

DISTRICT

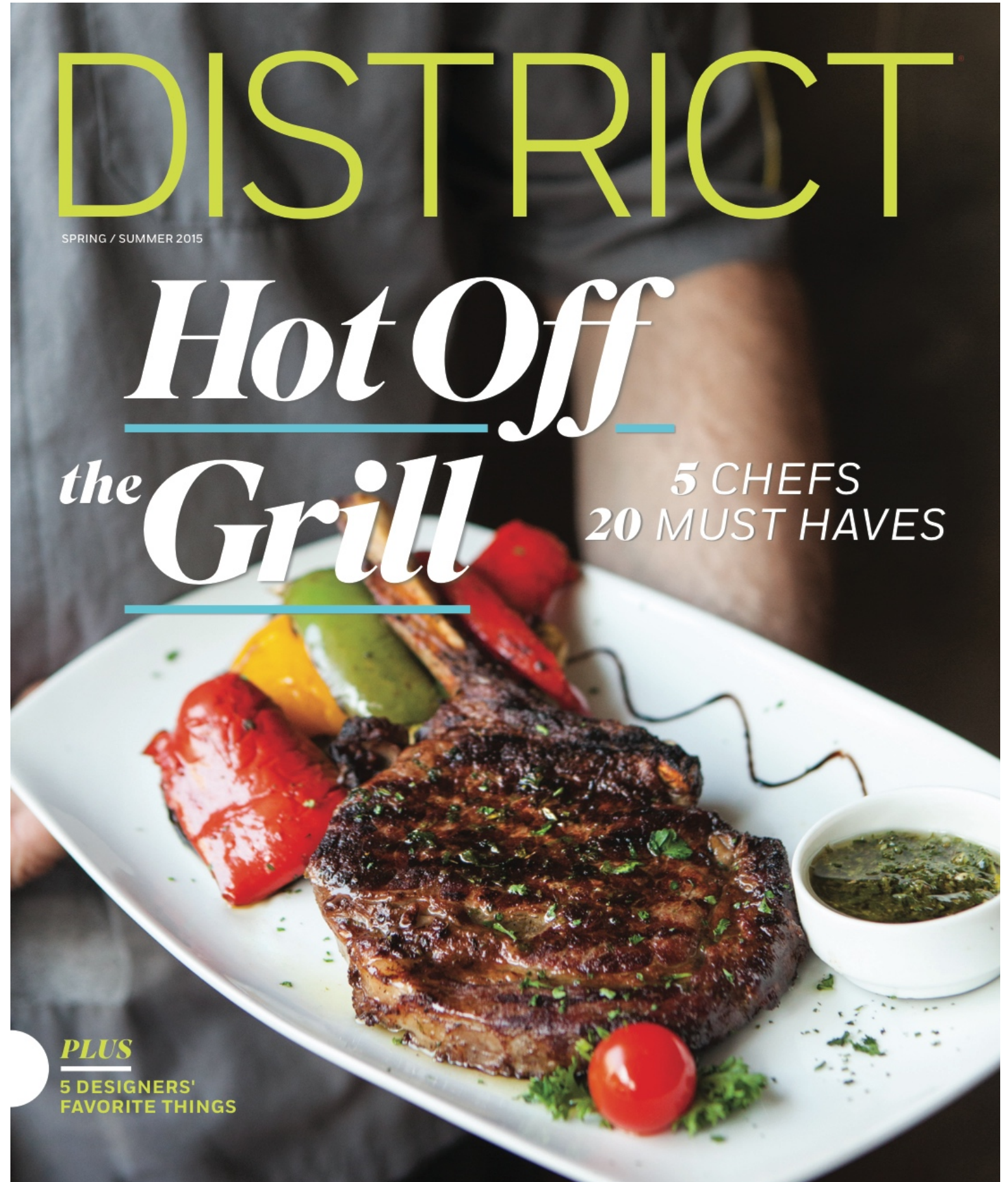
SPRING / SUMMER 2015

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5 CHEFS
20 MUST HAVES

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5 DESIGNERS'
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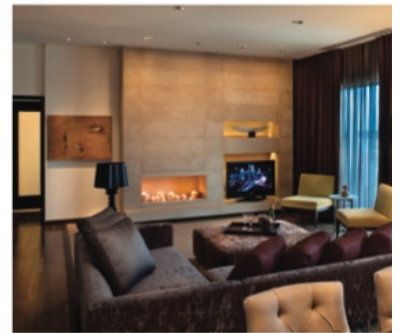
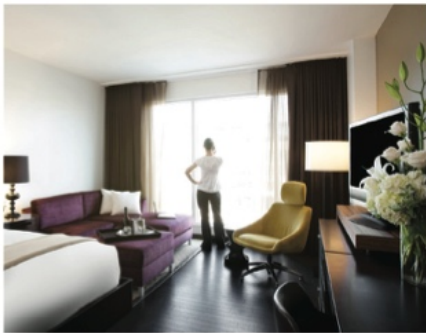
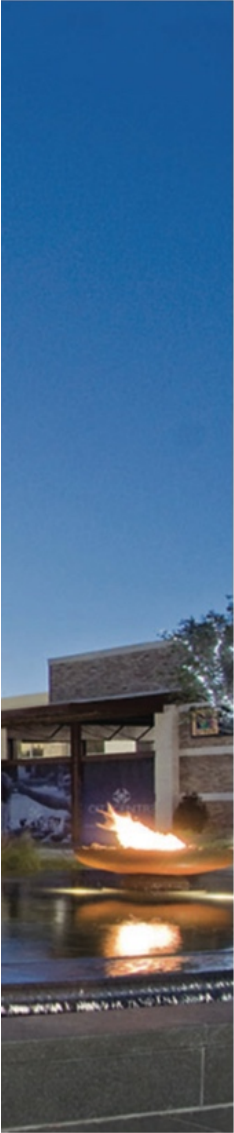
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Hot off the grill at Saly Pimienta
Photograph by Shannon O'Hara



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WELCOME



If you blink, you just might miss out: that's how much is going on at CITYCENTRE, GreenStreet, Kings Harbor and more. But amid the changes taking place every day, it's imperative to slow down and appreciate what's most important.

For us, it's the people we meet along the way—the ones who live, work and play at these centers of Houston life, not to mention design and create them—which is why they're featured so prominently in our magazine. They have much to teach us, whether it's designers sharing trade secrets on how to make any space beautiful, or grilling pros letting us in on the best way to get that perfect sear (or what to order if we decide to let them cook for us).

And that's just the beginning of what you'll learn reading this issue of *District*, which also features inspiring travel ideas, our favorite accessories, tips for getting swimsuit-ready, even a guide to setting the perfect outdoor table for entertaining friends and family—because above all, we hope this issue is a reminder that they're the ones that keep us going.

Dana L. Efthim
Editorial & Creative Director

DISTRICT

CITYCENTRE ONE
800 Town & Country Blvd., Suite 200
Houston, TX 77024
713.629.5200 | midwaycompanies.com

