

# tattle

MAGAZINE



**ANNIE POTTS**

ON STARRING  
IN THE SERIES  
'BEST MEDICINE'  
&  
THE QUIET POWER  
OF COMPASSION

## PETALS & POSSIBILITIES

WHAT GROWS  
WHEN  
CREATIVITY  
LEADS



**INTERVIEWS WITH**

**AUTHORS**


**EVELYN SKYE  
DINA YOUNIS**

**ARTISTS**

**MARY KOZIOL  
RACHEL WADLOW  
BECCA HALL  
CHELSEA PHELPS**

**FOUNDER OF SOCURIOUS  
JUSTIN SHIELS**



A vibrant field of pink cosmos flowers in full bloom, set against a clear, bright blue sky. The flowers are the central focus, with some in sharp focus in the foreground and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth. The overall mood is cheerful and optimistic.

WE ARE ALL DREAMING OF SOME  
MAGICAL GARDEN OVER THE HORIZON  
INSTEAD OF ENJOYING THE FLOWERS  
THAT ARE BLOOMING OUTSIDE  
OUR WINDOWS TODAY.

ADAPTED FROM DALE CARNEGIE



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# tattle

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*a note  
for you*



**WHAT GROWS WHEN YOU FOLLOW IT**

There's a moment in early spring when things start to shift, almost quietly. Buds you didn't notice yesterday are suddenly there. Light lingers a little longer. The air feels like it's holding something just about to happen. This issue lives in that space – the in-between where ideas begin, where creativity takes root, where possibility isn't loud yet, but it's undeniable.

*Petals & Possibilities* is about what grows when you follow that feeling.

Inside these pages, you'll meet artists, writers, and makers who remind us that creativity doesn't come from having it all figured out – it comes from showing up. Again and again. From sketchbooks filled with unfinished ideas. From hands in clay, paint, paper, and process. From trusting something small enough to begin.

There's a thread that runs through every story this issue. It's in the way one artist describes creating as a place of freedom when nothing else quite fit. It's in the reminder that consistency matters more than confidence. It's in the quiet truth that making something – anything – can steady you when life feels uncertain. And sometimes, it's even simpler than that – the idea that small, quiet actions, whether it's making something or offering something, can ripple farther than we ever see.

You'll see it in the way creativity becomes a kind of grounding. A return. A release. For some, it started as an escape and became a lifelong language. For others, it's still evolving – slow mornings, messy sketches, new forms, and the courage to try something unfamiliar.

And maybe that's the heart of it all: creativity isn't a destination. It's a process. One that looks different for everyone. One that doesn't need to be perfect to be meaningful.

Throughout this issue, you'll find reflections on imperfect things, on repair and resilience, on noticing what's right in front of you. You'll find stories that celebrate second chances – of objects, of ideas, of ourselves. You'll find reminders that beauty often lives in the unfinished, the evolving, the becoming.

Because blooming isn't about arriving. It's about allowing.

So wherever you are in your own season – whether you feel like you're just beginning, starting over, or somewhere in the middle of it all – let this be your invitation. To follow what pulls you. To make something just because you can. To trust that even the smallest spark has the potential to grow.

Here's to petals.  
To possibility.  
And to whatever is quietly beginning.

*Jennifer  
Dufek*

inspiration for  
this issue



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PHOTO OF ANNIEPOTTS: KIMNEWMONEY

bloom  
beautifully  
dangerously  
loudly  
bloom softly  
however you  
need  
just bloom

— RUPI KAUR



# LET IT BLOOM

Spring has a quiet way of nudging the world forward.



After months of slowing down and waiting things out, the world begins to shift again. Not dramatically – just enough to notice. The air softens, light lingers a little longer in the evening, and doors begin to open. People step outside without quite realizing they've been waiting for this moment.

Spring doesn't ask for a grand reset. It simply invites you forward. A walk lasts longer than planned. A new idea appears while you're doing something ordinary.

A small detour becomes the best part of the day.

Growth rarely arrives with a trumpet blast. Most of the time it unfolds quietly – petal by petal, moment by moment – until suddenly everything feels possible again.

The trick isn't chasing the season. It's carrying a piece of that energy with you wherever you go: a little curiosity, a little color, and a willingness to notice the unexpected.

Because spring isn't only something happening outside your window. It's a mindset – one that reminds us that creativity, joy, and possibility often begin with the smallest shift in direction.

Wherever the road leads next, let something bloom there. ■



## SMALL WAYS TO INVITE SPRING IN

**You don't need a full reset to feel the season shift. Sometimes it's the smallest changes that wake things up.**

### Open the windows earlier

Even if it's just for ten minutes. Let the air move through the room and remind the house winter is over.

### Bring something living inside

A few wildflowers, a sprig of herbs, a tiny plant on the windowsill. Life likes to be noticed.

### Take the longer way once a week

Walk an extra block. Bike the scenic route. Spring rewards people who wander a little.

### Write one idea down

Spring is a good season for beginnings. Capture the thought before it disappears.

### Sit outside without doing anything

No phone. No agenda. Just ten quiet minutes noticing the world warming up again.

# 3

## THINGS WE LEARNED THIS ISSUE

### 1

#### FLOWERS ARE DESIGNED TO BE SEEN DIFFERENTLY

Many flowers carry ultraviolet patterns invisible to the human eye but clear to bees and hummingbirds. These markings act like guides, directing pollinators toward nectar with surprising precision. What looks like a simple petal to us is actually layered with signals and pathways, built for a completely different kind of vision. It's a reminder that even the most familiar things – like a flower – aren't always what they seem.

### 2

#### SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL FLOWER FIELDS ARE ACTUALLY FARMS

Those sweeping landscapes of tulips, lavender, and poppies you see across Europe aren't just for photos – they're working farms. Many are grown for perfume, oils, dyes, or bulbs that get shipped all over the world. The good news: many of these regions (like Provence, the Netherlands, and parts of Tuscany) have cycling routes that wind directly through the fields, turning a farm road into one of the prettiest bike rides on earth.

### 3

#### PICNICS WERE ONCE A RADICAL IDEA

After the French Revolution, royal parks in France were opened to the public for the first time. People began gathering outdoors to eat, bringing simple foods and sharing space that had once been restricted. What we now think of as a picnic started as something quietly radical – a meal in a place you weren't always allowed to be. It's part of why eating outside still feels a little freer than it should. ■

## BEST NEW BOOKS

A nostalgic boy-band cruise, a quiet history teacher confronting life's hidden truths, and two strangers whose chance bookstore meeting becomes something more — three thoughtful, heartfelt stories about identity, connection, and the unexpected ways we rediscover ourselves when life refuses to stay predictable.



### AMERICAN FANTASY by Emma Straub

On a nostalgic boy-band cruise packed with devoted fans, newly divorced Annie unexpectedly reconnects with a forgotten part of herself. As music, memories, and midlife possibility collide, the trip becomes more than a themed getaway. Emma Straub delivers a witty, heartfelt story about aging, desire, identity, and discovering that passion — and reinvention — can arrive at any age.



### THE THINGS WE NEVER SAY by Elizabeth Strout

Artie Dam appears to have a steady life as a teacher, husband, and neighbor, yet privately wrestles with loneliness and questions about how little people truly know one another. When a hidden truth comes to light, he must reevaluate his relationships and confront the fragile, mysterious connections that shape a life.



### LOVE BY THE BOOK by Jessica George

Bestselling author Remy is struggling—her friends have drifted away and inspiration for her next novel has vanished. Simone, a guarded kindergarten teacher hiding a complicated secret, is equally isolated. When the two unexpectedly collide in a bookstore, an unlikely friendship forms, revealing how connection, honesty, and platonic love can reshape their lives.



## WHERE IDEAS GROW

Stories of creativity, curiosity, and ideas coming to life — tune in and let inspiration bloom.



### SONG EXPLORER

Averages 25 minutes per episode  
with over 350 episodes

A music creator favorite where artists break down a song piece by piece and talk about what inspired it and how it came to life — intimate, illuminating creative storytelling.



### THE CREATIVE BOOM PODCAST

Averages 50 minutes per episode  
with over 190 episodes

Hosted by Katy Cowan, this show features candid chats with creatives across art, design, writing, and entrepreneurship on what drives their work and helps them stay inspired.



### WRITING EXCUSES

Averages 20 minutes per episode  
with over 800 episodes

A brisk, playful, and wise podcast about the craft of writing — topics range from craft fundamentals to finding your voice, with authors sharing insights and back-stage perspectives.



### CREATIVE PEP TALK

Averages 45 minutes per episode  
with over 500 episodes

A favorite among artists and makers, host Andy J. Pizza blends motivation with practical insight, helping listeners push past creative blocks and rediscover joy in the work.

From law to bestselling novels, Evelyn Skye shares the leap, the rejections, and the quiet belief that kindness can still change everything.

A portrait of Evelyn Skye, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling and looking slightly to the right. She is wearing a black blazer over a black top, a gold necklace with a pearl pendant, and a ring on her left hand. Her right hand is on her hip.

# EVELYN SKYE



“ IT DOESN'T COST ME ANYTHING TO SMILE AT SOMEBODY, AND IT MIGHT MAKE THEIR DAY BETTER. ”

an adult, I realized it wasn't just a really cute little gift. It was so much love that had been put into this piece of paper that she carried across an ocean to bring to me and my brother.

**TM:** The story is set largely in New York City. How did you balance the bustling backdrop with the quieter, intimate storyline?

**ES:** I think it has to do a lot with the character. My cities and settings are always more ambient and I try to build the feeling of the place, but then it's grounded by the character themselves.

Chloe is originally a small-town girl from Kansas. When she is feeling particularly lost or overwhelmed, that's when I bring the city in to feel very busy and impersonal. The first place she goes to try to hand out paper roses is outside of a subway station exit. People are rushing. A woman scoffs at her and her paper rose falls to the ground and gets speared on this woman's stiletto heel. In those moments, the city feels chaotic.

But when she starts to connect with people – her neighbors or the baker she meets in the park – those moments are quieter. It feels like you're carving out your own space even within this big city. I try to make the setting reflect the mood or the mental state of the character.

**TM:** With kindness at the heart of your story, what does kindness look like to you in the moment when no one's watching?

**ES:** Kindness should not be something that you're doing for praise. It's sitting in that power that you have to make a small difference in people's lives.

When I was little, my mom would take me to the grocery store and point out a cashier who always smiled at everybody. My mom said, "Look at how she just brightens people's days." It impacted me. I realized it doesn't cost me anything to smile at somebody and it might make their day better.

I think it's kind of my guiding principle. Am I making the world better by putting this smile or comment out there? Or am I doing this for attention or ego? If it's the latter, that's not kindness to me. If you're doing it because you actually think the world is becoming better because you're putting this out there, that's what I try to lead with.

**TM:** What's one act of kindness that has changed the course of your own life?

**ES:** Probably that grocery store memory. But also remembering that everyone we pass by in our lives – they're not cameos or NPCs – they're living their own full lives.

**Tattle Magazine:** What first sparked the idea of your latest book *The Incredible Kindness of Paper* and how did that concept evolve as you wrote it?

**Evelyn Skye:** Yeah, so a few things. So first of all, I think what I really love is there's a Goodreads reviewer who called it *Love Actually* for human connection. And I think that really encapsulated this story well.

Chloe is the main character, she's a high school guidance counselor, and she has this practice of making these yellow origami roses for her students, and she writes an encouraging message in them. But then she loses her job. So she decides to write one of those messages like a pep talk for herself, and she tucks her little paper rose into her pocket. Then she loses the rose. It turns out that an elderly neighbor who is having an even worse day – who found out that she's being evicted – she picks up that rose, and it's exactly the message that she needs to turn her life around.

When Chloe figures that out, she decides that while she's looking for a job,

she's going to make more of these paper roses and leave them around New York City and just kind of spread little acts of kindness.

One of the inspirations for the story for me was I was in an Uber. After I got out of the Uber, I'd been in the car for 15–20 minutes, I realized that neither of us had said anything to each other. It was so sad. Here's two human beings in a small space, and because of technology, we forgot that there were actual people on the other side. I kind of determined at that point personally that from now on, I'm going to make sure I know the name of my driver before I get in the car and exchange a few words, just acknowledge that humanness. That realization that we have that power to do these little acts of kindness that can actually make a difference in someone's day.

The origami part came from my childhood. My grandma lived in Taiwan, and she would visit and bring gorgeous origami she had made. It was such a treasure for me as a kid. Looking back as



Sometimes I play a game with myself imagining the story of a person sitting at the next table. When there's traffic caused by an ambulance or fire truck, instead of getting upset, I try to ask what's happening up there to the people. That reminds you that someone is having the worst day of their life right now. When we remember each person is a fully fledged human being with their own full story, it makes us kinder to each other.

**TM:** This book is considered your most personal. What part of yourself were you afraid to put on the page?

**ES:** Chloe is very much me. What I was worried about is how do you write hope in a world that is so skeptical? The fear was people would brush this off as toxic positivity.

What I was trying to convey is informed optimism – the idea that you live a real life with ups and downs and heartbreaks, but despite whatever darkness you've gone through, you still choose to see the light.

My previous book *The Hundred Loves of Juliet* was inspired by my husband's near-death experience and lung transplant, while his brother died at the same time. People ask how I can still be so positive. This book was my way of showing how someone can be a light when life actually is hard.

**TM:** You previously worked in law. What did the moment feel like when you decided to change paths?

**ES:** It was so scary. I think a lot of smart women get caught along the current of life and before you know it, you're somewhere you didn't intend to be.

I had a degree in Russian literature, then went to law school, then worked as a lawyer. I was good at it, but I didn't find fulfillment. When I was on maternity leave, I finally had time to read for fun



again and reconnected with books. I thought, "What if I tried to write one?"

I extended my leave unpaid for a year to try writing, and I fell in love with it. It took years before I introduced myself as a writer because I had hundreds of rejections. I wrote eight manuscripts that were rejected before I finally got a book deal on my ninth manuscript. That in-between phase was scary, but absolutely worth it.

**TM:** What kept you going through those rejections?

**ES:** It was that love of writing. I didn't understand before when people said they wake up excited about their job. When I found writing, I thought, "Oh my gosh, this is it."

As a creative person, you need this delusional belief that what you're writing is really good or important, while you're getting rejected constantly. It's this mix of delusion and hope and just hoping you can make it work.

**TM:** How has motherhood shaped your storytelling?

**ES:** Becoming a mom shaped everything. I started writing YA partly by tapping into my youth and projecting forward into what values I wanted my daughter to have.

I later worked with Disney creating a young princess character, and my daughter became my proofreader, which was special. Now that she's a teenager about to go into the world, I feel urgency. I want to raise a good human being, and I think every book reflects that, even when I'm not consciously thinking about it.

**TM:** You've spoken about having *aphantasia*. How has that influenced your writing?

**ES:** I didn't realize other people see images in their heads until I read about it. Many writers see a movie in their minds, whereas I'm constructing things from scratch.

Some readers say my imagery is vivid. I don't really know what my characters or locations look like. I build them based on feeling. My editors always ask for more physical details, so I research those later. That sometimes allows readers to use their imaginations to fill in details I might have left open.

**TM:** If your characters could send you one of their origami notes, what would it say?

**ES:** There's a side character who works in a cancer center. She finds one of these paper roses, and the quote inside says, "Today has not yet been written and you can choose how to tell that story." I think that's a beautiful reminder that every day is a fresh start and we choose what lens we see it through.

**TM:** What do you hope readers carry with them after finishing *The Incredible Kindness of Paper*?

**ES:** I hope they realize they have so much power to make a difference in the world. We think changing the world means solving huge global problems. Those are important, but on an individual level, we have the power to compliment someone's shoes or hold a door.

Those little differences add up. We all have this superpower that we don't realize we're holding. ■

WE HAVE THAT  
POWER

*to do these little*

ACTS OF

KINDNESS

*that can actually  
make a*

DIFFERENCE

IN SOMEONE'S  
DAY

EVELYN SKYE





VIEW OF PORTLAND CITY  
DOWNTOWN, COLUMBIA RIVER  
AND NATIONAL FOREST PARK  
MOUNT HOOD

CITY SPOTLIGHT  
**PORTLAND,  
OREGON**  
CITY SPOTLIGHT  
CITY SPOTLIGHT  
CITY SPOTLIGHT



# A WEEKEND IN Portland, OR

Rain-soaked and effortlessly cool, Portland might be famous for its craft coffee and moody forests, but this city is layered in the best way. Think world-class books, garden hideaways, bold flavors, and neighborhoods with personality to spare. From culture fixes to craveable bites — and a few jaw-dropping escapes just beyond city limits — here's your ultimate hit list for a weekend that feels equal parts curated and carefree.



⬅️  
**ARLENE SCHNITZER  
CONCERT HALL**

A downtown icon hosting everything from the Oregon Symphony to touring artists and comedy acts. Inside, grand architecture and rich acoustics set the mood; outside, its ornate marquee anchors the arts district with old-school charm. Even if you don't have tickets, that iconic exterior alone is worth the photo.



