IN THIS ISSUE ART OF PULLING OVER / BORROWING LIGHT / LAKE EFFECT / WEST OF ORDINARY

# tattle

MAGAZINE



## RICK STEVES

ON GOING BEYOND THE GUIDEBOOK & THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE

+

## INTERVIEWS WITH

AUTHORS
JOHN KIM
DIAMOND SPRATLING
ELIZA KNIGHT

FILMMAKERS & CREATIVES
JESSICA MATTEN
DANIEL GLICK
BRADLEY BURBANK

ADVOCATES & CHANGEMAKERS
JENNIFER BUSHMAN
TIFFANY NURRENBERN
CHRIS WINTER

## COAST TO COAST

IT'S NOT JUST THE MILES.
IT'S THE MOMENTS
IN BETWEEN.

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 18




HOW FOOLISH TO FORGET HOW RARE ALL OF THIS IS

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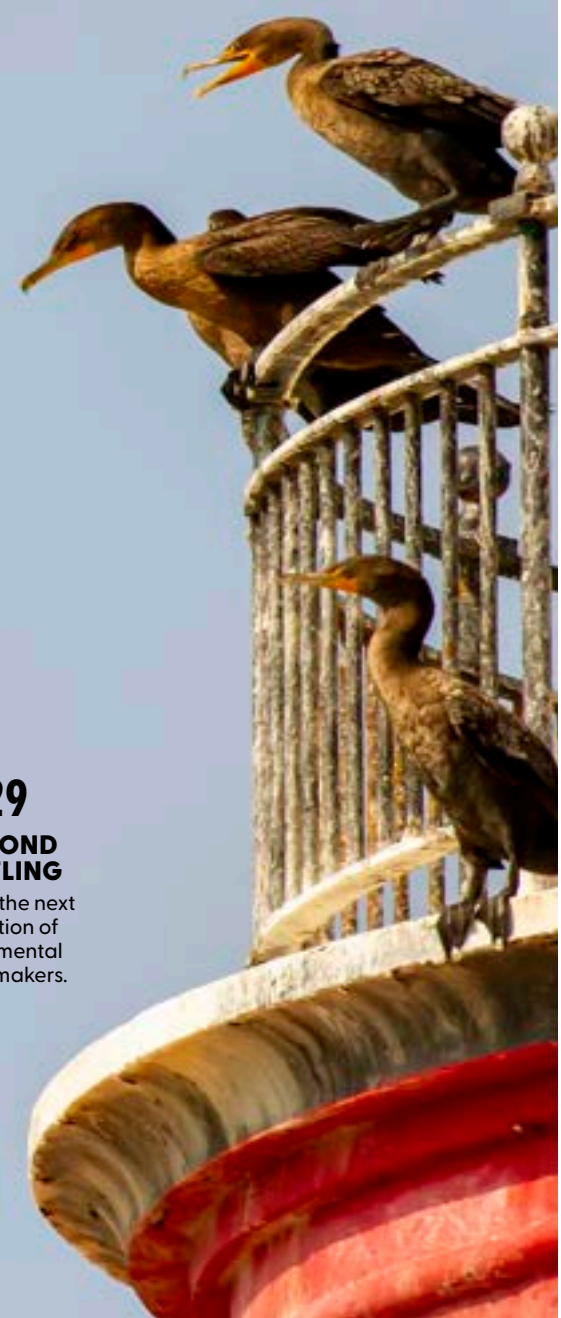
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# tattle

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## a note for you

### THE PLACES THAT STAY WITH US

There's something about the open road that makes the world feel a little bigger. Maybe it's the unfamiliar towns, the changing landscapes, or the way the horizon keeps moving just when you think you've reached it. There's a certain freedom in not knowing exactly what's around the next bend. A reminder that sometimes the best parts of a journey are the ones we never planned.

This issue of Tattle is about those places, the people we meet along the way, and everything we carry home with us.

Coast to Coast began with the idea of traveling across the country, from the rocky shores of Maine to the wild edges of the Pacific. But somewhere between the lighthouses, quiet farmland, and desert skies, it became about something more. About connection. To the land, to one another, to the stories that came before us, and to the ones we're still writing.

Inside these pages, you'll meet people who are protecting what matters and finding new ways to make a difference. From bringing buffalo back to the land they once roamed to restoring the soil beneath our feet, these stories remind us how much is worth preserving. You'll hear from storytellers bringing overlooked histories into the light, advocates protecting our oceans and wildlife, and voices encouraging us to rethink how we connect with one another.

What struck me most about these conversations is how differently people can arrive at the same understanding. Some find their purpose in protecting a place. Others find it in sharing a story or giving others a voice. The work may look different, but there's something deeply human about wanting to leave the world a little better than we found it. And perhaps that's one of the things travel teaches us, too. That we're often connected by more than we realize.

And then there are the quieter discoveries, the kind that happen when we slow down long enough to notice. A lighthouse that has stood against the elements for generations. A bird riding the wind without a single wingbeat. A sky so full of stars it makes you wonder what else you've been missing. Even a stretch of empty highway can remind us that there's still something wonderful about having nowhere else you need to be.

Of course, not every discovery needs to be profound. Sometimes it's a giant roadside attraction that makes absolutely no sense, a small town you never intended to visit, or a view that convinces you to stay a little longer. There's room for nostalgia, unexpected detours, and the wonderfully ridiculous. But there's also something to be said for seeing familiar places differently and remembering that our own small corner of the world is part of something much bigger.

Because the distance between two coasts is measured in miles, but what connects them can't always be found on a map.

So wherever these pages find you, whether you're planning your next adventure, remembering one you've already taken, or simply dreaming about the places you haven't seen yet, I hope this issue encourages you to stay curious. To take the scenic route when you can. To care about places you may never visit and people you may never meet. And to remember that sometimes the things that stay with us longest aren't the destinations, but the moments in between.

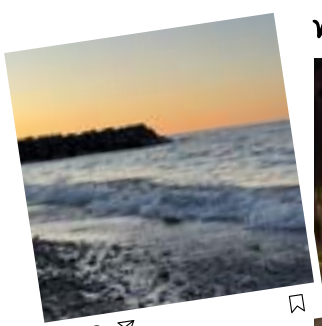
Here's to the open road.

To the stories that connect us.

And to all the places that become a part of who we are.

Jennifer Dufek

inspiration for this issue









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**BEHIND THE IMAGE**

Discover the story of *Bring Them Home* and the return of buffalo to Blackfeet lands. Page 98.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THUNDERHEART FILMS, *BRING THEM HOME* FILM

# THE LONG WAY HOME

**In a world obsessed with getting there faster, there's something to be said for taking your sweet time.**




Somewhere along the way, we got really good at getting places. GPS calculates the fastest route, traffic apps warn us about delays, and our phones can tell us exactly what time we'll arrive, right down to the minute. Efficient? Absolutely. A little boring? Sometimes.

There's something to be said for the scenic route. The two-lane highway that winds through a town you've never heard of. The old covered bridge that adds fifteen minutes to your drive but a hundred years of character. The roadside diner with mismatched coffee mugs, a pie case by the register, and a waitress who calls everyone honey. None of it was on the itinerary. All of it somehow makes the trip.

Maybe that's why taking the long way around is starting to sound pretty good again. Not because we're in a hurry to get lost, but because we've gotten so used to knowing exactly where we're going. We've forgotten how much fun there is in finding something we weren't looking for.

So take the exit. Follow the hand-painted sign. Cross the old bridge. Stop for the world's second-largest something-or-other. The destination will still be there when you arrive. And chances are, the stories you'll tell later won't have much to do with it. ▪

# 3

## THINGS WE LEARNED THIS ISSUE

### 1

**A BRIGHT SPOT FOR MICHIGAN**

Over 1,500 lighthouses have been built across the United States, although only about 850 were ever operating at the same time. And the state with the most? Surprisingly, it's not Maine or Massachusetts. It's Michigan, home to more than 120 lighthouses along the Great Lakes. Apparently, you don't need an ocean to earn some serious lighthouse bragging rights.

### 2

**ROUTE 66 IS TURNING 100**

On November 11, 1926, Route 66 officially became part of America's highway system. A century later, the Mother Road is still celebrated for its neon signs, roadside diners, and wonderfully strange attractions. Much of the original route has been bypassed or given new highway designations, but its spirit remains. Apparently, some roads are too interesting to disappear.

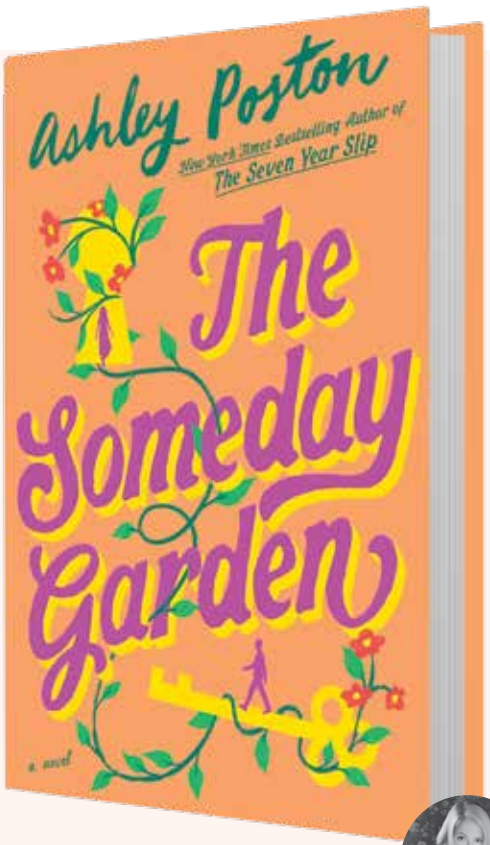
### 3

**WHEN BIGGER WAS BETTER**

Those giant roadside dinosaurs, enormous coffee pots, and towering lumberjacks weren't built just for fun. As automobile travel took off in the 1920s and 1930s, businesses needed creative ways to convince passing motorists to stop. Their solution? Make something impossible to miss. Oversized buildings and sculptures became three-dimensional advertisements, turning ordinary businesses into roadside landmarks. What started as a clever way to attract customers became one of America's quirkiest travel traditions. Sometimes bigger really was better. ▪

# BEST NEW BOOKS

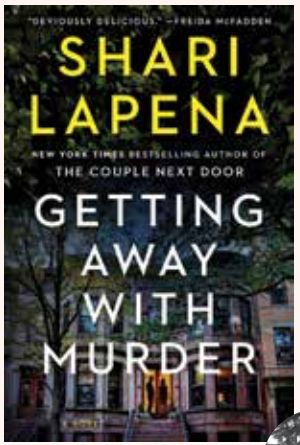
One story asks what might bloom behind a mysterious garden door. Another wonders how far two people will go to protect the life they've built. And one returns to a town where old secrets are finally catching up with everyone. Three unforgettable reads, each proving that appearances rarely tell the whole story.






### THE SOMEDAY GARDEN
by Ashley Poston

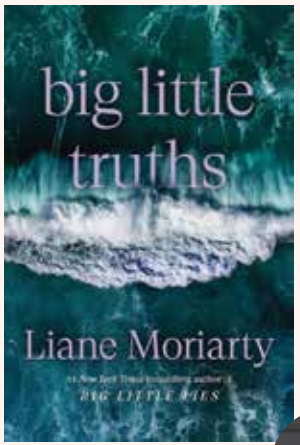
At the storied Lilymoor House on the coast of Maine, a summer gardening job blossoms into something far more unexpected. As Sophie Drear restores neglected gardens, she uncovers a mysterious hidden garden, tangled family secrets, and two intriguing men connected by fate. Filled with romance, magic, and second chances, *The Someday Garden* is a whimsical story about finding where – and with whom – you truly belong.






### GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER
by Shari Lapena

When financial disaster threatens their carefully curated life, Jill and Ted hatch a chilling plan: murder a wealthy relative and claim the inheritance. But as secrets, mistakes, and unexpected twists begin to unravel their scheme, staying one step ahead becomes far more dangerous than either imagined.






### BIG LITTLE TRUTHS
by Liane Moriarty

Ten years after the events of *Big Little Lies*, old secrets refuse to stay buried as the children enter high school and new threats emerge. When unsettling events shake the community, five women must confront the consequences of the truths they've kept – and the ones they've never shared with those they love.

# STORIES WORTH THE JOURNEY

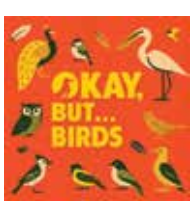
Four podcasts that explore the coastlines, creatures, and curious corners of the world—one episode at a time.




### LIGHTHOUSE EXPLORERS

*Averages 15 minutes per episode with over 60 episodes*

Discover lighthouse history, folklore, keeper interviews, and fascinating stories celebrating the iconic beacons that have guided sailors and sparked imaginations for generations.




### OKAY, BUT... BIRDS

*Averages 30 minutes per episode with over 25 episodes*

Evolutionary biologist Dr. Scott Taylor uncovers the science, surprises, and irresistible drama of birds through smart storytelling, expert guests, and plenty of humor.




### BIG DEEP - AN OCEAN PODCAST

*Averages 15 minutes per episode with over 40 episodes*

Dive beneath the surface with marine scientists, divers, surfers, and ocean advocates sharing unforgettable stories from the people devoted to our blue planet.




### THE ATLAS OBSCURA PODCAST

*Averages 15 minutes per episode with over 1,000 episodes*

Travel to the world's strangest and most fascinating places through captivating daily stories featuring hidden wonders, remarkable people, and extraordinary discoveries.



# ELIZA KNIGHT

AUTHOR OF
LOST IN THE
SUMMER OF '69




Every great road trip leaves behind more than a map of where you've been. It leaves songs you can't forget, conversations that linger, and moments that quietly reshape who you are. In Lost in the Summer of '69, bestselling author Eliza Knight captures that spirit through a multigenerational journey across America, where music, memory, and family intersect. We caught up with Eliza to talk about nostalgia, writing unforgettable characters, and why the past still has so much to say about the present.

**Tattle Magazine: Lost in the Summer of '69 feels like a perfect road trip novel. Tell us a little about the story.**

**Eliza Knight:** Sure, so it's a multi-generational story. We have Eleanor who has just turned 69, her daughter Leanne who is a woman in her mid-40s, and then Nora, Leanne's daughter. She's 18, just graduated from high school and about to be one of the first female students to matriculate at Yale.

Leanne is your typical 1950s and '60s housewife. She met her husband after school and became a stay-at-home mom. Her daughter has been her whole world, but now she's about to have an empty nest and isn't really sure what's going on with her marriage or where her future is.

Then Eleanor has just been diagnosed with early signs of dementia. She was a musician in her youth before she got married and had a family, which she gave up to do that. Now that her husband is

gone and she's been diagnosed with dementia and knows she's going to lose those memories from when she was younger and loved music, she decides, "I'm gonna go on a road trip. I'm gonna go to all these music festivals. I'm gonna see if I can play. If not, I'm at least just gonna listen to music and have the best summer of my life and bring back those wonderful memories before I start to lose them."

The only thing is, when she goes off on her road trip, she forgets to tell anyone that she's leaving. Or maybe she does that on purpose.

When Leanne goes to pick her up for dinner, she's not there. The house is in a little bit of chaos and Leanne starts to freak out. She finds a couple of clues that don't make sense to her, but they do make sense to Nora, who's like, "Wait, this looks like she's possibly going to a pop festival in California."

So Leanne asks Nora if she'd like to go on a road trip, maybe to rekindle their relationship, but also to find Grandma. Of course, any 18-year-old is like, "Summer road trip with Mom? That sounds terrible." But she'd always wanted to go to festivals like Woodstock, so she agrees.

They end up taking off on this epic road trip, chasing after Eleanor, who ends up getting to play on stage, joining a band and traveling the country with them. She's all over the news. Johnny Carson names her the "Dame of Rock and Roll."

It's a fun, quirky novel, but the characters are dealing with relationship issues, women empowerment issues and things that happened in the 1960s that still feel relevant today. In the end, it's a heartwarming novel filled with nostalgia.

**TM: Was there a road trip, song or personal memory that quietly shaped the emotional world of the novel?**

**EK:** There's a lot of songs in the novel. I grew up in the '80s, and my dad loved music from the '60s and '70s, so I grew up listening to rock. I was one of those kids in high school who drove to school listening to the oldies station, and when I pulled into the parking lot I'd turn it down really low so nobody would hear. I've always loved that music.

Jimi Hendrix is one of my favorites. Janis Joplin – just give me all of those. I also love The Beatles and The Beach Boys.

I did love Bryan Adams' "Summer of '69," which isn't a '60s song itself, but it talks about it. I've actually heard a lot of readers say they've been listening to that while reading early copies of the book.

As far as road trips, I am a huge lover of them. I've never gone from the East Coast to the West Coast, but I've driven from Maryland to Florida and Maryland to Canada. I love the bonding experience of a road trip. I've done it with my family, my husband and my kids.

We'll often listen to an audiobook and then talk about it afterward. In the novel there weren't audiobooks back then, so Leanne and Nora read books to each other while they're driving across the country, and then they talk about them. That sparks conversation. There are a lot of things from my own life tucked into the novel because they were really meaningful to me.

