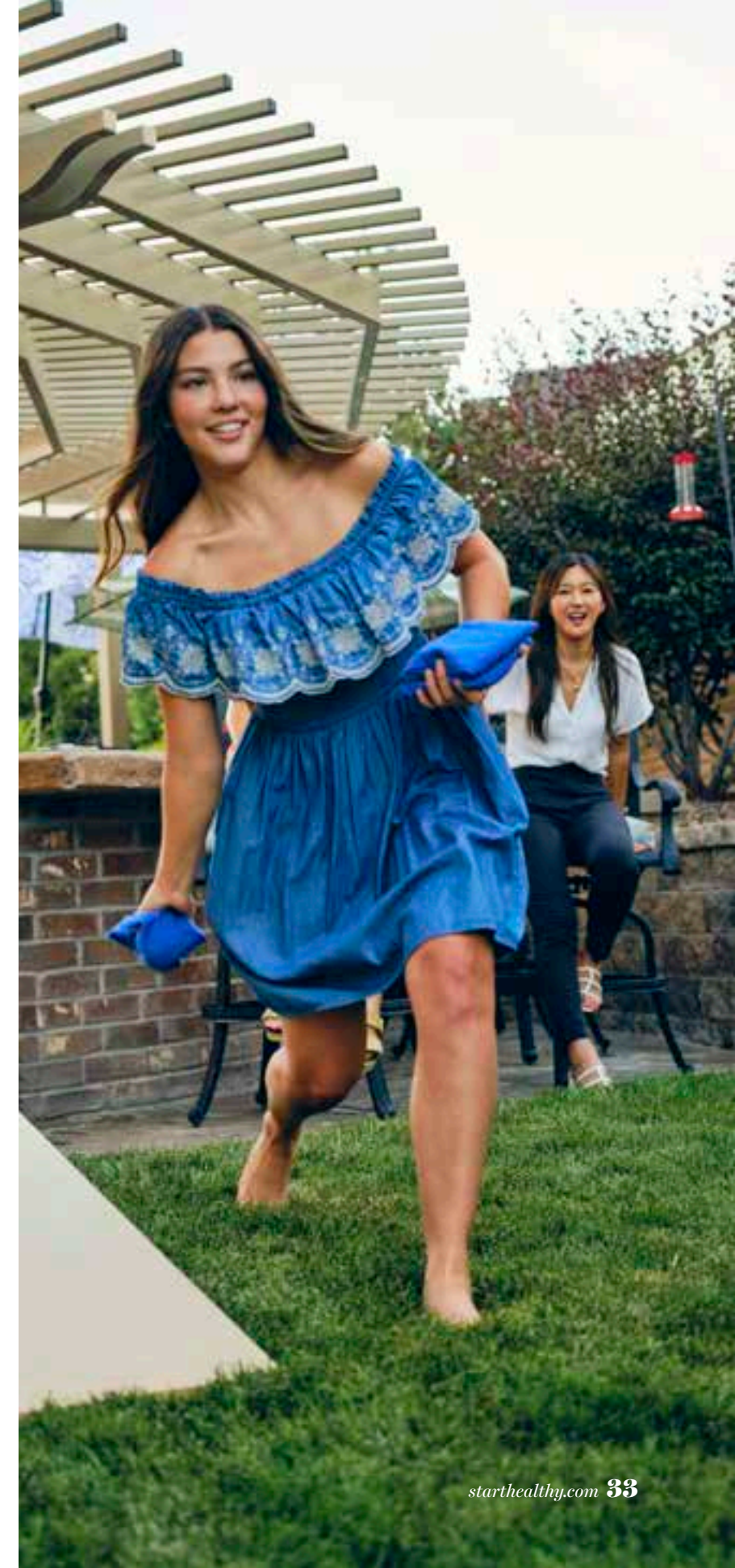
If you're planning to grill, you're already at an advantage. Grilled foods are not only delicious but also nutritious. Unlike frying or baking, grilling prevents foods from reabsorbing fat;

in fact, the grates actually allow excess fat to drip away from the food. Fish, beef, and chicken are high-protein options that pair well with seasonal vegetables like corn, peppers, and tomatoes.