Editorial & Creative Director
Dana L. Efthim

Editor
Catherine Matusow

Managing Editor
Natalie Harms

Art Directors
Paul Naughton, Chris Skiles

Production Manager
Chesney Fuller

Assistants
Melanie Chin, Caroline Conway,
Courtney Ray, Catherine Sdao



President & Founder
Nicole Vogel

**Senior Vice President,
Editorial & Operations**
Bill Hutfilz

Audience Development Director
Dana Such

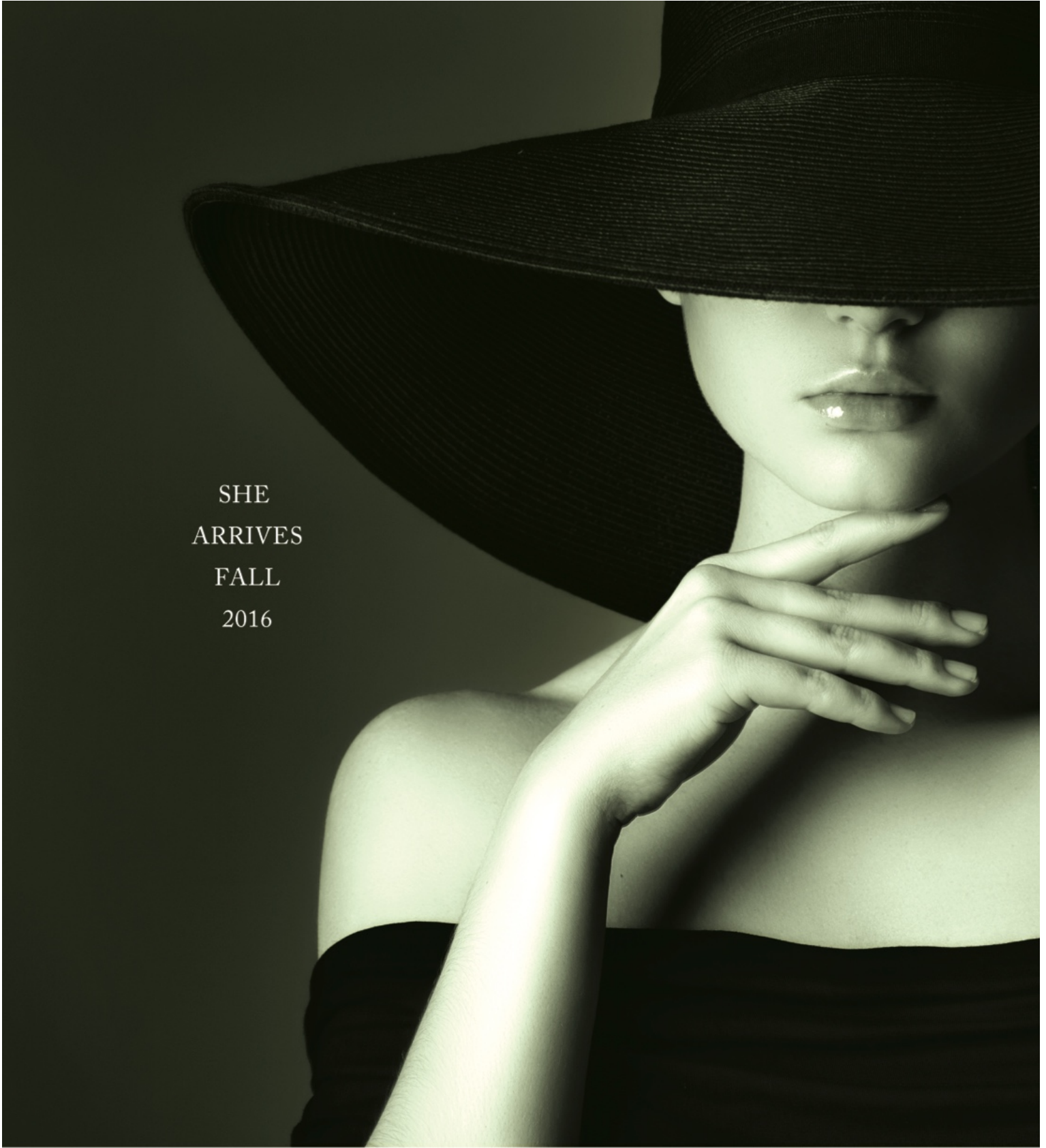
Controller
Kelly Faccone

**Director of Digital
& Print Publishing**
Claire McNally

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SHE
ARRIVES
FALL
2016

about:blank

Developing Story



PERFECT PROFILE

Alvin Gee, one of the most sought-after wedding, portrait and commercial photographers in Houston, recently opened a new photography studio in CITYCENTRE. The development, he says, is a great fit for his needs and customer base. The studio has enjoyed an excellent response from clients and new neighbors alike, and CITYCENTRE's "high-profile urban mix" of tenants and businesses was a key factor in the decision to make it his new home.



WALK THIS WAY

In a move that will dramatically impact area residents and shoppers, the city of Houston is planning to enhance the pedestrian areas surrounding the downtown hot spots along Dallas St. with more walking space, a better tree canopy and improved nighttime lighting. "The Dallas St. improvements will place GreenStreet at the center of this newly formed shopping district," says Melanie Chin of GreenStreet developer Midway, "allowing for an improved pedestrian experience with inviting storefronts and engaging patios." The project, an initiative of the Downtown Management District, is expected to be completed later this year.



DALLAS STREET: COURTESY CLARK CONDON ASSOCIATES;
DINERS: SHANNON O'HARA; ALL OTHERS: MAX BURKHALTER



Sweet, Indeed

When Allison Young Chavez opened the third location of her popular Sweet Paris Crêperie & Café at CITYCENTRE, she and her staff were ready—like, really ready. “We got our occupancy license at 1 p.m. and opened at 3 p.m.,” she explains with a laugh, remembering opening the doors for the first time on January 2. “It’s unique to find a place where people walk, shop and eat without driving their car three feet,” she says of her new surroundings. The community’s response to Sweet Paris’s gourmet coffee and fabulous brunch? “Amazing,” she says. “We’ve been really welcomed.”



DEVELOPING STORY



AN AMERICAN ORIGINAL

With all the walking CITYCENTRE shoppers and residents do, it should come as no surprise that one of the destination's newest additions is Allen Edmonds, the handcrafted shoe store. "After great success in our River Oaks store," explains Paul Grangaard, President and CEO of the Allen Edmonds Corporation, "we chose CITYCENTRE as another great location to service the burgeoning population of both homeowners and the workforce in west Houston." The shop offers not only the finest footwear available, but a team of "master fitters" who help clients get that custom-tailored look.





LUXURY LIVING

The new Memorial Green development—slated to open in 2016—will feature an exclusive gated community of luxury urban, single-family, energy-efficient homes surrounded by a beautiful linear park and boutique retail and restaurants. The smart-home technology and premium finishes are from some of Houston's most respected custom builders, including Jeff Paul Custom Homes, McCollum Custom Homes and Pelican Builders, Inc. Ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 square feet, the homes will be priced between \$1 and \$2 million. "The plans for this gated retreat of sophisticated homes and townhomes is patterned after luxurious private enclaves found in the world's most exclusive urban neighborhoods," says Kim Whaley, Director of Sales at Heritage Texas Properties, which is coordinating the leasing for the project. "Memorial Green blends the excitement and harmonious beauty of an urban village lifestyle."

ILLEN EDMONDS: MAX BURKHALTER
MEMORIAL GREEN: COURTESY MIDWAY

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Under the Sun

When we venture into the great outdoors, we dress for comfort, sure—but we also want that effortlessly cool look. How to get there? By mixing versatile, fun prints with shiny, adventurous accessories. Now get out there in the sunshine!

BY VICO PUENTES

PHOTOS BY AUDRA ODEN



MAKING AN ENTRANCE



Faux leather slip-ons, Forever 21, \$24.90
These laidback shoes are comfy and trendy, to boot.



Agatha cargo jacket, Bevello, \$80
Adding a cinched cargo jacket creates instant spring harmony.

Strappy bralette, Free People, \$20
A seamless, strappy bralette looks great layered under backless or low-back pieces.



Traveller canvas tote, Jennika's, \$48
Carry picnic provisions in this chic, flexible tote.



Wrap (\$48) and bracelets (\$32 each), Bevello
Leather and gold stack up for a radiant finishing touch.

Peter Grimm Alfred wool hat, Bevello, \$48
Top off your bold spring look with a statement hat.



BB Dakota Huber shirt dress, Bevello, \$64



Five Designers

WHAT'S ON THEIR RADAR

BY KATIE MCNEW | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KILLY & MAX BURKHALTER

Trends fade, yes, but style—that's eternal. Whether they're experts on hotels, homes or restaurants, these five designers know what's hot and what's not in the world of design, as well as how to add their signature stamp to any interior. We asked for their advice on how to make a space tell a story all its own.



1

Lauren Rottet

President and Founding Principal, Rottet Studios
Project: Hotel Alessandra, GreenStreet

When you were working on Hotel Alessandra, who was your inspiration?

Dominique de Menil, who was such an icon in Houston, and who epitomized the contrast between complete sophistication and the oil business.

What's your most unique design request?

A man in Dallas once requested a fire pole from his office to his father's office, so that when the secretary called him, he would just appear, and no one would know how he got there so fast.

What's your favorite material to work with?

Glass, because it reflects and absorbs, and it's so versatile and durable.

Name one must-have accessory for the home.

White-linen hand towels.

What's your best bang-for-your-buck decorating tip?

Instead of using an accent wall, paint a rectangle on the wall as a backdrop to frame furniture. It's incredibly powerful for holding the eye and giving the wall presence.

Name a home-decorating trend on the rise, and one on the way out.

I hope industrial chic is on the way out! Collectable furniture is on the way in; people are being more discerning with their purchases and want to know the pedigree of the piece before buying.

What's an easy DIY project anyone could do?

If you have a guest coming, fold your towels and washcloths neatly and wrap them with a big ribbon, so they look fresh and special.

Name a simple element that makes a big impact.

Focusing of view. Use your curtains and furniture to direct the gaze through the window towards what's pretty to clean up the ugly.

What's your favorite Houston design-savvy hot-spot?

The Great Hall at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, where the lovely old building meets the totally modern Mies van der Rohe addition.

2&3

Kelie Mayfield and Erick Ragni

**Architects and founders,
Mayfield and Ragni Studio
Project: CITYCENTRE
Multifamily Apartments**

What's the most challenging design you completed?

Ragni: As Frank Lloyd Wright once said: "The next one."

Mayfield: We do these art fairs every year that have no budget and an extremely short time frame, and they always need to be installed in three days and taken down in a day. So how do you design a rectangle that looks different every year with these constraints? We learn a lot from these design exercises.

What's your most unique design request?

Ragni: We've designed unusually large showers ... that can accommodate lots of people.

Mayfield: For one corporate client,

we did a 60-foot entertaining bar that housed everything from a video art installation, to library bookshelves, to yoga balls and customizable chairs that all folded back in.

What's your favorite material to work with?

Ragni: This is totally the arrogant architect answer, but space.

Mayfield: Mirrors and concrete.

Name one must-have accessory for the home.

Ragni: Nest Thermostat. I just put it in my house, and I love it. It's a smart thermostat that learns based on your behavior and makes your house more efficient.

Mayfield: Sonos player.

Ragni: Interesting that we both went tech.

What's your best bang-for-your-buck decorating tip?

Ragni: You need less space than you think you need.

Mayfield: You don't need formal dining rooms or formal living rooms.

Ragni: Or the guest room. Or an office for him and her.

Mayfield: We help clients realize that space can be convertible, and used in many different ways.

Name a home-decorating trend on the rise, and one on the way out.

Mayfield: Everything is shrinking. People are realizing that they don't need big houses or big offices. Everything is becoming much more efficient these days.

Ragni: And thus we see a rise in multifamily developments, as people become empty nesters and downsize.

Media rooms and

theaters are going out for sure.

Mayfield: Technology is advancing. You can be watching something and take it to your tablet or your iPhone. You don't have to go to that big experience.

What's your go-to design aesthetic?

Mayfield: Modern sensibility.

Ragni: Timelessness with a twist. And a twist is not style. It's personality.

Name a simple element that makes a big impact.

Ragni: Another cheesy one, but something unique and customized to that person.

Mayfield: A first-impression piece.