**TM: The late 1960s were filled with cultural shifts, rebellion, freedom and uncertainty. What parts of that era felt most relevant to the story you wanted to tell?**

**EK:** I love the revolution of music. You can even see it from 1961 to 1969, how rock and roll really takes off. It changes the way people are dancing, the way they're dressing and their attitudes.

Then there's the sexual revolution happening in the late '60s, and women were feeling more empowered to do things. Equal Pay came in 1963, and then by the early '70s women were demanding access to having their own credit cards, which is crazy to me that it took that long.

There were civil rights movements happening at the same time. It just felt like such a huge turning point culturally.

Music really spurred a lot of it on. People were singing more about love and freedom and what they wanted. That's a huge part of why I love that setting.

**TM: Were there moments while writing this where the past felt uncomfortably familiar?**

**EK:** Yes. In pretty much any novel I've written – even Tudor historical fiction – the past feels very familiar.

It usually has to do with women specifically and what they're dealing with in their lives.

Women being told they can't do everything. That if you want to be a



SOME SUMMERS END WITH THE SEASON. OTHERS STAY WITH US FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES.

good wife and a good mother, then you need to focus on that. You can't work.

A young college-age student wanting to explore her interests, but being told, "This is what you should do as a woman."

I see those parallels in pretty much every book I write, which is sad in a way.

I wrote a book with several other authors called Ribbons of Scarlet about the women of the French Revolution, and people kept saying, "You're just taking this from the Me Too movement."

Actually, all of those things in the book are direct quotes from journals and letters those women wrote in the 1700s.

It just so happens that 250 years later, we're still saying and asking for the same things.

**TM: So many people romanticize the past. Did researching the summer of 1969 challenge your own perception of that era?**

**EK:** Not really. I'd already written another book set during the '60s, so I knew what was going on during that time period.

There are obviously things that are disappointing – the fact that people of color were still fighting for their rights, and that women were still fighting for a voice. Those things are really disappointing.

It's like one foot forward and then we pull back.

I really hope people pick up, maybe not just from my book but from other people's books and your magazine, that we shouldn't give up. We need to keep pushing forward because anything can be pulled back at any time.

We have to keep talking about it and keep pointing it out and fighting for that.

**TM:What helps you build a world that readers can emotionally step inside?**

**EK:** I think it really depends on the characters.

If I'm going to pull readers in emotionally, they have to connect with my characters on some level.

It's about building characters that seem real, but are relatable too. They have flaws in addition to being super cool in some way.

Then, if I want the world itself to come alive, I add in all those little details you might not think about – the color of the paint on the walls, the burger at the diner, the smell of coffee, the songs people hear, the way things worked that are different than now.

It's building the world around those characters to make people feel like they're stepping back in time.

**TM: In a world that moves incredibly fast, what do stories rooted in memory and nostalgia give people right now?**

**EK:** I think they give people escapism.

Maybe they were alive during that time period and they get to remember happy moments. Even if they weren't, they get to escape to another place.

I think people read a lot to escape reality, which is constantly being shoved down our throats with social media.

That's the thing I love so much about creating novels and books and characters – giving readers a way to escape or dive into a happy memory.

Even if you weren't alive in the '60s, eighteen-year-olds are still eighteen-year-olds. Getting to pretend I was eighteen again while writing Nora's point of view was really fun, and my own kids can enjoy that part of the novel too.

**TM: Why do you think we're so drawn to stories about one unforgettable summer?**

**EK:** Summer represents freedom.

Even though I work all year long, summer still feels like freedom. You remember being a kid and school being over. You made all these wonderful plans about visiting friends, going to concerts, seeing movies and having sleepovers.

We didn't have parents chasing after us. We'd be out until dark. I was a huge woods explorer. I'd make up stories and had no responsibility except whatever story I was living that day.

I think that's why summers matter so much.

So many things happen during summers. You might have your first kiss. You make a new friend. We grow so much over those few months, and then you get back to school and everyone is different after whatever they were doing all summer long.

**TM: If Lost in the Summer of '69 were adapted into a film, what would the opening shot be?**

**EK:** That's such a good question.

I feel like it would have to be one of the road trips.

Maybe Leanne and Nora in this white convertible barreling down the highway with sunglasses on, singing and eating Cracker Jack.

Or Eleanor in this VW van with flowers painted on the side, surrounded by rock musicians practicing songs and using chairs as drums.

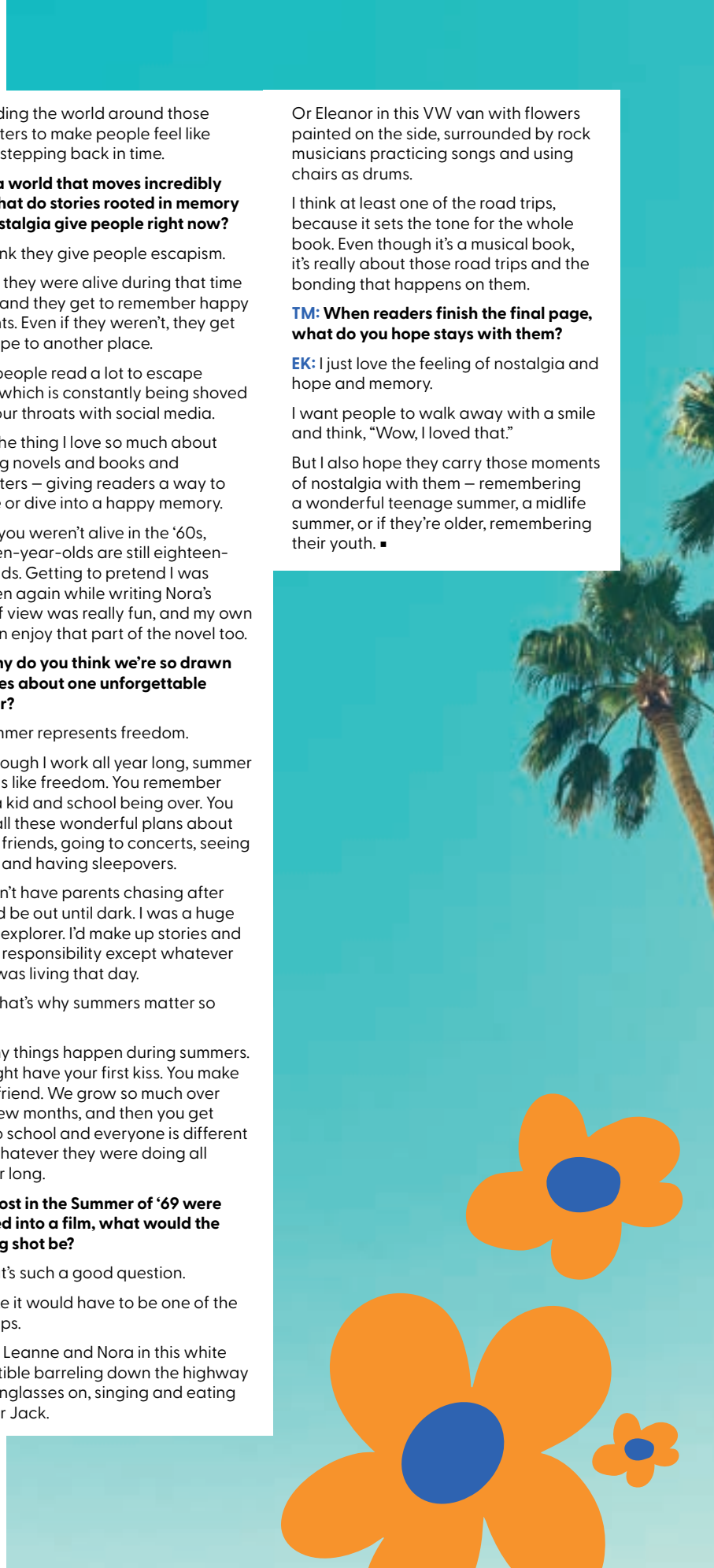
I think at least one of the road trips, because it sets the tone for the whole book. Even though it's a musical book, it's really about those road trips and the bonding that happens on them.

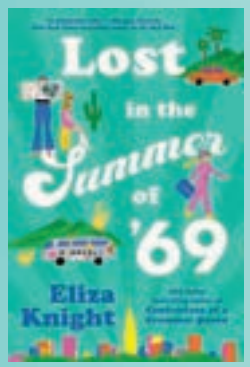
**TM: When readers finish the final page, what do you hope stays with them?**

**EK:** I just love the feeling of nostalgia and hope and memory.

I want people to walk away with a smile and think, "Wow, I loved that."

But I also hope they carry those moments of nostalgia with them – remembering a wonderful teenage summer, a midlife summer, or if they're older, remembering their youth. ▪






*Lost in the Summer of '69* by Eliza Knight is a feel-good road trip novel about family, freedom, and finding your way, proving it's never too late to chase the dreams that still call your name. Available wherever books are sold.

## Playlist #1: The Summer That Stayed

**Summer of '69**
Bryan Adams

**California Dreamin'**
The Mamas & the Papas

**Piece of My Heart**
Janis Joplin

**Purple Haze**
Jimi Hendrix

**Here Comes the Sun**
The Beatles

**America**
Simon & Garfunkel

**Born to Be Wild**
Steppenwolf

**Bad Moon Rising**
Creedence Clearwater Revival

**Me and Bobby McGee**
Janis Joplin

**Ventura Highway**
America

**Running on Empty**
Jackson Browne

**Dreams**
Fleetwood Mac

**Into the Mystic**
Van Morrison

**Wildflowers**
Tom Petty

**Kodachrome**
Paul Simon

You can find the entire **The Summer That Stayed** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile

# THE ROAD LESS SCROLLED

**Sometimes the best part of the journey is everything that happens after you stop trying to get there as quickly as possible.**




For all the ways technology has transformed the American road trip, it's remarkable how many of our favorite travel traditions remain stubbornly analog. We still pull into roadside diners because they look interesting, not because an algorithm suggested them. We still wander through independent bookstores, collect stickers from National Parks, and pocket ticket stubs we'll discover years later in the bottom of a glove compartment. Somewhere between the GPS and the destination, the road still asks us to slow down enough to notice it.

Road trips have always existed in a strange space between planning and chance. We map the route, book the hotel, and know almost exactly when we'll arrive, yet the stories we tell afterward rarely have anything to do with those carefully organized details. Instead, they begin with unexpected turns. The overlook that wasn't on the itinerary. The handwritten sign advertising fresh peaches. The tiny museum dedicated entirely to barbed wire, salt shakers, or giant balls of twine. America has always rewarded curious travelers, and curiosity has never depended on Wi-Fi.

Slow down long enough, and you begin to notice that the landscape isn't as still as it first appears. Not the mountains or the coastline, but the wildlife that shares the journey with you. A kestrel balancing on a telephone wire. Pelicans gliding just above the surf. An osprey circling a river you've never heard of. You don't have to call yourself a birder to appreciate the company. Sometimes the best wildlife sightings happen between destinations, when no one was looking for them in the first place.

Perhaps that's why analog feels so at home on the open road. Physical keepsakes collect stories in ways digital ones rarely can. A folded park map, a postcard, or even a receipt from a roadside barbecue joint can instantly transport you back to the smell of hickory smoke and the conversation that lasted three counties.

## MORE THAN SOUVENIRS

Long before social media encouraged us to document every stop, travelers found quieter ways to remember where they'd been. They kept journals, pressed wildflowers between book pages, circled favorite towns on road atlases, or mailed postcards home that often arrived after they did. Memory has a habit of smoothing away the ordinary details, but tangible keepsakes preserve the texture of a trip: a brochure you almost threw away, a coffee stain on a map, or a National Park passport stamp collected on a rainy Tuesday in June. None of those traditions were particularly efficient, but efficiency was never really the point.

## ASKING INSTEAD OF SEARCHING

Some of the best travel advice still comes from another person.

Ask the waitress where she eats on her day off. Ask the park ranger which trail is overlooked. Ask the cashier whether the pie is actually homemade or just famous for being homemade. Local knowledge has always traveled by conversation, and some of the country's best discoveries have never appeared on a "Top 10 Things to Do" list.

## KEEPING THE JOURNEY

There is, of course, nothing wrong with navigating by phone or storing thousands of photos in your pocket. Modern tools have made travel easier, safer, and more accessible than ever before. But they don't have to replace the rituals that have always made road trips memorable.

Buy the postcard anyway. Pick up the free visitor guide. Write down the name of the little café with the unforgettable slice of pie. Keep the receipt from the roadside fruit stand. Years from now, those simple keepsakes may tell the story of your trip more vividly than any perfectly organized photo album.

The beauty of analog isn't that it's old. It's that it's tangible. Long after the navigation app has forgotten your route and your phone has buried thousands of vacation photos beneath newer ones, a folded map or faded postcard can bring the whole journey rushing back.

The best road trips aren't measured by how quickly you crossed the country. They're measured by the things you almost drove past: a handwritten sign, a roadside peach stand, a lighthouse on the horizon, or a flash of bright feathers disappearing into the trees just as someone in the passenger seat says, "Did you see that?"

Those are the moments worth collecting. ▪



# rick steves



PHOTO CREDIT RICK STEVES' EUROPE

For many travelers, Rick Steves was the first person to hand them a passport—figuratively speaking. Through his books, television series, and decades of travel writing, he's inspired generations to venture beyond their own backyards with curiosity and confidence. But what has always made Rick's work resonate is that he encourages people to travel differently. Not faster. Not farther. Just more thoughtfully. While his name has become synonymous with European travel, our conversation quickly moved beyond guidebooks and itineraries into something much more universal. We talked about empathy, curiosity, overtourism, and why the most rewarding journeys often begin the moment we stop treating travel like a checklist.

INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER DUFEK & RYAN SHULTZ



**Jennifer Dufek: Rick, thank you for taking time to talk with us.**

**Ryan Shultz: Let me start out with a brief story. When I was in middle school, I found your DVDs at the library, rented them all, and went all over the world with you as a young 14-year-old kid. And I remember your Travels in Europe. I'm going to make a confession here. I don't know how long the statute of limitation is, but I took that map out of that book.**

**Rick Steves:** I took it out of some other map, other book, probably, so you're welcome. I love it. I appreciate it.

**Ryan: And I appreciate you letting me sit in.**

**Jennifer: Ryan's story is actually a perfect example of what you've built over the years. For a lot of people, travel isn't just about seeing a new place anymore. It's about seeing the world differently. You've said before that travel can make both the world and ourselves better. What has travel taught you about yourself that you don't think you could have learned any other way?**

**Rick:** Travel makes me a better person because it gives me empathy for people regardless of where they live and what color their skin is and what their religion is and so on. Travel makes me less fearful. And travel connects me with the world.

I'm sad for people that don't have a passport and are not curious, who let their view of the world be shaped by the most frightened people in our society, or people who have not had the ability or the economic wherewithal or the curiosity to leave this country. Even if it means just going south of the border a little bit and getting out of their comfort zone.

To me, culture shock is not something to avoid. Culture shock is a constructive thing. It's the growing pains of a broadening perspective, and it just needs to be curated. You can't just throw something at the average traveler. They'll be overwhelmed and hide under their pillow. But if it's properly curated, travel in areas that are out of your comfort zone can be really stimulating and broadening experiences and make you more clued in with the world.

Mohammed said, "Don't tell me how educated you are. Tell me how much you've traveled." I just love that.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that travel makes a person wiser if less happy. I find that interesting also. Less happy, what does that mean? Well, I know because I've traveled the value of a roof over my head or a shower or dinner.

I know that any bomb that falls and any bullet that flies, for me as a taxpayer, has my name on it, and I need to take responsibility for that. Even if I can't change it, I have to be honest that I am paying for that. And if I've got a government that doesn't represent my values, it's only right that I will raise my voice and speak up for my values with what my tax dollars are doing.

Travel complicates your life because it makes you a citizen of the planet. Travel complicates your life because it makes you less greedy when it comes to taking care of the environment and taking care of people who are south of the border.

What's the next generation gonna have when we're done? Am I more concerned about my quarterly profit statement or am I more concerned about the world I'm gonna leave my grandchildren?

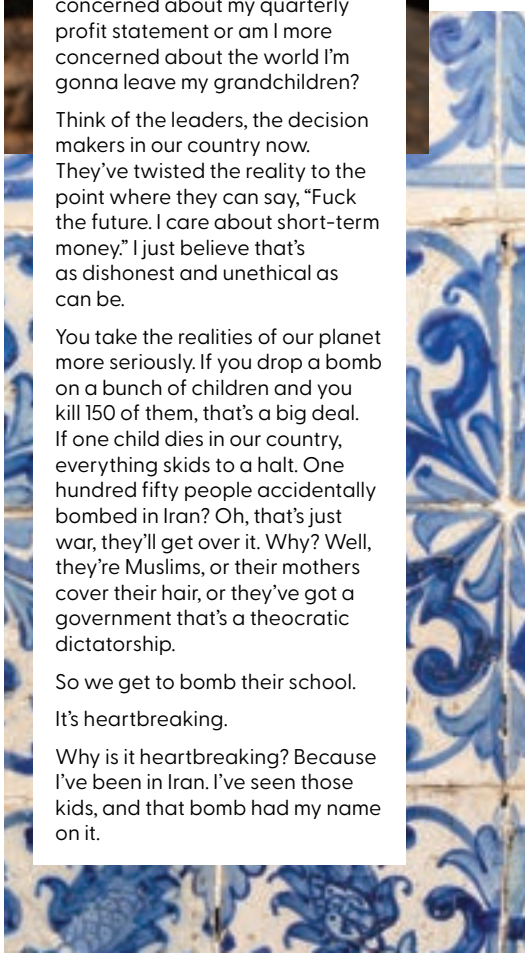
Think of the leaders, the decision makers in our country now. They've twisted the reality to the point where they can say, "Fuck the future. I care about short-term money." I just believe that's as dishonest and unethical as can be.