Most grilled foods will taste amazing with nothing more than a sprinkle of salt and pepper. However, you can up the ante on flavor by offering a plethora of homemade dipping sauces, which will be much healthier than store-bought choices. You can quickly whip up a chimichurri sauce, for example, with just a few handfuls of cilantro and parsley, onion, garlic, olive oil, vinegar, and basic seasonings; it pairs well with virtually anything but is particularly tasty on grilled meats. You also can't go wrong with a tangy, low-sugar barbecue sauce or a smoky romesco sauce made from roasted red peppers.

Sides are often easy dishes to swap in better-for-you ingredients, such as by subbing mayo in pasta and potato salads for Greek yogurt and preparing creamy dips with low-fat or nonfat sour cream or cream cheese. Cooking





everything homemade can be a big undertaking, though, so don't be afraid to buy premade; just be mindful of the ingredients to ensure the quality is top-notch.

Now on to drinks. Depending on the time frame of your party and the weather, guests may be inclined to enjoy a lot of refreshing beverages. A good estimate is about one to two drinks per hour per guest, which means if you're planning an all-day affair, the sugar quotient can add up quickly. To help keep it down, target the variety of low-sugar beverages on the market, including lemonades, teas, sodas, and alcoholic drinks, and offer plenty of water so guests can stay hydrated, especially if they're imbibing or the heat is scorching. And if you're making your own mixed drinks, opt for a homemade simple syrup—or, better yet, nix it all together—to better control the sugar content. Premade drink mixes tend to be loaded with sugars and syrups.

Entertainment

After food and drinks, entertainment is the most significant element of your party, so it's important to get it right. Whether your partygoers enjoy engaging in good conversation, playing lawn games, or swimming, setting up a safe environment for them to do so is crucial.

Make sure your patio or deck is clear of tripping hazards, like bunched-up rugs or an overabundance of furniture, and that the space is well lit, especially if the gathering is going to extend deep into the evening. Inspect your seating for rust, loose screws, and wobbly legs that could pose a potential threat, and fix or replace any furniture pieces that are broken.

Games are a must for your barbecue, but you'll want to examine your lawn to make sure you're setting them up in an optimal spot. Avoid placing activities like cornhole,

horseshoes, and ladder golf on a slope or rocky terrain where players could more easily trip and injure themselves; instead, put these games in flat areas where there's no risk of players running into the street or a neighboring yard. If your plans involve water balloons or other small objects, encourage players to pick up after themselves to prevent these pieces from becoming choking hazards for children or pets.

Whether in-ground, aboveground, or kiddie, a pool can be an epic focal point of a summer barbecue. However, as every responsible pool owner knows, it's essential to take precautions to ensure the well-being of all swimmers. First and foremost, pool gates should be closed and locked at all times to prevent little ones and pets



from sneaking through. If guests plan to bring their pets, you should instruct them to keep the animal indoors or, at the very least, on a leash and away from the water. Young children should never be left alone in the pool or without an adult supervisor, and all swimmers should be made aware of any rules, such as “no jumping or diving from the edge” and “no swimming after dark.”

Ambience

Last, you'll want to prioritize creating a comfortable atmosphere for your guests—even small, pleasant finishing touches can go a long way. For example, instead of asking guests to douse themselves in sticky, smelly bug spray that's often full of chemicals, place citronella candles on tables or citronella torches around your yard's perimeter to help keep bugs at bay. Want an even more natural approach? Planting certain flowers and herbs, such as lavender, basil, lemongrass, and mint, can prevent pests from invading your yard; these plants may smell lovely to us but repulsive to them.