For example, an exaggerated, long, reception, "everything" desk that's a one-of-a-kind, one-off piece. That's one of our signatures.

Name your favorite color pairings.

Ragni: Black and grey.

Mayfield: We like greys.

What's your favorite Houston design-savvy hot spot?

Mayfield: Noguchi Garden, outside the Museum of Fine Arts.

Ragni: Bistro Menil. There's restraint. And that's hard to find in a restaurant. Same with Tiny Boxwoods. It feels genuine.



CONSIDERED OPINION

4

Kathy Andrews
Designer and founder,
Kathy Andrews Interiors
Project: Ascent at
CITYCENTRE

What's your most unique design request?

One apartment project in Austin requested a funky, coffeehouse look to go with the Keep Austin Weird vibe.

What's your favorite material to work with?

Luxurious fabric for throw pillows.

Name one must-have accessory for the home.

A beautiful tray. I like to put a collection of items on a tray.

What's your best bang-for-your-buck decorating tip?

A special piece of art that makes the room come to life. Memory points are very important, things people walk away and will remember.

Name a home-decorating trend on the rise, and one on the way out.

Hard contemporary and mid-century modern is on the way out. A transitional, softer look with softer fabrics and no hard edges is coming back.

What is an easy DIY project anyone could do?

Framing a collection of personal photos.

Name a simple element that makes a big impact



Scale is super-important. Sizes of furniture, taking into consideration ceiling height—it's a basic element of good design, but sometimes people overlook it.

Name your favorite color pairings.

I love warm greys, like taupe, and pairing strong accent colors with them.

5

Ronald Perez
Owner and designer,
Chimichurri's South
American Grill
Project: Chimichurri's,
Kings Harbor

When you were working on Chimichurri's, what was your inspiration?

I've traveled to over 100 countries, and I wanted to blend different elements—stone, leather, fire, water—into the space to represent those same elements in South America.

What's your favorite material to work with?

Wood. The natural beauty of its tonality, graining and variations brings immediate beauty to any space.

Name one must-have accessory for the home.

Wine opener...just kidding. Lighting is important to set the mood.

Name a home-decorating trend on the rise.

Wallpaper is trying to come back, especially color and texture options with an inviting, warm feel.

What is an easy DIY project anyone could do?

Restoring old furniture.

Name a simple element that makes a big impact.

A large lamp.

Name your favorite color pairings.

Deep but muted earth tones, like blues and greys.

What's your favorite Houston design-savvy hot spot?

Restoration Hardware



I chose MD Anderson in Katy

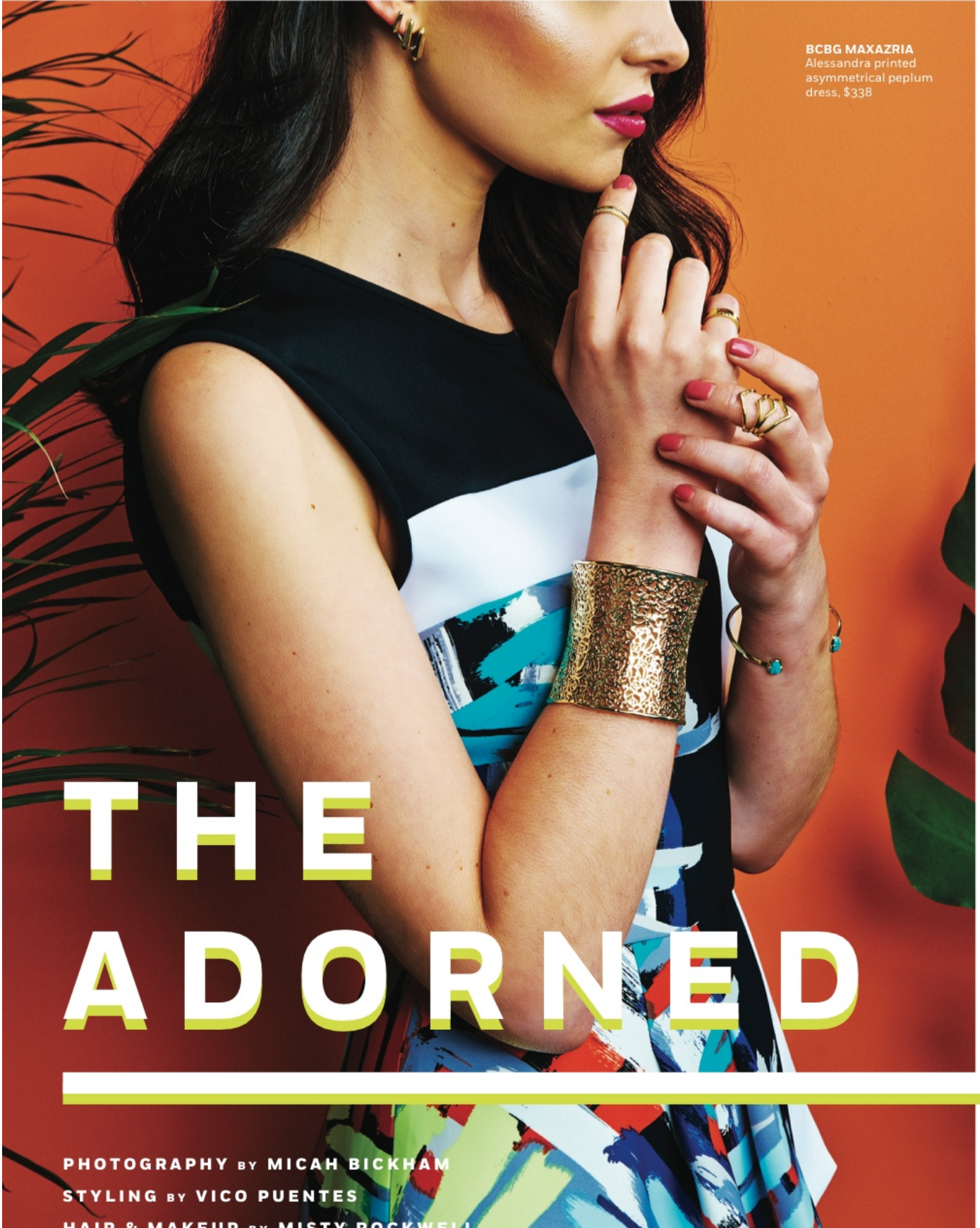
- Jeanne Zarazee

When I had **breast cancer**, the world's leading care was right here.

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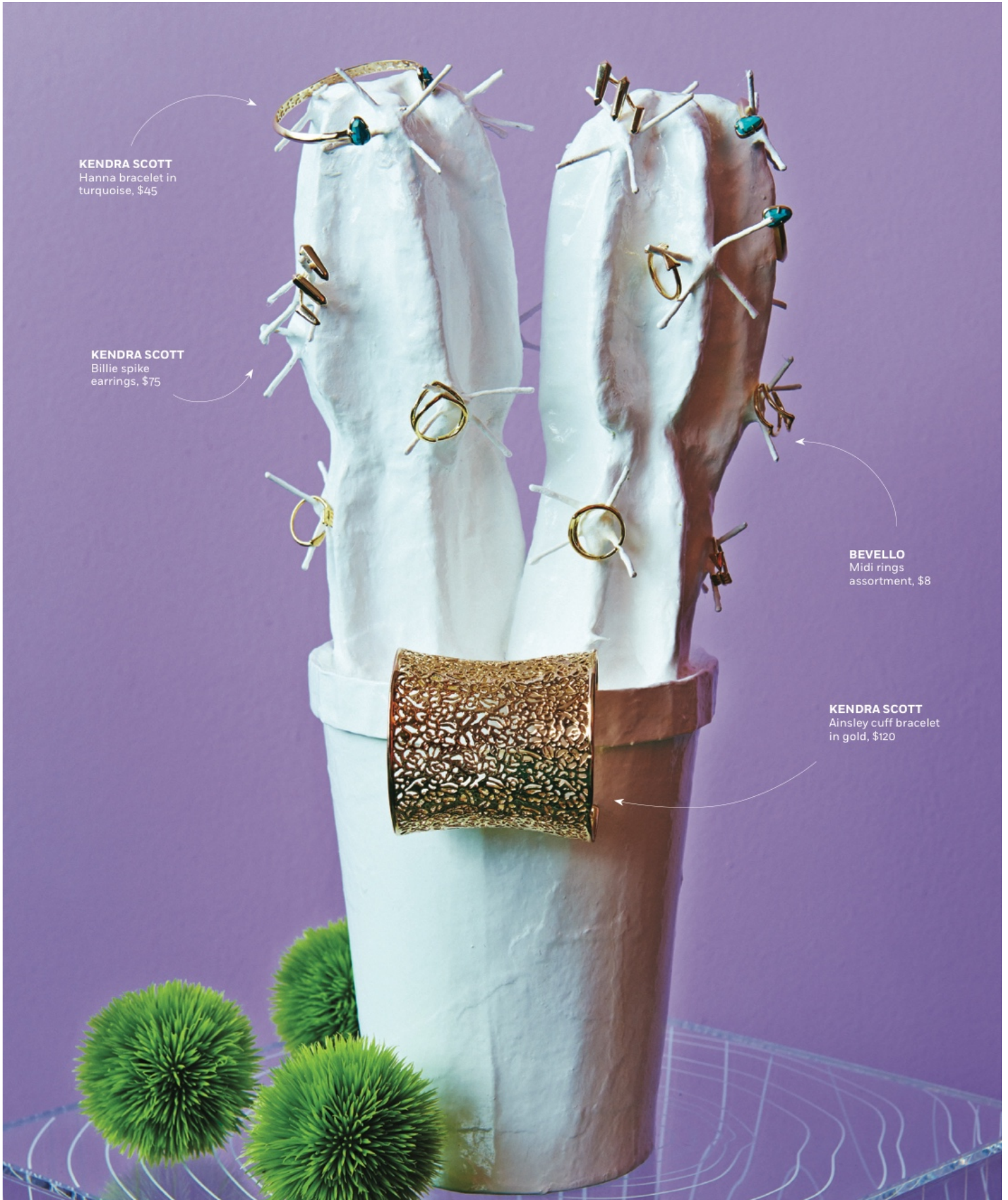
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center