You take the realities of our planet more seriously. If you drop a bomb on a bunch of children and you kill 150 of them, that's a big deal. If one child dies in our country, everything skids to a halt. One hundred fifty people accidentally bombed in Iran? Oh, that's just war, they'll get over it. Why? Well, they're Muslims, or their mothers cover their hair, or they've got a government that's a theocratic dictatorship.

So we get to bomb their school.

It's heartbreaking.

Why is it heartbreaking? Because I've been in Iran. I've seen those kids, and that bomb had my name on it.



TRAVELING MAKES MEN WISER, BUT LESS HAPPY. — THOMAS JEFFERSON



**Jennifer: That's a devastating image. I don't think many people expect a conversation about travel to end up talking about empathy, responsibility, and perspective, but that's been part of your philosophy for years. It's easy to think of travel as vacations and landmarks, but you've always talked about it as something much deeper.**

**There's so much pressure to check places off a list. In a world of bucket lists and social media, how do travelers move beyond simply seeing a place and actually connecting with it?**

**Rick:** Well, that's kind of like bucket-list travel. People say, "What's on your bucket list?" People say, "How many countries have you visited?" I don't answer either of those questions.

I don't have a bucket list. What's that mean? You just checked it off. "Ah, I saw the Eiffel Tower." Do you know why it was built? No, but I saw it. I got a selfie right there.

"I hate escargot." Well, what do you know about the culture from where it came?

"I saw the Leaning Tower of Pisa." Why was it important? Why do they call that square the Piazza of Miracles?

"I saw the Mona Lisa." Well, what is humanism? Do you know what humanism is?

I want meaningful experiences. I always ask, *so what?*

Vasco da Gama sailed around the Horn of Africa in 1498 to get to India. Good for you. You remembered that date. *What was the impact of that?*

Ten years later, Italy's trade dropped by 75 percent and Portugal's trade multiplied tenfold. Now I get it. Now the powerful states are looking out at the Atlantic in the Age of Discovery.

It's not to be an elitist. It's just to raise the bar a little bit and understand what you're looking at.

For me, if you visited 100 countries, twice as many countries as me, what does that mean? It doesn't mean anything. You may have been to 100 airports. You may have been to 100 intercontinental hotels.

How many locals who don't make money off of tourists have you had a beer with?

How many of your preconceptions have you challenged?

How has your ethnocentricity been walloped?

How has your cultural furniture been rearranged?

**Ryan: Yeah.**

**Rick:** Now we're talking, you see.

For me, travel humbles you. It reminds you we're four percent of this planet and there's ninety-six percent out there. We can get to know them. It's kind of cool.

And if you believe in God, regardless of if you go to church or what kind of religion it is, if you believe there's some kind of heavenly maker, we're all children of that God. When we travel, we get to know the family, which is a gorgeous thing.

Then take it one step further.

If you believe in that God and you embrace this nice idea of "Love thy neighbor," love thy neighbor has nothing to do with proximity.

Need and heartache and hunger across the street are no more real than need and hunger and heartache across the sea.

If you take that to heart, then you become more engaged in the world and your life takes on more meaning.

Or you could just take the easy route and watch a lot of TV and cheer on your favorite sports team.

**Jennifer: One thing that kept coming to mind while you were talking is perspective. It seems like that's really at the heart of what travel gives us. If someone is planning a trip—whether it's halfway around the world or just a few hours from home—what's one mindset you hope they take with them?**

**Rick:** If you encounter a wall, whether it is physical or metaphorical, you have no understanding of that wall without talking to people on both sides of it. It's called a dual narrative approach to travel.

In the Holy Land, if all you do is talk to Israelis about that wall, you don't know that wall. If you just talk to Palestinians, you don't know that wall. You've got to talk to Palestinians and Israelis.

If you go to Belfast and you stare at that ugly wall and you just talk to Protestants, you don't know that wall. Just talk to Catholics, you don't know that wall. Talk to both, you know that wall.

Come to a country like the United States with a big metaphorical wall between blue and red people. If you just hang out with blue people, you don't know that wall. If you just hang out with red people, you don't know that wall. You've got to talk to people on both sides of the wall.

People are good, generally, and they've got their own worldview and their own life story and their own hangups. There might be a reason this person thinks that. There might be a reason you think this.

Why am I a Lutheran? My parents, my grandparents came from Norway. I didn't choose that.

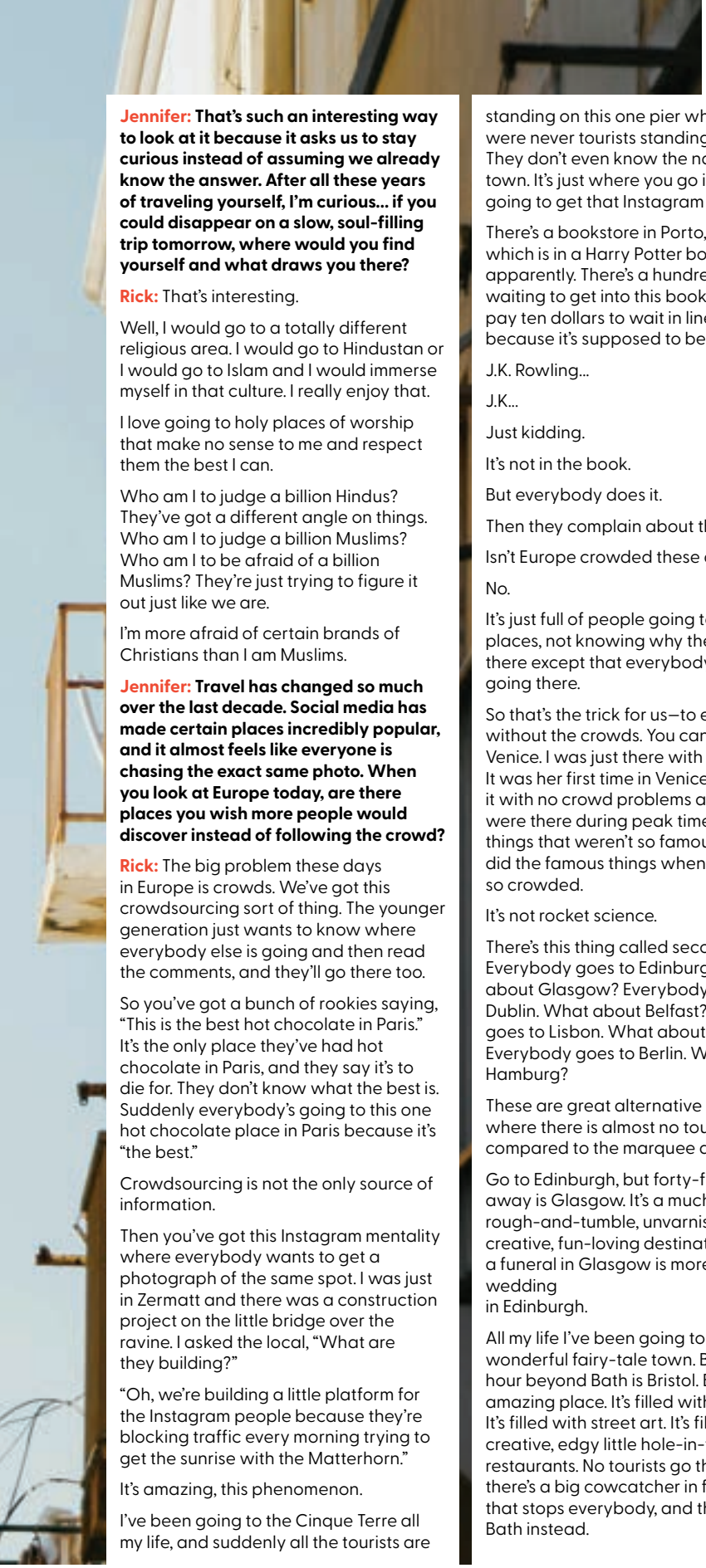
When we travel, we see things in a different context. We deal with our ethnocentricity. We're not the norm. The world's not a pyramid with us on top and everybody else trying to figure it out.

People sit on something when they go to the toilet. We're the oddballs on this planet. Most people just don't need a toilet. They just squat. That's not less civilized. It's more hygienic.

But we think it's less civilized because we're inclined to defend what we think are the norms.

I love that. It makes the world so fascinating and fun to explore.

I get nothing but eurekas when I travel.



**Jennifer: That's such an interesting way to look at it because it asks us to stay curious instead of assuming we already know the answer. After all these years of traveling yourself, I'm curious... if you could disappear on a slow, soul-filling trip tomorrow, where would you find yourself and what draws you there?**

**Rick:** That's interesting.

Well, I would go to a totally different religious area. I would go to Hindustan or I would go to Islam and I would immerse myself in that culture. I really enjoy that.

I love going to holy places of worship that make no sense to me and respect them the best I can.

Who am I to judge a billion Hindus? They've got a different angle on things. Who am I to judge a billion Muslims? Who am I to be afraid of a billion Muslims? They're just trying to figure it out just like we are.

I'm more afraid of certain brands of Christians than I am Muslims.

**Jennifer: Travel has changed so much over the last decade. Social media has made certain places incredibly popular, and it almost feels like everyone is chasing the exact same photo. When you look at Europe today, are there places you wish more people would discover instead of following the crowd?**

**Rick:** The big problem these days in Europe is crowds. We've got this crowdsourcing sort of thing. The younger generation just wants to know where everybody else is going and then read the comments, and they'll go there too.

So you've got a bunch of rookies saying, "This is the best hot chocolate in Paris." It's the only place they've had hot chocolate in Paris, and they say it's to die for. They don't know what the best is. Suddenly everybody's going to this one hot chocolate place in Paris because it's "the best."

Crowdsourcing is not the only source of information.

Then you've got this Instagram mentality where everybody wants to get a photograph of the same spot. I was just in Zermatt and there was a construction project on the little bridge over the ravine. I asked the local, "What are they building?"

"Oh, we're building a little platform for the Instagram people because they're blocking traffic every morning trying to get the sunrise with the Matterhorn."

It's amazing, this phenomenon.

I've been going to the Cinque Terre all my life, and suddenly all the tourists are standing on this one pier where there were never tourists standing before. They don't even know the name of the town. It's just where you go if you're going to get that Instagram shot.

There's a bookstore in Porto, in Portugal, which is in a Harry Potter book, apparently. There's a hundred-yard line waiting to get into this bookstore. People pay ten dollars to wait in line for an hour because it's supposed to be in the book.

J.K. Rowling...

J.K...

Just kidding.

It's not in the book.

But everybody does it.

Then they complain about the crowds.

Isn't Europe crowded these days?

No.

It's just full of people going to the same places, not knowing why they're going there except that everybody else is going there.

So that's the trick for us—to enjoy Europe without the crowds. You can go to Venice. I was just there with my girlfriend. It was her first time in Venice. We enjoyed it with no crowd problems at all, and we were there during peak time. We just did things that weren't so famous, and we did the famous things when they weren't so crowded.

It's not rocket science.

There's this thing called second cities. Everybody goes to Edinburgh. What about Glasgow? Everybody goes to Dublin. What about Belfast? Everybody goes to Lisbon. What about Porto? Everybody goes to Berlin. What about Hamburg?

These are great alternative places where there is almost no tourism compared to the marquee destinations.

Go to Edinburgh, but forty-five minutes away is Glasgow. It's a much more rough-and-tumble, unvarnished, edgy, creative, fun-loving destination. They say a funeral in Glasgow is more fun than a wedding in Edinburgh.

All my life I've been going to Bath. It's a wonderful fairy-tale town. But half an hour beyond Bath is Bristol. Bristol is an amazing place. It's filled with history. It's filled with street art. It's filled with creative, edgy little hole-in-the-wall restaurants. No tourists go there. It's like there's a big cowcatcher in front of it that stops everybody, and they go to Bath instead.

There are ways to enjoy Europe without the crowds, and that's more important than ever these days. There's two things—the weather and the crowds. They're just getting worse and worse.

I was just in Rome for a week. Five days ago I was in Florence teaching my new guides how to be Rick Steves guides. We do it in March because nobody's traveling off-season, so they're not missing work.

The weather was fine. It was cold, so you just bring a coat. The sites were wide open. There were no serious crowds. Everybody was in a good mood. I just kept thinking, why is nobody here?

Everybody's going to be here when it's really hot, really crowded and really expensive.

That's the choice we make.

For a lot of people they've scrimped and saved for this trip. This is a big deal, and they want to do it right. My work has always been to hit and miss and miss and hit and miss, then bring home the hits and write them up so people who travel like I like to travel can have a better batting average.





**Jennifer: I love that idea of helping people travel better instead of simply traveling more.**

**Ryan mentioned earlier how much your work influenced him growing up, and I imagine there are a lot of people who could say the same.**

**Ryan: Well, you know, I was going to ask you who inspired you, but I'm going to tell you, I'm kind of pleasantly surprised by your perspective on current political situations. I didn't think this would be a world I'd be living in, in the United States, ever in my lifetime. I'm hoping more people are like you and have an open heart and an open mind to say, let's not judge these people until we've walked a mile in their shoes.**

**Oldest saying in the book, right? Let's meet these people before we decide we hate them. I just pray more people have that mindset than "they're from there, we don't care."**

**Rick:** Well, that's the beautiful thing about travel. My girlfriend's a bishop, and she gave a sermon about Christian nationalism. I gave a talk about the state of democracy in our country right now. We put it together and filled up our local art center twice.

If you go on YouTube and type in "Rick Steves," you can find those two lectures. They're very poignant right now. Solidarity has never been more applicable in our culture.

I've been teaching solidarity for years. That's what the dock workers did in Gdańsk to help bring down the Soviet Union. That's how the farmers survived in Guatemala with corrupt landlords. But solidarity right now is the only way we're going to get our democracy back on track. We have to share, and we have to speak out.

But that's a forty-minute talk with an indoor voice. You might find it interesting. Hope that's helpful for you. But nice interview. Thank you very much.

**Jennifer: Thank you again for taking the time to talk with us today.**

**Ryan: Thank you... I wanted to sit in on this interview honestly because you did inspire me to travel. I've been to Europe because of your books. I'm grateful for it. You're making an impact on people's lives. I'm telling you right now—I have that hunger for the world because you gave me that first taste.**

**Rick**: Nice, Ryan. Amen. Thank you so much. ▪







Travel complicates your life because it makes you a *citizen of the planet.*

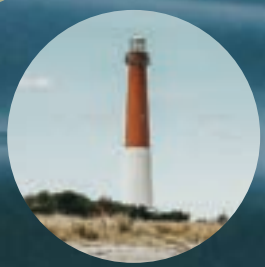
RICK STEVES



## PORTLAND HEAD LIGHT

**LOCATION**
Cape Elizabeth, Maine

Commissioned by George Washington in 1791, it's one of America's oldest lighthouses and is often considered the country's most photographed.



## BARNEGAT LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Long Beach Island, New Jersey

Nicknamed "Old Barney," this red-and-white lighthouse has been standing watch since 1859. Originally built 900 feet from shore, erosion brought the Atlantic to within 50 feet of its doorstep.



## MORRIS ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Charleston, South Carolina

Built in 1876, this black-and-white lighthouse once stood on dry land. Decades of erosion have left it surrounded by water, making it one of the most hauntingly beautiful lighthouse sights on the Atlantic coast.



## ST. AUGUSTINE LIGHTHOUSE & MARITIME MUSEUM

**LOCATION**
St. Augustine, Florida

Climb 219 steps to the top for sweeping views of America's oldest continuously occupied European-established city and the Atlantic coastline.

# KEEPERS OF THE COAST

## EAST COAST BEACONS

Some stand atop rocky cliffs, others rise from sandy shores, but every lighthouse has a story to tell. These are a few East Coast beacons worth pulling over for, where the views are timeless and the journey is just as memorable as the destination.

### CAPE HATTERAS LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Buxton, North Carolina

At 198 feet, it's the tallest brick lighthouse in the United States and was famously moved nearly 3,000 feet inland in 1999 to escape shoreline erosion.

### CAPE LOOKOUT LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
South Core Banks, North Carolina

Its black-and-white diamond pattern is more than decoration. Viewed from the north or south, the tower appears predominantly black; from the east or west, predominantly white. A clever optical trick that helped sailors find their bearings.