Speaking of bugs, an increase in foot traffic in and out of your home can quickly result in critters making their way inside. This will inevitably be a pain for your indoor visitors during the festivities and for you when you're chasing the insects out later. Encourage guests to keep doors and windows closed, and consider investing in a magnetic door screen, which will automatically seal shut behind guests as they pass through the doorway.

As you prepare your backyard to be filled with the sights, sounds, and smells of barbecue season, make sure you factor in the well-being of your guests by heeding the advice in this guide. Your partygoers will be grateful to have such a thoughtful and gracious host.



TOURING THE Circle of Discovery

written by: *andre rios* photos by: *getty images, unless noted*

The road trip is a staple of the American summer agenda, thanks in part to our impressive highway systems, varied landscapes, and widespread locales—the best of which may just be our national parks. If you're eager to add miles to both your odometer and your hiking boots as you gaze upon astonishing sights, there is possibly no greater road trip to embark on than a Circle of Discovery adventure.

This ring of seven national parks loops through Northern California and southern Oregon and features some of the most beguiling wonders the planet has to offer. You'll encounter the world's tallest trees, a mysteriously deep lake, brilliant stone passageways, and landscapes scarred with furious volcanic activity. If you thirst for an extraordinary summer odyssey, pack up your vehicle with a tent, camping supplies, and the spirit of adventure and make your way to this route through unforgettable phenomena.



CLEAR YOUR HEAD IN WHISKEYTOWN

While the name may suggest a dusty Western saloon town, **Whiskeytown National Recreation Area** is actually a peaceful wilderness featuring forested mountains peering over a crystal-clear lake. Hike up to waterfalls that pour their bounty into the lake bed, kayak down quaint creeks meandering through the surrounding woodlands, or, if you'd like to experience a taste of the California gold rush, purchase a gold-panning pass and scan the grounds for this highly sought-after metal.

The recreation area includes nine scenic campgrounds, but your day doesn't have to end with these Whiskeytown escapades; you're only just over an hour away from the next stop in the Circle of Discovery. Take Route 44 east briefly past Summertown to a deceptively gorgeous park that conceals striking subterranean wonders. (As you travel between parks, stay clued to the National Park Service website for updates in anticipation of potential road or park closures.)



HOT-STONE LEAPING IN LASSEN

Though it may seem like an unassuming companion to Whiskeytown's dense pine forests and moderate peaks, **Lassen Volcanic National Park** is a lesson in the beauty that can arise from chaos. Its jagged trails, volcanic mountainsides, boiling mud pools, and fumaroles—gaseous vents that breathe steam from the pits of the earth—offer thrilling glimpses into the momentous natural disasters that shaped the park grounds as they appear today.

Take an exhilarating hike through these hectic trails that come alive with audible volcanic activity, then rest beside the tranquil Manzanita Lake to appreciate Mother Nature's nurturing side. Dog-friendly campgrounds along this lake are the perfect accommodations to spend the night, though advance reservations are recommended.



LAKES AND LAVA GALORE

Wake up to the sounds of bufflehead ducks and mountain quails chattering around Manzanita Lake, then clean up your camp and head out to another geological wonder: **Lava Beds National Monument**. This park lies at the end of a twisted, two-hour drive north of Lassen. Reference your map often to stay on course—the Circle of Discovery is more a figurative route than a direct one.

Once you arrive, it will be immediately evident that this park has been rocked by sporadic volcanic eruptions over the last half-million years. Descend straight into the outcomes of these disasters with a self-guided trek through one of over eight hundred caves, each of which was formed by spouting magma. You may encounter remarkable American Indian rock art, but you won't be spelunking alone; these caves are home to sixteen species of active bat colonies.

For another historical experience, make the approximately ten-minute trip to the **Tule Lake National Monument**. This somber remnant of American actions during wartime is full of informative sites and exhibits, but it is only open to those with tour reservations.