⬆️  
**POWELL'S CITY OF  
BOOKS**

A literary labyrinth that somehow feels both iconic and intimate. Color-coded rooms, unexpected finds, and a coffee stop that begs you to linger. Even non-readers get converted here. It's not just a bookstore; it's a Portland rite of passage with excellent people-watching.



WASHINGTON PARK



⬅️  
**PORTLAND  
AERIAL TRAM**

A quirky Portland staple and one of only a few commuter aerial trams in the U.S. Glide above the South Waterfront up to Marquam Hill in just minutes, with sweeping views of the Willamette River, downtown, and, on clear days, Mount Hood. It's transit turned sightseeing — and a fun way to see the city from above.



⬆️  
**LAN SU CHINESE GARDEN**

An urban escape tucked downtown. Rock formations, classical architecture, and a serene teahouse make this feel transportive in the best way. It's the perfect reset between museum hopping and espresso stops.





⬆️ **INTERNATIONAL ROSE TEST GARDEN**

Classic, fragrant, and unapologetically romantic. Come for the blooms, stay for sweeping city views and golden-hour strolls between rows of impossibly perfect petals. Roses typically begin blooming in late May, hit their peak in June, and often linger into September. In peak season, the air itself feels perfumed — proof that Portland can be soft and dramatic all at once.



⬆️ **PORTLAND JAPANESE GARDEN**

Quiet, intentional, and stunning in every season. Wander mossy paths, pause by koi ponds, and let the city noise dissolve into the sound of water and wind through trees. Every turn feels curated yet effortless. It's Portland's reminder that beauty doesn't need to shout — it just needs space to breathe.



**PORTLAND ART MUSEUM**

Refined but approachable, this museum balances classic works with thoughtful contemporary exhibitions. It's the kind of place you duck into on a gray afternoon and leave feeling sharper, calmer, and slightly more cultured than you arrived.



**ALBERTA ARTS DISTRICT**

Colorful, creative, and community-driven. Murals line the streets, galleries and shops invite lingering, and the food scene punches above its weight. Come during Last Thursday if you want the neighborhood at full volume.



**FOREST PARK**

One of the largest urban forests in the country, and a quiet flex for Portland. Miles of trails, towering trees, and the sense that you've escaped far beyond city limits—without ever leaving them.



**SCREEN DOOR EASTSIDE**

Southern comfort with a Portland polish. Crispy fried chicken, buttery biscuits, and a brunch line that's absolutely worth it. This is the meal you plan your morning around—and talk about long after.



**WILLAMETTE  
NATIONAL FOREST**

Stretching east of Portland into the Cascade Mountains, Willamette National Forest is a moss-draped masterpiece of waterfalls, alpine lakes, and old-growth evergreens. Mist clings to the trees, rivers run glacier-cold, and trails wind toward turquoise pools and volcanic peaks. Hike to Sahalie and Koosah Falls, dip into hot springs, or simply breathe deeper. This is Pacific Northwest magic at full volume.



Lower Butte  
Creek Falls,  
Willamette  
National Forest,  
Oregon



*pretty  
pink  
petals*  
COLLECTIVE

*Romance, Rewritten in Petals.*

PRETTYPINKPETALSCOLLECTIVE.COM

# *petals with a purpose*

## **DANDELION**

Unbothered and everywhere—in the best way. The blossoms are edible and have long been used in teas and tonics that support digestion and overall balance.

## **CALENDULA**

Bright, sunny, and surprisingly hardworking. Often used in balms and oils to help soothe irritated or sensitive skin.

## **HIBISCUS**

Bold, tart, and impossible to ignore. Packed with antioxidants and commonly brewed into vibrant teas that feel as refreshing as they look.

## **ELDERFLOWER**

Light and airy with a hint of sweetness. Often used in syrups and teas, traditionally linked to immune support and gentle seasonal resets.

## **PEONY**

Full, lush, and a little indulgent. Beyond their beauty, peony petals have roots in traditional herbal practices tied to calming and circulation.

## **ORANGE BLOSSOM**

Bright with a soft edge. Frequently used in calming waters and teas, with a scent that feels like sunlight without the heat.

## **JASMINE**

Small blossoms, big presence. Known for its soft, mood-lifting scent, jasmine leans into calm while still keeping things a little dreamy.

## **LAVENDER**

The deep exhale of the flower world. Known for easing stress and helping with sleep, whether tucked into a pillow, steeped in tea, or drifting through the air.

## **ROSE**


Soft, classic, and quietly powerful. Rose petals show up in teas, oils, and skin care for a reason—calming, soothing, and a little bit romantic without trying too hard.

Flowers aren't just beautiful — they've long been part of quiet wellness rituals. Steeped in tea, scattered in baths, pressed into oils, or simply arranged on a table, petals have a way of turning ordinary moments into small acts of care.

## **CHAMOMILE**

Gentle and dependable. A go-to for winding down, calming the nervous system, and settling the kind of days that felt a little too loud.



An abstract painting featuring a dense, textured composition of brushstrokes. The color palette is dominated by various shades of pink and magenta, interspersed with bright yellow, vibrant green, and deep blue. There are also several strokes of white and black, adding contrast and depth. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and creative spontaneity.

creativity is  
the courage to  
embrace imperfection  
and find beauty  
in the unexpected.

There's a quiet moment that happens when you stop trying to make things perfect. It's the moment you notice the charm in a crooked line, the uneven edge of a handmade bowl, or the coffee mug with a chip that somehow makes your morning feel more like your morning

Perfection is sterile. Imperfect things have fingerprints.

A notebook with messy handwriting means the ideas came faster than the pen could keep up. A sketch with smudges means someone actually touched the page. The pie crust that folded a little too much at the edge probably tasted better anyway.

The Japanese call this appreciation of imperfection *wabi-sabi* – the beauty found in things that are incomplete, weathered, or slightly off-center. It's the opposite of the polished, filtered world we scroll through every day.

Nature, after all, is gloriously imperfect. No two petals are identical. Tree branches twist in directions that make no architectural sense. A garden doesn't grow in straight lines unless someone forces it to.

And maybe that's the point.

Imperfect things feel alive because they *are* alive – shaped by time, weather, mistakes, and hands that kept going anyway.

The crack in a bowl. The crease in a page. The paint that dripped where it wasn't supposed to. These aren't flaws.

They're evidence

Evidence that something was made, used, loved, and lived with long enough to change.

And sometimes, the most beautiful things in the world aren't the ones that stayed perfect.

They're the ones that broke a little – and stayed anyway. ■

# the beauty of imperfect things



Where the cracks, smudges, and uneven edges tell the better story.





## GOLD BETWEEN THE BREAKS

A centuries-old Japanese art that turns breakage into beauty — and reminds us that repair can be something worth seeing.

Somewhere between heartbreak and repair lives a centuries-old Japanese art called *kintsugi*, which loosely translates to “golden joinery.” It’s the practice of fixing broken pottery with lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. Instead of disguising cracks, *kintsugi* turns them into something worth lingering over. The break becomes part of the beauty. The damage becomes design.

The technique dates back to 15th-century Japan. Legend tells of a shattered tea bowl sent away for repair and returned awkwardly stapled together with metal brackets. It worked, technically.

But it lacked grace. Craftsmen reimagined the process, bonding the fragments with natural lacquer — often made from the sap of the *urushi* tree — then dusting the seams with precious metal. The result looks less like a repair and more like a constellation drawn across porcelain sky.

*Kintsugi* is rooted in the philosophy of *wabi-sabi*, a worldview that finds beauty in imperfection and impermanence.

It suggests that objects, like people, gather character through wear. A chip is not a flaw. It’s a timestamp. A moment that stayed.

The process moves slowly. Lacquer cures in humid, patient air. Gold is brushed along the fracture lines with deliberate care. Some repairs take months, which feels quietly radical in a world obsessed with instant fixes and overnight reinventions.

A finished *kintsugi* piece never returns to what it once was. It becomes something layered.

Something honest. A bowl that openly admits it was dropped and chosen again anyway.

There’s something comforting about that. The idea that restoration doesn’t erase history — it highlights it. That the places where something once fell apart might be the very places where it learns how to glow. ■



### REAL GOLD, REAL STORY

Traditional *kintsugi* uses genuine precious metals, making each repair both artistic and valuable.

### THE ART OF SLOW MENDING

Authentic *kintsugi* can take weeks or months, allowing each layer to cure and strengthen.

### SUSTAINABILITY BEFORE IT WAS TRENDY

*Kintsugi* celebrates repairing rather than replacing, giving objects extended life and deeper meaning.

### PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICE

The art is closely tied to *wabi-sabi*, honoring imperfection, age, and quiet transformation.



# THE QUIET ART OF NOTICING



## THERE'S NO SINGLE VIEW

In many traditional Zen gardens, there isn't one place where you can see everything at once. Take Kyoto's famous Ryōan-ji garden—no matter where you sit, at least one rock is always hidden from view. Some believe this was by design.

The idea isn't to take it all in at once, but to sit with what's in front of you—to accept that something will always remain just out of sight.

**Where raked lines become water, rocks become islands, and stillness becomes the point.**

A Zen garden doesn't bloom or spill over or try to catch your eye. It doesn't change with the seasons in any obvious way. At first glance, it can feel almost too simple — just stone, space, and something pale stretched out beneath it.

And then you stay a little longer.

These gardens, known as *karesansui* (dry landscape gardens), were designed in Japan as places for quiet contemplation — often found in temple settings where time is meant to slow down.

The materials are spare, but the meaning isn't. Rocks suggest mountains or islands. Gravel — raked into careful lines — becomes water. Not literal water, but the idea of it: movement, stillness, direction. Nothing is accidental, even when it feels that way.

What's interesting is how quickly your mind starts to follow the patterns. The curves, the spacing, the pauses between elements.

You stop looking at the garden and start settling into it. There's nothing to solve, nothing to finish. Just a quiet shift from doing to noticing.

Even the act of raking — if you try it — feels less like creating and more like listening.

Repeating a motion. Letting

your thoughts rise and fall with each line. It doesn't have to be perfect, and it won't stay that way anyway. Wind moves it. Hands smooth it. The whole thing is meant to be reset.

That might be the most unexpected part.

A Zen garden isn't something you complete. It's something you return to — again and again — each time seeing slightly differently, even if nothing has really changed at all. ■



*the obstacle is the path. — zen proverb*



CREATIVITY TAKES COURAGE.



## LIMITED, STILL

In quiet clay, with  
trembling hand,  
A form began it  
scarcely planned  
– Not perfect  
lines, nor  
edges true,  
But something  
shaped that  
slowly grew.

The wheel did  
turn, the pressure  
stayed,  
A fragile thing the  
fingers made;  
It wavered once, it  
nearly fell,  
Yet held within a  
deeper spell.

For not in flaw nor  
fracture slight  
Does beauty lose  
its sacred right –  
But in the mark no  
twin can claim,  
A whisper soft,  
without a name.

So let it stand,  
uneven, rare,  
With quiet soul  
and patient care –  
For what endures,  
though worn  
or scarred,  
Is shaped by  
courage, held,  
and marred.

And you, like this,  
are not confined –  
No second cast, no  
borrowed mind.

A singular,  
unspoken edition...  
A fleeting, fierce,  
and formed  
condition.

# art for the soul

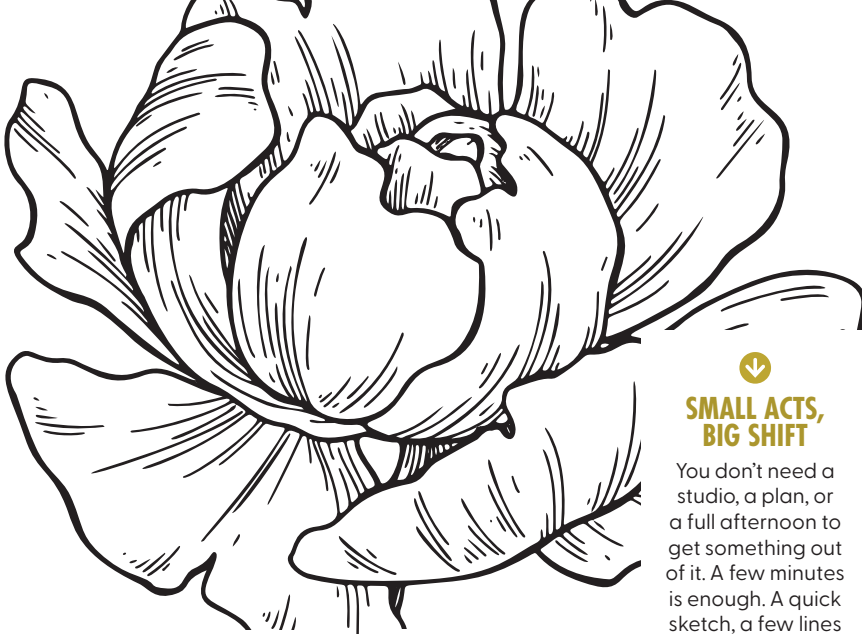
(and everything that comes with it)



There's a reason art has been around as long as people have. Before the words, before the rules, before anything needed to make sense, there was the instinct to create. To draw something, shape something, leave a mark that said *I was here, and this mattered*. That instinct didn't go anywhere. It just got buried under busier things. Art has a way of bringing it back.

Whether you're sketching, painting, writing, rearranging a space, or just experimenting with color, creating something by hand does more than pass the time – it shifts your state of mind. It pulls you out of the constant loop of thinking and into something more grounded, where your attention has somewhere real to land. And that's where the magic is.





**WHY IT FEELS SO GOOD**

Art taps into something deeper than productivity. Studies have shown that creative activity can lower stress levels, improve mood, and even help regulate emotions. Not because you're creating something impressive, but because you're focused, present, and just engaged enough for everything else to quiet down.

It's similar to meditation – just with a little more color involved. When your hands are moving, your mind follows. You stop jumping ahead to what's next or replaying what already happened. Instead, you're right there with what's in front of you, whether it's a blank page or something halfway finished. And for a lot of people, that's a rare place to be.



**YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE "CREATIVE"**

One of the biggest myths about art is that it belongs to a certain group of people. The talented ones. The trained ones. The ones who know what they're doing. But that's not really how it works.

Creativity isn't a category – it's a behavior. It's the act of trying something, following an idea, or making something that didn't exist five minutes ago. There's no threshold you have to cross before it "counts," and no requirement that it needs to turn into anything polished. In fact, the less pressure you put on it, the better it tends to feel.

Some of the most meaningful creative moments happen when there's no end goal at all. Just curiosity. Just movement. Just seeing what happens.



**SMALL ACTS, BIG SHIFT**

You don't need a studio, a plan, or a full afternoon to get something out of it. A few minutes is enough. A quick sketch, a few lines in a notebook, rearranging flowers on a table, messing with colors just to see what works. These small acts might not look like much from the outside, but internally, they create space. They give your mind a break from solving, producing, and keeping up. And in that space, things tend to settle. Not perfectly. Just enough.



**THE SOUL PART**

This is the piece that's harder to explain, but you know it when you feel it. Art connects you back to something quieter, something less rushed. It reminds you that not everything has to be optimized, improved, or shared. Some things can just exist because you made them. And sometimes, that's exactly what your mind – and maybe your soul – has been asking for. ■

**Holocene**

Bon Iver

**From the Morning**

Nick Drake

**Featherstone**

The Paper Kites

**Lua**

Bright Eyes

**Dream Brother**

Jeff Buckley

**Go Easy**

Mac DeMarco

**Myth**

Beach House

**Motion Sickness**

Phoebe Bridgers

**The Joke**

Brandi Carlile

**Slow Show**

The National

**Nikes**

Frank Ocean

**Red Eyes**

The War on Drugs

**Casimir Pulaski Day**

Sufjan Stevens

**Chelsea Hotel #2**

Leonard Cohen

**Naked as We Came**

Iron & Wine

You can find the entire **The Analog Hour** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile



# 50 WAYS to go ANALOG

You don't have to do all of them. You don't have to do them well. Just pick one, try it, and see what shifts.

Because sometimes the smallest change — paper instead of screen, pause instead of scroll — is enough to bring you back to the moment you were already in.