YOUR INNER STILLNESS CAN BE A STEADY LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE DAY.










# bradley burbank



PHOTOS COURTESTY OF BRADLEY BURBANK, BBURBANKPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

In an age of instant photos and endless scrolling, film photographer and lighthouse storyteller Bradley Burbank has chosen a slower path. Through his images and the stories behind them, he documents places that have spent generations guiding others home. His photography, volunteer work, and Lighthouse Keepers Club Snail Mail all share the same purpose: preserving history while inviting others to pause, explore, and experience the coast with fresh eyes.

**Tattle Magazine: What first drew you to lighthouses? Was there a particular lighthouse, trip, or moment that sparked your love for them?**

**Bradley Burbank:** Well, I feel like I've always kind of loved lighthouses. I grew up as a military kid, and I didn't move to Maine until about eight years ago. I visited Portland Head Light and I thought it was really cool. I got into photography a couple of years later and started visiting lighthouses, but I don't think I really loved them until I met my girlfriend.

I had just gotten out of a really bad relationship, and I met my girlfriend and we went to visit all the lighthouses along the Maine coast and eventually spread to Massachusetts and so on. I think it just kind of grew more and more. I almost feel like she's my kind of lighthouse, and I feel like it represents that for me. It just continues to grow, my appreciation for the coast and lighthouses in general, apart from that meaning too.

**TM: Film photography has become increasingly rare in such a digital world. What keeps you reaching for a film camera instead of a digital one?**

**BB:** For me, I feel like it really just makes me slow down and I really get to enjoy it. I've been using digital cameras more recently, but when I use digital or use my phone, I'm focused on my phone making sure everything looks okay. Versus if I'm using my film camera, it makes me escape the digital side of everything and just get focused on the moment and enjoy everything I see. I'm not too worried about anything else except enjoying what I see.

I just like to stay in the moment, especially when I'm out on my adventures.

**TM: When you photograph a lighthouse, what are you hoping people see beyond just the structure itself?**

**BB:** I think it is a huge part of history. It represents the maritime history, and I love how different each lighthouse in the United States looks. There's all unique architecture, but then there's also what lighthouses represent for people.

I like to go for tours or talk to people that work at the lighthouses to see how they feel about it and what it represents to them. Some people use it to escape from reality, just to take a little bit of time away from everything that stresses them out. Some people like to meet other people and see where they're traveling from.

**TM: You've volunteered at a lighthouse yourself. What have you learned from being involved behind the scenes?**

**BB:** I work for a lighthouse here in Maine called Spring Point Ledge Lighthouse. It's the Spring Point Ledge Light Trust that's responsible for maintaining it. We give tours, and we're open in the summer trying to do all that stuff.



**TM: Do you have a favorite lighthouse you've photographed so far?**

**BB:** There's one in Oregon called Yaquina Head Lighthouse. Since I got into photography about six years ago, I saw these videos and photos from the Oregon coast. I'd been dreaming of going there forever, and I finally went about a year ago.

One of the big stops for me was Yaquina Head Lighthouse, and all the volunteers there were amazing. My girlfriend and I got to stay there and have breakfast in what was the old keeper's house. We just had a really amazing experience. Everything was perfect—the scenery, the people. You could not ask for a better experience there.

**TM: Have you ever arrived at a lighthouse expecting one experience and left with a completely different story?**

**BB:** I feel like sometimes there's a few lighthouses I expected to visit really quickly, and then we'll meet a cool group of people and have a good conversation. We'll think we'll be there for five minutes, and then we end up being there for like an hour just having a whole conversation about other experiences. I think stuff like that is always the best.

**TM: Your Lighthouse Keepers Club Snail Mail feels almost like a love letter to slower living. What inspired you to start it?**

**BB:** Since working at Spring Point Lighthouse, I realized we're trying to get grants to raise money to get repairs done because there's a lot of major things that go on. Hearing stories of other lighthouses, I realized it's very expensive to repair them.

I wanted to help support the lighthouses that I love and that I've visited on my adventures. So I started the snail mail club. I'll include some of my art, write a letter, talk about the lighthouse's history, and donate a dollar for every member. It's not a lot, but it's a small way for people to get some art, learn about the lighthouse, and help support it.

I think I have about 230-ish members right now, so it's steadily growing. Hopefully in the future I can help more lighthouses. I just love them so much.

**TM: In a world of instant notifications and endless scrolling, what do you think people still crave about something as simple as receiving a letter?**

**BB:** I feel like receiving mail is special because you don't really get that a lot nowadays. Sometimes you expect a package or bills in the mail, but receiving something that's more handmade, like a letter, because they take the time to write something or include something special, I feel like it's more meaningful than just the bills.

**TM: Many people visit lighthouses without realizing how much work and funding goes into maintaining them. What do you wish more people understood about preserving these landmarks?**

**BB:** I don't think a lot of the general public realizes there's no real thing funding them. The government doesn't fund them to help fix them. They can get grants, but it's a whole process.

People also don't realize how expensive it is. They might think, "Oh, you just have to paint it," but in reality there's structural damage from storms or different projects that need to be fixed.

**TM: Has photographing places built to guide people home taught you anything about finding your own direction?**

**BB:** I feel like it has helped me because it's helped my love for traveling and getting to know people. It almost inspires me to continue art more because I get inspired by so many different things.

My focus has been a lot of lighthouse-related stuff recently, but now I still want to do that while also making other art related to different animals or buildings, or do some sort of vlog series and tie it in with people.

**TM: If someone subscribed to your club and visited their first lighthouse because of it, what would you hope they would take away from the experience?**

**BB:** Just enjoy their time there. Enjoy the moment and maybe learn something, meet someone new, or do something out of the norm that they would normally do. Hopefully get some sort of shared experience with someone else, whether it's a friend or family member. I think experience is important.

**TM: Since we're featuring Bar Harbor in this issue, aside from the lighthouses, what do you love most about Maine?**

**BB:** I really love the coast in general. One of my personal favorite spots is the Cutler Coast. It's close to the northeastern point of the continental U.S. The cliffs are huge, and you can hike several miles along the coast. It's just so beautiful.

I also love seeing boats. Here in Portland, where I volunteer at the lighthouse, you can watch cruise ships come in. There are a bunch of schooners, and it just feels very peaceful on the coast. Maybe the ferries, too. It just feels very magical to me.

**TM: Finally, where can readers learn more about your work and your Lighthouse Keepers Club?**

**BB:** I have two different memberships. I recently made a more affordable option with a $12 membership that includes the letter, the history sheet, a sticker, and prints of the lighthouse.

Then I have a $18 membership that also includes a mystery item, like a bookmark or homemade stamps. For this next letter I'm going to do a virtual tour since it's the lighthouse I work at. I also include a word search, the history sheet, and a letter. I try to include as much as I can in there. ▪




The Lighthouse Keepers Snail Mail Club is a monthly subscription that helps support lighthouse preservation and a small artist. Every month will talk about a different lighthouse from around the United States. You'll receive some art Bradley has created, a letter about his experience at each lighthouse and a little about the lighthouse's history. For each member of the snail mail club, $1 will be donated to each month's lighthouse. There are two different memberships to memberships to choose from.

## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

INSTAGRAM: **@bburbank_photography**
FACEBOOK: **@bburbankphotography**
TIKTOK: **@bburbank_photography**
ETSY: **etsy.com/shop/bburbankphotography**

JOIN THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS SNAIL MAIL CLUB
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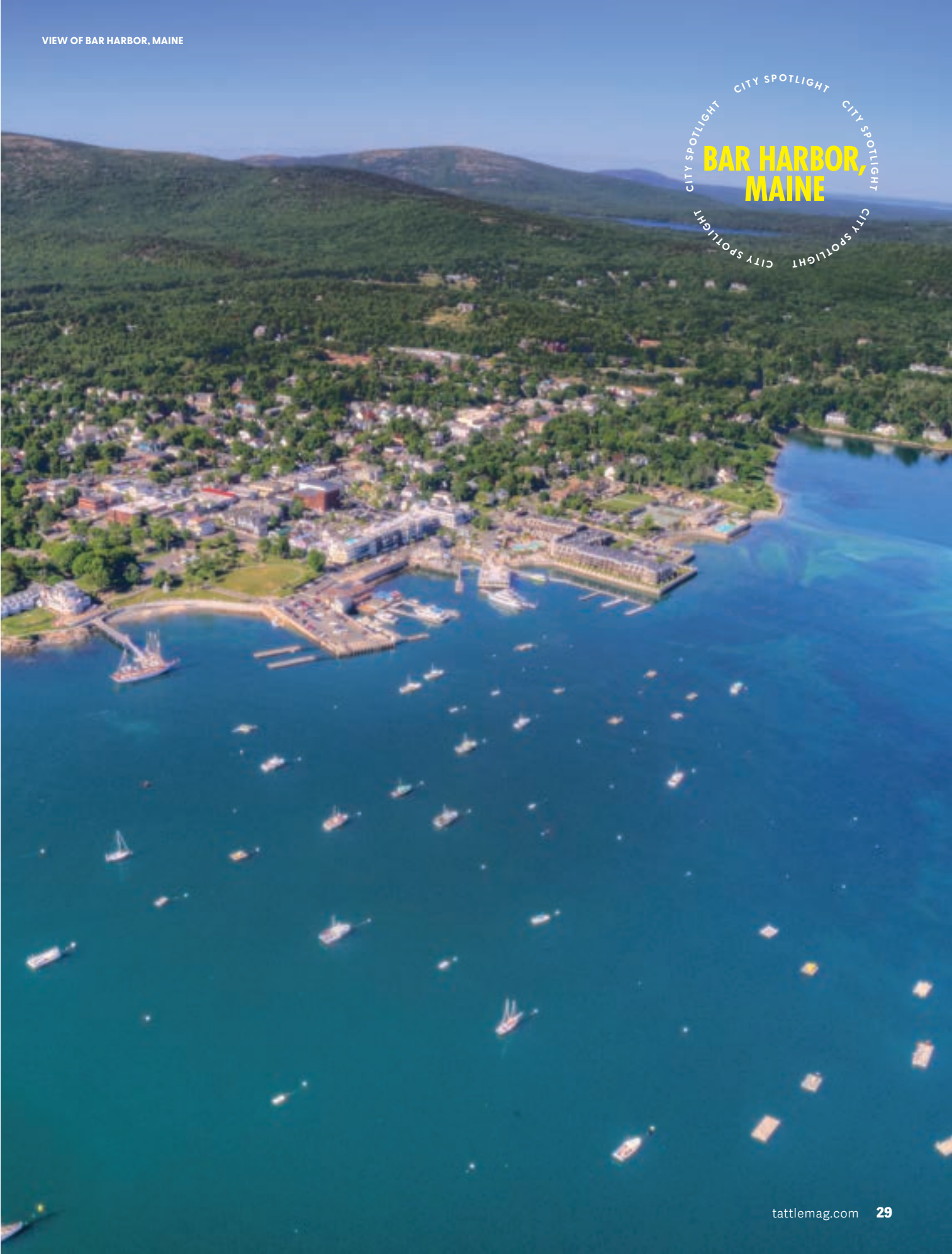
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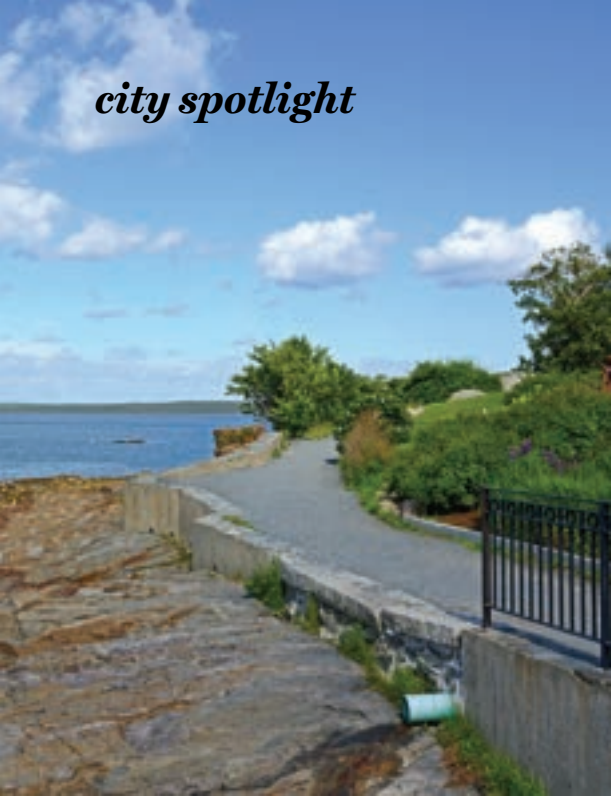
— john a. shedd

VIEW OF BAR HARBOR, MAINE

CITY SPOTLIGHT

# BAR HARBOR, MAINE





# A WEEKEND IN Bar Harbor, ME

Tucked along the shores of Mount Desert Island, Bar Harbor has a way of making every arrival feel like the beginning of an adventure. Rugged granite coastline meets historic inns, lobster shacks share streets with art galleries, and Acadia National Park begins just beyond town. It's equal parts classic New England and wild coastal escape.

### SHORE PATH

The best things in Bar Harbor are often free. This picturesque waterfront path hugs the harbor for just under a mile, delivering postcard-worthy views of sailboats, rocky beaches, and elegant seaside homes. Visit at sunrise if you want the shoreline nearly to yourself.



### ABBE MUSEUM

For a deeper understanding of the region, step inside the Abbe Museum. Dedicated to the history and culture of the Wabanaki Nations, it offers thoughtful exhibits that reveal stories often overlooked in traditional travel guides.








### JORDAN POND HOUSE

Technically inside Acadia, but practically a Bar Harbor institution. Visitors come for the famous popovers served with strawberry jam, but the real star is the view of Jordan Pond and the rounded mountain peaks known as The Bubbles.



### BEN & BILL'S CHOCOLATE EMPORIUM

A Bar Harbor tradition for generations, Ben & Bill's is equal parts candy shop, chocolate counter, and ice cream parlor. Browse handmade fudge and chocolates, then decide whether you're brave enough to order the shop's famous lobster ice cream. It's quirky, memorable, and undeniably part of the Bar Harbor experience.



**BAR ISLAND**

Twice a day, nature opens a temporary road. At low tide, a gravel bar emerges from the sea, allowing visitors to walk from downtown Bar Harbor to Bar Island. Just keep an eye on the tide schedule unless you'd like an unplanned extended stay.



**THUNDER HOLE**

Some attractions come with a soundtrack. At Thunder Hole, crashing waves funnel into a narrow rock crevice, creating a deep, thunderous boom that can be heard long before it's seen. Visit near high tide on a rough-water day, and you may also catch a dramatic splash soaring skyward..

## MORE TO EXPLORE

### CADILLAC MOUNTAIN

The highest point on the East Coast has become famous for its sunrises, and for good reason. Watching the first light spill across the Atlantic from the summit feels less like sightseeing and more like witnessing a daily miracle.

### ASTICOU AZALEA GARDEN

A peaceful blend of Japanese-inspired design and Maine landscape, this hidden gem feels worlds away from the bustling waterfront. Wander stone paths, footbridges, and reflective ponds tucked beneath flowering trees.

### SEAL COVE AUTO MUSEUM

Even non-car enthusiasts tend to leave impressed. The collection showcases beautifully restored brass-era automobiles and offers a fascinating glimpse into the earliest days of road-tripping along the coast.



### BASS HARBOR HEAD LIGHT STATION

One of Maine's most photographed lighthouses, this historic beacon sits dramatically atop rugged cliffs. Arrive near sunset when the golden light transforms the rocky coastline into something straight from a painting.

## ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

Just beyond the streets of Bar Harbor, Acadia unfolds into nearly 50,000 acres of granite peaks, evergreen forests, rocky shoreline, and quiet lakes. As America's first national park east of the Mississippi River, it's a place where mountains meet the Atlantic and every scenic drive leads to another unforgettable view. Whether you're hiking, cycling the historic carriage roads, or watching the waves roll onto the shore, Acadia has a way of making you linger.



Sand Beach, Acadia National Park, Maine

# atlantic puffin

If the ocean designed a mascot, it would probably look something like this.





**ONE FISH. TWO FISH. FIFTEEN FISH.**

A puffin can carry 10–20 small fish in its beak at once without dropping the first one. Tiny backward-facing spines on the roof of its mouth act like nature's version of a grocery bag.

With tuxedo feathers, bright orange feet, and a beak that looks hand-painted, the Atlantic Puffin has mastered the art of standing out. They're often called the "clowns of the sea," but don't let the comedy fool you. Beneath those colorful bills is one of the Atlantic's most impressive little seabirds, diving through icy water with wings that work more like flippers than feathers.

For most of the year, puffin live far offshore, returning to rocky islands each summer to raise a single chick tucked safely inside a burrow.

## fascinating facts

**FISHING CHAMPION**
Puffins can carry more than a dozen fish at once, thanks to tiny backward-facing spines inside their mouths that keep every catch neatly in place.

**UNDERWATER FLYERS**
Instead of paddling, puffins "fly" beneath the surface, using their wings to chase fish through the cold Atlantic.