BCBG MAXAZRIA
Alessandra printed
asymmetrical peplum
dress, \$338

THE ADORNED

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICAH BICKHAM
STYLING BY VICO PUENTES
HAIR & MAKEUP BY MISTY ROCKWELL



KENDRA SCOTT
Hanna bracelet in
turquoise, \$45

KENDRA SCOTT
Billie spike
earrings, \$75

BEVELLO
Midi rings
assortment, \$8

KENDRA SCOTT
Ainsley cuff bracelet
in gold, \$120



J.CREW
484 Japanese
selvedge jean, \$225

TIMEX x J.CREW
Vintage field army
watch, \$98 at J.Crew

J.CREW
Medium-dot cotton
socks, \$14.50

ALLEN EDMONDS
McAllister wingtip
oxford shoe, \$385



**A. ALLEN
EDMONDS**
Dalton winatio

B. J.CREW
Tipped microstripe
socks. \$14.50

C. TIMEX x J.CREW
Andros watch,
\$118 at J.Crew

D. TIMEX x J.CREW
Vintage field army
watch. \$98. with camo

**E. ALLEN
EDMONDS**
Polka dot cotton

F. J.CREW
Ribbed striped
socks. \$14.50



A. LIPRAN OUTLETTERS

B. KENDRA SCOTT

C. BCBG MAXAZRIA

D. BCBG MAXAZRIA



BCBG MAXAZRIA
Emerson cropped
blazer, \$228

**CHARMING
CHARLIE**
Carmel crossbody
wristlet, \$19

JENNIKA'S
Black tunic, \$65

GreenStreet

FOOD | FASHION | ENTERTAINMENT | EVENTS | SOCIAL HOUR

1

urban linear park
destination for premier
shopping, dining,
entertainment and events

8



Games on the Green
events planned for 2015

17



mature trees
conserved for each
ton of fiber recycled
at GreenStreet

75



happy hour seats
at McCormick
& Schmick's
expanded patio

10



MetroRail stops from
GreenStreet to
NRG Stadium



260

bikes checked
out from the Main
Street B-cycle
station every month

1

225-room luxury
hotel, Hotel
Alessandra, slated
to debut in late
2016

2

great stops for
all your spring
fashion needs—
BCBGMAXAZRIA &
Forever 21

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UNDER THE STARS**
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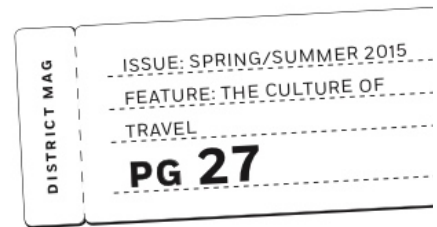


The Culture of Travel

SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT IN
NEW YORK, LONDON AND CANNES.

BY MAI PHAM

The best vacations, we think, give travelers the chance to explore art, music and film, which is why New York, London and Cannes are high on our list of great destinations for 2015. But of course, not everyone can get away, which is why we're glad that when it comes to culture, Houston has plenty to offer, too.



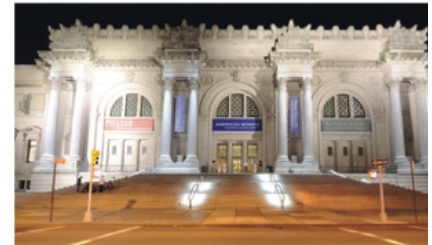
New York City

What makes a city world-class is the amount of culture and arts on offer, and in this, the Big Apple is unparalleled. A bustling metropolis that attracts more than 50 million visitors a year, it's a visual art lover's paradise. You could spend months taking in the amazing permanent collections at the museums alone: works by Vermeer, Rembrandt and Renoir at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Modigliani and Klee at the Guggenheim (to say nothing of the building itself, a marvel of modernist architecture). Then there's Vincent van Gogh's *The Starry Night* at MOMA, always surrounded by crowds. Of course, these are just a few names among many heavy hitters.

New York gets all the big traveling exhibitions, which is another huge draw for visitors, and the upcoming months bring some especially exciting art events. The Met's upcoming Van Gogh show, the can't-miss "Irises and Roses" (May 12–August 16), is expected to be a blockbuster. The Guggenheim's "Hugo Boss Prize 2014" (through May 13) exhibition features sculpture, animated video and light projection works by Paul Chan, who received a \$100,000 prize purse and, by the way, is officially no longer up-and-coming. And travelers won't want to miss MOMA's "Björk," (March 8–June 7) with sound, film, visuals, instruments, objects, costumes and performance pieces by the multifaceted avant-garde artist. The NYC gallery scene, meanwhile, is unparalleled. If days spent wandering the galleries is your idea of the perfect vacation, we suggest doing it by neighborhood. Pick

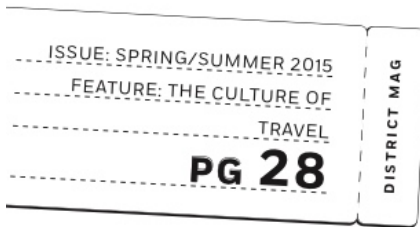
Chelsea, say, or the Lower East Side, then visit a newsstand for a Time Out New York for the skinny on all the latest shows.

For a taste of NYC in town, spend a Saturday exploring what Houston has to offer, either at the bigger institutions of the Museum District, or smaller pockets around the city. At GreenStreet downtown, don't miss Esperson Gallery, whose collection, curated by Tammy Dowe and Carliss Chatman, focuses on local artists or artists with Texas ties. "Art doesn't just happen in New York City," says Chatman. "Houston is a city that should be paid attention to, and there is definitely collectible art that you can buy without leaving the city." See works by established artists such as David Adickes of giant-presidential-head fame, or graffiti artist Gonzo 247, whose murals, including the now-famous "Houston Is" downtown, have been commissioned by the city of Houston.



Top to bottom: The Museum of Modern Art; The Guggenheim Museum; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Esperson Gallery.





London

When you think of musicians who changed the rock world, you think of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones or—some of you, anyway—One Direction. What do these guys have in common, other than their ability to make young women swoon? Their United Kingdom heritage.

Edgy, international, perennially cloudy and home to Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace and Queen Elizabeth II herself, London is one of the oldest cities in the world—and one of the most exciting for music fans. In fact, a great way to get to know the city is through a music-history lens, and

for that, try a Rock 'n' Roll Legends tour. There's a whole menu of options, including Pink Floyd's Cambridge and London, Experiencing Hendrix's London, Beatles by Night, Punk & New Wave and much more.

After that, of course, you'll be dying to take in a show at one of the city's music venues. Want acoustic or jazz? Head to Union Chapel, a Gothic masterpiece built in 1877, where the acoustics are spellbinding. Want rock music? Head to the legendary Electric Ballroom, dedicated to all things rock, or to Underworld, located in Camden underneath World's End, the world's biggest pub. Among the can't-miss big-ticket shows coming up: Kylie Minogue plays Hyde Park with CHIC and Grace Jones on June 21; The Who plays Hyde Park on June 26; and Drake, A\$AP Rocky, Kendrick Lamar, Nicki Minaj, Avicii and David Guetta play the New Look Wireless Festival at Finsbury Park from July 3 to 5.

Of course, London isn't the only breeding ground for musicians. Houston lays claim to a large roster of them, of course—Beyoncé, Lightin' Hopkins and ZZ Top among them—not to mention a flagship musical festival, the Free Press Summer Fest, on June 6 and 7, and stellar live music every night of the week. The House of Blues at GreenStreet is one of the city's major destinations, and this summer, its hot tickets include Polica on April 14, The Kooks on April 26, Jason Bonham's Led Zeppelin Experience on June 6 and, of course, its special Gospel Brunch, held on select Sundays and offering incredible gospel music and perfect Bloody Marys. Oh, and for drinks and a meal before a show, head to the House of Blues Crossroads restaurant, located downstairs from the concert venue.





ISSUE: SPRING/SUMMER 2015
FEATURE: THE CULTURE OF
TRAVEL
PG 30
DISTRICT MAG

Clockwise from below: the
Cannes International Film
Festival scene, Cannes
harbor, Friday Flicks on the
Lawn at GreenStreet, SMG
theater at CITYCENTRE.





Cannes

A small town on the French Riviera located between Marseilles and Nice, Cannes is a favorite holiday destination for the French, as well as a playground for the international adventurer. Enjoying mild Mediterranean temperatures during the off-season, and sunny, 12-hour days during peak season—March to October, this is a great place to visit year-round, but especially May 13 to 24, when the annual Cannes International Film Festival takes over the sleepy town.

The festival draws celebrities from all over the world every year, so get your camera phone ready for selfies, as during these two weeks the streets are positively teeming with stars. A-list actors George Clooney, Nicole Kidman, Naomi Watts, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie—among countless others—have all walked the red carpet leading up to the Grand Auditorium Louis Lumière.

Joel and Ethan Coen, directors of classic movies *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *No Country For Old Men* and *True Grit*, will serve as co-presidents of the 2015 festival, the town's 68th annual film extravaganza. While the winner of this year's coveted Palm d'Or title is anyone's guess, past honorees have included Roman Polanski (*The Pianist*), Gus Van Sant (*Elephant*) and Waco native Terrence Malick, whose 2011 film *The Tree of Life* was partially filmed in Houston.