1. FLOWER ARRANGING
2. GARDENING
3. BIRD WATCHING
4. STARGAZING
5. ANTIQUING
6. THRIFT SHOPPING
7. MUSEUM VISITS
8. VOLUNTEERING
9. NATURE WALKS
10. ORIGAMI
11. COOKING NEW RECIPES
12. BAKING
13. BOARD GAMES
14. PUZZLES
15. LETTER WRITING
16. JOURNALING
17. WOOD WORKING
18. KNITTING
19. POTTERY
20. SCRAPBOOKING
21. READING
22. BOOK CLUBS
23. YOGA
24. MEDITATION
25. PICKLEBALL
26. HOSTING NIGHTS
27. CREATIVE WRITING
28. SKETCHING
29. WATERCOLOR PAINTING

30. PAINT-BY-NUMBER
31. LISTEN TO RECORDS
32. CRAFT
33. VISIT A LIBRARY
34. PRESS FLOWERS
35. MAKE POSTCARDS
36. SEND POSTCARDS
37. PRINT YOUR FAVORITE PHOTOS
38. WRITE YOUR TO-DO LIST ON PAPER
39. SIT ON YOUR PORCH
40. PACK A PICNIC

41. USE A PAPER CALENDAR
42. WRITE A THANK YOU NOTE
43. VISIT A FARMERS MARKET
44. MAKE A PHOTO ALBUM
45. ORGANIZE YOUR HOME
46. CREATE A BATH RITUAL
47. SIT BY A CAMP FIRE
48. GO ON A BIKE RIDE
49. GO TO A LOCAL WORKSHOP
50. TAKE A SCENIC DRIVE



dirt  
washes  
away  
from the  
soul the  
dust of  
everyday  
life.

- pablo  
picasso

## marykoziol



## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

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**Tattle Magazine:** What first pulled you toward creating, and what keeps you coming back to it now?

**MK:** I've been creative my whole life. When I was a kid I sewed my own dolls and clothing for them, and built them houses out of boxes and carpet samples. Through the years, what I have created has certainly changed, but I know that I feel the best and most like me when I have some sort of artistic project going on.

**TM:** When you're feeling stuck or uninspired, what usually helps you find your way back?

I have several tricks that work when resistance strikes or when I think I can't come up with any fresh ideas. One of my favorites is to get out a fresh canvas or a piece of paper and simply start making marks with my eyes closed. Just moving my body and connecting with the materials helps, but the best part is that when I do open my eyes, I have something to work with. Much of it may get covered up, but it gives me something to respond to and it's hard to stay stuck when I've already begun.

**TM:** How does the season you're in – personally or creatively – show up in your work right now?

**MK:** In the past I tried to to paint with the meteorological seasons, using colors that seemed fitting, or trying to be inspired by the outside world. I realized though that I have my own "seasons" that

may not match what's happening outside. When fresh ideas are brewing, that's Spring for me. I'm sketching and writing down new ideas. When I'm fully involved in painting a collection of work, it's Summer. In Autumn, I'm on the downside of a big rush of creativity and I'm starting to celebrate all that excitement and productivity. I notice that I'm going inward a bit. And in my Winter, I'm not as actively making things, but am letting myself slow down and pause, taking stock of my supplies and then making mental space for the next burst of creativity that I know will be coming.

**TM:** Is there a small, everyday moment that tends to spark your best ideas?

**MK:** Often my best ideas come when I'm slowing down for the day or when I'm starting to fall asleep. Trying to remember those ideas can be challenging, but they are often much more creative solutions to things I've been working on throughout the day. When I'm able to capture the ideas and scribble something down to remember the next day, I have it there to work with when I go back into the studio.

**TM:** What have you learned about yourself through making that surprised you?

**MK:** I've learned that I'm a storyteller. I had no idea that I had so many memories and stories to tell, but when I start to paint, it's usually based on a memory. Those memories are the basis of the artwork, but I've found out that I also really like to write the stories so that they can be told if people ask about the inspiration behind a piece.

**TM:** What role does art journaling play in your creative or personal life (if any)?

**MK:** I love art journaling! I use my journal to just play. I try out new things, whether they're color combinations, new mediums, quick studies, or even words or quotes woven into the art that are inspiring to me. I think that experimenting and playing for artists is something like research is to a scientist. They're very different fields but to me trying new things through play leads to results that maybe haven't been tried before. I often land on something new and fresh.

**TM:** Have you ever turned to art during a difficult or uncertain time? What role did creating play for you?

**MK:** Absolutely. I struggle with anxiety and have used art to help keep my focus on something good rather than stressful emotions. I went through a time when I had pretty bad insomnia. I was wrecked, but I used paint and a canvas to work through the exhaustion by assigning a color of paint to each emotion I was feeling and let my "story" play out on the canvas. I can't say that it cured me, but I ended up with a couple of pieces that I loved and knew that it was a cathartic experience for me because I felt more content despite the fatigue.

**TM:** Do you see your work as a form of healing – for yourself, others, or both?

**MK:** I do. As I mentioned, I used painting to get me through some difficult periods of anxiety and insomnia. I don't have the credentials to be an art therapist, but I do believe that art can be a tool that many people can use to express their emotions. There's something about creating something out of nothing that feels so grounding. I like to paint big so that I can use my whole body to express myself, but even just putting several pieces of paper together





and really getting the arm into the movements of drawing or making abstract marks feels like a release of emotions.

**TM:** Do you believe creativity has the power to help people process things they can't always put into words?

**MK:** Most definitely. I remember when my daughter was very young and wasn't talking a lot yet. I started her out with some non-toxic water-based paints and sheets of watercolor paper when she was fussy. She could barely hold that little brush but making colorful marks on paper was calming. If that's helpful to a little child who's frustrated, imagine what it can do for someone older! I think adults tend to get into their heads and forget how to just "be" and "feel." It can be disconcerting for some, but by letting the hand make marks, they've tapped into something emotional and that can be an amazing way to express themselves that maybe they couldn't or didn't want to say in words.

**TM:** If you could leave one piece of encouragement for someone just beginning their creative path, what would it be?

**MK:** To play and experiment. There is no rush at all. The beginning can feel overwhelming with thoughts of "Did I do it right?" or "There's so much to learn." But it's a really wonderful place to be. It's the time to try all the things to see what you love and what you don't. Remember, play is the artist's form of research! ■



## THE SHORT LIST

**What are you making more room for this spring?**

I'm physically making more room by organizing my studio and making every square inch count.

**What time of day do your best ideas usually show up?**

When I'm sleepy or dreaming! They pop up then and I act on them in the morning.

**A tool or material you can't imagine creating without?**

Acrylic inks. They're amazing on paper and work beautifully on canvases too.

**What feels inspiring to you lately – big or small?**

The colors of the high desert in the Southwest.

**One creative habit that helps your mental well-being?**

Art journaling. It's the best way for me to discover fresh ways of doing things.

**What's one word that describes your creative life right now?**

Savoring.





## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

INSTAGRAM: [@rachelwadlowstudio](#)

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**Tattle Magazine:** What first pulled you toward creating, and what keeps you coming back to it now?

**RW:** I was born into a family of artists, makers, and small business owners so I began cultivating creativity at a young age. It was something that my parents encouraged and nurtured in me, which was very special. I'd say the act of creating, experimentation, and play keeps me coming back to the studio. If I start to take myself too seriously, I know I need a break.

**TM:** When you're feeling stuck or uninspired, what usually helps you find your way back?

**RW:** I always try to be working on several projects at once – so when I get stuck on one, I can easily pivot to the next one and return to it with fresh eyes later.

**TM:** How does the season you're in – personally or creatively – show up in your work right now?

**RW:** Last year, I was in the hospital for 3 months. During my stay, I decided to try collage just to pass the time. Turns out it became something I carried with me back into the studio as an integral part of my practice.

**TM:** Is there a small, everyday moment that tends to spark your best ideas?

**RW:** I love going outside for a walk or run to get fresh air. I live in California, so the weather is almost always great and inspiring.



**TM:** What have you learned about yourself through making that surprised you?

**RW:** When I was in art school, one of my professors told me “Your work is best when it’s a little raw,” and I never forgot that. To my surprise, that has been a consistent lesson and theme in my practice for over 10 years. The less I “try” and the more I let go – the more I find my true artistic style and voice – so that professor was right!

**TM:** What role does art journaling play in your creative or personal life (if any)?

**RW:** I love taking a small sketchbook + a limited amount of materials with me to a coffee shop and just play around. There’s something about a sketchbook and just a few choice materials that really helps me focus and also find the freedom to experiment. I try to do this as often as I can!

**TM:** Have you ever turned to art during a difficult or uncertain time? What role did creating play for you?

**RW:** When I got out of the hospital last year, the only thing that felt right was making art. It was extremely helpful to go into my little studio and solve visual puzzles rather than sit and ruminate about the pain of the past or present.

**TM:** Do you see your work as a form of healing – for yourself, others, or both?

**RW:** I used to treat my art practice more like a business and a machine. Since I’ve gotten older and suffered through various trials, I now see that simply the process of creation is not only an act that can heal, but it is also an act of defiance against whatever voices in my head are telling me “I’m no good” or “It’s not worth it.” I love teaching workshops as well and watching other peoples’ eyes light up when they’re simply making something with their hands. In my own work, I try to infuse my pieces with a combination of serenity, texture, play, and freedom. Many people have told me how calming it is to look at my art, which I’m so grateful for.



## THE SHORT LIST

### What are you making more room for this spring?

Flowers! I'm excited to start the #100daychallenge which is a creative challenge on Instagram. I'm going to try to make one floral themed piece of art per day - so fingers crossed! You can check it out at @rachelwadowstudio on instagram.

### What time of day do your best ideas usually show up?

Sometimes early in the morning when I'm still asleep I'll have dreams about what to do next!

### A tool or material you can't imagine creating without?

Paper and drawing materials.

### What feels inspiring to you lately – big or small?

Music! It's so helpful, especially while creating.

### One creative habit that helps your mental well-being?

Changing your environment! If the studio feels confusing, I'll take some work outside, or into my house, or to a coffee shop. It helps my mind but it also helps to see the work itself in a different space.

### What's one word that describes your creative life right now?

I would say "blooming." After my hospital stay, I sort of started my art practice back from the ground-up and I can finally say I have habits, styles, and a body of work that I'm proud of!

**TM:** Do you believe creativity has the power to help people process things they can't always put into words?

**RW:** Yes! I believe this on multiple levels, but lately I've been discovering one thing specifically: When I'm stuck in a cycle of pain in my mind, determined to get to the bottom of it, I can sense God telling me to let it go for now. I want to solve the problem in my head right there in the moment, but as soon as I let go and do something else, (aka go into the studio and paint,) my emotions often become more clear. I'll let something go, and then later on while I'm in the studio solving a different kind of problem, a more tactile problem, I'll start to gain some clarity on what was going on in my mind earlier. It's so funny what happens when we choose to loosen our grip just a little!

**TM:** If you could leave one piece of encouragement for someone just beginning their creative path, what would it be?

**RW:** Fall in love with the PROCESS! If you just love the act of creating, then masterpieces and finished products will flow out of you in different seasons in different ways – but the constant thing that will keep you going is the love of the process. ■





## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

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**Tattle Magazine:** What first pulled you toward creating, and what keeps you coming back to it now?

**BH:** I've loved drawing, illustrating, and storytelling for as long as I can remember. At primary school I was always writing and illustrating my own short stories, and looking back, I think it was how I learned to express myself when other forms of learning felt hard. I'm dyslexic, but I wasn't diagnosed at school, so the curriculum often didn't match the way my brain wanted to work. Creating felt different – it wasn't judged in a tick-box, right-or-wrong way. It was a place where I felt free, where imagination mattered, and where anything could happen on a page. That sense of freedom is still what keeps me coming back to it now.

**TM:** When you're feeling stuck or uninspired, what usually helps you find your way back?

**BH:** Movement and a change of focus, almost always. A walk – preferably somewhere coastal or green – with no pressure to think creatively at all. I also find it helps to lower expectations and draw without trying to make something good: small, messy sketches, unfinished ideas, or drawing the same subject over and over again in

pen. Travelling always opens things up creatively, but we can't always do that! Getting in the sea, or doing something I really enjoy outdoors, often unlocks ideas in a different way. When you're hyper-focused on one thing, it can block what's quietly waiting underneath – stepping away and doing something completely different usually brings the inspiration back.

**TM:** How does the season you're in – personally or creatively – show up in your work right now?

**BH:** I'm in a season of soft confidence, but also real excitement. I'm feeling genuinely inspired at the moment – wanting to learn, write, draw, and follow ideas to see where they lead. That shows up in calmer compositions and gentler colour palettes, but also in a sense of curiosity and play. I'm letting things breathe, while also leaning into that buzz of wanting to make more and go deeper.

**TM:** Is there a small, everyday moment that tends to spark your best ideas?

**BH:** Very often it's watching animals just... be – birds hopping, dogs pausing mid-walk, wildlife doing something ordinary but full of character. I'm also constantly collecting snippets of overheard conversation, little half-sentences or observations that stick in my head. A lot of my ideas come from noticing these everyday moments and then asking how they might be made playful, or turned into something you'd expect to find in a picture book. Those quiet, unremarkable moments are usually where the best ideas sneak in.

**TM:** What have you learned about yourself through making that surprised you?

**BH:** That consistency matters far more than confidence. I used to think I had to feel ready or inspired to make good work, but I've learned that simply showing up – even when I'm unsure, is what builds momentum. Making regularly has also taught me to trust my own ability and style, and not get too caught up in comparison. It's easy to see work you love and feel like what you do isn't good enough, but looking back at your own body of work is a reminder that trusting your process matters more than trying to be someone else.

**TM:** What role does documenting ideas – through sketching, journaling, or planning – play in your creative life?

**BH:** A huge one. My sketchbooks are part notebook, part playground, part permission slip.





Documenting ideas removes the pressure to make something finished straight away – it's a space where thoughts can exist without being judged. It's also something I love sharing and teaching on my Patreon, because seeing the process, not just the polished end result, often gives others the confidence to start.

**TM: When an illustration begins for you, does it start as a story, a feeling, a visual image – or something that reveals itself along the way?**

**BH:** It completely depends on the day, the week, or the season I'm in. Sometimes it starts very simply, by sitting down and drawing from a photograph or scene I love the look of. Other times it's an idea that's popped into my head on a walk, or a desire to play with materials and see where they take me. And sometimes it begins with a feeling – letting whatever emotions are there spill out onto the page in whatever form they want to take. Often the meaning or story reveals itself along the way.

**TM: Have you ever turned to art during a difficult or uncertain time? What role did creating play for you?**

**BH:** Absolutely. Creating gives shape to uncertainty when everything else feels a bit wobbly. It doesn't fix things, but it steadies them. It's a release and distraction when life can feel too much. I've got pages of characters displaying my emotions, as well as things that bring a smile when I wasn't feeling my best. I found it gave me more self confidence and made me realize I can tackle what life throws at me.

**TM: Do you see your work as a form of healing – for yourself, others, or both?**

**BH:** Both, I think. For me, it's grounding and steadying, as well as being something FUN that I can come back to any time. For others, I hope it offers a moment of calm, or simply makes them smile. Sometimes a small smile, a pause, or a sense of connection can be its own quiet kind of healing.

**TM: If you could leave one piece of encouragement for someone just beginning their creative path, what would it be?**

**BH:** Don't wait to feel ready. Start where you are, with what you have, and let the work teach you as you go. You don't need a perfectly formed style or a clear plan – those things emerge through making, not before it. Stay curious, make a lot, and try not to measure your progress against someone else's highlight reel. Your creative path only has to make sense to you, and everyone's journey looks different. ■



## THE SHORT LIST

**What are you making more room for this spring?**

Excitement, inspiration, and making things just for the fun of it.

**What time of day do your best ideas usually show up?**

Afternoon into early evening.

**A tool or material you can't imagine creating without?**

Coloured pencils – especially Derwent and Caran d'Ache.

**What feels inspiring to you lately – big or small?**

Migration, character, and storytelling.

**One creative habit that helps your mental well-being?**

Drawing wildlife.

**What's one word that describes your creative life right now?**

Excited!

# chelsea pottery

INTERVIEW WITH AN ARTIST



## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

Chelsea Pottery Co.

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**Tattle Magazine:** What first pulled you toward creating, and what keeps you coming back to it now?

**CP:** I was first pulled toward creating as a young girl. It became an escape during a childhood that was often challenging and unpredictable. With my parents struggling with substance abuse, creativity gave me a sense of safety and structure.

I keep coming back to it because I genuinely love making with my hands and learning new things. In many ways, creativity is in my veins. I'm always making something, always curious. It has been the most constant presence in my life, and there's always more to learn, try, and grow into.

**TM:** When you're feeling stuck or uninspired, what usually helps you find your way back?

**CP:** There's something about the beginning of the year that always pushes me forward creatively, and right now I'm in a really good headspace.

When I do feel stuck, creating something outside of my main medium helps, as does making something just for myself. Traveling or changing my scenery almost always pulls me out of a funk and sparks new ideas.



**TM:** How does the season you're in – personally or creatively – show up in your work right now?

**CP:** This season feels slow and grounded. I'm usually a million miles ahead and reaching for goals that don't always align with what I really want. This year feels more intentional and I'm attributing that to more early mornings, movement, slow coffee, journaling, and sending my boys off to school.

I'm leaning into where I am in life and letting that guide what I make instead of forcing it.

**TM:** Is there a small, everyday moment that tends to spark your best ideas?

**CP:** My best ideas usually come when my mind quiets. That often happens in the shower, and recently through meditation as well. Those reflective moments create space for new ideas to surface.