**SEASONAL STYLE**
That famous rainbow-colored beak isn't permanent. After breeding season, the colorful outer layer sheds away, revealing a smaller, duller bill beneath.

**HOME SWEET BURROW**
Their chick, called a puffling, spends its first weeks tucked safely underground while both parents take turns bringing home dinner.

**OCEAN HEALTH INDICATOR**
Puffins are considered an indicator species. When warming waters or changing fish populations affect puffins, it's often an early sign that the surrounding ocean ecosystem is changing too.

**A MAINE COMEBACK**
Atlantic Puffins disappeared as nesting birds from Maine in the late 1800s, but decades of restoration and protected nesting islands have brought them back to several islands along the coast.

**A FUTURE WORTH PROTECTING**
Atlantic Puffins are considered **Vulnerable** worldwide. Climate change, warming seas, and shifting fish populations remain challenges, making continued conservation more important than ever. ▪


LIFE IS A COLLECTION OF BEAUTIFUL,
ORDINARY MOMENTS
QUARTERS ONLY
25¢

# the art of *pulling over*



There are two kinds of travelers. The first has an arrival time programmed into the GPS before the engine even starts. Every stop is calculated, every detour questioned, every delay measured in minutes lost. The second notices a hand-painted sign for homemade pie, a weathered lighthouse tucked beyond a curve in the road, or a scenic overlook with two empty parking spaces and decides, almost on instinct, to see what's there. Years later, only one of them can still taste the pie.

Road trips have a funny way of reminding us that the best parts of the journey rarely appear on the itinerary. They're found in the places we almost skipped, the conversations we never planned to have, and the moments that asked for nothing more than a little extra time. Somewhere between the first mile marker and the last, we begin to realize that life isn't always asking us to move faster. Sometimes it's quietly inviting us to slow down enough to notice what's already there.

Pulling over has become an underrated skill. Not because every scenic overlook deserves a photograph, but because stopping—even for five minutes—interrupts the constant feeling that we should always be headed somewhere else. It gives us permission to trade productivity for presence, if only for a little while. The ocean doesn't care what's waiting in your inbox. Neither does the breeze rolling through the dune grass or the gull circling overhead. They simply keep doing what they've always done, patiently waiting for someone to pay attention.

The best roadside discoveries rarely announce themselves. They're the tiny bookstores with creaky wooden floors, the roadside farm stand selling peaches still warm from the sun, the beach access hidden between two cottages, or the elderly gentleman who points you toward the lighthouse with the best sunset because, in his words, "that's where the locals go." None of those moments can be scheduled. They simply happen to people willing to pull over.

Maybe that's why stopping feels so restorative. For a few quiet minutes, there isn't another task to finish or another destination demanding your attention. There's only the rhythm of waves meeting the shore, the distant call of seabirds, and the comforting realization that the world keeps turning whether you hurry through it or not. It's a small act of rebellion in a culture that celebrates constant motion, and perhaps that's exactly what makes it worth practicing.

The road will still be there when you're ready. So will the next exit, the next town, and the next adventure waiting just around the bend. The art isn't knowing where to pull over. It's remembering that you can. ■

# borrowing the light



Sometimes you don't need all the answers. Sometimes you just need enough light to take the next step.

Most of us spend an embarrassing amount of time wishing for certainty. We want a map with highlighted routes, guaranteed outcomes, and little stars marking exactly where everything will work out. Instead, life usually hands us something much less satisfying: a flashlight with half-charged batteries and directions that amount to, "You'll figure it out."

Lighthouses have been solving that problem for centuries.

For all the romance we've attached to them, lighthouses have never existed to show sailors the entire journey. They don't illuminate the horizon, calm the waves, or promise smooth sailing. They simply offer enough light to reveal where danger ends and safe passage begins. Just enough to help someone make the next decision. The rest has always belonged to the navigator.

Life, it turns out, works much the same way.

## THE PEOPLE WHO HOLD THE LANTERN

If you look back over your life, you'll probably discover you've been borrowing light for years.

Maybe it was a teacher who noticed a talent before you did. A grandparent who somehow always knew the right thing to say. A neighbor who quietly showed up when life became heavier than expected. Maybe it was a book you happened to pick up at exactly the right time, or a song that somehow understood what you couldn't explain yet. Sometimes the brightest guidance comes from people we only meet briefly. A conversation in a coffee shop. A park ranger at a trailhead. A stranger who reminds us, often without realizing it, that kindness still exists.

These people rarely change our entire lives in a single moment. More often, they illuminate the next hundred feet.

## SMALL BEACONS EVERYWHERE

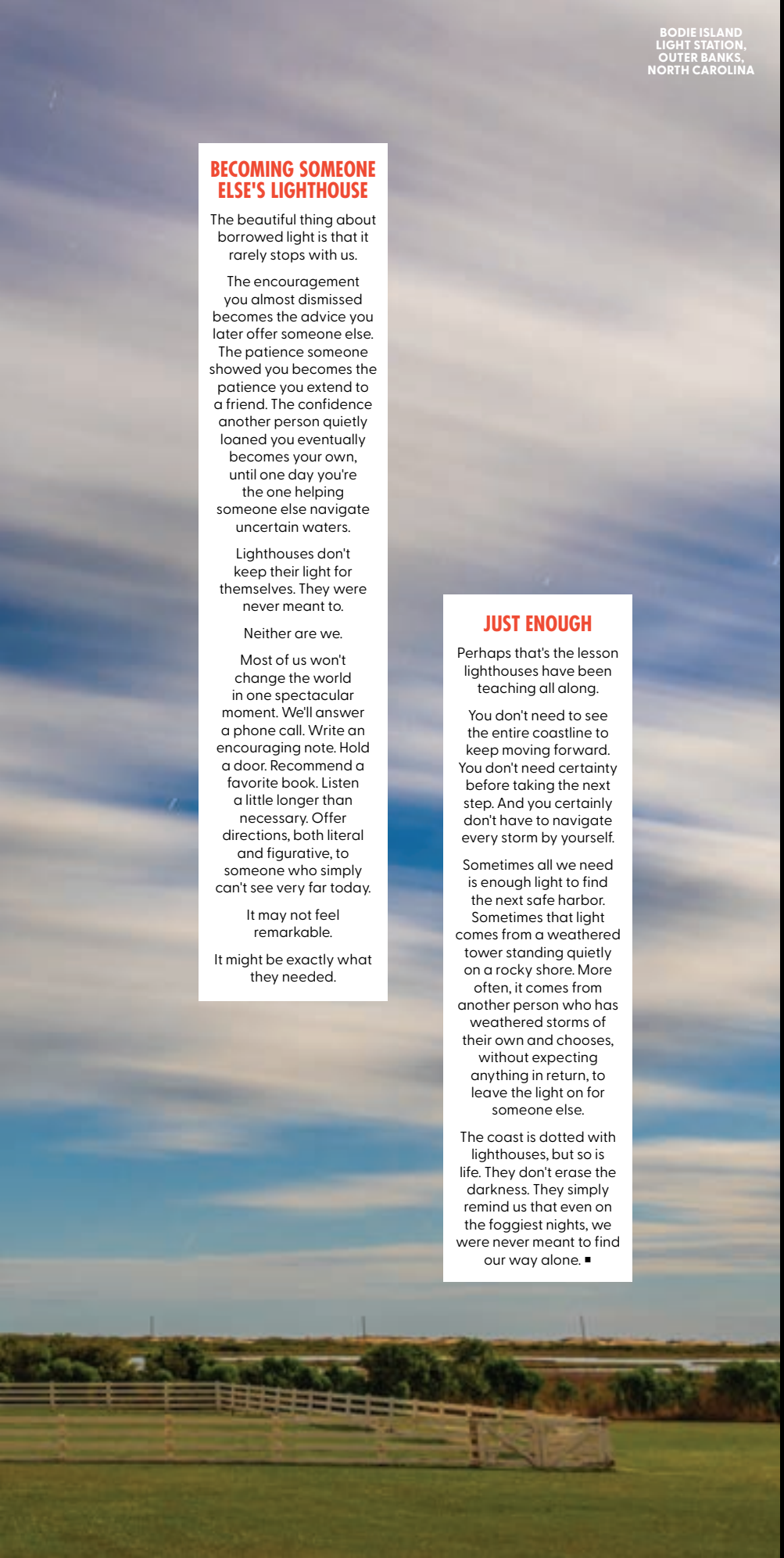
Once you begin looking for them, borrowed lights seem to appear everywhere.

There's the friend who insists you'll be okay until you finally believe it yourself. The handwritten note tucked inside an old book. The family recipe that keeps finding its way onto the table. The podcast that changes your morning commute. The roadside diner where the waitress calls everyone "hon," and somehow that feels like exactly what the day needed.

None of these moments solve everything. They're not supposed to.

They simply remind us that hope has a habit of showing up in ordinary places.

Maybe that's why road trips stay with us long after we've unpacked the car. We remember the lighthouse standing against the fog, of course. But we also remember the tiny bookstore we almost drove past, the couple who recommended a beach we'd never heard of, the fisherman who pointed us toward the best sunrise in town. We set out looking for landmarks and end up collecting people instead.



BODIE ISLAND LIGHT STATION, OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA

## BECOMING SOMEONE ELSE'S LIGHTHOUSE

The beautiful thing about borrowed light is that it rarely stops with us.

The encouragement you almost dismissed becomes the advice you later offer someone else. The patience someone showed you becomes the patience you extend to a friend. The confidence another person quietly loaned you eventually becomes your own, until one day you're the one helping someone else navigate uncertain waters.

Lighthouses don't keep their light for themselves. They were never meant to.

Neither are we.

Most of us won't change the world in one spectacular moment. We'll answer a phone call. Write an encouraging note. Hold a door. Recommend a favorite book. Listen a little longer than necessary. Offer directions, both literal and figurative, to someone who simply can't see very far today.

It may not feel remarkable.

It might be exactly what they needed.

## JUST ENOUGH

Perhaps that's the lesson lighthouses have been teaching all along.

You don't need to see the entire coastline to keep moving forward. You don't need certainty before taking the next step. And you certainly don't have to navigate every storm by yourself.

Sometimes all we need is enough light to find the next safe harbor. Sometimes that light comes from a weathered tower standing quietly on a rocky shore. More often, it comes from another person who has weathered storms of their own and chooses, without expecting anything in return, to leave the light on for someone else.

The coast is dotted with lighthouses, but so is life. They don't erase the darkness. They simply remind us that even on the foggiest nights, we were never meant to find our way alone. ■

## Playlist #2: Borrowed Light

**Light of a Clear Blue Morning**
Dolly Parton

**The Stable Song**
Gregory Alan Isakov

**All My Days**
Alexi Murdoch

**Closer to Fine**
Indigo Girls

**Old Pine**
Ben Howard

**Keep Me in Your Heart**
Warren Zevon

**Hello My Old Heart**
The Oh Hellos

**From the Morning**
Nick Drake

**Be Here Now**
Ray LaMontagne

**Long Ride Home**
Patty Griffin

**When My Time Comes**
Dawes

**Hold On**
Tom Waits

**Nothing More Than That**
The Paper Kites

**Into the Mystic**
Van Morrison

**One Day Like This**
Elbow

You can find the entire **Borrowed Light** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile

THE WORLD NEEDS MORE PEOPLE WHO TELL THE WIND THEIR SECRETS, WAVE AT MOUNTAINS AND SEND MESSAGES TO THE OCEAN.

# the long way around

Long before text messages, email, or even reliable mail service, there was a far less efficient way to send a message: toss it into the water and hope for the best.

The practice stretches back more than 2,000 years. One of the earliest recorded examples comes from the Greek philosopher Theophrastus, who is said to have dropped sealed vessels into the sea to study ocean currents. Over the centuries, sailors, explorers, scientists, and even shipwreck survivors used messages in bottles to share discoveries, report disasters, or simply send a few words into the unknown. Most never arrived anywhere, which somehow makes the tradition even more captivating.

A message in a bottle is the opposite of modern communication. There are no notifications, no read receipts, and no guarantee the message will ever be found. The writer gives up control the moment the bottle leaves their hand, leaving the rest to the wind, the waves, the currents, and a little bit of luck. The bottle itself was never the interesting part. The interesting part was the possibility.

Somewhere along a shoreline, someone bends down to pick up an ordinary-looking bottle. Inside is a note written by a stranger. Maybe it traveled a few miles. Maybe it crossed an ocean. Maybe it spent years drifting between places neither person has ever visited. For a brief moment, two completely different lives become connected by a piece of paper and an extraordinary amount of patience.

Travel feels a little like that. We leave home thinking we know where we're headed, with destinations circled on maps and playlists queued up for the drive. Yet the stories we tell afterward rarely come from those carefully made plans. They come from the lighthouse hidden behind the fog, the roadside diner we almost skipped, the farm stand with peaches beneath a hand-painted sign, or the conversation with someone we'll never see again.

Like a message in a bottle, the best journeys take the long way around. They remind us that not everything worth finding can be searched for, mapped out, or scheduled months in advance. Sometimes the most memorable parts of a journey are the ones carried to us by chance. ▪

### A MODERN-DAY DISCLAIMER

**We should probably mention that launching bottles into the ocean isn't exactly encouraged these days. The world has enough things floating around in it already.**

**If the idea of a message finding its way to a stranger speaks to you, there are friendlier ways to make it happen. Mail a postcard. Leave a note for someone to discover. Write a letter you'll open years from now. The magic wasn't the glass bottle. It was the possibility that a few words could travel farther than you ever expected.**




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# the call of the coastline

Long before Route 1 stitched together fishing towns and beach communities, this coastline was America's front door. Indigenous communities traveled these waters for thousands of years before European ships appeared on the horizon, and lighthouses eventually rose to answer a simple question: How do we help people find their way home?

Today, that same coastline invites a different kind of journey. You're not simply following a highway. You're following one of the oldest stories in America.

## ACADIA NATIONAL PARK & BASS HARBOR HEAD LIGHT

The classic beginning. Granite cliffs, spruce forests, crashing surf, and one of America's most photographed lighthouses. Sunrise here feels like someone slowly turning the brightness up on the entire Atlantic.

**DON'T MISS:** Drive the Park Loop Road before breakfast. The earlier you go, the more it feels like Acadia belongs only to you.



## BAR HARBOR, MAINE

Road trips need places where you linger longer than planned, and Bar Harbor has a way of stealing an afternoon. Wander the Shore Path, browse bookstores that smell pleasantly of old paper, eat blueberry pie that somehow tastes better this close to the ocean, and watch fishing boats return with the day's catch.



## PORTLAND HEAD LIGHT, MAINE

If you picture a lighthouse in your mind, chances are it looks something like this. Commissioned by George Washington and standing watch since 1791, it's equal parts history lesson and postcard. Even on cloudy days, it somehow manages to look like it ordered the weather itself.

## NUBBLE LIGHT, YORK, MAINE

Small island. Big personality. Everyone stops for one photo, then takes twenty. The crashing surf, the tiny island setting, and the impossible-to-miss white tower make this one of New England's most recognizable landmarks.



**WILD ENCOUNTER**

From late fall through early spring, harbor seals make seasonal visits to the waters around Cape May. They aren't permanent residents, but every winter they return to haul out on sandbars and jetties before continuing their migration.



## CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS

Not technically one stop but an entire chapter. Windmills, cranberry bogs, weathered cedar shingles, clam shacks, bicycle trails, kettle ponds, and enough lighthouses to justify taking the scenic route every single time. If your vacation somehow ends with sand in the car three months later, congratulations. You did Cape Cod correctly.

## NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Trade lobster shacks for Gilded Age mansions perched above the sea. Walk the famous Cliff Walk where million-dollar views are available for exactly the price of comfortable shoes.



MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT

## MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT

Yes, that Mystic. The seaport still feels like a living postcard, complete with tall ships, wooden docks, drawbridges, and enough maritime history to make you wonder why you didn't pay more attention in social studies.





CAPE MAY LIGHTHOUSE



## CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

Cape May feels like stepping into another era, where colorful Victorian homes line quiet streets and the Atlantic is never more than a short walk away. Keep an eye on the water while you're exploring. Harbor seals are often spotted resting on jetties and sandbars during the cooler months, popping curious heads above the waves before disappearing just as quickly. It's the kind of place where your biggest decision might be whether to spend the afternoon searching for wildlife or watching the sunset over Delaware Bay.



CAPE HATTERAS LIGHTHOUSE, BUXTON , NORTH CAROLINA

**MASTER OF WAVES**

Sanderlings seem to play tag with the ocean, racing toward retreating waves to snatch tiny crustaceans before sprinting away from the next surge. Their nonstop beach dance is one of the easiest ways to recognize them.



ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
NATIONAL SEASHORE

## ASSATEAGUE NATIONAL SEASHORE

The first hint that something magical is waiting farther south. Wild horses roam the beaches here, sharing the shoreline with shorebirds, windswept dunes, and rolling Atlantic waves. It feels wonderfully untamed, as though the coast decided to stay just a little bit wild.

## CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA

Just across the bridge from Assateague sits a quieter coastal town famous for oysters, seafood, and the annual Pony Swim. Even if you miss the event, you'll still find docks, marshes, and the kind of small-town charm that makes you wonder why you ever hurry anywhere.

## OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA

The road narrows. Sand dunes rise beside the highway. Lighthouses grow taller. The Atlantic stretches endlessly to one side while peaceful sounds fill the other. It feels less like arriving somewhere and more like reaching the edge of the map. ▪

SOME LANDSCAPES STAY WITH US LONG AFTER WE'VE LEFT THE SHORE.


the strongest
waves began as
tiny ripples



## THE FIRST RIPPLE

Before the
breakers claimed
the shore,
Before the gulls
began to soar,
Before the tide
knew where
to climb,
There came a
pulse beyond
all time.

A quiet circle
crossed the sea,
So slight it scarcely
seemed to be;
Yet moon and
current, wind
and wave,
Remembered
what that
ripple gave.

The ocean keeps
no boastful song,
It gathers strength
by moving on;
No mighty crest
arrives complete,
It learns its power
beneath our feet.

So trust the
motion, small
and slow,
The unseen tides
that softly grow;
For every force
that shapes
the blue
Began with one...
as all things do.





# CHRIS WINTER

## Chief Executive Officer of the Corolla Wild Horse Fund

Watching a herd of wild horses move across the beaches of the Outer Banks is the kind of experience people remember for a lifetime. Behind those unforgettable moments, however, is an ongoing effort to protect both the horses and the landscape that has shaped them for hundreds of years. Chris Winter, Chief Executive Officer of the Corolla Wild Horse Fund, discusses the history of the Banker horses, the realities of managing a truly wild herd, and why every visitor has a role to play in their future.

**Tattle Magazine: For readers who may not be familiar with the Corolla wild horses, what makes this herd so special compared to other wild horse populations?**

**Chris Winter:** These are wild horses, and they have lived on the Outer Banks for three, four, or five hundred years. There's lots of oral tradition on the Outer Banks, and you kind of get fact and legend all mixed together. Where are these horses from? Are they colonial? Without question, they have European descent. Original European colonists were traveling with horses to the New World. We know ships would wreck on the Outer Banks, and we know there are times where horses would make it to the Outer Banks in that manner

What also started to happen was, as Europeans got established on the East Coast of the United States, they started to have horse farms throughout the Americas, really into Central America and South America, because rather than bringing horses across the ocean, it made a lot more sense to have them already here. They started raising horses, and there became a thriving horse trade up the East Coast of the United States, inland to the Mississippi River, down the Mississippi River. It was just kind of a circular horse trade. So the horses probably also do have some Americas descent as well

What makes them truly unique today is that they are a land race breed. What that means is they are of the place where they are. We call them Bankers, and that's truly what they are right now. They've been on the Outer Banks for so long that they are considered of the Outer Banks. That's where you get to be a land race breed. If you removed them from the Outer Banks, they would change. They would cease to be what they are today.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF COROLLA WILD HORSE FUND

That's really, more than anything else, what makes them truly unique. They have their differences. They're very different from the western wild horses.

**TM: Why is preserving the land just as important as preserving the horses themselves?**

**CW:** One of the most important pieces that we're looking at is how do we preserve their habitat? How do we preserve this land? Where they live is an 11-mile stretch of beach north of Corolla that runs all the way up to the Virginia border. There are no paved roads in that area. However, there are lots and lots of houses. There are full-time residents, there are part-time residents, and there is a tourist population that comes for week-long visits and day trips.

What we've seen, especially over the last 10 years and especially since COVID, is the pace of development has accelerated rapidly. We're seeing more cars, more people, more construction. What we're looking at is how do we make this sustainable for the long term? How do we keep access to the horses? Because they are such an important public trust here in North Carolina, how do we keep this beach and life on the beach sustainable for the long term?

Preservation and conservation are at the center of that work. We are working with a wide range of partners on how to make development more sustainable. How do we work through a system of conservation easements on people's property that may want to protect their property forever? Are there pathways where we ourselves might buy land and put conservation easements on it? We're working with land trusts. It's a complex web, but at its core is protecting the habitat.

That impacts not only the horses. There are all kinds of co-benefits to that. You've got a fragile ecosystem. You have human life up there. You have full-time residents where it can be a very challenging place to live because you are, in certain ways, off the grid. There are concerns that the sustainability of residential life up there has limits too. The reality is right now that 11-mile stretch is only about one-third built out of what it could be based on how it's platted. There's over 2,500 property owners up there.





**TM: When people hear "wild horses," they often assume nature should simply take its course. How do you balance allowing the horses to remain wild while still responsibly managing the herd?**

**CW:** That is a great question, and it is a question that often many people have very specific opinions about. At its core, our mission is to keep the horses wild and free. In coordination with our board of directors and the Wild Horse Advisory Board, which is a group effort of us, the state, the county, and the federal government that oversees and gives us the right to do this work, we have decided that we will intervene with the horses only as a last resort in the wild.

We're out on the beach every day. We have field stewards, and our horse management staff is on the beach every day. They are collecting data. They're observing. They are monitoring tourists and making sure people are doing the right thing with regards to the horse laws.

It can get interesting when there is a horse that clearly has some sort of health issue. When that comes to pass, we'll work with our veterinarian and our horse management staff. Essentially, we're visually assessing the situation. If there is no truly lifesaving benefit to removing the horse from the wild, we're not going to.

This is where it can get tricky. There are instances where we have a very old horse out in the wild. It's lived 27, 30, even 32 years. It's had a great wild and free life, and it may not be entirely healthy at that point. It could be more traumatic for the horse to actually remove it from the beach and take it to the farm than to simply let it live out its days in the wild.

When we see a horse that lives its entire life in the wild and maybe goes off into the marsh and passes away, that's a success. That horse has lived an entire wild and free life like its ancestors did 300 or 400 years ago. That's what we want.

**TM: Does removing a horse ever affect the herd itself?**

**CW:** It can certainly impact herd dynamics. They move in harems, and they move in and out of harems at times. That's definitely something that we are always observing on the beach. Are the herd dynamics healthy? Because if you start to get over involved, that can play an impact.

Right now, we have a very healthy herd. We've got about 120 horses in the wild, which is right at the number we try to maintain. We want to be between 110 and 130 horses, and that's right where we are.

**TM: Millions of people have fallen in love with these horses through photographs, social media, and visits to the Outer Banks. How do you encourage that connection while also reminding people these are wild animals and not attractions?**

**CW:** That's a lot of the ball game right there. Education is a big part of what we do. We make considerable investments in education through a variety of mechanisms. What's most important is that people understand that these are wild animals. Sometimes it's important even to say not wild horses – these are wild animals – because people visually see a horse and think of the horse down the road at the stable. That is the sweetest thing in the world.

These horses are wild animals, and they're unpredictable. That presents danger to humans and horses alike. It's very important that people who come visit the beach have an understanding of what that means and of the local

ordinances that require you to remain a minimum of 50 feet away from a wild horse.

The great news is the vast majority of tourists, the vast majority of residents, follow the rules. They want to see the horses protected. They want to see the horses' ability to remain wild and free stay intact. It's the extra five percent of people that can sometimes be a challenge.

**TM: People often grow up seeing movies where someone simply walks up to a wild horse and rides away. Does that perception create challenges?**

**CW:** Historically, on the Outer Banks, that did happen. People used the horses. They had uses when we're going way back in time. But obviously, we're in a very different place today.

The horses are an enormously important public trust in North Carolina. They're the state horse of North Carolina. They're connected to the history of the Outer Banks. They're connected to the culture of the Outer Banks. They're a significant reason why people travel to North Carolina. They bring an enormous amount of tourism revenue that supports the local economy on the Outer Banks.

There's so many pieces to this conversation and why it is so important that all of us – whether it's those of us working on this, residents, visitors to the Outer Banks, Currituck County government, or the State of North Carolina – all of us have a stake in protecting the horses and keeping them accessible.

It's really important that sometimes people might think our only interest is protecting the horses by putting a big wall around where they are. Absolutely not. Entirely the opposite. We want people to have access to the horses. People have always had access to the horses. It's about being sustainable and figuring out how to make that sustainable over time.

**TM: The horses have survived hurricanes, development, changes in the landscape, and centuries of history. What do you think their resilience can teach us?**

**CW:** They are incredibly resilient. You talk about the horses as part of the history and culture of the Outer Banks, but the history and culture of the Outer Banks is about resilience. The Outer Banks is not a traditional beach resort by any stretch. It's so far east. The weather is harsh out there. It's been a hard life throughout history on the Outer Banks. It's really been a life about survival and resilience.

As development came to the Outer Banks, it obviously became much more of a tourism destination, and life has changed, although that culture still exists for sure. The horses are one thing that connect us to that history of resilience on the Outer Banks. They've survived everything the Outer Banks has thrown at them, and the Outer Banks is not a gentle place often. They manage storms way better than humans often do.

**TM: How do the horses respond to hurricanes and changing seasons?**

**CW:** The beach, when I say the beach, is really the whole area. It's about 7,700 acres. It runs from the oceanfront on the east to the Currituck Sound on the west. On the sound side, there are marshes and maritime forest. It's an incredibly beautiful piece of land, and there are a lot of places where it's very difficult for humans to get. It is dense, dense brush.

When storms come, they'll go back into the maritime forest or into the marsh, and they'll put their butts to the wind, essentially, and ride it out. When it gets colder, there's more food back in the marshes, so they'll head back there in the winter.

Then, in the spring, you'll get a southwest wind that gets the May flies going. They are miserable biting flies. Just like they create misery for us people, they do the same for the horses. That's when you'll usually see a lot more horses on the beach because the flies are pushing them out there for a little relief.

There have been days where people have seen 60, 70, even 80 horses out on the oceanfront. They're up on the dunes, they're walking on the beach. It's the stuff of those incredible pictures you've always seen. It actually does happen.



**TM: What gives you the most hope about the future of the herd?**

**CW:** I think the people involved in trying to protect the herd. We have incredible people who work with us here at the Fund. We've got incredible partners involved in this. There are so many residents who live up on the beach that want to see this protected. Our partners at Currituck County and the State of North Carolina are taking a much greater interest. I've spent a lot of time with the legislature in North Carolina working to get them more involved.

We work with optimism. There is a moment out there in the future where maybe it's not sustainable. It's not feasible. That could be for horses, people, or the other animals that rely on the ecosystem up there on the beach. But we're doing everything we can to keep that moment way out in the future. We approach this with optimism because that's the only way to do it.

Especially as we talk more about land conservation and land preservation, we're having some great conversations with folks who are very interested in helping out. That's going to be one of the key pieces of this – slowing down the building and construction out there.

**TM: If every visitor left understanding one thing about these horses, what would you want that message to be?**

**CW:** That the horses are an integral part of life on the Outer Banks. Whether you're a resident or whether you came here on vacation, these horses are part of that experience.

We have lots of tourists who support our work, and I'll ask people, "How did you come to know us?" They'll say, "My great-grandmother used to bring us to the Outer Banks 50 years ago. She took us up on the beach to see the horses, and now I want to pass that on to the next generation."

The Outer Banks is very much a generational tourist destination. People come back and stay in the same house during the same week year after year, and the horses are part of that tradition. For residents who have lived there for generations, the horses are part of that life and culture as well.

So when you come, respect that. Enjoy it, and be part of it. Part of that is respecting conservation and learning how you can be part of the long-term solution so your grandkids can experience the same thing. We have incredible support, and that's where our optimism comes from.

**TM: For readers who visit the Outer Banks and feel inspired to help, what are some of the ways they can support the Corolla Wild Horse Fund?**

**CW:** Absolutely. The best thing is to go to our website, and you can learn about all kinds of ways to engage. We are a very traditional small nonprofit, and financially we exist on the shoulders of our supporters.

You can become a member of the Corolla Wild Horse Fund. You can sponsor horses that have been removed from the beach and now live at our farm in Grandy. There are lots of ways to be engaged.

The other thing I would do is follow us on Facebook. We tell the story in its entirety on Facebook. The pictures are incredible, and our Director of Herd Management, Meg Puckett, does a lot of the writing. She tells the story beautifully. Following us on Facebook is another great way to engage and share the story. ▪

### KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

Corolla Wild Horse Fund
corollawildhorses.com




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# lake effect

The Great Lakes have a habit of changing expectations. They crash like oceans, stretch to the horizon like seas, and hide small discoveries in places you'd never think to look. This stretch of the country isn't about rushing from one attraction to the next. It's about slowing down enough to notice the details — a lighthouse standing watch, a dune rising out of nowhere, a colorful piece of glass polished by decades of waves. Before you dive into our beach glass story, here's a pair of shoreline road trips worth taking.



PRESQUE ISLE'S NORTH PIERHEAD LIGHTHOUSE



SOUTH BASS ISLAND, PUT-IN-BAY



**MEET THE PETOSKEY STONE**

Found almost exclusively in northern Michigan, the Petoskey stone is actually fossilized coral that lived roughly 350 million years ago when this part of North America sat beneath a warm tropical sea. Polish one, and its distinctive honeycomb pattern comes to life.

**FRESHWATER, OCEAN FEEL**

Stand on the shore of Lake Michigan or Lake Superior on a clear day and the opposite side disappears beyond the horizon. It's one of the few places in the United States where you can look out over freshwater and feel like you're standing beside the sea.

## Michigan's Beach Glass Trail

Some road trips are measured in miles. This one is measured in what the lake leaves behind.

Lake Michigan's shoreline is constantly reshaping itself. Wind, waves, and time have spent decades turning discarded bottles into smooth pieces of colorful glass, scattering them among stones, driftwood, and sandy beaches. The fun isn't in finding the rarest piece. It's in wandering a shoreline with your eyes down, letting each curve of the beach reveal something unexpected. Along the way you'll climb towering dunes, duck through a tunnel carved into the sand, stroll quiet coves, and discover why Petoskey stones have become just as treasured as beach glass. Whether you leave with a pocketful of treasures or simply a camera roll full of sunsets, the journey is the real souvenir.

### STOPS ALONG THE WAY

Silver Beach
ST. JOSEPH

Tunnel Park
HOLLAND

Warren Dunes State Park
SAWYER

Christmas Cove Beach
NORTHPORT

Petoskey State Park

Bayfront Park
PETOSKEY

Lakeport State Park



PRESQUE ISLE'S NORTH PIERHEAD LIGHTHOUSE

## Lake Erie's Hidden Shore

Overshadowed? Maybe. Underrated? Absolutely.

Lake Erie may be the smallest of the Great Lakes by volume, but it packs an incredible amount into a single shoreline. From Ohio to Pennsylvania, the route is filled with historic lighthouses, quiet beaches, island ferries, wineries, and some of the best sunsets in the Midwest. Walk the long sandy shoreline at Headlands Beach, climb to Marblehead Lighthouse, spend an afternoon hopping between Put-in-Bay and Kelleys Island, then continue east to Presque Isle, where sandy peninsulas stretch into the lake like they're reaching for Canada. It's proof that you don't need saltwater to have a classic beach road trip – just an open road, a cooler in the back seat, and enough daylight to pull over one more time. ▪

### WORTH PULLING OVER FOR

Headlands Beach State Park

Lake Erie Bluffs

Marblehead Lighthouse

East Harbor State Park

Kelleys Island

Put-in-Bay

Presque Isle State Park

# *the second life of glass*

Every piece of beach glass begins the same way: broken.

A bottle slips from a dock. A jar washes overboard. A medicine bottle tossed decades ago meets a rock instead of a recycling bin. What starts as trash becomes something else entirely once the ocean takes over. Waves become the workshop. Sand becomes the sandpaper. Time becomes the artist.

Unlike polished glass sold in souvenir shops, genuine beach glass can't be rushed. It spends decades rolling along the shoreline, its sharp edges softened by thousands of tides. The frosted finish collectors prize isn't painted on or manufactured. It's earned, one wave at a time.

If you look closely, each color hints at a former life. White and brown often began as soda or beer bottles. Greens likely held wine. Aqua pieces may have once been Mason jars, while cobalt blue sometimes traces back to old medicine bottles. The rarest finds—reds, oranges, and yellows—can send seasoned beachcombers scanning the sand for hours.

Ironically, authentic beach glass is becoming harder to find. Better recycling practices and the shift away from glass packaging mean fewer bottles are entering the water than they did generations ago. The beaches are still there. The waves still tumble. There are simply fewer stories waiting to wash ashore.

That's part of the magic. Pick up a smooth piece of sea glass, and you're holding something that has already lived another life. Long before it found its place in your pocket, it spent years traveling the coastline, transformed not by force, but by patience. ▪



## Reading the Colors

**WHITE/CLEAR**

The most common finds, often from soda, milk, or household bottles.

**BROWN (AMBER)**

Usually beer bottles or medicine bottles, designed to protect contents from sunlight.

**GREEN**

Most often from wine, champagne, or spirits bottles.

**AQUA**

A favorite among collectors. Many pieces began life as old Mason jars or early glass containers.

**COBALT BLUE**

Often traces back to medicine bottles, poison bottles, or decorative glass.

**PINK**

A rarer find that may come from vintage Depression-era glassware, perfume bottles, decorative glass, or older tableware. Soft pink pieces are especially prized by collectors.