While Clooney isn't a regular at Houston film happenings, the local scene is flourishing, with events like the Houston Cinema Arts Festival attracting more and more attention nationally. We also host lovely outdoor festivals, with "free" and "family-friendly" being the operative words. This spring brings Friday Flicks on The Lawn at GreenStreet, with screenings of *Pitch Perfect* on April 24 and *Jurassic Park 1* on May 22. Meanwhile, the summer brings CITYCENTRE's Moonlight Movies for Kids in the plaza, kicking off on June 6 with *Big Hero 6*, and *Cinderella*, the animated original, on July 8. Couples and families are encouraged to show up with blankets and snacks for movie night under the stars, complete with free popcorn. And if you like sturdier fare with your films, head to Studio Movie Grill at CITYCENTRE, where there's a full menu offering burgers, pizzas and salads—plus wine, beer and cocktails—along with all the latest releases, making it a little piece of film-fan heaven. ▶

A SPECTACULAR SEAR

THE PROS SHARE THEIR FAVORITE
DISHES—AND GRILLING SECRETS.

BY MAI PHAM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANNON O'HARA





GRANT MARION, *Sharky's Waterfront Grill*

KINGS HARBOR
1660 W. LAKE HOUSTON PKWY,
281-360-0660
SHARKYSWATERFRONTGRILL.COM

Standout dishes: Simple yet savory always wins out here, according to lead chef Grant Marion. "Salmon and the red-fish are the best—simply grilled with lemon butter, rice and veggies."

Grilling tips: "When you're grilling seafood, make sure you have a clean grill and good flame control, and make sure the food is cooked through for food safety," says Marion. "You can serve salmon rare, so no need to cook it through. We grill filets, primarily center cuts that are one to two inches in thickness. You can tell how it's done by the firmness of the fish—this comes with practice. It should still be juicy. If you start to see the fish separate, you've definitely overcooked it."





DYLAN SALISBURY, *Grub Burger Bar*

CITYCENTRE
799 TOWN & COUNTRY BLVD., STE. 200;
713-827-7157
GRUBBURGERBAR.COM

Standout dishes: The most popular burgers are the Lockheart Legend (topped with applewood-smoked bacon, cheddar cheese, house-made Dr Pepper barbecue sauce, onion rings and dill pickles), the Guacapotle (chipotle aioli, cheddar cheese and guacamole) and the Jive Turkey (turkey patty with pesto, bacon, swiss, sprouts, avocado and chipotle aioli).

Grilling tips: “We aim to serve all our burgers a juicy medium-well,” says chef Dylan Salisbury. “Our patties are seven ounces of 100-percent certified Angus beef. We use a typical flat top grill, and it typically takes nine minutes total to grill a burger. Best tip I can give: don’t mess with the meat. Put it on the grill and leave it alone for about four-and-a-half minutes, then flip it and leave it for another four-and-a-half minutes.”



DAVID HERNANDEZ, *McCormick & Schmick's*

GREEN STREET
1201 FANNIN ST. #121
713-658-8100
MCCORMICKANDSCHMICKS.COM

Standout dishes: The restaurant gets a lot of its seafood from Hawaii. “At least once a week, we’ll get ahi tuna,” says chef David Hernandez. “We get a lot of heavy spearfish, wahoo, grey snapper, swordfish. We have several composed dishes, but you can get most of them simply grilled.”

Grilling tips: “For ahi tuna, you want it to be rare, so the thing to do is to sear it on the outside, so it’s still raw in the middle—a quick sear is all you need,” says Hernandez. “To keep other types of fish juicy, we constantly brush it with butter and salt. Continue to brush until you flip it. You don’t want to overcook fish. We cook it until it’s right to the touch. It takes practice, but you





**GIANFRANCO
PERCOVICH,**
Sal y Pimienta

CITYCENTRE
818 TOWN & COUNTRY BLVD. #105,
832-849-0097
SALYPIMIENTAKITCHEN.COM

Standout dishes: Not surprisingly, the specialty at this South American restaurant is beef, cooked on a mesquite-wood grill and seasoned simply, with salt and pepper. "We have the highest-quality meat we can buy," says owner Gianfranco Percovich, "from Niman Ranch dry-aged tomahawk ribeye, to grass-fed beef from Uruguay and Australia, to American kobe and more."

Grilling tips: "Always, when you put the meat on the grill, you want to just seal it with a very hot temperature," says, Percovich. "This helps to keep the juices inside the meat. To gauge doneness, you can feel with your fingers, or you can eyeball it; or use both techniques. My advice for a great piece of steak? Be there, love what you do, pay attention."







JEFFREY MEYER, *Capital Grille*

CITYCENTRE
840 W. SAM HOUSTON PARKWAY N.,
713-463-5051
THECAPITALGRILLE.COM

Standout dishes: The specialties here are fresh fish and steaks. "One of our most popular signature items is the dry-aged, bone-in, Kona coffee-crust sirloin with shallot butter," says executive chef Jeffrey Meyer. "Another is a feature we do, a porcini-crust Delmonico steak—a 22-ounce prime bone-in ribeye—served au jus. For fish, the citrus-glazed salmon served with haricot verts and marcona almonds is excellent."

Grilling tips: "When you're cooking beef, make sure you start with a clean grill to get a great sear," says Meyer. "You can brush it with high-smoke-point oil like canola or olive oil if the grill has some rust on it. The ideal thickness of a steak depends on the level of doneness you want. I like a nice, big, thick steak. The thinner ones are easier to cook medium-well to well-done, but if you like a rare or medium-rare steak, thicker is better."



PEDRO MORALES, *Chimichurri's*

KINGS HARBOR
1660 W. LAKE HOUSTON PKWY.,
281-360-0015
CHIMICHURRISGRILL.COM

Standout dishes: The churrasco steak is this signature dish at this South American grill. "It's our best seller," says chef Pedro Morales. "It's a tender, juicy, grilled beef tenderloin marinated with chimichurri sauce." Other popular dishes include the bistec de aguja, which is a 12-ounce gauchocut ribeye, and the rack of lamb.

Grilling tips: "Grilling a good steak starts with buying good-quality meat," says Morales. "At Chimichurri's, we use the highest quality beef tenderloin, which is basted with our house-made, olive-oil, parsley-and-garlic-based chimichurri sauce for about an hour. The meat should be cold when you place it on the grill, and you want the heat of the grill to be hot, but not too hot—about 400 degrees. We also grill fish, and the key there is starting it on the grill and then finishing it off in the oven."





EXPERT EYE

On the Horizon

Taking It Outside

THE WORLD IS YOUR DINING ROOM.

BY JEFF BALKE
PHOTO BY AUDRA ODEN

In our city, dining al fresco almost year-round is as much a birthright as free chips and salsa—whether we're out on the town or in our own backyard. Even on the hottest day of August, sitting on a patio, margarita in hand, is perfectly acceptable.

When entertaining friends and family, it's important to remember that hosting outdoors brings its own particular considerations. "Be sure to have enough serving pieces as part of your outdoor collections, like large platters and bowls for casual dinners outside," says Jacob Maurer, Sur La Table's senior vice president and general merchandising manager. "And don't forget lighting for your table, since summer parties often carry on into the evening hours." To keep things safe, use durable dinnerware like melamine plates, which can withstand inclement weather.

Trends this spring and summer include novelty tea lights, decorative candleholders and table scatterers, from crystals, to artificial leaves, to twigs. Natural materials, including plants and wood, and galvanized metals are also popular choices. And what would an outdoor party be without the right server for your refreshing beverages? "The must-have accessory is the beverage jar for serving everything from water, to iced tea, to specialty cocktails," Maurer explains.

Above all, Maurer recommends having fun. "Mix and match patterns, and use decor items and linens to add fun and interest to the table," he explains. Putting it all together can transform a bland deck into a beautiful dining area. Assuming no rain, with the right accessories—and perhaps a little mosquito repellent—there's simply no reason to keep the party inside. ■



5 MUST-HAVE GADGETS FOR DINING OUTDOORS

Coravin 1000 Wine Access System, \$299

This system, perhaps the most useful gadget since the corkscrew, removes air from opened bottles to keep wine fresh for weeks, even months. surlatable.com



Vitamix Professional Series 750 Blender, \$649

Nothing is more important on a hot day than a cool drink, and no blender can match the blending power of a Vitamix. This is the go-to blender for everything from smoothies to margaritas. surlatable.com



iDevices iGrill 2 Bluetooth Thermometer, \$99

Many a backyard cook has ruined dinner by opening the grill too often. Enter this nifty thermometer, which will tell you how your burgers are progressing via your smartphone, so you won't keep checking on them and losing heat. surlatable.com



ThermaCELL Torch Lantern Mosquito Repellent, \$46 per unit

Mosquitos can be pesky nuisances for Bayou City dwellers. The solution? This small "lantern," which repels bugs over an area of 225 square feet. amazon.com



Bose SoundLink Color Bluetooth Speaker, \$129

There's never been an easier or more convenient way to fill your patio with tunes than this Bluetooth-ready speaker, which has both

JORA ODEN
 : ITS FROM TOP: COURTESY CORAVIN;
 : IDEVICES; THERMACELL; BOSE

Learning to Live

Practice Makes Perfect

OUR TAKEAWAY FROM THREE GREAT CLASSES.

BY NATALIE HARMS



CRAFTS

Paper Source Craft Class

CITYCENTRE / \$20

Each month, the popular paper goods boutique hosts two workshops with different themes. The most popular is a wedding-crafts class, which we attended along with a group of brides and a few grooms wanting to pick up quick and easy do-it-yourself skills for making invitations and other creative projects.