**TM:** What have you learned about yourself through making that surprised you?

**CP:** I'm continually surprised by my ability to learn and grow. Studio work can be repetitive, but every month I find myself trying something new – new forms, techniques, and ways of working.

**TM:** What role does documenting ideas – through sketching, journaling, or planning – play in your creative life?

**CP:** I need to be better about planning. My husband handles much of that side of the business, while I tend to capture ideas on the fly – on pottery wareboards or my hundred sketchbooks/notebooks, just need to remember which one it is.

That said, I love journaling and sketching and definitely need more of that in my life right now.

**TM:** Is there a moment in the pottery process that feels most magical to you?

**CP:** Two moments stand out. One is the sgraffito process. I recently started sketching loose lines on



some stacking cup forms and then carving into them, allowing myself room to adjust and refine along the way. I'm not sure why now, after 10 years in ceramics...

The other is opening the kiln. After weeks of the lengthy pottery process, you finally see what you've made. It feels like Christmas or Halloween – either magical or terrifying. Pottery is so humbling!

**TM:** Have you ever turned to art during a difficult or uncertain time? What role did it play?

**CP:** Art has always been my safe place to land. As a child, it provided grounding and structure, and it continues to do that now. I often turn to both art and nature during hard times, which is why so much of my work is nature inspired.

**TM:** Do you see your work as a form of healing – for yourself, others, or both?

**CP:** Absolutely. This is at the core of Chelsea Pottery Co. I want people to feel happy using my pieces. Starting the day with something that brings joy – even something small like a mug – can shift your entire mindset.

Creating with my hands is healing for me as well. When I first had kids, those quiet moments with a handmade mug helped me feel like myself again.

**TM:** If you could leave one piece of encouragement for someone just beginning their creative path, what would it be?

**CP:** Turn your doubts into action. It's easy to wait until you feel ready or good enough, but growth comes from starting anyway.

I've learned by doing – wearing hats I never imagined I'd wear – and I'm still learning. Take small steps. Do things scared. Let yourself grow. ■



## THE SHORT LIST

**What are you making more room for this spring?**

Time with my family, rock hounding, and making work I feel genuinely inspired by.

**What time of day do your best ideas usually show up?**

Early quiet mornings or an evening shower.

**A tool or material you can't imagine creating without?**

My original Giffin Grip, the time I save trimming is HUGE!

**What feels inspiring to you lately – big or small?**

New forms, larger pieces, creating with my sons, and growing the business in new, slightly scary ways.

**One creative habit that helps your mental well-being?**

Meditation and getting ideas out of my head and onto paper.

**What's one word that describes your creative life right now?**

Lucky.

# joy is a quiet rebellion

Not a trend.  
Not a mood.  
A choice you  
make more  
often than you  
think.



Joy gets a weird reputation. It's often treated like something soft, optional, or reserved for when everything else is going right. Like a reward you earn after the hard stuff is over. But that's not really how it works.

Real joy shows up in the middle of things – not after them. It's the decision to laugh when the day didn't go as planned. It's choosing to stay present instead of reaching for a distraction. It's letting something small be enough, even when bigger things feel out of reach.

And here's the part that matters – That choice is powerful.

## REASON #1 JOY DISRUPTS THE NOISE

We live in a constant loop of updates, expectations, and comparison. Choosing joy – especially the quiet, everyday kind – pulls you out of that cycle. It shifts your attention back to what's actually happening in front of you.

## REASON #2 IT BUILDS MOMENTUM

Joy isn't just a reaction, it's a starting point. One good moment leads to another. Not because everything suddenly changes, but because your perspective does.

## REASON #3 IT'S CONTAGIOUS

The way you carry yourself – lighter, more present, more open – affects the people around you. Joy has a ripple effect, whether you realize it or not.



## QUICK TRUTHS

Joy doesn't require perfect timing

It doesn't need to be shared to be real

Small moments count just as much as big ones

So no, joy isn't passive. It's not something you wait for. It's something you choose – over and over again – in ways that might seem small, but add up to something much bigger. ■

*find joy in  
the ordinary*

CHOOSE

JOY



# JUSTIN SHIELS

FOUNDER OF SOCURIOS

Creativity doesn't always begin with a grand plan. Sometimes it starts with a sketch, a journal page, a handwritten note, or simply the decision to slow down and make something for the joy of it. Artist and founder Justin Shiels created SoCurious as a way to reconnect people with that feeling – reminding us that creativity isn't reserved for professionals or experts. It's a practice, a way of seeing the world, and sometimes even a quiet act of rebellion.

**Tattle Magazine:** Let me start with asking you a little bit about SoCurious. What gave you the idea to start that and have it become a mission for you?

**Justin Shiels:** I started as a graphic designer in advertising, kind of was able to work my way up to being a creative director and did that for about seven years. Over the course of my career, I had the opportunity to do a lot of kind of brand campaigns, national brand campaigns for businesses. And I've really enjoyed my job greatly. But one of the things that was really important to me was using the skills that I learned during that time, in order to create positive social change in the world. And so, SoCurious started

with my therapy journey. The first iteration of the business was me sharing the notes that I was learning in therapy. I would send out a weekly email and share these hand lettered inspirational phrases and writings about what I was experiencing.

As time progressed, it kind of shifted into being a digital space for people to reconnect with their creativity, their joy, and their hope. And in November of 2024, I kind of really latched on to the idea of spreading the concept that your joy is the revolution. Because I think during that time period, so many people felt disillusioned with the world and needed a little bit of inspiration and hope.



**TM:** How do you constantly stay inspired and how has your own creative practice evolved since you started this?

**JS:** Yeah, so it's interesting like the beauty of launching SoCurious was I kind of re-found my path back to being an artist and a writer and it has been a really beautiful journey being able to share that part of myself more fully.

For context, being a creative director in advertising is really just a middle management job. I obviously use creativity in order to encourage the team and to come up with big picture strategic plans, but I had fully stepped away from working inside of the design programs. And very frequently I wasn't responsible for writing the content anymore.

And so it was so awesome to kind of come back to my individual creative practice and then inspire other people to start their own creative practices.

One cool thing that I was able to do in 2025 was I threw these three "Joy is the Revolution" parties. What's awesome about it is I got to share my visual artwork in these spaces, but then I would set up these tables where people would be able to reconnect with their own creativity as well.

The tables would have a few different options. There was always coloring pages that people could color. There was often a craft project that people could do. And then there were also writing prompts for people that wanted to journal.

This created just a really interesting experience for people to reconnect with their own inner children at these spaces. The other thing I forgot to mention is it always would include disco music, which I feel really strongly about its power to help people loosen up, have a little fun and reconnect with themselves.

**TM:** How do you think handmade goods help people connect in ways that digital content doesn't?

**JS:** I think we're living in an interesting transition point culturally. I think technology has sped up exponentially. And in many ways it has the beauty of making our lives ultra optimized.

But we have come to a point culturally where I think everyone desires to slow down and experience life more. And I say an analog revolution. When I say an analog revolution, I mean we want to go back to some of the best parts of our culture.

To me some of those things are meeting people in real life, sending greeting cards, journaling, coloring, writing, slowing down in order to actually fully be human again and step away from constantly being online.

It's really beautiful to get a text message from a friend wishing you happy birthday, but it's so much more special to get a handwritten note, especially something that you can keep forever. That's the beauty of paper goods. It really shows your community how much you care for them.

And one of my big goals with SoCurious is to tell people reconnect with their long distance friendships. I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee. I moved to New Orleans for undergrad and was there for 16 years. A lot of why I started SoCurious in this iteration is partially to be able to reconnect with my community of friends that were there when I was in New Orleans. But we all have kind of moved to all these different places all over the United States.





**TM:** A big part of your work is helping people reconnect with their creativity. What's a practice you think most people overlook that could instantly deepen their creative life?

**JS:** So I just finished *The Artist's Way*. It took me three years to do this. It was the hardest book that I have ever worked through. But it was actually one of the most influential parts of my creative journey to date.

One of the creative practices that Julia Cameron shares is called writing morning pages. Her specific way of doing it is three pages of unfiltered brain vomit on paper, which is a really effective tool for clearing out the clutter that we have moving around in our brains and allowing us to unleash our inner creatives.

I actually ended up adapting that practice slightly. Every morning I write ten things that I'm grateful for and then how that thing that I'm grateful for makes me feel.

It's a really beautiful practice because it keeps you in a gratitude loop, reminding you that you have so many things to be grateful for even during uncertain or challenging times.

For example: I'm grateful that I redecorated my home office. I feel so in alignment. The path is showing itself clearer and clearer each day. I feel blessed to have a space to work creatively.

I do ten of those every single day. And that practice shifted my mindset from focusing on the challenges first thing and instead focusing on all the things that I can be thankful for.

I try to do that first thing in the morning instead of checking social media first. It sets the tone for your day.

**TM:** What's one misconception creatives have about finding their calling?

**JS:** I feel like it's really important to remember that creativity is a practice.

A lot of people, especially because of the way school works, you end up losing a part of your passion toward making things just for the sake of making things. Oftentimes people will try to jump to monetization first or feel like because I'm not an expert at this thing it's not worth doing.

But I think approaching your art practice kind of like a child would makes it such a much more enjoyable process. It allows you to create for creativity's sake.

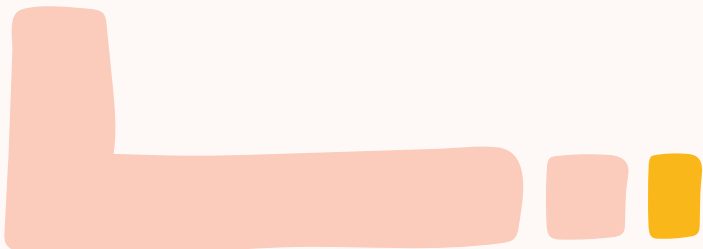
When you allow yourself to sit in that inner child energy, that's when you make the most interesting work. That's when you become the most connected to your individual path.

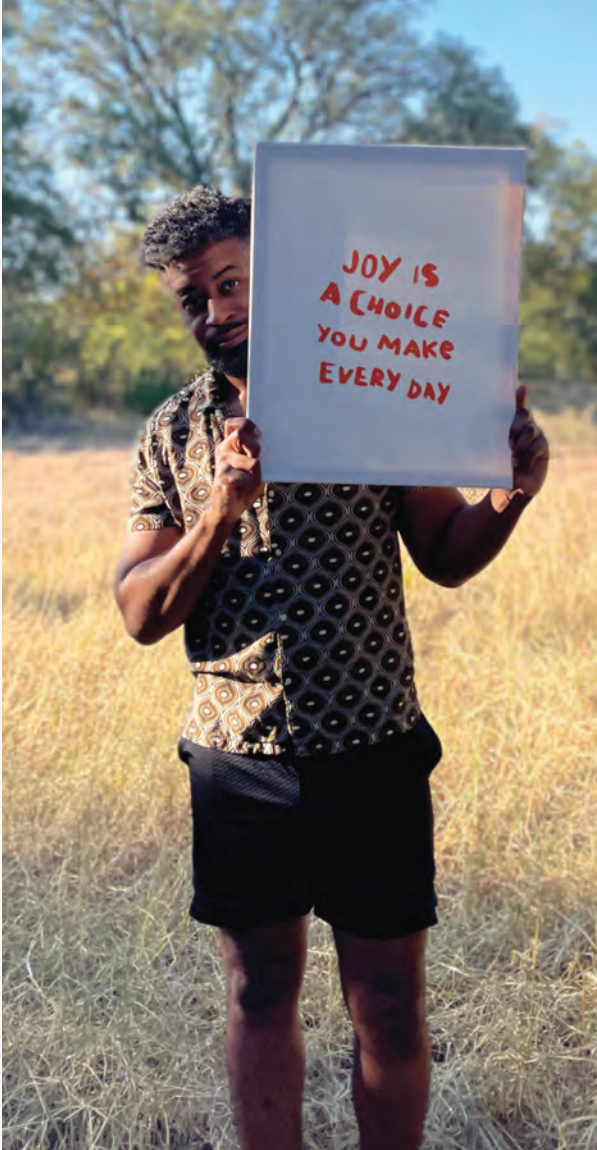
Honestly that is how I was able to build this company. The logical thing for me to do would have been to start a creative services agency when I left my full time job.

The beauty of this experience is that I got to follow my inner child and do the thing that I was actually made to do, which is write and draw and share my work with people.



START WHERE YOU ARE





It's been a really beautiful opportunity to reconnect with who I am at my core, which is an artist and writer.

**TM: Many people struggle with perfectionism when starting something creative. What advice would you give someone who wants to create but feels stuck?**

**JS:** I feel like there are different ways in that I would suggest.

The first one is to start by coloring things. Coloring is often the lowest barrier of entry that allows you to tap into creativity without having much pressure. I encourage people to get really simple coloring books, not the complicated ones that might take hours to finish one page, but simple images that you can color in 30 minutes to an hour.

The second thing is building your own journal practice. Your journal practice can be the written word, but it can also include images that you create or that you find on the internet and print out. You can do a junk journal where you find paper bits and ephemera from out in the world and put them together into a journal. You can buy stickers and decorate that way.

Then the third tier is building your own art yourself in whatever form fits your background. A lot of times the easiest way to get into it is to take a class or do a workshop. You can find something in your local city, take a figure drawing class or a ceramics class, and give yourself a dedicated space to tap back into your creativity.

If you do one or all of those things it sets the stage for you to build your own creative practice.

**TM: If you could give one piece of encouragement for someone beginning their creative path, what would it be?**

**JS:** We are living through a really strange version of reality where the most valuable asset that every human has right now is their attention.

Choosing to look at screens all day limits your ability to live a healthy, full and beautiful life. Deciding to take a few hours every day to not be accessible to your cell phone or your laptop or your television and instead invest that time in creating something is the most wonderful use of your time.

It's actually pretty rebellious to do that now. It is not commonplace to spend time detached from the internet.

So allow your inner rebel to exist in the world and do the thing you actually love doing.

**TM: One word you hope people feel when they experience SoCurious?**

**JS:** Absolutely. That word is joy.

Living in these strange and uncertain times has been incredibly challenging for everyone. But regardless of the circumstances of your life, there is always the opportunity to find joy.

That joy is in the small moments that we can take for granted. I have clean water to drink. I have air conditioning and heat in my apartment. I have delicious food that I can make.

There is always some way to find joy. And by tapping into your creativity and allowing yourself to be a creator instead of a consumer, that's one of the most beautiful ways to reconnect with your joy. ■

joy is the

KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

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@justinmadethat

shop.socurious.co

revolution



# ANNIE POTTS

From her role in *Best Medicine* to the real-life work of helping others through The Heart Channels, Annie Potts believes in the quiet power of compassion. She shares with Tattle Magazine why even the smallest acts of kindness can ripple farther than we realize.

**Tattle Magazine:** What first drew you to the role of Aunt Sarah on *Best Medicine*?

**Annie Potts:** I didn't feel like I'd ever played anything like her before. At my age, there's not a lot of things I haven't done. Not a lot of characters I haven't already played, and I thought, it's really different. I also love Josh Charles' work, and the whole cast is wonderful. Everybody comes in bringing their A-game. The enthusiasm of young actors is just wonderful.

**TM:** The show has such a comforting small-town feel. What do you think people connect with most about that world?

**AP:** I've had so many people write me and say, "I want to live here." Of course, nobody wants to live exactly where they're living right now. It's a scary, dark place right now. If nothing else, the show gives everybody a reminder of who we really are — kind and thoughtful and interested in trying to help others. I think that's a sweet place to go for an hour each week.

**TM:** What did you enjoy most about stepping into Aunt Sarah's shoes?

**AP:** Well, they were comfortable. I'm so old now, it's like, whatever it is, I'm not wearing heels. I grew up on a farm, and I knew sensible people like her. I grew up hunting and fishing. Both of my parents did that, and all the kids did too, three little girls. Picking up slimy things that bite you and stuff didn't bother me at all.



**TM:** When you're acting, you're constantly stepping into someone else's life and perspective. Has that changed the way you think about empathy in your own life?

**AP:** The different characters take you through different people's feelings. I don't think I've ever played a villain. I learn so much from characters — how they react to situations — and I compare that to things that have happened in my own life. It might not be the way the character reacts, but it's interesting. I love puzzles, especially emotional puzzles. What's the key to that? What's behind that? I found her interesting.

**TM:** After years of storytelling through acting, did creating *The Heart Channels* feel like a different kind of storytelling?

**AP:** Yes, a little bit. It came about because I met people who were in need. My best friend and I kept meeting people like that, and we thought we should put something together so we could formally help people

About twelve years ago I met this little boy while I was vacationing in the Caribbean. He was eight years old but didn't have language. We were swimming together in the ocean and he wanted to borrow my goggles and play. I realized something was off right away. His mother told me she'd never been able to get a diagnosis for him.

Eventually they were able to go to England and he was placed in a school for children with challenges. His language improved tremendously. His mother, who had never even been off the island, went to college and got her degree so she could work with special needs children. His older sister graduated at the top of her class. In a time when people are terrified to be immigrants anywhere, their story is such one of hope.