THE DEEP CREVICES OF CRATER LAKE

Once you've had your fill of volcanic conditions, pack up and proceed due north into Oregon via picturesque, forest-lined highways. (One particularly scenic stretch of this route runs along the blue shores of Upper Klamath Lake.) Head straight for the base of Mount Scott, where an even more impressive setting lies: **Crater Lake**.

Welcome to the deepest lake in the United States, a freshwater wonder that descends a profoundly vast 1,943 feet into the earth—a couple hundred feet beyond the height of New York City's One World Trade Center. A collapsed volcano is responsible for this incredible aquatic chasm, which was so volatile it completely self-destructed in the aftermath. But the scene today is remarkably peaceful in contrast. Crater Lake is fed not by inlet rivers or streams but by a consistent bounty of rain and melting snow from the surrounding peaks, so it practically glitters within the peaceful mountainsides that frame it.

There are many potential sites where you can set down your baggage and marvel at this vast blue lake. Choose the comfortable Crater Lake Lodge if you're craving a soft bed with views of the waters, or rough it in the forested Mazama Campground situated a substantial hike from the shore. Just note that due to this park's popularity and protected status, any accommodations will likely require reservations several weeks in advance.



STROLLING “THE MARBLE HALLS OF OREGON”

Wherever you wake up, the fresh and crisp air from Crater Lake should tempt you to draw closer to the shore and witness sunlight glittering off its pristine surface. But don't idle for too long. You're only about three and a half hours away from your next stop, which lies at the end of a route wriggling down into southwest Oregon.

Make your way into **Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve**, a pleasant system of trails through the bright-green Siskiyou Mountains

wilderness. But, as its name suggests, the greenery on the surface is just an opening act for the main event: a winding cave through geological structures such as calcite formations and marble passages that give the cave its “Marble Halls of Oregon” nickname. Be forewarned that the National Park Service deems the route “moderately strenuous” due to its length, occasional very low ceilings, and many stair steps.

Once you return to the surface, consider camping at one of the seventeen peaceful open-air sites, where you can stay up late stargazing at the site's famous clear skies.

IN THE PRESENCE OF PREHISTORY

Next, course a breathtakingly verdant route southwest toward California's Pacific shores, where a populace even grander than the beach will steal your attention. In the **Redwood National and State Parks**, you'll find what are not only the tallest trees on earth but also the world's largest living beings. With their signature reddish bark and vast green canopies, these trees are known to live for over 2,000 years and grow over 360 feet tall.

To get up close to these ancient wonders, head to a trail at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park or Humboldt Redwoods State Park about an hour and a half farther south. While camping is allowed near these locales, strict guidelines are in place to preserve the elder trees to ensure they stand for many generations to come. As the adage goes, “leave only footprints,” so it's best to pay your respects to them and then depart, walking only in the designated areas to avoid trampling on vulnerable tree roots.

CLOSING THE LOOP

If you're traveling from Prairie Creek, start a jaunt down US Route 101 along the Pacific Coast, then proceed east by southeast, or head directly east from Humboldt. After a few hours, you'll zip past Whiskeytown again and land in Redding, where you can lodge in a proper hotel before a flight or road trip home the next morning. Because of its proximity to so many national parks, this town offers numerous hiker-friendly and even pet-friendly accommodations, particularly in the neighborhoods overlooking the bustling Sacramento River.

Once your journey comes to a close, take a moment to reflect, curl up with your loved ones, and look back at the keepsakes from your trip. With such a bevy of thrilling wonders to behold, the Circle of Discovery's seven parks may unveil some of nature's best-kept secrets—and even draw you back for another adventure to discover more.

For more info, visit

nps.gov/redw/circleofdiscovery.htm

written by: *matthew brady*

photos courtesy of: *rightwater*

water done right

When it comes to water, the world has an abundance problem *and* a scarcity problem.

The UN estimates that around 600 billion bottles and containers were produced worldwide in 2021, and Americans alone purchased approximately sixteen billion gallons' worth of bottled water in 2022. The vast majority of these bottles end up in landfills, which wouldn't be as much of an issue if they were made of glass—but plastic is the material of choice. Remarkably, it's estimated that this material takes 450 to 1,000 years to biodegrade.