What we learned:

- ♦ The store imports papers from all over the world, changing them with the seasons;
- ♦ Professionally printed invitations take three weeks to several months, depending on how intricate they are;
- ♦ Copper will be a huge color this wedding season
- ♦ Lining an envelope yourself is a surprisingly easy process that will jazz it right up;
- ♦ You don't need to pay a professional printer to heat-emboss an envelope; and
- ♦ The best way to put ink on a stamp is to hold the stamp and dab the pad on it, rather than vice versa, so you can see which spots are dry.

FROM LEFT: COURTESY PAPER SOURCE; SHUTTERSTOCK; JILL HUNTER



Culinary

Sur la Table Cooking Class

CITYCENTRE / \$69

Attend one of the multiple classes offered daily and get a 10 percent off coupon to the store. Among many others, there's a knife basics course, a kolache workshop and a croissants-from-scratch class, which is the one we attended.

What we learned:

- Making croissants is labor-intensive and can take up to three days;
- Turning the dough means rolling it flat, folding it and making layers;
- Turn the dough three times for perfect croissants;
- It's best to invest in a flour shaker and instant yeast;
- Use a fattier, European-style butter;
- Work the dough with damp hands;
- Relax the dough in the fridge; and
- You can freeze dough for up to six weeks.



WINE & BUBBLES

The Tasting Room Wine Class

KINGS HARBOR / \$35

If you like wine but don't know much about it, this popular wine bar is here to help. Depending on which class you attend, you might learn the difference between grape-harvesting methods in Napa Valley and Argentina, or how to tell a pinot noir from a Malbec. Monthly classes include wine tastings paired with selections from the wonderful menu; the one we attended focused on champagne.

What we learned:

- The safest way to open champagne is by untwisting the wire, taking off the cage and twisting slowly;
- Champagne goes through two rounds of fermentation, the second of which puts the bubbles in the bubbly;
- Only seven types of grapes are in champagne, the great majority of which contain a blend of chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier;
- The grapes in vintage champagne are all harvested in one year (usually a high-quality one); and
- France and America have a gentlemen's agreement, not strictly enforced, that a bottle labeled "champagne" must be made from grapes grown in Champagne, France. ▶

District Docket

Shopping, sipping, dancing and dining—there’s something for everyone all through this spring and summer at CITYCENTRE, Kings Harbor and GreenStreet. Check online for new events every month.

BY SARAH GABBART

Key:  CITYCENTRE  Kings Harbor  GreenStreet




First Fridays at Kings Harbor


ONGOING


Live Music in the Plaza 
Thursdays through Sundays, take in a night of live music featuring a variety of artists playing everything from classic rock, to salsa, to smooth jazz. Friday night’s music is sponsored by Sewell Cadillac. For the full lineup, visit citycentrehouston.com.


Thursday and Friday Night Live Music 
At the end of the week, The Lawn at GreenStreet comes alive from 5 to 8 p.m. with the sounds of rock, pop and rhythm and blues. For the full lineup, visit greenstreetdowntown.com.

First Friday Concert 
Friday nights are made for music. Sit back and enjoy a free concert at Kings

Harbor from 7 to 10 p.m. the first Friday of each month, March through October.

Dancing Under the Stars 
Lace up your dancing shoes and head to CITYCENTRE for a night of dips and twirls. From 7 to 10 p.m. on the last Saturday of the month, March through October, guests will learn all the right steps, to live music accompaniment. For details, visit citycentrehouston.com.

Wind Down Wednesdays 
Visit the Kings Harbor Plaza on Wednesdays from 6 to 9 p.m., every March and April, and unwind to the sounds of live music.


Games on the Green 
On the fourth Thursday of every month, head to The Lawn from 5 to 8


friendly field games while you enjoy live music at GreenStreet.

Running Club at Ruggles Green 
Meet up with fellow runners at Ruggles Green on Mondays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Runners of all speeds and styles are welcome, and if you need extra motivation, everyone can enjoy snacks courtesy of Ruggles Green afterward.

Boot Camp 
Challenge yourself with an intense boot camp on The Lawn at GreenStreet, Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7 a.m., March through November. The shady space will keep you cool during the summer mornings while you sweat through your workout.

MARCH

3/27 Yoga Under the Stars 
Bring your mat and get zen at Kings Harbor. Join Life Time Fitness instructors for twists, turns and total relaxation from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

3/30, 4/13, 4/27 Move + Shake Zumba Mondays 
Need to dance off a case of the Mondays? Groove your way to a better week at this class, which runs from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. No equipment is needed; all skill levels are welcome.

ILL PHOTOS: COURTESY MIDWAY



CITYCENTRE



Kings Harbor



GreenStreet

APRIL

4/4

Sixth Annual Doggy Party on the Plaza

Grab your pooch—and your human friends—and head to this party, sponsored by Houston's *PetTalk Magazine* and *myfuzzbook.com*. From noon to 5 p.m., celebrate all things puppy and featuring family fun, including music, contests, vendors and a parade.



4/5, 4/19, 5/13, 5/17 Spring Art Series

Meet local artists and enjoy live music from 3 to 7 p.m. as you shop for one-of-a-kind drawings, paintings, sculptures and handmade jewelry along sidewalks alive with art and family-friendly fun.

4/11

Green 6.2 Fun Run

Start stretching—the Green 6.2 Fun Run is back. The race takes runners through CITYCENTRE and surrounding areas, with a 10K starting at 7:45 a.m. and a special 1K for kids at 9:15 a.m. For details, visit Green62.com.

4/18

Briggs True Texas Hot Stuff Market Festival

Dust off your boots and scoot to this Lone Star State-themed festival hosted by Briggs True Texas Sauce and Seasonings. From noon to 5 p.m. enjoy delicious down-home food, live music and vendors from all over Texas.

4/24

Friday Flicks on The Lawn

Spread out a blanket or grab a seat on a nearby patio while you sing along to *Pitch Perfect* at GreenStreet's Friday Flicks on The Lawn. For details and a full schedule, visit citycentrehouston.com.

April 24–May 3 Shop With Heart Card

Donate \$40 to the American Heart Association and enjoy discounts at participating CITYCENTRE restaurants and retailers with this card from April 24 through May 3. For information, visit shopwithheart.org.

MAY

5/5

Live Music in the Plaza

Take in a night of live music inspired by Cinco de Mayo from 5 to 8 p.m. For the full lineup, visit citycentrehouston.com.

5/9

Biron Gymnastics Show Team of Houston

Watch Houston's most talented gymnasts take the green from 4 to 6 p.m. at this tumbling and acrobatic performance. The team will represent the United States in the 15th World Gymnaestrada Games in Finland.

May 21–25

Memorial Weekend Concert Series

CITYCENTRE is your staycation destination for Memorial Day weekend. With five nights of live music, there's no need to leave the Bayou City—or even the neighborhood—for great entertainment and family fun. For a full lineup, visit citycentrehouston.com.

5/22

Friday Flicks on The Lawn

Spread out a blanket or grab a seat on a nearby patio while taking in a classic, *Jurassic Park 1*, at GreenStreet's Friday Flicks on The Lawn. For details and a full schedule, visit greenstreetdowntown.com.

JUNE

6/10 and 7/8

Moonlight Movies for Kids

Sit down with some popcorn and enjoy a beautiful summer evening with a kid-friendly movie under the stars. Sponsored by Texas Children's Hospital – West Campus and Sewell Cadillac, June's screening, *Big Hero 6*, and July's, the animated original *Cinderella*, start at 9 p.m. (or dusk). For details and a schedule of movies, visit citycentrehouston.com.



JULY

7/2–7/5

Fourth of July Celebration

We need more than just a day to celebrate America, which is why CITYCENTRE has planned four days of family-friendly fun for the Fourth of July. See the fireworks at 9 p.m. July 4, and check citycentrehouston.com for information about each day's entertainment and activities.

7/3

Kings Harbor Concert + Fireworks

Celebrate Independence Day with live entertainment and a fireworks show from 6:30 to 10 p.m. Visit kings-harbor.com for details.

7/9

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center Blood Drive

In just one hour, you can save up to three lives, and blood banks around the country are in the most need of donations during the summertime. From 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., do your part by visiting the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center mobile donation facility. Visit citycentrehouston.com/events for donor requirements and to sign up.



Eating Around

Whether you're in the mood for a romantic dinner, cocktails with friends, a healthy snack or a beer with the game, we've got it all.

BY MAI PHAM



Radio Milano at
CITYCENTRE

GreenStreet

For a complete directory, visit
greenstreetdowntown.com.

Andalucia Tapas Restaurant & Bar

1201 San Jacinto St. Ste. 161
832-319-6673 | andaluciatapas.com

From *patatas bravas* to empanadas, grilled octopus to baked goat cheese, Andalucia offers a selection of hot and cold Spanish tapas that will please the most discerning of palates. Midweek happy hour features \$3 and \$4 tapas specials; Friday and Saturday nights bring live flamenco performances. Don't forget to order a pitcher of the house sangria.

Crossroads at the House of Blues

1204 Caroline St.
888-402-5837 | houseofblues.com
Celebrity chef Aaron Sanchez offers a bold, tasty menu of American classics at Crossroads, including a build-your-own certified Angus beef burger, a large selection of hand-stretched flatbreads, pulled pork sliders, chicken wings, applewood bacon-wrapped meatloaf, lobster mac 'n cheese and much more. Happy hour starts at 4 p.m. daily, and a children's menu is available.