We're small, so we can't do big things. But you can't imagine the difference you can make in people's lives when you help just a little. Every time we think this is the last person we're going to help, something happens and we keep going.

**TM:** Working that closely with people who need help must change the way you see kindness and community. What has that experience taught you?

**AP:** Sometimes people just can't believe it. When the giving is



Josh Charles & Annie Potts



private and spontaneous, there's no embarrassment. It's just one human being to another going, "Let's be human together."

**TM:** Balancing compassion and boundaries can be hard. How do you take care of yourself while doing this work?

**AP:** I share it. A shared load is lighter. Two of my girlfriends help with it, and when we get stuck on something, someone else finds a way through it.

People want to give. People want to help. I think so many people are just asking, "What can I do?"

**TM:** For someone hearing about *The Heart Channels* for the first time, what do you hope they take away from it?

**AP:** That they can give something, or help lead someone else to it. Everybody wants to help. Everybody's looking for something. ■



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOX



Catch Annie Potts in *Best Medicine*, airing on FOX and now streaming on Hulu. The heartwarming series has already been renewed for a second season.

**ON WHAT GIVES  
HER HOPE**

One thing I keep seeing is this idea that no matter how hard it gets, in the end the bully never wins. The darkness is always defeated by the light.

We might be in for some rough times, but this cannot hold. It's not who we are as people. We are learning some really hard lessons right now. There are bad guys around, but we have lessons to learn too. We have to be better. We have to get better. And we will come out of it better.

Learn more about  
The Heart Channels at  
[theheartchannels.org](http://theheartchannels.org)



BLOOM LIKE YOU HAVE YOUR OWN SEASON

# backyard sanctuary



A nature-filled oasis for the mind, body, soul — and the pollinators that keep it blooming.

## WHAT LIVES IN A BACKYARD SANCTUARY

### STILLNESS

Not the empty kind. The alive kind. The kind layered with soft hums and distant birdsong. The kind that makes you notice your own breathing again.

### COLOR

Petals glowing against green like tiny flags waving pollinators in. Gold, lavender, coral, white. A palette chosen less by design and more by instinct.

### WINGS

Butterflies drifting like living confetti. Bees working with quiet determination. A hummingbird rewriting the air in quick flashes of green.

### TIME

Slower. Softer. Less urgent. Measured in blooms opening and shadows stretching across the grass.

### YOU

Barefoot. Watching. Part of it. Staying a little longer than you meant to. Realizing the sanctuary was never just for the birds.

**BACKYARD  
ALL-STARS**

Seven native plants that bring the wings with them.



**MILKWEED**

The monarch magnet. Milkweed isn't just a flower – it's the only plant monarch caterpillars can eat. When you plant it, you're basically putting up a "butterflies welcome" sign.



**CONEFLOWER  
(ECHINACEA)**

Tall, bright, and nearly indestructible. Bees love the nectar, butterflies love the landing pad, and in fall the seed heads turn into a snack bar for birds.



**BEE BALM (MONARDA)**

Looks like a firework made of petals. Hummingbirds dart to it immediately, bees pile in, and the minty leaves smell incredible when brushed against.



**BLACK-EYED SUSAN**

A backyard classic for a reason. These cheerful yellow blooms are easy to grow and provide nectar for pollinators while brightening up any sunny corner.



**GOLDENROD**

Often blamed for allergies it didn't cause (that's ragweed). Goldenrod is actually one of the most important late-season nectar sources for bees and butterflies preparing for fall.



**WILD BERGAMOT**

A soft lavender cousin of bee balm that pollinators adore. Butterflies land easily on its shaggy blooms while bees happily disappear inside.



**ASTERS**

One of the last flowers standing before winter. When most gardens fade, asters bloom in clouds of purple and white, feeding migrating butterflies and late-season bees.





## START WITH A SMALL PATCH OF PEACE

Plants that naturally grow  
A backyard sanctuary doesn't need to be big. It doesn't need perfect garden beds or a landscaping plan drawn on graph paper.

It starts with something much simpler: a small patch of space where nature is allowed to do its thing.

Maybe it's a corner with wildflowers. Maybe it's a cluster of potted plants near the patio. Maybe it's a place where the grass grows a little longer and the breeze carries the smell of something blooming.

Sanctuaries aren't built overnight. They grow slowly, the way nature prefers.

## LET FLOWERS DO THE TALKING

The easiest way to invite life into your backyard is also the most colorful. Plant flowers.

Native plants are especially good at this because they already know the rhythm of the land. Coneflowers lift bright petals like tiny sunbursts. Bee balm explodes into shaggy blooms that hummingbirds adore. Milkweed quietly becomes a nursery for monarch butterflies.

You don't need rows or perfect spacing. A few clusters here and there is enough. To pollinators, flowers aren't decoration — they're dinner invitations.

## THE WINGED VISITORS ARRIVE

Something wonderful happens when the flowers settle in.

First come the bees, zigzagging between blossoms with serious determination. Then butterflies drift through like pieces of stained glass floating in the air.

Dragonflies patrol the yard like tiny helicopters, keeping mosquitoes in check. And if you're lucky, a hummingbird appears — hovering for a moment before darting away like a flash of green lightning.

This is the moment you realize your backyard has quietly become a habitat.

## LEAVE A LITTLE ROOM FOR THE WILD

Not every inch of a sanctuary needs to be tidy. Leave a corner where plants lean into each other. Let leaves rest on the ground a little longer. Allow flowers to reseed and wander.

Nature rarely grows in straight lines, and that's part of the charm. A slightly wild space gives insects shelter, birds places to forage, and the whole yard a feeling of life instead of control. Sometimes the best thing you can do for a garden is step back.

## A SANCTUARY WORKS FOR YOU, TOO

The funny thing about building a backyard sanctuary is that it helps the humans living there just as much as the wildlife.

You start noticing things you missed before — the hum of bees, the slow drift of butterflies, the quiet patience of a flower opening in the morning sun.

The yard becomes a place to pause. A place to breathe. A place to sit with a cup of coffee while something small and miraculous passes through the air.

And all of it begins with a few flowers and a decision to let nature stay. ■





DRAGONFLIES ARE REMINDERS THAT WE ARE LIGHT, AND WE CAN  
REFLECT LIGHT IN POWERFUL WAYS IF WE CHOOSE TO DO SO  
ROBYN BOLA

# small wings. big energy.

How hummingbirds remind us to pause mid-air, chase sweetness, and trust the smallest wings to do the biggest work.

## RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

### LOCATION

Eastern United States,  
Central America

### WHAT MAKES THEM MAGIC

The only hummingbird species that breeds east of the Mississippi.

Tiny. Determined. Migratory in ways that feel almost unreal.

### THE FEAT

Crosses the Gulf of Mexico in a single nonstop flight – 500 miles over open water, powered by something the size of a thumb.

No backup plan. No safety net.  
Just instinct and resolve.

There's something slightly unbelievable about a hummingbird. The way it arrives without warning. The way it hovers like it's suspended by invisible thread. The way it vanishes before you can call anyone over to see it.

Hummingbirds don't ease into a moment. They commit. Wings beating up to 80 times per second, hearts racing, bodies built for motion – they operate on urgency and instinct. To stay alive, they have to keep moving. To keep moving, they have to keep feeding. It's a rhythm of sip, hover, go.

And yet, for a creature that lives so fast, they've mastered stillness

Hovering isn't passive. It's work. It's precision. It's burning energy just to remain exactly where you are. Hummingbirds remind us that pausing mid-air isn't laziness – it's strategy. You stop long enough to gather what you need. You drink from what's sweet. Then you move on.

They don't hoard flowers. They don't circle back in doubt. They trust the next bloom will open.

Small wings. Massive output. Crossing oceans. Surviving deserts. Flashing color like proof that size has nothing to do with impact.

Maybe the lesson isn't to slow down entirely. Maybe it's to hover with intention – to take what nourishes you and trust your wings to handle the rest. ■



# TINY WINGS. WILD FACTS.

## THEY DON'T WALK. AT ALL.

Hummingbirds perch, but strolling? Not their thing. If they're moving, they're flying. Zero half-commitment energy.

## THEIR HEARTS RACE LIKE THEY'RE LATE FOR SOMETHING.

Up to 1,200 beats per minute. Imagine living your entire life as if you just saw someone you like across the room.

## THEY POWER DOWN AT NIGHT.

It's called *torpor* – their body temperature drops, their heart slows, and they basically enter airplane mode. Even high achievers need rest.

## THEY SEE SECRET COLORS.

Hummingbirds can detect ultraviolet light. The world is literally more electric to them than it is to us.

## THEY REMEMBER EVERY FLOWER THEY'VE VISITED.

Not vaguely. Precisely. They know which bloom had nectar and when it'll be ready again. Efficiency, but make it elegant.



## ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD

### LOCATION

Western United States

### WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT

Bold. Territorial. Known for dramatic dives and metallic pink head feathers that flash like tiny crowns.

### THE SOUND

That sharp chirp isn't just noise – it's a declaration.

This flower matters. This space is claimed. This moment is mine.

## THEY CAN FLY BACKWARD.

Forward is great. Backward is also great. They do not believe in one-direction living.

## THE TINIEST ONE WEIGHS LESS THAN A PENNY.

The bee hummingbird is about two inches long. Two inches. Let that reset your understanding of power.

## FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

### LOCATION

Highlands of Costa Rica and western Panama

### WHAT MAKES THEM UNREAL

At rest, they look dark. Almost understated. But when the light strikes their throat? It ignites — bands of blazing orange, gold, emerald, and electric blue layered like living stained glass.

### THE SURPRISE

They live high where the air is thin and the mornings are cool. Small body. Alpine attitude. Proof that even at altitude, color can burn bright.

## BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD

### LOCATION

Western United States and parts of Mexico

### WHAT MAKES THEM INTERESTING

At first glance? Understated. Dark chin. Muted tones. But when the light hits just right, a hidden band of iridescent purple flares beneath the black — like a secret only the sun gets to see.

### THE MOVE

Efficient. Adaptable. Comfortable in deserts, suburbs, riverbanks. A master of making almost anywhere work.

### Pink + White

Frank Ocean

### Harvest Moon

Neil Young

### Landslide

Fleetwood Mac

### Moon

Kid Francescoli

### Sunset Lover

Petit Biscuit

### Night Owl

Galimatias

### Midnight

Lane 8

### Retrograde

James Blake

### Beyond

Leon Bridges

### River

Leon Bridges

### Cold Little Heart (Radio Edit)

Michael Kiwanuka

### Come Away With Me

Norah Jones

### Experience

Ludovico Einaudi

### Awake

Tycho

### Weightless

Marconi Union

You can find the entire **Hover Mode** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile



## THE ART OF HOVERING

On precision and presence.

From far away, hovering looks effortless.

Up close, it's work.

It's balance and recalibration and a thousand invisible corrections happening every second. It's energy spent just to stay exactly where you are.

Maybe that's why it feels familiar.

Sometimes life isn't about forward motion. Sometimes it's about holding steady — long enough to see clearly, long enough to choose your next move.

Hovering isn't hesitation.

It's awareness with wings. ■

## VIOLET-CROWNED WOODNYMPH

### LOCATION

Central America and northern South America

### WHAT MAKES THEM MAGIC

Metallic emerald body. A throat that flashes electric violet-blue when the light hits just right. In shadow, almost dark. In sun, unreal.

### THE MOMENT

They don't glow constantly — and that's the point. Their color depends on angle. On timing. On light. Turn your head and it disappears. Shift slightly and it's blazing.

Not loud. Not oversized. Just a living jewel that rewards attention.



### BY THE NUMBERS

Up to **80 wing beats per second**

Heart rate:  
**up to 1,200 beats per minute**

Migration distance:  
**500+ miles nonstop**  
(for some species)

Body weight: often  
**less than a nickel**

Time from hatch to flight:  
**about 3 weeks**



**Pollination Palace Hanging Habitat, Butterfly House**  
Touch of ECO, \$25



**Solar Smart Bird Feeder with Camera**  
Birdbuddy, \$299



**Artisan Glass Gravity Hummingbird Feeder**  
Nature's Way, \$24



**Glass Hummingbird Feeder with Ant Moat**  
Kingsyard, \$25

# NECTAR NOOK

Where your backyard becomes a refueling station for wonder.



**Better Gardens Pollinator House**  
Nature's Way, \$24



**Thistle Butterfly Puddler**  
Jo-Anne and Gerald Warren, \$45



**Bee Watering Station**  
Pumpkin Ridge Pottery, \$18

## THE BEST HERBS TO BEGIN WITH

If you're new, choose herbs that don't mind a little trial and error.

**Basil** loves sun and regular pinching

**Rosemary** prefers to be left alone and thrives on neglect.

**Mint** grows fast and should always get its own pot (it likes to take over).

**Thyme** and **oregano** are steady, low-maintenance staples that work in almost everything.

Start with two or three. You can always add more later.

## WATER, SUN, REPEAT

Most herbs like bright light and well-draining soil. Water when the soil feels dry, not on a schedule. Think attentive, not anxious. Herbs respond better to consistency than perfection.

## WHEN (AND HOW) TO HARVEST

Trim herbs regularly to encourage growth. Snip just above a leaf joint and never take more than a third of the plant at once. The best time to harvest is in the morning, when the oils are strongest.

## DRYING HERBS THE SIMPLE WAY

Tie small bundles with twine and hang them upside down in a dry, airy space. Or lay them flat on a screen. Once they crumble easily, store them in jars away from light. Label everything — future you will be grateful.

## WHY IT'S WORTH IT

An herb garden is slow joy. It's a reminder that flavor, patience, and care grow together. And sometimes, that's more than enough.

# START SMALL, START SOMEWHERE

Starting an herb garden doesn't require a backyard, a green thumb, or a sudden personality change. It starts with a pot. Or a windowsill. Or that forgotten corner of your porch that gets good morning light. Herbs are forgiving. They want to grow. You mostly just have to let them.



### **FRESH VS. DRIED: DOES IT MATTER?**

Short answer? Yes. But nothing to overthink.

**Fresh herbs** are bright, punchy, and a little dramatic. Add them at the end of cooking or sprinkle on top just before serving. Think basil on pasta. Parsley over roasted vegetables. Mint in lemonade.

**Dried herbs** are deeper and more concentrated. They hold up to heat and long cooking times. Add them early so they have time to soften and bloom in oil or broth.

**A simple rule:** If it simmers, dried works beautifully. If it finishes, go fresh.

THE LAST THING TO GROW ON A TREE IS THE FRUIT. DON'T GIVE UP.



# ➔ YOUR HERB GARDEN, INTRODUCED

## OREGANO

Bright, almost sweet, and unmistakably fresh. Add it at the end so it keeps its glow. Pinch the tops often to keep it full and bushy.

## SAGE

Soft, velvety leaves with savory depth. It turns butter into something restaurant-worthy. Harvest lightly and give it space to breathe.

## THYME

Small leaves, big impact. Earthy and steady – it makes roasted vegetables taste like you planned ahead. Thrives in full sun and doesn't mind dry soil.

## BASIL

Bright, almost sweet, and unmistakably fresh. Add it at the end so it keeps its glow. Pinch the tops often to keep it full and bushy.

## ROSEMARY

Woodsy and bold with piney edges. A little goes a long way, especially with potatoes or bread. Loves bright light and hates overwatering.