**PURPLE (AMETHYST)**

One of the most fascinating colors. Some antique clear glass was made with manganese, which can slowly turn shades of lavender or purple after years of exposure to ultraviolet light.

**RED, ORANGE & YELLOW**

Among the hardest colors to find. These brilliant pieces may have come from decorative glassware, old bottles, tableware, or maritime lights and signals.

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so lovely
was the
loneliness
of a
wild
lake.
– edgar allan poe



# TAKE THE BACKROADS

**There are faster ways to cross the middle of the country. Interstates are designed to move you efficiently from one place to another, exits spaced just far enough apart for gas, coffee, and whatever you can eat with one hand. They are useful. They are predictable. And then there are the other roads. The ones that bend around cornfields, follow rivers, disappear over the horizon, and occasionally make you wonder whether you missed a turn somewhere around that abandoned gas station twenty miles back.**

**Take those.**

**Because somewhere between Nebraska and Oklahoma, the road trip changes. Mountains flatten into prairie. Skylines become grain elevators. Traffic thins until another car feels noteworthy. Suddenly, the things you normally drive past become the reason for going.**

## NEBRASKA SANDHILLS

### NEBRASKA HIGHWAY 2

Start where Nebraska gets wonderfully empty. Highway 2 rolls through the Sandhills, a landscape of grass-covered dunes stretching across a huge portion of the state. There are cattle ranches, tiny towns, windmills, railroad tracks, and skies so enormous they seem slightly unreasonable.

This is the kind of road where you stop measuring distance in miles and start measuring it in towns. Broken Bow. Thedford. Mullen. Places that appear on the horizon, offer a café or gas pump, and then quietly disappear in the rearview mirror. Roll down the windows. Watch for pronghorn. Stop when something looks interesting. There will be plenty of road left.

## LOESS HILLS

### WESTERN IOWA

Cross into Iowa and aim for the Loess Hills Scenic Byway, where the landscape does something unexpected. Instead of endless flat farmland, narrow ridges rise above the Missouri River valley, formed from windblown soil deposited thousands of years ago. The road slips through woodland, prairie, farms, and small towns that rarely make anyone's bucket list. Which is precisely why they belong on one.

Pull into a farm stand. Buy whatever is in season. Find a town square. Order pie somewhere that doesn't need to advertise that the pie is good. The locals already know.



## THE COVERED BRIDGES

**MADISON COUNTY, IOWA**

Yes, those bridges. The covered bridges of Madison County turn rural Iowa into something resembling a movie set, although the farms, gravel roads, and rolling countryside were here long before Hollywood noticed them. Several historic bridges remain scattered around the area near Winterset, connected by country roads worth wandering without much urgency.

And while you're there, make time for the town itself. Wander the courthouse square, poke around the local shops, and stop somewhere for a slow lunch. Backroad travel works best when you're willing to spend an hour somewhere you hadn't planned to spend ten minutes.

## FLINT HILLS

**KANSAS SCENIC BYWAY**

Then Kansas changes the scenery again. The Flint Hills are one of the last great expanses of tallgrass prairie left in North America, and driving through them feels less like crossing a landscape than floating through one. Follow the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway along K-177, where the road rolls between open pasture, limestone hills, cattle ranches, and grass that seems to move with the wind.

Stop at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve and walk into it. You don't need a dramatic overlook or a perfectly marked photo spot. Sometimes the attraction is simply standing still while the prairie keeps moving.



## GYPSUM HILLS

### SOUTHERN KANSAS

Keep heading south and Kansas gets stranger. Near the Oklahoma border, the Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway trades green prairie for red earth, mesas, canyons, and unexpected flashes of the Southwest. The road passes through places like Medicine Lodge and Coldwater, where ranch country stretches toward a horizon that suddenly looks much farther away.

This is good windows-down territory. It's also good pull-over-because-the-sky-is-doing-something territory. Conveniently, there is a lot of sky.

## OKLAHOMA'S RED DIRT ROADS

### WESTERN OKLAHOMA

Cross the state line and the earth turns red. Oklahoma's western roads run through wheat fields, cattle country, mesas, wind farms, and towns built around old highways and railroad tracks. Take the slower route toward places like Gloss Mountain State Park, where rust-colored mesas rise abruptly from the plains.

Climb one if you have time, then get back in the car and keep wandering. Look for hand-painted signs, old motels, roadside fruit stands, weathered barns, and diners where the coffee arrives before you've fully opened the menu.

## FIND A ROAD YOU DIDN'T PLAN FOR

Eventually, stop following this route. That's important. Turn onto the county road with the old barn. Follow the sign for homemade jam. Pull over when you see sunflowers stretching toward the horizon or a thunderstorm rolling across the plains.

The middle of America has spent decades being treated like something to cross on the way to somewhere else, but the backroads tell a different story. They pass century-old farms and towns barely large enough for a stop sign. They follow rivers, railroad tracks, wheat fields, cattle fences, and landscapes shaped by weather more than tourism. They lead to diners, antique stores, swimming holes, county fairs, and places where the biggest landmark might be a grain elevator visible from ten miles away.

None of it announces itself very loudly. That's part of the appeal. So skip an exit. Leave the interstate. Let the GPS complain for a minute. The fastest road will still be there tomorrow.

Today, take the one that looks interesting. ▪



### WHERE THE BUFFALO STILL ROAM

Tucked into northeastern Oklahoma, the Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie Preserve protects the largest remaining protected stretch of tallgrass prairie on Earth. Thousands of bison roam across its wide-open landscape, often wandering near or across the preserve's roads. Drive slowly, keep your distance, and take it in. This is a glimpse of the Great Plains before fences, highways, and cities changed the view.







# Tiffany Nurrenbern

## Program Director of Zero Foodprint

Healthy soil rarely gets the spotlight, yet it's at the heart of nearly everything we eat. Tiffany Nurrenbern, Program Director of Zero Foodprint, is helping farmers build healthier land through regenerative agriculture while making it easier for everyday people to be part of that story. Our conversation explored the hidden world beneath our feet, the future of farming, and why lasting change often begins with one small step.



**Tattle Magazine: For readers who may be hearing about Zero Foodprint for the first time, what problem were you trying to solve when the organization was created?**

**Tiffany Nurrenbern:** In our very early days, it was started by folks that were all working in the restaurant industry, and they were really trying to solve the problem of understanding what their environmental impacts were, especially what their carbon emissions were, and how they could reduce that. That's really where we started, with folks working in restaurants who wanted to make sure what they were doing was aligning with their values, that they were leaving the world they wanted for their children, and really needed a tool to understand what that looked like. So in the very early days, that was the problem that we were trying to solve.

**TM: Is that still the focus, or have you grown into other areas?**

**TN:** Definitely. I think that's what started a journey over the last 10-ish years to get us to where we are now. What we learned when we started looking at the emissions of restaurants, and then did 80 or 100 more consistently, was that the majority of the carbon footprint was coming from the way the food was produced.

That led us down this path. We thought at first our restaurants were going to be leading by reducing their emissions, and many of them are still doing that work. There's a lot of great work happening in that space. But after having many conversations with farmers and really looking at the industry, we realized that the best way to tackle the challenges we were facing was by working with farmers directly to change the way farming was done.

Now we're investing directly in farmers so they can implement practices they want to do and are excited about that also provide community benefit. Regenerative practices are not only helping with climate issues, but creating healthy soil that builds more resilient communities.

We see that regenerative agriculture creates soil that's able to increase water quality and retain water, making it more resistant to extreme weather events such as fire and flooding. We're seeing farmers are happier when they're able to farm this way. We're only beginning to understand the nutritional density that comes from growing food in living soils, but the numbers we're seeing can be 10x or even 100x in terms of vitamins and minerals people are able to get from food grown in healthy living soil.

Instead of focusing on changing behavior in one industry, we really focused on how we bring resources from different areas to get farmers the resources they need to do the work they want to do.

**TM: Sometimes it seems like the easier solution is to fix one area, but really you have to go all the way back to the beginning.**

**TN:** Yeah, I think so. I've worked in nonprofits and food for a long time. I'm on the board of an organization called Slow Food that's really dedicated to local communities and local sourcing, and I'm deeply committed to that work.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZERO FOODPRINT

What we've often done before is say, you've got to take a number of steps to get it right. It's sourcing to support the farmer so they can do the practices. All of that is fantastic work and creates all sorts of benefits. But what farmers often need, the missing piece, is access to capital to do the work and de-risk that transition.

We have federal funding and different funding sources, but there are lists hundreds of thousands of farmers long who are ready to do this work and just don't have access to the funding.

**TM: Zero Foodprint talks a lot about restoring climate through healthy soil. Most people never think about soil as part of the climate conversation. How do you help people connect those dots?**

**TN:** That's an interesting question that we're grappling with every day. We try to focus on putting carbon in the ground where it belongs.

Carbon gets a really bad rap, but carbon is a part of our natural systems. Regenerative agriculture has always been a part of maintaining those natural cycles. We tend to talk to people about carbon being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Our work is to recapture that carbon and restore it underground through healthy soil practices.

We can show people root systems and help them think about how forests are carbon sinks. People understand forests above ground, but they don't think about what's happening underground. That creates a whole ecosystem of living beings and fungus. When it's left relatively undisturbed and fed with healthy nutrients, you have all of these things happening underground in the same way they're happening in our forests. We try to help people see it from that perspective.

We also focus on creating fun campaigns and interesting opportunities so people don't have to carry the whole weight of climate on their shoulders. We have a campaign coming up called Dirty Drinks, where businesses commit to serving a beverage that includes a one-dollar donation to farmers. We have cocktail bars, fine dining restaurants and coffee shops creating drinks that highlight regenerative agriculture. Some talk about farming practices, some reduce waste, and some are just funny puns or creative ideas.

It's about giving people an entry point that isn't so heavy. We can take small actions that lead to larger systemic change, and we can do it in our everyday lives while we're having a good time. It might start with a cocktail and then plant a seed. No pun intended. Really, it's about helping people find a different entry point into the conversation.

**TM: I think it also comes down to supporting local farmers and farmers markets. That helps farmers improve what they're doing and supports the food system.**

**TN:** Absolutely. Every one of those actions does good work to support farmers and their communities.

The difference between buying something at a farmers market and giving direct funds is that it takes a long time for those extra pennies per pound to add up to the kind of capital a farmer needs to make an investment in changing their practices. Those day-to-day purchases support work that's already been done and hopefully allow them to continue doing that work.

That's why we think these things are complementary. Supporting farmers markets and local food economies is crucial. Then that one little penny collected across many different people can provide those upfront chunks of capital farmers need to do the work.











It takes a while for sourcing alone to add up to something like twenty-five thousand dollars for a farmer to improve another field or another set of acres. We're really looking at how we get those good practices to the next farm and the next acre.

**TM: Do you find farmers are eager to jump on board, or is there an educational process?**

**TN:** There's a big range in terms of where people are, but we don't do a lot of education with the farmers because they're there, they're waiting, and they're ready to go. We're really providing that injection of capital for farmers who say, "I know I want to do this, and I need support."

We really team up with them. We work with a lot of partners who do the education work and spread the word about the grants. We also work with technical assistance providers so farmers have someone making sure they're doing the practices appropriately and according to the right standards. We provide that level of support and education as they bring those practices to their land.

**TM: You've worked with farmers across different landscapes and communities. What is something they all seem to understand that maybe the rest of us have forgotten?**

**TN:** That's a really interesting question.

I think at the most basic level, it's how important soil is. How important the land, as a natural resource, is to all of us thriving. Especially for most of us, including myself, who live in cities and are going about our day-to-day business, even if we're thinking about making the right choices with food, farmers are on the front lines of seeing that land. To be a farmer, you have to see it on a different timeline.

Those are the two things that really stand out: the importance of that connection to the land and all that it offers us, and thinking about the future, both now and many generations ahead. Across the board, farmers really see themselves as stewards of the land. There are disagreements about the best practices and how to do that, but there is a commitment to place and a commitment to community that you have to have when you're working the land on a day-to-day basis.

**TM: What gives you hope when you look at the future of food and farming?**

**TN:** One of the things that I appreciate about the regenerative movement is that there isn't necessarily one agreed-upon definition. What gives me hope is that so many people are now interested in learning more about soil and the potential of taking care of that soil to support community health and human health.

I feel like this is something that cuts across political lines. It's opening more people up to looking at their practices and asking how they can steward their land. Conversations that I would have had twenty years ago might have been a little dicey, but talking about soil health and those kinds of things, there's just a lot more openness now.





There's a lot more interest in doing the work than I've seen over the last twenty years. That's really hopeful. People are talking about it, taking action, and getting creative about how to support farmers in doing that work for all of us.

**TM: What's something you wish people would slow down and appreciate about the journey food takes before it reaches their plate?**

**TN:** That's a great question.

I think about it in terms of wine. There's a concept of terroir, where people who are interested in wine understand that it's deeply rooted to the place where it's grown. I think all of the things we're consuming have that same connection to the soil.

Stopping for a moment to think about how something was grown, how the way it was grown impacts that community, and how it impacts the nutrition we're getting from it, those are important moments.

I also think we often approach problems from only one direction. We have a member in Colorado who owns five Subway locations, and one percent of every Subway sandwich sold in Boulder goes toward this work. When you stop and think about it, you start to see another entry point. There are different ways to make a difference.

**TM: Your organization talks about restoring rather than simply sustaining. What's the difference, and why does that distinction matter?**

**TN:** When we're talking about sustaining, we're talking about sustaining a status quo. What we're really looking for is to regenerate, to tend the soil, to be part of healing it, and to create balanced systems that farm with nature rather than against it.

We're not just trying to maintain the status quo. This is a solution that helps us make progress on a number of different goals and restore a resource that has fed us and taken care of us for eons, helping get it back to a place where it can continue doing that for the next generations.

**TM: What's one thing happening beneath our feet in healthy soil that would completely amaze most people?**

**TN:** There's so much magic going on under there.

I think about networks of mycelium that are growing and connecting, moving nutrients back and forth across large areas, sending messages, and rehabilitating soils in ways we never thought about. When you build healthy soil and leave it undisturbed, the work that goes on to recreate those networks is incredible.

There are all of these little miracles happening underneath in terms of entire communities and ecosystems that we don't see. We think of soil as just being there, but we don't think of it as alive. That's really the thing. It's alive. There are thriving communities underneath our feet.

I also think about something as simple as putting a quarter of an inch of compost on top







of degraded rangeland and then appropriately managing livestock. That can restart an entire cycle of carbon sequestration and rebuilding that life, and it can continue for years. It's incredible.

We're seeing the same thing with fungal inoculated compost that helps bring fungus and spores back. There's this whole world that we're only beginning to understand about how very small interventions can support rehabilitating and restoring these ecosystems.

It's one of the things I really appreciate about our work here. We're not purists on either side of the equation. We work with farms that are taking their first steps all the way up to people who've been leading this movement for a generation. We work with three-star Michelin restaurants and Subway sandwiches. We work with people who've been doing farm-to-table forever and people who are just getting started.

This is a movement that has room for lots of people to make lots of little changes that add up to a bigger change. Whether it's a penny per dollar, buying a drink that's participating in a campaign, major corporations investing, or governments investing, it's all important. People can do what they can do when they can, and we're there to meet them there.

**TM: If readers want to help, what's one small thing they can do?**

**TN:** We have opportunities for people who want to invest directly in projects, and if they happen to have someone participating in Dirty Drinks in their community, they can support that.

We also have a "Get Loud" section on our website where people can nominate places they love to eat. They can tell us, "Here's a place that should join your campaign." Then we're able to reach out and say someone in their community thought they'd be a perfect fit.

I'd love to see you do a cocktail for the campaign or something like that. That goes a long way. I think that's a great way for people to connect and interact. ▪




# restoring the climate

**Not in 2050, not in 2040. Right now.**

keep the connection going

zerofoodprint.org



# Red, Ripe Remarkable



## Why Tomatoes Might Be the Most Underrated Fruit in the Kitchen

### PACKED WITH THE GOOD STUFF

Tomatoes are loaded with vitamin C, potassium, folate, and vitamin K. They deliver a surprising amount of nutrition without bringing much in the way of calories. In other words, they do a lot of heavy lifting while taking up very little space. Not bad for something that can also improve a grilled cheese.

### A FRIEND TO YOUR HEART

Research continues to point toward tomatoes as part of a heart-healthy diet. Their combination of potassium, antioxidants, and plant compounds may help support healthy blood pressure and overall cardiovascular health.

### A DRINK OF WATER IN DISGUISE

Tomatoes are made up of about 95 percent water, which makes them one of summer's most refreshing foods. They won't replace your water bottle, but they can help keep you hydrated on hot afternoons, whether they're sliced onto a sandwich or tossed into a salad.