On the scarcity end of the water spectrum, bottles aren't the most urgent problem. That's because approximately one-quarter of the earth's population—two billion people—doesn't have access to clean drinking water. It's the classic case, as the saying goes, of too much of something being as bad as too little.





One company that's doing its part to help reverse these respective realities is RightWater. Founded in 2019 by philanthropic entrepreneur Simon Konecki, it sells a sustainable alternative: natural spring water in aluminum cans. But it's also selling a vision.

A history of helping

RightWater is actually Konecki's third venture into the water space. In 2005, he cofounded both the UK version of the company, Life Water, and the nonprofit Drop4Drop, which provides clean-water solutions like wells, hygiene education, and work opportunities in India and Africa. With every purchase of RightWater or Life Water, individuals and corporations help not only themselves and the environment but also others in need since all profits go directly to

Drop4Drop. To date, two million people have gotten access to clean drinking water through these projects—hence why RightWater considers itself a “social enterprise” rather than a typical corporation.

Eco-conscious efforts

The organization's corporate mindset is summarized by its tagline: *There is no planet B.* To that end, RightWater is committed to being 100 percent plastic-free. Its BPA-free aluminum cans are totally recyclable, of course; in fact, they can be transformed into new ones within sixty days. But RightWater also takes several extra steps to put its money where its mouth is, ensuring that everything used in its shipping process, from its packaging to its pallet wrap, contains no plastic.



Total transparency

Unsurprisingly, RightWater is as transparent as the water it sells. The organization even states that it values its plastic-free mission and message above profits; its goal for itself and others is simply to #dotherightthing by the environment and help as many people as possible.

This also applies to the water itself, which RightWater sources from three protected natural springs in its home state of California—an effort that not only reduces wasteful shipping but also allows for sourcing flexibility if one of the respective communities needs access to the streams in an emergency. Furthermore, RightWater details its strict standards for

filtration, contaminants, and other FDA requirements in the Bottled Water Report on its website so the public knows exactly what it's getting in every can.

Change doesn't often happen overnight, especially with something as ingrained as Americans' overreliance on plastic bottles. But it can happen—and it needs to. Thanks to companies like RightWater, eco-friendly options are readily available that make it easier to better the health of both people and the planet.

For more info, visit drinkrightwater.com



The formula for a written by: alexa bricker **Protein-Packed Picnic**

Warmer weather brings more opportunities to enjoy your meals outside, and one of the best ways to do so is by packing a picnic. Check out this guide to make sure your alfresco meal is well-balanced and won't leave you hungry for more.

- No picnic is complete without sandwiches, but peanut butter and jelly may not be the healthiest choice. Focus on building hearty, nutrient-dense sandwiches with a variety of ingredients like cheese and veggies with eggs, meat, or tofu. Delicious combinations could include mayo-free egg salad with tomatoes and onions on whole-wheat toast; roasted chicken with peppers, lettuce, and provolone on a baguette; or sliced smoked tofu with cucumbers, onions, and tomato on seeded bread.
- Every picnic needs some good snacks and sides. Leave the bag of chips at home, though, and opt for more filling options like uncured pepperoni slices, individually wrapped wedges of low-fat cheese, and whole-wheat crackers.
- There's no need to skimp on dessert! Make a high-protein chocolate mousse by mixing your favorite chocolate protein powder with some Greek yogurt, then top it with fruits and nuts of choice. Another option is to melt some chocolate (bonus points if it's dark), pour it onto a sheet pan, and sprinkle it with almonds or pumpkin seeds. Freeze the chocolate for an hour until it hardens, break it into pieces, and—voilà—you have healthier chocolate bark.

Keep this list in mind when packing your next picnic to ensure it fuels all the fun activities you have planned for the rest of the day!



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