## MINT

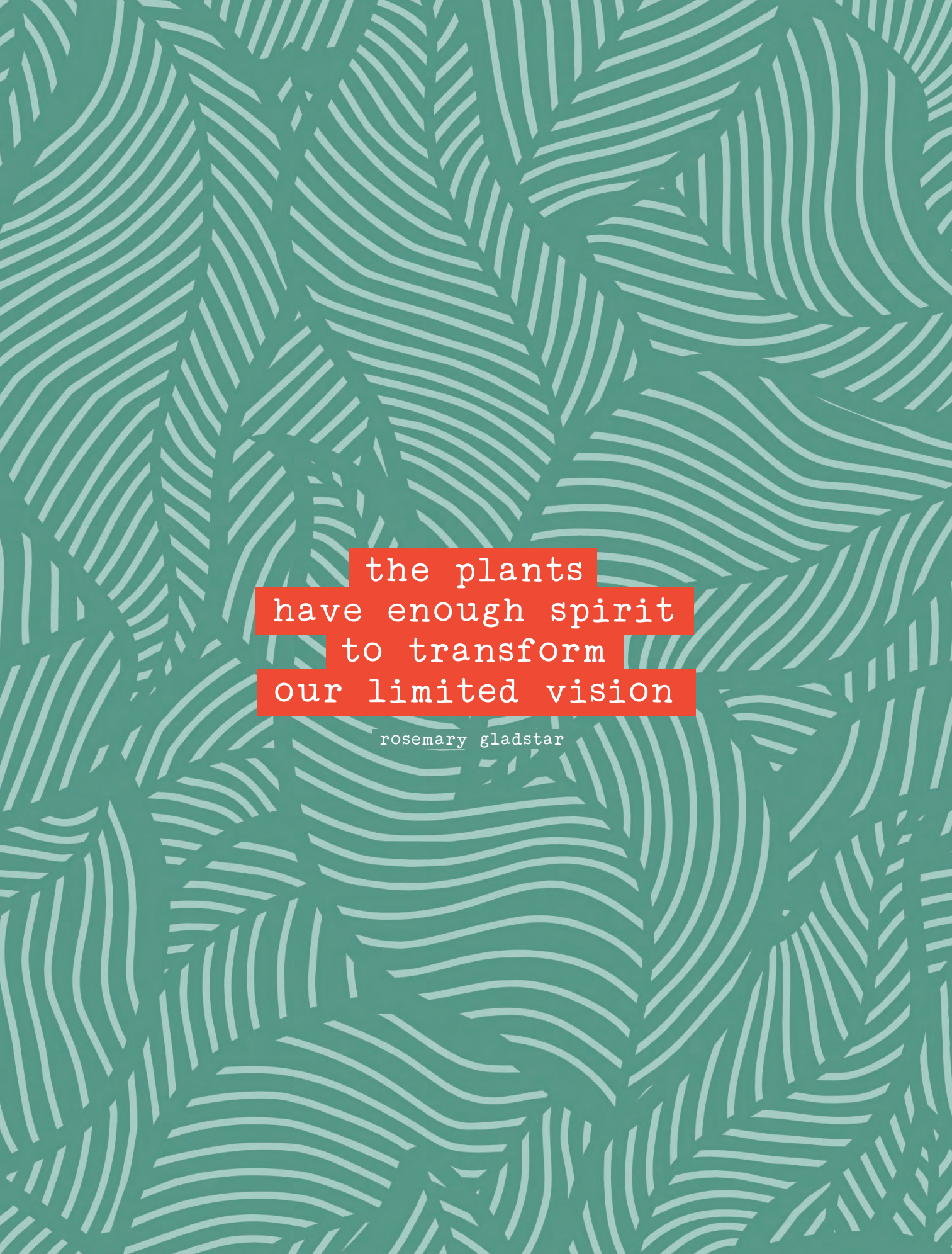
Cool and lively with a hint of sweetness. Perfect in drinks and fruit salads. Plant in its own pot – it likes to take over.

## PARSLEY

Clean and grassy in the best way. It wakes up heavy dishes and makes everything look finished. Tolerates partial shade and steady watering.

## CILANTRO

Bright and citrusy with a little edge. Best used fresh and added at the end – it bolts quickly in heat, so harvest often and don't get too attached.



the plants  
have enough spirit  
to transform  
our limited vision

rosemary gladstar

*in season*

# the apricot advantage



Simple.  
Seasonal.  
Solid.  
The original  
wellness  
move.



#### **COLOR THEORY**

That orange glow comes from beta-carotene. Your body converts it to vitamin A. Science is cool. So are snacks.



### MINERAL MOMENT

Potassium helps regulate blood pressure and muscle function. Apricots have it. Your heart says thank you. Your group chat remains unchanged.



### YOUR NEW FAVORITE WORD

The dried version of an apricot is sometimes called a Turkish delight's quieter cousin. Technically? Still just an apricot. Impress nobody. Snack confidently anyway.



### FIBER FLEX

Apricots contain both soluble and insoluble fiber. That's a teamwork situation. Your digestion benefits. No one needs the details.

### THE SOFT KIND OF HEALTHY

Apricots feel like a small yes. Not a trend, not a cleanse, not a "new you." Just a fruit that tastes like light. If spring is your reset button, let it be a realistic one — less pressure, more steadiness. Apricots fit that vibe: gentle, bright, and quietly useful.

### SKIN + EYES: THE LONG GAME

Loaded with beta-carotene and vitamin A, they support vision and skin in the steady way that matters. Translation: they're good for the parts of you that face the world first. No promises, no glow-up propaganda — just nutrients doing their job while you keep doing yours.

### DIGESTION, WITHOUT THE DRAMA

There's fiber here, and it matters. Fresh apricots help keep digestion steady, and dried ones have a reputation for being... dependable.

If you're feeling stuck—physically or otherwise—consider this your reminder: your body likes consistency more than intensity.

### HEART HELP, QUIETLY

They bring potassium to the table, supporting healthy blood pressure and the steady rhythm your heart keeps all day long. It's the kind of wellness nobody posts about because it isn't flashy. It's also the kind that keeps you going.

### THE STRESS YOU CARRY

Apricots contain antioxidants — small protective compounds that help your body deal with everyday wear and tear. Think of them as background support for all the invisible things you're managing. Not a cure. A cushion.

### HOW TO ACTUALLY EAT THEM

Eat one over the sink. Slice it into yogurt. Add chopped dried apricots to oatmeal. Keep it simple. The point isn't perfection — it's choosing something small that's on your side. ■



## apricot clafoutis

Soft, custardy, and sun-soaked with fruit, this apricot clafoutis feels effortlessly French but is wonderfully simple. Preheat your oven to 350°F and butter a baking dish. Arrange 4–5 fresh apricots, halved and pitted, cut-side up in the dish, adding a few small spoonfuls of apricot preserves between them for extra depth. In a bowl, whisk 3 eggs with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla, and a pinch of salt. Stir in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole milk,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup heavy cream, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup flour until smooth. Pour the thin batter over the fruit and bake for 35–40 minutes, until puffed and lightly golden with a just-set center. Let it rest slightly (it will settle), then dust with powdered sugar and serve warm.



### **GOLDEN EDGES**

Bake until the center barely jiggles – it will finish setting as it cools, keeping the texture custardy, not dry.





#### ADD A LITTLE ALMOND

Sprinkle a pinch of sliced almonds over the egg wash before baking for a subtle crunch and classic apricot-almond pairing.

## sunrise apricot crescents

Unroll 1 can refrigerated crescent roll dough and separate into triangles. Spoon 1–2 teaspoons thick apricot preserves onto the wide end of each triangle, spreading gently but keeping it away from the edges. Roll up from the wide end to the tip, tucking slightly to seal, and place on a lined baking sheet. Brush the tops lightly with 1 beaten egg mixed with a splash of water for that deep golden finish. Bake at 375°F according to package directions, usually 10–12 minutes, until puffed and beautifully browned.

While still warm, brush lightly with a spoonful of warmed apricot preserves for a soft bakery-style glow.



#### JAM MATTERS

Choose a thick apricot preserve rather than a loose jam. The thicker it is, the better it stays tucked inside and bakes into a soft, golden center.

## apricot prosciutto focaccia squares

Savory, creamy, and just sweet enough – these focaccia squares layer prosciutto, stracciatella, dried apricots, and pistachios into a beautifully balanced bite. Slice fresh focaccia into squares and toast lightly until the edges are golden but the center stays soft. Spread a generous layer of stracciatella over the warm bread, then drape with thin ribbons of prosciutto. Scatter chopped dried apricots and finish with crushed pistachios for crunch. Add a light drizzle of olive oil or a crack of black pepper if desired, then slice and serve warm or at room temperature. The salty, creamy, and sweet layers come together effortlessly – perfect for an easy lunch or relaxed entertaining.



### NO STRACCIATELLA? NO PROBLEM.

Swap with burrata (use the creamy center), fresh mozzarella torn into pieces with a drizzle of cream, or even whipped ricotta for a similar soft, spreadable texture.



### CHOP SMALL, LAYER BIG

Finely chop the dried apricots and pistachios so you get a little sweetness and crunch in every bite. Smaller pieces distribute better, giving the sandwich balance instead of bold pockets.

# apricot orchard whole grain muffins

## INGREDIENTS

1 c whole wheat flour  
½ c oat flour (or finely ground rolled oats)  
½ c rolled oats  
1 t baking powder  
½ t baking soda  
½ t ground cinnamon  
¼ t ground nutmeg  
¼ t salt  
2 large eggs  
⅓ c maple syrup or honey  
¼ c brown sugar  
⅓ c neutral oil  
(avocado, vegetable, or melted coconut oil)  
½ c unsweetened applesauce  
1 t vanilla extract  
½ c finely chopped dried apricots  
½ c finely grated apple,  
lightly squeeze excess moisture  
⅓ c finely grated carrot  
½ c chopped walnuts or pecans

## Optional toppings:

2 T rolled oats  
1 t chopped nuts  
1 t maple syrup  
pinch cinnamon

## DIRECTIONS

**1** Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease or line a mini muffin tin.

**2** In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, oat flour, rolled oats, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.

**3** In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs, maple syrup, brown sugar, oil, applesauce, and vanilla until smooth.

**4** Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir gently until just combined. Fold in the apricots, grated apple, carrot, and chopped nuts. The batter should be thick and textured – avoid overmixing.

**5** Spoon batter into muffin cups, filling each about ¾ full.

**6** If using the topping, stir the oats, nuts, maple syrup, and cinnamon together and sprinkle lightly over each muffin.

**7** Bake for 12–15 minutes, or until muffins are golden and spring back lightly when touched.

**8** Allow muffins to cool for 5 minutes in the pan before transferring to a cooling rack.



## A LITTLE MELTED MAGIC

Softened butter, a drizzle of honey, and a tiny pinch of sea salt – that's it. Stir until creamy and lightly whipped, then swipe generously onto a warm muffin and let it melt into every oat-filled corner. It turns wholesome into indulgent without trying too hard.



## apricot blossom fizz

### INGREDIENTS

1½ oz gin (a floral gin works beautifully)  
1 oz fresh apricot purée  
½ oz fresh lemon juice  
½ oz honey syrup  
(equal parts honey + warm water,  
stirred until smooth)  
3 oz chilled prosecco or other  
dry sparkling wine  
ice  
thin apricot slice or edible flower, garnish

### DIRECTIONS

**1** Add gin, apricot purée, lemon juice, and honey syrup to a shaker with ice. Shake until chilled.  
**2** Strain into a chilled coupe glass.  
**3** Top gently with prosecco.  
**4** Garnish with a floating apricot slice or a small edible flower.  
**5** Serve immediately while it's lively and bright.



## baked apricots with honey, sage & rosemary

Sweet, sun-ripened apricots turn jammy and golden in the oven, soaking up warm honey and the woody perfume of fresh herbs. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Slice 8-10 ripe apricots in half and remove the pits, then arrange them cut-side up in a parchment-lined baking dish. Drizzle generously with 2-3 tablespoons of honey and a splash of olive oil, letting it pool into the centers. Tuck a few fresh sage leaves and sprigs of rosemary in and around the fruit, gently pressing some into the honey so their flavor infuses as they bake. Add a tiny pinch of sea salt and, if you like, a crack of black pepper for contrast. Roast for 18-25 minutes, until the apricots are soft, glossy, and lightly caramelized at the edges. Spoon the warm honey-herb syrup from the pan over the top before serving. Enjoy them on their own, over thick yogurt, alongside soft cheese, or with toasted bread to soak up every last drop.



### HERB IT LIGHT

Tuck whole sprigs around the apricots, not on top, so the flavor infuses gently without overpowering the honeyed sweetness.

## *in the kitchen*

**Wire Fruit Basket**  
Kingtow, \$9



**Muffin Pan, Nonstick Non Toxic**  
HAPPIELS, \$38



**Herringbone Serving Board**  
Magnolia, \$72

**Stoneware 2-qt. Square Baker**  
KitchenAid, \$28



**Texture Pastry Server**  
Robert Welch, \$20



# LET'S GET COOKIN'

Looking for kitchenware to help you create the recipes in this issue or products that are just inspired by what's in season? We've got you!



**Coupe Glass**  
Ridgecrest, \$6



PANTRY INSPO



**PANTRY POWER MOVES**

**Add white beans** in the skillet when you add the pasta for protein and bulk.

Stir in frozen peas during the last 2 minutes of pasta cooking.

**Sauté onion** and garlic in the oil before adding pepper for deeper flavor.

**Add tuna** at the end for a salty, filling boost.

**Toast breadcrumbs** in a dry pan and sprinkle on top for crunch.

*food with a purpose*

**A LITTLE BOX OF CELEBRATION**

Everyone deserves a reason to light candles – even when the budget is tight. A simple “party package” donated to your local pantry can turn an ordinary night into something worth remembering. Tuck a boxed cake mix, a can of soda (the secret ingredient that replaces eggs and oil), and a tub of frosting into an aluminum baking pan so it’s ready to mix and bake. Add colorful paper plates, napkins, and a set of disposable utensils to make it feel like a real celebration. It’s small. It’s affordable. And it quietly says: your joy matters, too.

A PARTY WITHOUT CAKE IS REALLY JUST A MEETING. — JULIA CHILD

**cacio e pepe**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 lb spaghetti (or any pasta you have - linguine, fettuccine, even elbows work)
- 1 ½ c finely grated Parmesan
- 1-2 t freshly ground black pepper
- 2 T olive oil or butter
- salt, for pasta water

**DIRECTIONS**

- 1 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook pasta until just shy of al dente. Before draining, scoop out 1 cup of the starchy pasta water and set aside.
- 2 While the pasta cooks, heat olive oil or butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add black pepper and toast it gently for 30-60 seconds until fragrant – this step matters. It wakes everything up.
- 3 Add ½ cup of the reserved pasta water to the skillet and let it simmer for a minute. Lower heat.
- 4 Add drained pasta directly into the skillet. Remove from heat and immediately add the grated cheese, tossing quickly. Add more pasta water a little at a time, stirring constantly, until a creamy sauce forms. The starch and cheese will emulsify into something silky.
- 5 Taste and adjust with more pepper or salt if needed. Serve immediately.



**STRETCH IT FURTHER**

If you’re feeding more people (or saving leftovers), stir in a splash of milk and an extra handful of pasta water the next day when reheating. The sauce loosens back up instead of clumping, and no one feels like they’re eating “leftovers.” Add a drizzle of olive oil and a crack of fresh pepper to wake it up again.



**CHOOSE THE RIGHT SODA**

Cola for chocolate cake, lemon-lime or cream soda for vanilla and ginger ale for spice cake. The bubbles do the work – no eggs needed.



# THE ART OF STARTING ANYWAY

What one fearless beginner can teach us about momentum, mistakes, and spring energy.

We imagine Julia Child in the kitchen before we imagine the advice. The butter is already out. Something is chopped, imperfectly. There's movement before there's instruction.

Spring does that. It starts before we're ready.

She would tell us not to worry so much about timing. Timing, she'd say, has very little to do with readiness. Most things begin when curiosity outweighs fear. That's usually later than planned – and exactly on time.

There's comfort in knowing she didn't arrive fully formed. That the confidence came after the trying. That the famous work followed years of quiet practice, wrong turns, and learning out loud. Spring favors that kind of patience.

We'd probably ask her what to do with the feeling that everyone else is ahead. She'd laugh. Not unkindly. The kind of laugh that clears the air. Ahead of what? she'd ask. There's no finish line worth sprinting toward. There's only the next thing that asks for your hands.

She'd encourage us to stay beginners a little longer. To stop rushing toward mastery. To let ourselves be clumsy, curious, imperfect. That's where the joy lives. That's where the good stories come from.

If we stood there long enough, watching her work, we'd notice how often she tastes as she goes. Adjusts. Adds. Starts again. Nothing precious. Nothing wasted. Spring is generous that way.



## ABOUT JULIA

Julia Child was an American cook, author, and television pioneer who introduced French cuisine to home kitchens – and proved it's never too late to begin.



## BEGINNER ENERGY CHECKLIST

Try something slightly intimidating.

Taste as you go.

Adjust without apology.

Laugh when it flops.

Share what you make.

Keep going.

Fear would come up, as it always does. The fear of getting it wrong. Of being seen trying. Of starting something that might not turn into what we hoped. Start anyway, she'd say. You can always fix it. And if you can't, you'll learn something better.

Before we leave, she'd probably remind us to share what we make. Even the imperfect versions. Especially the imperfect versions. Because growth is rarely meant to be private.

By the time we step back outside, something has shifted.

The table is set. The butter is soft. And whatever you've been waiting to begin suddenly feels possible. ■



*“The only real stumbling block is fear of failure.”*

Julia Child's Kitchen  
at the Smithsonian.