Guadalajara Del Centro

1201 San Jacinto St. Ste. 141
713-650-0101 | guadalajahacienda.com

For a festive, upscale Mexican-food experience, Guadalajara is your stop for margaritas, fajitas, enchiladas, specialty fish dishes and more. The house guacamole is a must-try, and happy hour specials make this a downtown after-work hotspot from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

Mia Bella Trattoria

1201 San Jacinto St. Ste. 161
832-319-6675 | miabellarestaurants.com
Get your romance on at this charming Italian trattoria, where dishes like the *capellini de mare* (seafood angel hair pasta), *ossobuco di capretto* and fettuccine scampi always get rave reviews, as does the delicious deep-fried calamari. Brunch is excellent: try the eggs Mia Bella (the restaurant's version of Eggs Benedict) with a mimosa.

III Forks Steakhouse

1201 San Jacinto St. Ste. 129
713-658-9457 | iiiforks.com
Steaks are the name of the game at III Forks, where the USDA Prime steaks win over hearts daily. Whether you opt for the bone-in ribeye or a traditional filet, III Forks ensures a superlative dining experience. We also recommend the beef sliders, which are elevated to perfection with their caramelized onions and pillowy-soft potato buns.

Lucky Strike Lanes

1201 San Jacinto St. Ste. 321
713-658-8888 | luckystrikelanes.com

Work up an appetite bowling; then ease your hunger pangs with a menu designed for sharing. Dishes like grilled jerk skewers, coconut shrimp, fresh guacamole, soft pretzel dippers, crispy tacos, mini burgers and wings by the pound are fun and tasty.

McCormick and Schmick's Seafood and Steaks

1201 Fannin St. Ste. 121 | 713-658-8100
mccormickandschmicks.com
You can't go wrong at McCormick and Schmick's, whether you order seafood or steak. For an appetizer, try the delicious mussels. Lunch specials are generously portioned and well priced, and the happy hour, Monday to Friday from 3:30 to 7 p.m., is one of the best in town, with plenty of specials for less than \$5.

Salata

1201 Fannin St. Ste. 123 | 713-739-0101 (corporate) salata.com
Downtown favorite Salata is opening its newest location at GreenStreet this fall. Beloved for its fresh selection of all-you-can-choose vegetarian ingredients (the base salad or wrap is just \$7 or \$8, with a supplement for proteins such as chicken or shrimp) and its delicious gluten-free dressings, this Salata will have a patio and expanded hours—a great choice for a healthful meal while enjoying entertainment at The Lawn. GreenStreet's outdoor event space

Kings Harbor

For a complete directory,
visit kings-harbor.com.

The Berry Bar

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 106
281-312-2861

Stop by The Berry Bar for refreshment or a healthy dessert—this is the place for fresh juices, fun tapioca drinks, smoothies and self-serve frozen yogurt with build-your-own toppings.

Chimichurri's South American Grill

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 106
281-360-0015 | chimichurrisgrill.com

Upscale, high-quality South American cuisine is what you'll find at Chimichurri's, where the signature dish is Argentinian *churrasco* steak, grilled to perfection and then basted with *chimichurri* sauce. Other must-try items include the Peruvian ceviche, empanadas and Argentinian chorizo.

Puerto Tacos + Cervezas

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 107
281-312-0931 | puertotacos.com

Puerto, which means "door" in Spanish, is the place for tacos, with shrimp, chicken, Baja fish, crawfish and *carnitas* tacos. Order one of the specialty margaritas and a taco combination platter, then sit and watch the water from one of their two patios.

Raffa's Waterfront Grill

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 103
281-360-1436 | raffas.net

For a wonderful romantic evening, head to Raffa's Waterfront Grill, where Executive Chef David Welch will wow you. Don't miss items include the crab cakes, the Madeira-braised pork osso bucco, the crispy-skinned pan-seared *branzino* (often a special) and the braised lamb shank served over butternut squash risotto.

Sharky's Waterfront Grill

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 104
281-360-0660

sharkyswaterfrontgrill.com

Enjoy a casual seafood meal at Sharky's Waterfront Grill. The extensive menu offers buckets of shrimp, gumbo, fresh salads and signature "Shark" burgers made with certified Angus beef, not to mention killer shrimp tacos.

The Tasting Room

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 105
281-361-0044 | tastingroomwines.com

One of Houston's best wine bars, The Tasting Room offers a wide selection of wine choices by the glass, along with the option to purchase a bottle to take home. Chef Erick Madden's superb menu of cheese plates, nibbles, stone-fired pizzas and entrees enhances the experience. (See below for The Tasting Room, CITYCENTRE.)

Zammitti's Italian Ristorante

1660 W. Lake Houston Pkwy. Ste. 101
281-361-7499 | zammittis.com

TEXAS de BRAZIL[®] CHURRASCARIA

Brazilian Steakhouse

Carving a New Experience



16 flame-grilled meats
served tableside

50-item gourmet salad area

Ultimate caipirinhas,
award-winning wines,
and much more

CITYCENTRE

822 Town & Country Blvd.

Houston

713.730.3013

Serving Dinner Nightly and Friday Lunch

EATING AROUND

menu features comforting Italian dishes such as veal *scallopini*, chicken *marsala*, house-made lasagna, pasta *alfredo* and specialty pizzas and calzones. The Zammiti family makes all of these dishes with care, using generations-old Italian recipes.



CITYCENTRE

For a complete directory, visit citycentrehouston.com.

Brio Tuscan Grille

12808 Queensbury Ln. Ste. 100

713-973-9610 | brioitalian.com

Everything is big and bold at upscale Italian restaurant Brio. Order the beef *carpaccio* to start and finish with a delicious pasta dish. The patio is lovely, and the happy hour menu, which offers drinks and appetizers for around \$5 or less, is fantastic.

Chipotle Mexican Grill

12888 Queensbury Ln. Ste. 142

713-343-0521 | chipotle.com

Build your own gourmet burritos and tacos, with fresh ingredients and meats that are hormone- and antibiotic-free.

Cyclone Anaya's Mexican Kitchen

800 Town and Country Blvd.

713-461-1300 | cycloneanaya.com

Make sure to order a tasty margarita or tequila cocktail before sitting down to dine on some of the city's best Mexican at this Houston stalwart. Start off with some great chips and salsa, then order whatever you're in the mood for: from fajitas to enchiladas, *chiles rellenos* to *flautas*, everything here is excellent. Happy hour is also fun, with half-price margaritas and inexpensive bites.

Eddie V's Prime Seafood

12848 Queensbury Ln. Ste. 200

832-200-2380 | eddiev.com

For one of the best steak and seafood experiences around, indulge in an evening at Eddie V's. The crab cakes are sinfully delicious, and the steamed Chilean sea bass is something you won't forget. Steaks, like the off-menu tomahawk, are also mouth-watering, and happy hour is a big scene.

Grub Burger Bar

799 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 200

713-827-7157 | grubburgerbar.com

One of the newest additions to the gourmet burger scene, Grub Burger Bar is the epitome of the modern-day diner. The buns are baked daily, the burgers are made with a house-ground-chuck-and-brisket blend, the sweet potato fries are stellar, and the onion rings are huge. Offerings include basic burgers, decked-out specialty burgers, turkey burgers, tuna burgers and a rotating special of the month. Before you leave, a gourmet milkshake—you can get it spiked with alcohol—is mandatory.

Houston Texans Grille

12848 Queensbury Ln. Ste. 208

713-461-2002 | texansgrille.g3restaurants.com

Houston Texans Grille is an awesome place to watch any game. The restaurant gets packed on game nights, but that's part of the fun, as is the delicious food, steaming expensive plates of fresh

chicken wings, sliders, sandwiches and flatbreads. Everything goes down great with beer, conversation and, of course, a win for the home team.

LifeCafe at Life Time Athletic

815 Town & Country Ln.

713-464-1200 | lifetimefitness.com

Need something before or after your workout?

LifeCafe offers smoothies, salads, wraps and grab-and-go options to support an active lifestyle.

Milano Bar

800 Sorella Ct.

713-827-3545 | radio-milano.com

There's a sexy, retro speakeasy craft-bar feel to Milano Bar. Not only is the staff decked out in Prohibition-style outfits, but the gleaming dark woods and retro design make this an attractive spot for pre-dinner drinks or a nightcap. Beautiful glassware, infused liquors, freshly squeezed juices and a fine selection of whiskeys, bourbon, absinthe and other spirits offer a full complement to the menu of creative craft cocktails.

Monnalisa at the Hotel Sorella

800 Sorella Ct. | 713-973-1600

hotelsorella-citycentre.com

Stop for a pre-dinner drink or a nightcap at this gorgeous bar inside the Hotel Sorella. With a large fireplace and spectacular views of the hotel's brightly lit pool, this place will make you feel like you're in Miami. There are also plenty of hidden alcoves, a dance floor and live music several nights a week.

RA Sushi

799 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 234

713-331-2792 | rasushi.com

Sleek, contemporary decor, a great sound system and modern Japanese cuisine make RA Sushi a great choice for date night or an evening with friends. Cocktails are well composed and delicious, with a great happy hour and Sunday Funday specials.

Radio Milano

800 Sorella Ct.,

713-827-3545 | radio-milano.com

The contemporary Italian menu at executive chef Jose Hernandez's Radio Milano offers an excellent selection of small plates, pizzas, pastas, entrées and desserts. Start with mushroom cappuccino soup, a tangy beet ribbon salad, the tuna crudo with avocado mousse or the delectable black-truffle-cream-and-prosciutto wood-fired pizza. Revel in the creaminess of the lobster and uni tagliatelle, or indulge in something more substantial, like the artfully plated pork three ways. Of note: Hernandez started out as a pastry chef, so his desserts are not to be missed.

Red Mango

801 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. A

713-463-3830 | redmangousa.com

Visit Red Mango for a healthy dessert of frozen yogurt filled with protein, active cultures and, of course, deliciousness. The non-fat, low-fat and gluten-free delights can be spruced up with toppings of your choice, such as fresh fruit, cheesecake bits or Cap 'N Crunch cereal.