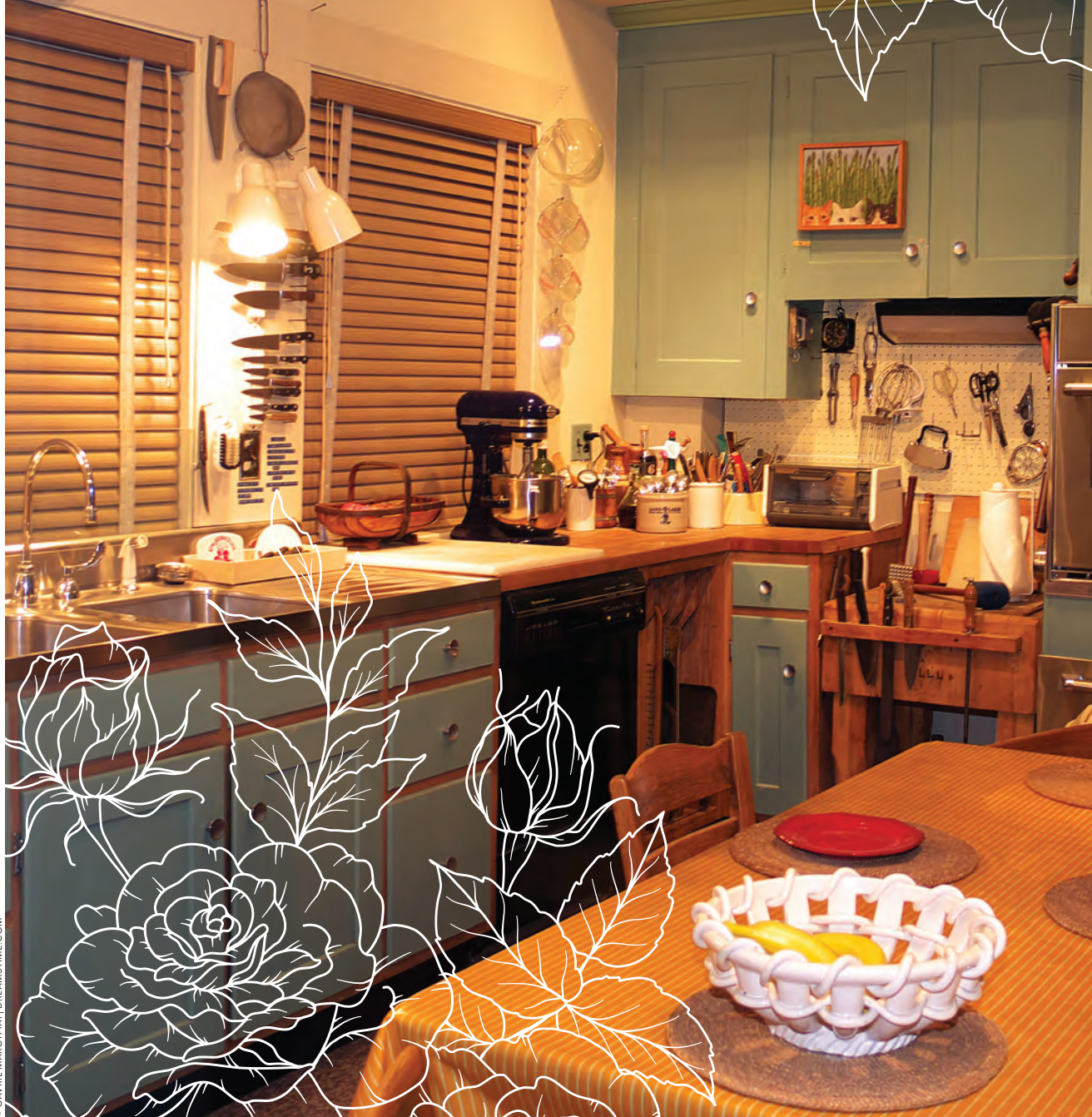


PHOTO: CREDIT SCIENCE HISTORY IMAGES

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## KITCHEN TABLE TRUTHS

**ON COOKING**  
"No one is born a great cook, one learns by doing."

**ON MISTAKES**  
"You just scoop it back into the pan. Remember, you are alone in the kitchen and nobody can see you."

**ON BUTTER**  
"With enough butter, anything is good."

**ON TECHNIQUE**  
"If you are afraid of butter, use cream."

**ON LIFE**  
"Life itself is the proper binge."

THE BEST WAY TO KNOW LIFE IS TO LOVE MANY THINGS. — VINCENT VAN GOGH



# THE FIELD GUIDE TO A PERFECT PICNIC

Joy tastes different outside. Slower. Less polished.

You don't need linen napkins. You don't need a curated spread or a three-hour block on your calendar. You need a patch of grass, something crusty to tear into, and the willingness to stop performing your life for a minute.

A picnic is not content. It is a reset.

## OBSERVATION #1

### BREAD TASTES BETTER OUTDOORS

A crusty baguette. Good butter, soft enough to spread without resistance. A wedge of cheese that smells faintly wild. Tear, don't slice. Let crumbs fall. The wind can have some.

## OBSERVATION #2

### FRUIT IS MEANT TO BE HELD

Bring one piece of fruit you can eat with your hands. Something that drips or stains a little. Something that reminds you you're not in a rush. And pack something sweet you'll forget about until the end. The best discoveries are the accidental ones.

## OBSERVATION #3

### DRINKS SLOW DOWN TIME

Sparkling water with lemon. A small bottle of wine, shared slowly. Coffee poured from a dented thermos that tastes inexplicably better under open sky. Sip. Pause. Look up.



## OBSERVATION #4

### WHERE YOU SIT MATTERS

Sit where the flowers grow like they weren't meant to be curated. Near a tree. Along a trail. In the middle of a field that hums. Shoes off if possible. No phones on the blanket. This is not documentation. This is participation.

## OBSERVATION #5

### IMPERFECTION IS THE POINT

If the cheese sweats in the sun, it's alive. If ants arrive, you're officially outside. If something tips over, laugh and keep eating. Nothing about this has to be earned. ■





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You'll *love* it here.

*Dreamland*  
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FOLLOW WHERE YOUR DREAMS LEAD.

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# PRETTY & PLEASANT



Some bike rides are about distance. These are about color. Across Europe, certain roads pass through landscape that burst into bloom — lavender fields humming in Provence, endless sunflowers in Tuscany, tulip corridors in the Netherlands. Pedal slowly. The view isn't going anywhere, but the season is.





## **RHINE CYCLE ROUTE** **SWITZERLAND ⇄ NETHERLANDS**

### **VIBE**

Alpine origins to Dutch lowlands.

Follow the Rhine from its alpine beginnings through Germany's vineyard-covered slopes and onward to the Netherlands' famously flat canal country. Medieval towns, castle-dotted cliffs, and wide riverside paths shape the journey. It's one of Europe's great river rides – varied, scenic, and deeply historic.

### **PEDAL PAUSES**

The Middle Rhine Gorge is peak castle country

Cologne Cathedral is worth the stop

Dutch sections are blissfully flat



## LAKE CONSTANCE CYCLE PATH

GERMANY ⇨ AUSTRIA ⇨ SWITZERLAND

### VIBE

Three countries. One shimmering lake.

Circle Lake Constance and cross international borders before lunch. The path is mostly flat and wonderfully well marked, passing pastel harbor towns, vineyards, and distant Alpine silhouettes.

It's approachable, scenic, and quietly cosmopolitan for such a relaxed ride.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Ferries provide scenic shortcuts

Ideal for relaxed touring or families

Lake swims are strongly encouraged

## EUROVELO 10

NORTHERN EUROPE COAST

### VIBE

Open horizons, dune grass, wind that clears your head.

EuroVelo 10 circles the Baltic Sea through Germany, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, and beyond. Expect lighthouses, fishing villages, quiet beaches, and long meditative stretches of coastline. The riding is less about climbing hills and more about settling into a steady rhythm beside the sea.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Summer brings nearly endless daylight

Denmark's cycling culture is legendary

Seafood dinners taste better after sea wind



**EUROVELO 1**  
NORWAY ⇄ PORTUGAL

**VIBE**

Cliffs, harbors, and Atlantic mood swings.

EuroVelo 1 stretches from Norway's North Cape to Portugal, tracing Europe's Atlantic edge. Most riders choose sections – Brittany's rugged coast, Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way, or Spain's dramatic cliffs. The scenery is cinematic, the weather unpredictable, the ocean always nearby.

**PEDAL PAUSES**

Brittany and northern Spain are standout segments

Ferry connections open endless route options

Layers are non-negotiable



## DANUBE CYCLE PATH GERMANY → AUSTRIA → HUNGARY

### VIBE

Riverside castles,  
vineyard hills, pastry stops  
that feel earned.

Start in Passau, Germany, and follow the Danube as it drifts toward Vienna and beyond. This is Europe's most beloved cycling tour for a reason: mostly flat, beautifully paved, and lined with medieval towns, Baroque abbeys, and wine taverns tucked into river bends. The route glides through the Wachau Valley, known for apricots, terraced vineyards, and spired villages that look lifted from a painting.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Best first-timer stretch:  
Passau → Vienna

Stop in Dürnstein for wine

Trains along the route  
carry bikes if needed



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO SPAIN

### VIBE

Pilgrim roads, golden fields, long horizons.

Cyclists ride versions of the Camino pilgrimage routes across northern Spain, sharing centuries-old paths with walkers. Stone villages, vineyard valleys, and wide open landscapes define the ride. It's less about speed and more about steady movement through history.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Spring and fall are ideal seasons

Albergues often welcome cyclists

Evenings belong to tapas

## CICLOVIA ALPE-ADRIA AUSTRIA → ITALY

### VIBE

Alpine air turning into Adriatic salt.

Begin in Salzburg and ride south through the Alps along converted railway lines that slip through tunnels and across soaring viaducts. Lakes flash turquoise. The Julian Alps frame everything. By the time you roll into Grado, the mountains have softened into sea breeze and seafood dinners by the Adriatic.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Ideal in late spring or early fall

E-bikes make the climbs joyful

Celebrate the finish with seafood in Grado

## LOIRE À VÉLO LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE

### VIBE

Château shadows, river light, markets that smell like butter.

The Loire winds past vineyards, orchards, and sunflower fields in season, connecting Renaissance castles that rise out of morning mist. The cycling network follows the river through Blois, Amboise, and Tours on relaxed, well-marked paths. It's elegant without being intimidating. The terrain is forgiving. The pastries are not.

### PEDAL PAUSES

Château de Chambord is wildly worth it

Flat terrain makes multi-day rides easy

Local goat cheese deserves a detour

## ELBE CYCLE ROUTE

CZECH REPUBLIC → GERMANY

### VIBE

Storybook towns, sandstone cliffs, vineyard hills.

Beginning near the Czech mountains, the Elbe route flows through Prague's orbit and into Germany's dramatic Saxon Switzerland region before reaching Dresden. The ride blends river calm with architectural beauty and dramatic rock formations.

### PEDAL PUSES

Dresden's Old Town is stunning

Meissen porcelain country is charming

One of Europe's best-marked routes





## **NORTHERN ITALY** **LAKE GARDA → VERONA**

### **VIBE**

Lakeside calm to storybook city streets.

Lake Garda's shoreline cycling paths run beneath steep mountains and bright blue water. From there, quiet countryside roads lead toward Verona's piazzas and ancient Roman amphitheater. It's less a single trail and more a beautifully connected regional ride.

### **PEDAL PAUSES**

Spring and fall are perfect riding seasons

Olive groves line parts of the route

Aperitivo in Verona is the proper finish

## **BRITTANY** **VELOROUTES** **FRANCE**

### **VIBE**

Granite cliffs, sea wind, cider stops.

Brittany's cycling routes weave along rugged coastline and quiet inland canals. Expect fishing harbors, wild Atlantic views, green farmland, and crêperies that feel like mandatory stops. It's moodier than the Loire and far less crowded.

### **PEDAL PAUSES**

Rennes makes a great starting base

Combine coast and inland greenways

Order cider with your galette

## **LUCCA & TUSCANY** **COUNTRYSIDE** **ITALY**

### **VIBE**

Renaissance walls and rolling vineyard roads.

Lucca's intact Renaissance walls form a perfectly smooth, tree-lined cycling loop circling the historic city. Venture beyond and Tuscany unfolds into olive groves, vineyards, and hill towns perched like postcards. It's a ride built for lingering.

### **PEDAL PAUSES**

Gelato mid-ride is strategic

Early mornings beat Tuscan heat

Winery stops are unavoidable



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Pedal long enough in the right season and the countryside starts to bloom around you. These routes wind through some of Europe's most colorful landscapes.

**PROVENCE  
LAVENDER ROADS**  
VALENSOLE PLATEAU → FRANCE

**WHEN**

Late June – Early July

If you've ever seen photos of lavender stretching to the horizon, chances are they were taken here. Quiet farm lanes wind through the Valensole Plateau and nearby villages like Sault, where cyclists roll past endless rows of violet blooms beneath wide Provençal skies. The scent alone makes the ride unforgettable.

# IN BLOOM

## NETHERLANDS TULIP ROUTES

KEUKENHOF → HOLLAND

### WHEN

April – Early May

Spring in the Netherlands turns entire landscapes into color charts. Dedicated cycling paths weave through bulb fields near Lisse, where tulips form bands of red, yellow, pink, and purple across the countryside. Rent a bike and follow quiet routes between villages and canals – it's one of the most joyful rides in Europe.





**TUSCANY  
SUNFLOWER ROADS**  
VAL D'ORCIA → ITALY

**WHEN**

Late June – July

Summer in Tuscany means sunflowers – towering rows of gold stretching across rolling hills. Cycling the backroads of Val d'Orcia or Chianti brings you through vineyards, olive groves, and fields glowing in the heat. Stop in hill towns for espresso or gelato before coasting downhill through another sea of yellow.



**LAKE CONSTANCE  
SPRING BLOSSOMS**  
GERMANY, SWITZERLAND,  
AUSTRIA

**WHEN**

April – May

Spring arrives early around Lake Constance, and orchards burst into bloom with cherry, apple, and pear blossoms. The lakeside cycling path is mostly flat and wonderfully scenic, with pastel harbor towns and distant Alps completing the picture.



**DANUBE WILDFLOWER  
MEADOWS**  
DANUBE CYCLE PATH → EUROPE

**WHEN**

May – June

Along stretches of the Danube, especially in Austria's countryside, riverbanks and floodplains erupt with oxeye daisies, poppies, and wild meadow flowers. The result feels less like a garden and more like nature showing off.

**Send Me On My Way**

Rusted Root

**Home**

Edward Sharpe &  
The Magnetic Zeros

**Sweet Disposition**

The Temper Trap

**Dog Days Are Over**

Florence + The Machine

**Budapest**

George Ezra

**Tongue Tied**

Grouplove

**Electric Love**

BØRNS

**My Silver Lining**

First Aid Kit

**Lisztomania**

Phoenix

**Young Folks**

Peter Bjorn and John

**Take a Walk**

Passion Pit

**Walking on a Dream**

Empire of the Sun

**Midnight City**

M83

**Big Jet Plane**

Angus & Julia Stone

**Golden**

Harry Styles

You can find the entire  
**Pedals & Daydreams** playlist  
on Tattle's Spotify profile





# Chasing the Tuscan sun.

*Dreamland*  
-GETAWAYS-

FROM COAST TO COAST.  
FOLLOW WHERE YOUR DREAMS LEAD.

[DREAMLANDGETAWAYS.COM](http://DREAMLANDGETAWAYS.COM)

**ANTELOPE VALLEY CALIFORNIA  
POPPY RESERVE  
CALIFORNIA**

When conditions are right, the desert floor becomes a sea of blazing orange poppies. Quiet roads nearby make for unforgettable spring rides through California's most famous wildflower bloom.



You don't need a passport to find a road lined with flowers. Across the United States, bike trails weave through national parks, coastal paths, and wide-open landscapes where spring and summer bring bursts of wild color. The pace is the same: slow, steady, and full of reasons to stop and look around.



**GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK**  
TENNESSEE/NORTH CAROLINA

Often called the “Wildflower National Park,” the Smokies explode with trillium, violets, and mountain blooms in spring. Quiet park roads and nearby greenway trails make it a dreamy place to pedal through the misty hills.

**SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK**  
VIRGINIA

Skyline Drive isn't just for cars. Early mornings and quiet stretches make for incredible cycling, especially in late spring when roadside wildflowers and mountain laurel begin to appear.

**CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK**  
OHIO

The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail winds through forests, wetlands, and open meadows where wildflowers and tall grasses bloom through the warmer months. One of the Midwest's most peaceful rides.

**MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK**  
WASHINGTON

By mid-summer, Rainier's meadows erupt with lupine, paintbrush, and avalanche lilies. Nearby cycling routes offer unforgettable views of flower-filled valleys beneath the glacier-capped peak.

**ACADIA NATIONAL PARK**  
MAINE

Carriage Roads wind through forest and around quiet lakes, with wildflowers and salty coastal air making every mile feel fresh and unrushed.

**GLACIER NATIONAL PARK**  
MONTANA

Ride sections of the legendary Going-to-the-Sun Road in early summer when cyclists are sometimes allowed before full vehicle traffic. Alpine meadows burst with beargrass, glacier lilies, and mountain wildflowers.

Glacier National Park, Montana





# BLOOM

(noun) blüm

A beautiful process  
of becoming.

## BLOOM

Beneath the hush  
of hidden ground,  
Where silence  
folds and roots  
are bound,  
There stirs a thing  
not yet in sight –  
A quiet claim  
against the night.

No sudden burst,  
no reckless show,  
But patient breath  
and steady grow;  
A trembling inch,  
a fragile climb,  
Unseen, unmarked,  
untouched by time.

For bloom is not  
the petaled face  
That greets the sun  
with easy grace –  
It is the dark, the  
waiting deep,  
The secret  
vows the seeds  
must keep.

A breaking open,  
soft and slow,  
A yielding only few  
may know;  
The courage  
pressed in  
tender green,  
Before the world  
has ever seen.

And when at last it  
finds the air,  
It wears no crown,  
yet still lays bare –  
A fleeting  
proof, both wild  
and true...  
Becoming is the  
bloom in you.





BOLIVAR  
GRAN REPUBLICA



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## WHAT IF “USED” ACTUALLY MEANS “ALIVE”?

Somewhere right now, a denim jacket is waiting on a rack, soft at the elbows and perfectly faded at the seams. It has known other shoulders. It has leaned against brick walls. It has probably watched at least one sunset. You could buy a stiff, factory-fresh version that smells like plastic wrapping, or you could choose the one that already carries memory in its stitching. “Used” is just another word for lived with. And spring reminds us that living things don’t lose value just because they’ve bloomed once before.

## THE MAGIC OF A PREVIOUS LIFE

A ceramic bowl with a tiny chip on the rim. A book with someone’s name written inside the cover. A wooden chair that creaks slightly when you sit down. These aren’t flaws; they’re fingerprints. Secondhand objects hold character the way trees hold rings. You can’t manufacture that depth. You can only inherit it. In a culture that worships untouched and unboxed, choosing something with history feels almost rebellious – not loudly, but gently. It says, I don’t need perfection. I prefer patina. I prefer story.

## TRANSPLANTING, NOT BUYING

When you thrift in spring, it doesn’t feel like shopping. It feels like transplanting. You’re lifting something from one soil and giving it another. A lamp that once lit someone else’s kitchen now glows beside your couch. A wicker basket that held yarn in 1998 now carries farmers market peonies. A slightly-too-big sweater becomes your porch-morning uniform. Nothing wasted. Nothing rushed. Just migration. Nature does this constantly – seeds travel, roots stretch, birds relocate. Secondhand is simply ecology with receipts.

## WHY SPRING IS THE PERFECT TIME TO GO SECONDHAND

Spring makes us want to refresh everything – closets, shelves, corners that collected winter. But refresh doesn’t have to mean replace. It can mean rearrange. Rediscover. Reclaim. When the light shifts and the days stretch longer, thrift stores feel different. Sun filters through the windows and suddenly you notice colors you missed in January. You hold up a glass vase and can already see it filled with lilacs. Secondhand in spring feels less like bargain hunting and more like treasure foraging. And maybe the real re-bloom isn’t just the object. Maybe it’s you.

## THE GENTLE POWER OF AGAIN

We live in a culture obsessed with firsts – first owner, first edition, brand new. But nature doesn’t celebrate firsts. It celebrates cycles. Bloom. Rest. Bloom again. Secondhand invites us into that rhythm. It asks us to believe that something can be beautiful more than once. That value doesn’t disappear with time. That layers make things richer. A thrifted spring isn’t just about saving money, though that’s lovely. It isn’t only about sustainability, though that matters. It’s about choosing continuity over consumption. It’s about understanding that most things – like most people – don’t need replacing. They just need another season.

This spring, before you click “add to cart,” consider wandering instead. Let your hand brush against fabrics that have already softened. Pick up the mug that doesn’t match anything you own but somehow feels exactly right. Let something live again. Let something re-bloom. And maybe, quietly, let yourself do the same. ■



Spring has a funny way of convincing us everything is brand new. The tulips. The grass. The air that suddenly smells like thawed earth and optimism. But here’s the quiet truth: none of it is new. Tulips are bulbs that slept underground all winter. Grass is roots that never left. Birds return to places they’ve already loved. Spring isn’t about newness. It’s about return. And secondhand? It’s spring in object form.



# The Spring Re-Bloom



**Tattle Magazine:** What inspired you to write an alphabet book centered around thrifting and sustainability?

**Dina Younis:** So I am like what I like to call a lifelong thrifter. It's always sort of been in our DNA. And it was just a way of life for me growing up. And after college, I started a blog about thrifting and then, fast forward ten years, it became my full-time job just creating content about thrifting and sustainability. A big focus of my content is helping people get over the fear of thrifting or the shame of thrifting. I mean, now it's very commonplace, but in 2009, when I started my blog, it was very much taboo to say that you thrifted. Thankfully now, you know, we've really turned a corner and it's become popular again.

I was always trying to think of different ways to introduce this theme of sustainability in ways that haven't been done before. And so I thought, you know, there's not a lot of children's books about this. I have two young kids and reading to them was always such a big priority for me and thrifting books for them was always a big thing for me. And so it kind of combined this passion of creating something for my children and other children out there and to try to do something that really hasn't been done before.

So I had this idea of, let's teach kids these themes of sustainability and zero waste, but also how to find a good deal and what all these terms mean – What does clearance mean? What does bargain mean? And it's very colorful. I love colorful things. So it's a very colorful book that teaches them the alphabet,

# DINA YOUNIS

For Dina, thrifting has always been a way of life. With her children's book *S is for Secondhand*, she's introducing kids to the idea that sustainability, creativity, and community can start with something as simple as giving an old item a new story.

kind of big vocabulary words, and these overall themes of secondhand and being thrifty and sustainable.

**TM:** You touch on different forms of secondhand shopping in the book. Why was that important to you?

**DY:** There are so many different angles to this. So, you know, one of the things in the book is that we do actually G is for garage sale and Y is for yard sale because there are so many different ways to be sustainable and to be thrifty and to shop secondhand. Maybe you don't like the traditional type of thrift store experience, but you love a garage sale or maybe a child has never been to a thrift store, but they had a yard sale with their neighborhood.

U is for upcycle. So maybe you don't go thrifting with your family, but you know how to get creative and improvise with recycled items. There are so many different ways that you can be sustainable. And yeah, and not to be ashamed of it. There are so many different reasons why people thrift. It's not just for financial reasons. Maybe you are passionate about sustainability and reusing and zero waste. Maybe it's creativity reasons.

I started because I love being able to go to the thrift store or a garage sale or a rummage sale and find things that I was seeing in some of my favorite magazines at the time. I was circling things in Delia's magazine and being like, okay, well, my mom's not going to buy this for me full price, but maybe I can find a way to make it my own. That was like my first introduction to thrifting was the creativity aspect of it. So there are so many different reasons why. I just feel like I wanted to teach children that you don't have to be placed in this thrifting box.

**TM:** You highlight affordability, sustainability, and creativity as key benefits. Which feels most powerful for families right now?

**DY:** For today, the financial economic affordability aspect to it. My answer probably would have been different even just five years ago, but with how everybody's trying to save money now. Everything is much more expensive than it used to be. I think a lot of families are adopting and taking on their own version of thriftiness. And that's what I love about it.

Some people will say, I started doing these buy sell trade things with my kids. Or some people will say, well, I started buying stuff on Facebook marketplace. My sister is not a big thrifter. She doesn't have the patience for it, but her family



PHOTO CREDIT PHILLINGTON

has taken on their own version of thriftiness. There are so many different ways that you can take that on and save money.

**TM:** How do you hope the book opens dialogue about reuse and environmental consciousness among young readers?

**DY:** I really just want kids to feel proud of it. Whatever version of sustainability and secondhand you take on in your family, or as you grow up, if you decide to do something that your family hasn't done, I just want kids to be proud of it, because I was really proud of it as a kid.

When I go and I read to these classrooms and their hands are shooting up, telling me all the different ways that they're being sustainable, that's exactly what I'm talking about. Whether it's recycling a box and creating an imaginary toy out of a box. Or whether you go yard sailing with your grandma or you go to a Goodwill. Or if you donate things. All of those things, there's something to be proud of that. And that's really what I hope the biggest takeaway is for children.

**TM:** Secondhand shopping often builds community. How have you seen thrifting foster connection?

**DY:** I get a question often that's, what's the best thing you found thrifting? And I'm like, I can't answer that question. But over time, I started telling people, honestly, it's the thrifting community. That is the best thing I found through my thrifting adventures.



*S is for Secondhand* by Dina Younis, illustrated by Nadia Alnashar, is a rhyming alphabet book that brings the world of secondhand to life through two curious kids—celebrating sustainability, creativity, and the joy of thrifting.

Grab a copy at [dinasdays.com](http://dinasdays.com)

The thrifting and kind of vintage antique community, both in person, here locally and online, there's something very special about it. We all have this one thing in common where we are excited and we all have an eye for quirky things. That's what I would love to foster through this book, just a strong thrifting community.

**TM:** For someone who wants to get started, what's your advice?

**DY:** Figure out kind of what interests you, what seems the most appealing to you. Look beyond the traditional ways of thrifting. If you want to go the traditional thrift route, go and just spend one hour at a thrift store. There's no rule that says you need to browse every single department. Go to one department that you feel excites you or you feel comfortable with. Spend one hour there, and then build on that.

Instead of doing your Saturday target run, swap that out with a Saturday thrift store run and spend just an hour or so in there. If you don't want to go the traditional thrift route, explore different ways. Maybe start at a consignment store. Maybe start buying and selling online or make a little garage sale roadmap for the day. So just start small and start with something that kind of seems accessible and convenient for you.

Because I think a lot of times people jump right into it and they go on the busiest time of day and they're overwhelmed. So create your own adventure, honestly. ■



spread  
KINDNESS  
around  
LIKE  
WILD  
FLOWERS

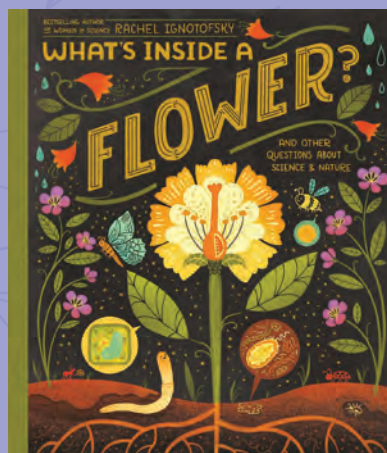
# STORIES IN FULL BLOOM

A collection for budding imaginations, nature lovers, and readers ready to blossom.

## We Are the Gardeners

Written by Joanna Gaines  
Illustrated by Julianna Swaney

Inspired by real gardening adventures, kids learn to grow a garden from scratch – bugs, mistakes, and all – discovering patience, perseverance, and the joy of watching something grow.



## What's Inside a Flower?

Written by Rachel Ignotofsky

This colorful guide explores the secret life of flowers, explaining pollination, seeds, and plant life cycles through playful illustrations and simple science that make learning feel like discovery.

## Just Flowers

Written by Erin Dealey  
Illustrated by Kate Cosgrove

A young girl plants flowers around her neighborhood, slowly brightening her community and softening a grumpy neighbor, proving that small acts of kindness can blossom into something bigger.



## Linh's Rooftop Garden

Written by JaNay Brown-Wood  
Illustrated by Samara Hardy

Linh and her grandmother plant a rooftop garden above their city apartment, discovering that even small spaces can grow beauty, food, and meaningful connections across generations.

## The Big Book of Blooms

Written by Yuval Zommer

A lively exploration of flowers around the world, filled with fascinating facts about pollination, unusual blooms, and plant life, brought to life through bold illustrations.



## Flower Block

Written by Lanisha Butterfield  
Illustrated by Hoang Giang

A boy plants sunflower seeds in memory of his father, and bright blooms spread across his apartment building, transforming grief into hope and community through color and imagination.



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inspiration and how-tos  
inspired by this issue,  
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# FLORAL FLICKS

>>> From secret gardens to daffodil fields — films where flowers quietly steal the show.



## **ALICE IN WONDERLAND** 1951 | G

When Alice tumbles into Wonderland, she encounters a world where logic disappears and even the flowers have opinions. Bright colors, curious characters, and playful nonsense abound.

**MOOD:** Delightfully absurd whimsy.



## **MAMMA MIA!** 2008 | PG-13

On a sun-soaked Greek island bursting with bougainvillea and blue sea views, a bride secretly invites three men who might be her father. ABBA songs, romance, and joyful chaos follow.

**MOOD:** Sun-drenched celebration.



## **THE GREAT GATSBY** 2013 | PG-13

In the glittering world of 1920s Long Island, lavish parties overflow with champagne, music, and mountains of flowers. Beneath the spectacle lies a story of longing, illusion, and impossible dreams.

**MOOD:** Opulent longing.



## **THE SECRET GARDEN** 1993 | G

After moving to her uncle's estate, a lonely girl discovers a locked garden hidden behind ivy-covered walls. As the garden slowly returns to life, so do the people around her.

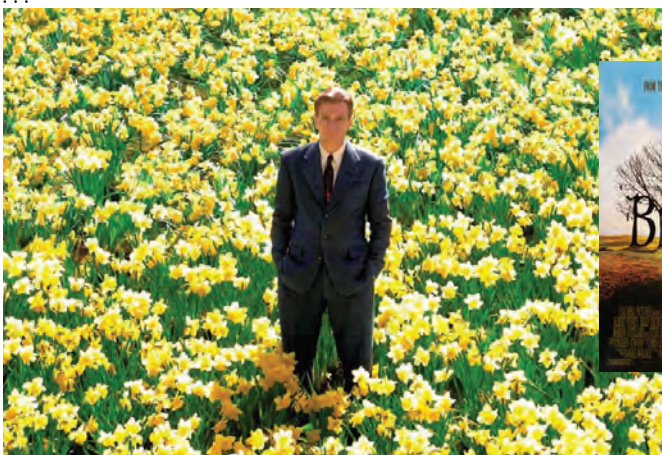
**MOOD:** Quiet transformation.



## **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS** 1986 | PG-13

A shy florist discovers a mysterious plant with a taste for human blood. Dark comedy, catchy songs, and one very demanding houseplant make this cult classic bloom in the strangest ways.

**MOOD:** Mischievous botanical chaos.



## **BIG FISH** 2003 | PG-13

A son pieces together the larger-than-life stories his father told for years, where myth and memory blur into something magical. One unforgettable gesture involves an entire field of daffodils.

**MOOD:** Grand romantic gestures.



## ***publisher's picks***



### **Crochet Your Own Emotional Support Desk Plant**

*The Woobles, \$30*

A cheerful DIY crochet kit that lets you create a smiling desk plant that never needs watering. Equal parts craft project and mood booster, it's a playful reminder to take creative breaks.



Some gifts do more than fill a space—they spark creativity, encourage quiet moments, and bring a little beauty into everyday life. From botanical puzzles to handmade crafts and artful stationery, these picks celebrate curiosity, creativity, and the joy of making something meaningful.

### **DIY Potted Succulent Trio Needle Felting Kit**

*Created by Elizabeth Whitton, \$58*

Create a trio of fuzzy felt succulents nestled in miniature pots. This beginner-friendly needle felting kit makes crafting your own little garden both relaxing and delightfully rewarding.



### **Wildflower Bouquet**

*LEGO, \$60*

Build a bouquet that never wilts. This colorful LEGO® wildflower set turns creative play into a striking display piece inspired by real blooms, blending design, nature, and a little hands-on joy.



*gifts that  
let  
creativity  
bloom*



### **Flora Specimen Vintage Puzzle**

*Cavallini & Co., \$25*

A beautiful 1,000-piece puzzle filled with vintage botanical illustrations, perfect for nature lovers and slow afternoons. Piece by piece, it brings a garden of carefully drawn plant specimens to life.



### **Journal with Pen, Violet Garden Party**

*Rifle Paper Co., \$30*

A beautifully illustrated hardcover journal designed for dreamers, planners, and everyday note-takers. Complete with a gold pen and elegant floral design, it makes capturing ideas feel extra special.

### **Blooming Fabric Paint-by-Number Kit**

*Craftoria, \$40*

This relaxing paint-by-number kit transforms a blank canvas into vibrant floral artwork. With guided sections and rich colors, it's an easy, calming way to unwind while creating your own blooming masterpiece.



ONE DAY YOU WILL LOOK BACK AND SEE  
THAT ALL ALONG YOU WERE BLOOMING




"SHOCKING"  
"WILL STICK WITH YOU"  
★★★★★  
*Film Threat*



"WILL BRING AUDIENCES  
CHEERING TO THEIR FEET"  
★★★★★  
*San Diego Reader*

# THE CONSERVATION GAME

"Something for the *Tiger King* crowd but  
DELIVERS MUCH MORE BITE."

 *RogerEbert.com*



**TIM HARRISON CARNEY ANNE NASSER HOWARD & CAROLE BASKIN**

NIGHTFLY ENTERTAINMENT in association with MAINSAIL PRODUCTIONS presents THE CONSERVATION GAME  
TIM HARRISON CARNEY ANNE NASSER JEFF KREMER KEITH GAD RUSSELL MUNTZ  
executive producer GENE HOWARD music by PAUL BRILL and MICHAEL LEONHART  
produced and directed by MICHAEL WEBBER



**S T R E A M I N G   N O W   O N**