Ruggles Green

801 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 1B

713-464-5551 | rugglesgreen.com

For healthy and wholesome fare, head to Ruggles Green, Houston's first Certified Green Restaurant. All produce is local and organic, and meats are free of hormones, antibiotics and steroids. Dairy-free, gluten-free and vegetarian items are clearly noted, making your dining choices—salads, tacos, pizzas, pastas, sandwiches and desserts—super-easy and guilt-free. The outdoor patio overlooking the courtyard is lovely.

Sal y Pimienta

818 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 105

832-849-0097 | salypimientakitchen.com

Uruguyan ex-pat Gianfranco Percovich has created a South American steakhouse that would do his homeland proud, offering up exquisite cuts of organic steaks from local ranches such as 44 Farms and an extensive South American wine list to accompany them. The scent of the mesquite-fired grill is guaranteed to make your mouth water from the moment you walk in. Select the cut you want—Sal y Pimienta has a dozen different cuts of both beef and pork to choose from—and watch the kitchen team grill it to order in the big, open kitchen. Not a carnivore? There's also plenty of seafood, pasta and even salads on the menu.

Salata

840 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. N. Ste. 101

832-538-0170 | salata.com

Build-your-own salads and wraps are the name of the game at Salata, where meals are made to order right in front of you from the ingredients that you choose. It's simple, really: decide if you want a wrap or a salad, pick all the vegetables you want, add a protein, select a salad dressing, and voilà! Lunch or dinner is served. The basic veggie option starts at \$7, and you can add a cup of soup for a nominal fee. It's a great spot for the health-conscious as well as people with dietary restrictions—most of the salad dressings are gluten-free.

Seasons 52

842 W. Sam Houston Pkwy.

713-464-5252 | seasons52.com

Seasons 52 makes it easy to indulge and not feel guilty. Everything on the menu is 475 calories or less, which includes salads and entrees such as grilled salmon and strip steak. Drinks are powerful: get a martini made with infused vodka or enjoy one of the 60-plus wines by the glass, selected by Master Sommelier Georges Miliotes.

Straits Restaurant

800 Sorella Ct. Ste. 940

713-365-9922 | straitsrestaurants.com

Chef John Sikkhattana wows with a creative menu of pan-Asian dishes that are meant to be shared. From a beautiful parchment-steamed sea bass, to classic Singaporean dishes like *chow kway teo* noodles and Thai basil beef, the flavors are authentic and delicious. The bar comes alive at night, and the patio is spectacular.

SWEET

801 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. A120

713-647-9338 | ilovesweet.com

If the large case of colorful French macarons isn't enough to entice you, SWEET dessert shop also offers cake truffles, cupcakes, cookies, cakes, pastries and a myriad of other sweet, irresistible treats that are just begging to be eaten. Gluten-free options are also available.

Sweet Paris Creperie & Café

797 Sorella Ct. Ste. 100

713-266-6460 | sweetparis.com

You don't have to make the drive into Rice Village for your crepe fix now that Sweet Paris is bringing its popular sweet and savory crepe selection to CITYCENTRE. It's perfect for a quick pick-me-up between boutique shopping. Try the Bonne Maman berry jam crepe with sweet cream, or the ham and gruyere option; both are wonderful with a cappuccino or a glass of chardonnay. Sweet Paris also offers breakfast crepes—we love the Alaskan, filled with smoked salmon and scrambled eggs—and a selection of salads and panini for those who don't crave crepes. We do, though, especially for dessert, and especially the s'mores crepe made extra indulgent accompanied by a Nutella hot chocolate.

Texas de Brazil Churrascaria

822 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 100

713-730-3013 | texasdebrazil.com

For a belt-busting Brazilian rodizio experience, Texas de Brazil is a great choice. The all-you-can-eat menu boasts an extensive salad bar as well as a dizzying array of meats, all brought to your table and sliced onto your plate until you're ready to say stop. Don't miss the lobster bisque or the caipirinha cocktails.

The Capital Grille

840 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. N.

713-463-5051 | thecapitalgrille.com

Excellent service, an award-winning wine list and a menu of fine steaks make Capital Grille an excellent choice when you want a fine-dining experience. The lobster mac 'n cheese is legendary, the seafood tower decadent, and dry and wet aged steaks, such as the 22-ounce, bone-in ribeye Delmonico Steak, always make for a great night.

The Tasting Room

818 Town & Country Blvd. Ste. 100

281-822-1500 | tastingroomwines.com

With a large patio that often features live music, The Tasting Room is the perfect spot to unwind with a glass of vino at the end of the day. There are plenty of by-the-glass options that you can try, then buy to take home. A menu of charcuterie and cheese plates, wood oven-fired pizzas and other wine-friendly offerings completes the experience. (See above for The Tasting Room, Kings Harbor.)

Yard House

800 Sorella Ct. Ste. 116

713-461-9273 | yardhouse.com

Yard House is the quintessential American pub, with an extensive beer selection, along with wine and cocktails when you want to change things up. The menu features classic American bar food—wings, pizzas, tacos, sliders and more. There's an awesome happy hour with half-price pizzas, Monday to Friday, along with reverse happy hour Thursday through Sunday.



What to Drink Now

BY MAI PHAM

Cynar Julep

THE BAR:**Milano Bar**, 800 Sorella Ct.,713-827-3545, radio-milano.com**THE BARTENDER:**

Peter Clifton

DETAILS:

This Argentinian twist on the mint julep uses Cynar, an artichoke liqueur, in place of bourbon and lemon *oleo saccharum* instead of plain sugar, with fresh mint as garnish. It makes for a refreshing summer aperitif cocktail.

RECIPE INGREDIENTS:

2 oz. Cynar
2 oz. grapefruit
1/4 oz. lemon oleo saccharum
(to make a batch, mix juice of 1 lemon, rinds of 2 lemons and 1 cup of sugar, let sit for an hour, strain)
Splash soda
Mint

DIRECTIONS:

Shake first three ingredients and double-strain into julep cup with coarse ice, then top with soda. Slap mint in palm, then use as garnish.

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DISTRICT DWELLER

Life at Life Time

BY ANASTASIA HANSEN

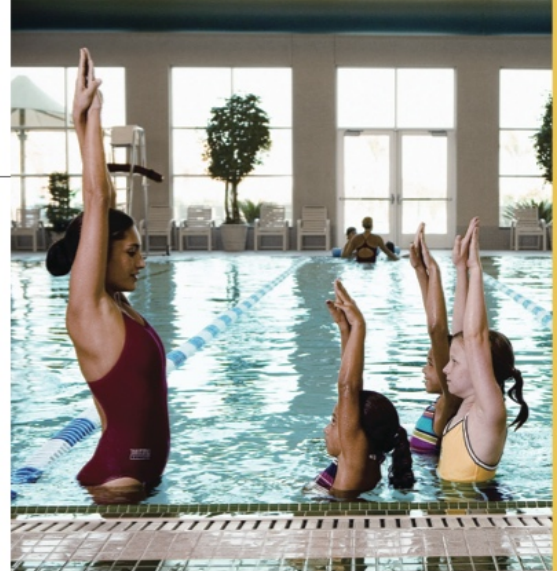
We know, we know. Although you've been meaning to go the gym, somehow there's always an excuse to skip it. But what if we told you that going to Life Time Athletic at CITYCENTRE is actually fun? When you're having a blast instead of suffering through another boring workout, it becomes easier to incorporate healthy habits into your routine. Suddenly, there really is enough time in the day... So you want to...



Kick butt: Head to Strike!, an intense, kickboxing-inspired workout featuring cardio-intensive intervals and athletic drills. Hook, jab and kick your way to toned shoulders, strengthened legs and a killer core. This class is not for the weak of heart.



One-up CrossFit: Challenge yourself with an Alpha Workout, which teaches proper form and technique while focusing on power movements like lifting, reaching and stretching. Train on your own or join a mentored group workout. Warning: it's highly addictive.



Reach new heights: Build strength and agility while climbing the second-tallest rock wall in Houston. The rock paths change monthly, so a new challenge is always waiting. Available for adult classes and kids' birthday parties.



Relax and renew: Schedule an appointment at the LifeSpa|Salon and treat yourself to a cut and color, complete with the spa's signature scalp renewal therapy, or get a manicure with polish from the organic, vegan SpaRitual product line. Soothe sore muscles with a therapeutic BodyWork deep-tissue massage featuring assisted stretching designed to meet the needs of athletes.



Tone your bod: Sign up for LifeBarre to condition and

develop your core while dancing your way to fitness. The class—part ballet, part pilates and part traditional conditioning—helps build endurance, flexibility and strength.



Make a splash: Dip your toe into a Water Circuit class, suit up for the Master's Swim Team or schedule a swim lesson. For a more relaxing experience after your workout, catch some rays at the resort-style outdoor pool or visit Friday evenings for Family Movie Night.



Snack healthy: The LifeCafe uses only 100-percent natural ingredients to prevent cravings and help recovery post-workout. Get the popular turkey avocado sandwich, almond delight shake or super greens salad, or try the D.TOX menu to help jump-start weight loss.

LIFE TIME ATHLETIC BY THE NUMBERS

75

Spin bikes

130

Weight, in pounds, of heaviest dumbbell

104

Temperature, in degrees Fahrenheit, of the Jacuzzi

8

Rowing machines

30

Yoga classes per week

3

Basketball courts

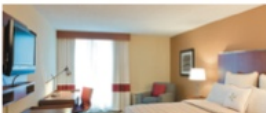
12

LifeCafe Shakes

14

For exercise classes and events at CITYCENTRE, Green-

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For maps and information, visit westcampus.texaschildrens.org.



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