### THE POWER OF RED

The bright red color comes from lycopene, a natural antioxidant that has been linked to heart health and may help protect cells from damage caused by everyday wear and tear. Interestingly, cooked tomatoes often make lycopene easier for the body to absorb, which means that pasta sauce and tomato soup are doing more than simply tasting good. ▪



# The Tomato Hall of Fame

**BEST FOR HYDRATION**
Cherry tomatoes

**BEST COOKED**
Roma tomatoes

**BEST SANDWICH TOMATO**
Beefsteak

**BEST SNACK**
Sungold
(sweet enough to eat like candy)

**BEST CONVERSATION STARTER**
Heirloom tomatoes – every one looks a little different.

### THE TOMATO WAS ONCE FEARED

When tomatoes first arrived in Europe in the 1500s, many people believed they were poisonous. Wealthy Europeans often ate from pewter plates containing lead, and the acid in tomatoes caused lead to leach into food. People became sick and blamed the tomato rather than the plate.

# baked feta with roasted tomatoes

Grab a block of feta, place it in the center of a baking dish, and surround it with plenty of cherry tomatoes, leaving a few on the vine for a beautiful presentation if you have them. Drizzle everything generously with olive oil, then season with minced garlic, dried oregano, thyme, a pinch of red pepper flakes, cracked black pepper, and a light sprinkle of sea salt. Bake at 400°F for 30–35 minutes, until the tomatoes have burst and the feta is golden around the edges. Finish with fresh parsley or basil, then serve warm with toasted sourdough, crusty baguette slices, or spooned over pasta for a simple dish that tastes like summer in every bite.



# panzanella italian bread salad

Start with a loaf of crusty Italian bread, tearing it into bite-sized pieces before drizzling with olive oil and toasting until crisp around the edges but still slightly chewy inside. Toss the warm bread with chopped cucumbers, halved cherry tomatoes, sliced red onion, sweet pepper rings, and a handful of fresh basil. Whisk together extra virgin olive oil, red wine vinegar, a touch of Dijon mustard, minced garlic, salt, black pepper, and a pinch of Italian seasoning, then pour it over the salad and toss well. Let everything sit for 15-20 minutes so the bread soaks up the bright, tangy dressing while keeping a little crunch. Finish with more fresh basil and cracked black pepper before serving.



**MAKE IT A MEAL**

Top with grilled chicken, shrimp, or fresh mozzarella for an easy lunch or light summer dinner.



# vegetable puff pastry tarts

Unfold a sheet of thawed puff pastry and cut it into squares, then lightly score a border around each piece to help the edges puff as they bake. Spread a thin layer of whipped ricotta or herb cream cheese in the center, then top with your favorite vegetables — sliced mushrooms, halved cherry tomatoes, or thin rounds of zucchini like the ones pictured. Brush the pastry edges with beaten egg and sprinkle everything with Italian seasoning, cracked black pepper, a pinch of garlic powder, and a little grated Parmesan. Bake at 400°F for 18-22 minutes, until the pastry is deeply golden and crisp. Finish with fresh herbs, a drizzle of good olive oil, or a touch of balsamic glaze, and serve warm as an easy appetizer that's just as impressive as it is simple.

**MIX AND MATCH**

Each tart can have its own personality — try asparagus, caramelized onions, roasted peppers, or goat cheese to create a colorful assortment on one baking tray.

# burrata & roasted tomatoes

Creamy burrata pairs beautifully with sweet roasted cherry tomatoes, toasted rustic bread, and crisp romaine for a simple meal that's big on flavor. Finish with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, a splash of balsamic glaze, fresh dill, flaky sea salt, and cracked black pepper, then serve while the tomatoes are still warm.



**ABRING IT TO ROOM TEMPERATURE**

Take the burrata out of the refrigerator about 20 minutes before serving. It becomes extra creamy and its delicate flavor really shines.

**Heirloom Tomatoes Pinch Bowls**
*Hester & Cook*, **$6**





**Essential Rectangular Baker, 3 3/4 Qt.**
*Williams Sonoma*, **$90**



**Novelty Check/ Stripe Double Oven Glove**
*Damson Madde*, **$60**

**Tomato Print Wood Bowl**
*Sonoma Goods For Life*, **$30**



**Olive Oil Dispenser Bottle**
*Zulay Kitchen* , **$15**



# 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!



**Dip Bowls, Set of 4**
*Out of the Woods Oregon*, **$28**


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as a 'game changer'
Rajesh Kumar Singh

FOOD IS OUR COMMON GROUND, A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE. —JAMES BEARD



# WORTH THE STOP

**Why the best souvenir from a road trip might be something you can eat.**

The best roadside attractions don't always have billboards. Sometimes they're marked by a hand-painted sign that simply reads **PEACHES**, **SWEET CORN**, or **TOMATOES TODAY**. A gravel pull-off. A weathered barn. A table tucked beneath a shade tree. Maybe an old pickup truck parked nearby. Maybe no one around at all except a cash box and a note thanking you for stopping.

Across America, roadside farm stands have long been part of the journey. They're reminders that the landscape rolling past your window isn't just scenery—it's someone's livelihood. Every basket of strawberries, every dozen ears of corn, every jar of honey or carton of blueberries represents months of planting, watering, waiting, and hoping the season cooperates.

Choosing to stop does more than fill a cooler for the next stretch of highway. It helps keep family farms in business, preserves open farmland, and supports communities where agriculture remains a way of life. The dollars spent at a roadside stand often stay close to home, helping farms invest in next year's crops, equipment, and future generations.

There's another reward, too. Produce picked that morning tastes different than produce shipped across the country. Tomatoes are sweeter. Peaches drip down your arm. Corn barely needs butter. The food reflects the place where it was grown, turning a simple snack into part of the trip itself.

So the next time you spot a handwritten sign along the shoulder, consider pulling over. You might leave with fresh produce, homemade jam, or a warm pie. More importantly, you'll leave having supported the people who help shape the landscapes that make the journey worth taking. ▪

**THE HONOR SYSTEM**

One of the most charming sights on American backroads is the unattended farm stand. Instead of a cashier, you'll often find a small lockbox, a coffee can for cash, or even a QR code for digital payments. It's a system built on trust—one that's endured for generations in many rural communities. While not every stand operates this way, those that do offer a quiet reminder that honesty and neighborliness still have a place beside the highway.

stay hungry. stay foolish.



# America's Longest Roadside Attraction



**Get in, we're going west. There are 2,448 miles of neon, nostalgia, giant oddities, and roadside weirdness waiting.**

There are faster ways to get from Chicago to Los Angeles. Almost all of them, actually. But Route 66 was never really about efficiency. At its best, it was about the stuff that made somebody in the passenger seat point out the window and yell, "Wait. What was that?" A 20-foot-tall spaceman. A motel shaped like teepees. Ten Cadillacs buried nose-first in a Texas field. A giant blue whale sitting beside an Oklahoma pond for no particularly practical reason. Somewhere along the way, Americans figured out that if you were going to convince a tired family to pull off the highway, subtlety was probably not the answer.

Route 66 officially arrived in 1926, connecting Chicago with Los Angeles and eventually becoming one of the most famous roads in America. It carried families west during the Dust Bowl, vacationers toward California and generations of travelers looking for something new beyond the windshield. Diners opened. Motor courts flickered to life. Gas stations appeared in little towns. Then came the roadside attractions, each one seemingly created by someone asking the very important question: What if we made it bigger?

A century later, you can still chase that particular kind of roadside magic. Start in Chicago, where Route 66 begins rather politely amid skyscrapers and city streets. Illinois quickly loosens its tie. In Wilmington, the Gemini Giant stands outside the former Launching Pad Drive-In, a towering green spaceman holding a rocket like this is a perfectly normal thing to encounter before lunch. He is one of the surviving "Muffler Men," enormous fiberglass figures that once appeared outside businesses across the country, and an excellent indication of what lies ahead.

Keep heading southwest and Route 66 begins collecting the things interstate travel left behind. Old filling stations, restored neon signs, drive-ins, motels and diners still dot the road through Illinois and Missouri. Some are beautifully preserved. Others are fading slowly into the landscape. Both have their charm. This was an era when a business had only a few seconds to convince a passing motorist to hit the brakes, which explains why Route 66 advertising tended to favor bright lights, enormous signs and objects that could be seen from half a mile away.

Then Oklahoma brings out a whale. The Blue Whale of Catoosa is exactly what it sounds like: an enormous smiling blue whale sitting in a pond beside Route 66. Built in the early 1970s by Hugh Davis as an anniversary gift for his wife, Zelta, the whale eventually became part of a family swimming hole and roadside attraction. Today, nobody is diving off its tail, but the big blue grin remains. It is wonderfully unnecessary, completely charming and exactly the sort of thing Route 66 does best

Texas somehow gets even less reasonable. Just west of Amarillo, ten Cadillacs stick nose-first out of a dusty field at Cadillac Ranch, looking like an archaeological site from a civilization that worshipped tail fins. Created in 1974 by the art group Ant Farm and local millionaire Stanley Marsh 3, the installation has spent decades being covered, repainted and covered again in graffiti. Visitors have become part of the artwork, adding new layers faster than anyone could possibly keep track. There is something appropriately Route 66 about turning a row of luxury cars into a constantly changing canvas in the middle of nowhere.

By New Mexico, the roadside weirdness starts sharing the stage with the landscape. Old motels and trading posts glow beneath enormous skies, while stretches of historic pavement lead through towns that once depended almost entirely on travelers passing through. Tucumcari may be one of the best places to see





what nighttime on Route 66 once looked like, with restored neon signs buzzing back to life after sunset. This is the part of the trip where checking into an old motor court feels considerably more appropriate than finding the nearest chain hotel.




Arizona turns the whole thing into a Western. Route 66 cuts directly through Petrified Forest National Park, where fallen trees that lived more than 200 million years ago have slowly turned to stone, scattering the desert with logs that look like someone swapped the wood for quartz when nobody was looking. The old highway once carried travelers straight through this strange, colorful landscape, and portions of the original roadbed can still be spotted today. Nature, apparently, was making bizarre roadside attractions long before we were.

From there, the road rolls through places like Winslow, Flagstaff, Williams and Seligman before heading toward California. There are diners with chrome stools, old gas pumps, souvenir shops, faded signs and enough Route 66 shields painted on pavement to make you briefly consider putting one in your driveway. Eventually the desert gives way to palms, traffic and the sprawling edges of Los Angeles before the journey reaches its symbolic finish near the Santa Monica Pier. After more than 2,000 miles, the Pacific suddenly appears and Chicago feels like another lifetime.

The funny thing is, those 2,448 miles aren't necessarily what you remember. You remember the enormous blue whale. The motel sign glowing after dark. The diner where somebody topped off your coffee without asking. The ridiculous fiberglass spaceman you absolutely did not need to stop and photograph, but did anyway. You remember all the little things that slowed you down.

The interstate taught us how to get somewhere faster. Route 66 made a pretty convincing argument for taking your time. ▪

# Road Notes

**A few things worth knowing before you get your kicks.**

### WAIT, ROUTE 66 DOESN'T EXIST?

Technically, not anymore. Route 66 was officially removed from the U.S. Highway System in 1985 after interstates replaced much of the old road. Today, travelers follow preserved stretches designated as Historic Route 66.

### WHY 66?

Route 66 almost had a different number. Its promoters originally pushed for U.S. 60, but after a numbering dispute, 66 was chosen instead. Turns out, it had a pretty good ring to it.

### EIGHT STATES. THREE TIME ZONES

Route 66 crosses Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California on its journey from Chicago to Los Angeles.

### ONLY 13 MILES?!

Kansas gets the smallest slice of Route 66. The Mother Road clips the southeastern corner of the state for only about 13 miles, passing through Galena, Riverton, and Baxter Springs.

### THE MOTHER ROAD

John Steinbeck helped give Route 66 its most famous nickname when he called it the "Mother Road" in his 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath*.




**PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK**
**ARIZONA**

Historic Route 66 once cut directly through the park. Today, an old 1932 Studebaker marks the former roadbed, surrounded by a landscape where fallen trees began turning to stone more than 200 million years ago.

**WINSLOW**
**ARIZONA**

One line from the Eagles' 1972 hit "Take It Easy" transformed this little Arizona town into a road-trip pilgrimage. Today, you really can stand on a corner in Winslow, complete with a flatbed Ford nearby.



**SANTA MONICA PIER**
**CALIFORNIA**

Route 66 originally ended in downtown Los Angeles, but Santa Monica became its symbolic finish line. Today, the famous "End of the Trail" sign near the pier gives road-trippers the Pacific Ocean ending the Mother Road deserves.

## Playlist #3: Route 66

**Route 66**
Chuck Berry

**Runnin' Down a Dream**
Tom Petty

**Take It Easy**
Eagles

**Going Up the Country**
Canned Heat

**Ventura Highway**
America

**Roadrunner**
The Modern Lovers

**The Passenger**
Iggy Pop

**Everyday Is a Winding Road**
Sheryl Crow

**Life Is a Highway**
Tom Cochrane

**Midnight Rider**
The Allman Brothers Band

**Running on Empty**
Jackson Browne

**King of the Road**
Roger Miller

**California Stars**
Wilco

**No Particular Place to Go**
Chuck Berry

**I've Been Everywhere**
Johnny Cash

You can find the entire **Route 66** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile




EXIT

# the lone road

**Here's the story: U.S. 50 is actually a massive highway stretching more than 3,000 miles from Ocean City, Maryland, to Sacramento, California. But forget most of that for a minute. The part that earned the road its reputation lies much farther west, where Utah starts thinning out and Nevada basically says, Hope you filled the tank.**

In 1986, Life magazine published a story about Nevada's stretch of Route 50 and called it "The Loneliest Road in America." It wasn't exactly meant as a compliment. The article described a highway with few attractions and warned travelers against making the trip unless they had some serious survival skills. Nevada could have protested. Instead, it did something much smarter: it put the nickname on a sign and invited everybody to come see for themselves.

Turns out, telling Americans not to drive somewhere is a pretty good way to make them want to drive there.

## So, How Lonely Are We Talking?

Pretty lonely.

Across western Utah and Nevada, Route 50 cuts through enormous valleys separated by mountain range after mountain range. There are places where the highway seems to run straight toward the horizon with little more than sagebrush, mountains, and the occasional cow keeping you company. Cell service can disappear. Radio stations fade away. Services become scarce enough that "Should we get gas?" stops being a casual question and starts becoming a relationship test.

But the emptiness is a little deceptive. Long before Route 50 carried road-trippers, portions of this corridor were traveled by Pony Express riders carrying mail across the West. Later, parts became associated with the Lincoln Highway, one of America's earliest transcontinental automobile routes. Mining booms brought prospectors, railroads, saloons, hotels, and entire towns into landscapes that today can look almost untouched.

Some of those towns disappeared.

Others apparently didn't get the memo.

## The Towns That Stayed

Ely is one of the largest communities along Nevada's stretch, which tells you something about the definition of "large" out here. Its mining history still runs deep, and the Nevada



# liest

SOMETIMES YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, AND SOMETIMES, IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, YOU FIND YOURSELF.

Northern Railway keeps the region's railroad past very much alive. Farther west, Eureka looks like someone forgot to tell an old mining town that the 1800s ended. Historic brick buildings still line the streets, including an opera house dating to the town's boom years.

Then there's Austin, tucked into the mountains along a road that seems determined to make you earn every town you reach. Once a booming silver-mining community, today it's the kind of place where the historic buildings outnumber the traffic jams. By a lot.

That's part of what makes Route 50 so interesting. These aren't giant attractions surrounded by souvenir shops and parking garages. They're remnants of an older West that simply kept going while the rest of the country built faster roads around it.

## Bring a Passport. Sort Of.

Nevada eventually turned Life's less-than-flattering review into one of the better road-trip challenges in America. Travelers can pick up a Highway 50 Survival Guide and collect stamps from designated communities along the route. Complete the journey, send in your stamped guide, and you can receive an official Highway 50 Survivor certificate.

Is driving on a paved highway really something you need to "survive"? Not particularly.

Is getting a certificate for it still fun? Absolutely

And honestly, the gimmick works because it gives you an excuse to stop. That matters on a road where the temptation is to stare at the horizon and keep going. Pull into the towns. Visit the old buildings. Order lunch somewhere with six tables. Ask what's down the road. Route 50 gets better the more curious you are.

## Turns Out, Empty Is the Attraction

The strange thing about the Loneliest Road is that its biggest selling point is exactly what Life warned everyone about. There really isn't much out there.
And that's fantastic.

There are no billboards every half mile telling you what to buy. No endless parade of exits filled with the same restaurants and hotels. Instead, there are mountain passes, enormous skies, old mining towns, wild stretches of desert, and nights dark enough to remind you just how many stars are usually hiding behind city lights.

The Loneliest Road isn't lonely because nobody cared enough to put anything there. It's lonely because this is one of those increasingly rare places where the landscape still gets to be bigger than everything humans built through it.

So fill the tank, grab some snacks, and maybe download your playlist before you leave.

Out here, even Spotify might abandon you. ▪







# desert after dark

The desert has a secret.

Not abandoned ghost towns, mysterious petroglyphs, or stories of UFO sightings, although it's got plenty of those too. Its greatest trick happens every evening when the sun slips below the horizon. That's when the lights come on. Not electric lights. Celestial ones.

Across the deserts of the Southwest, some remarkably dark skies reveal themselves one star at a time until the Milky Way stretches overhead. It's a reminder that the night sky never disappeared. We just built brighter places to live.

The recipe is surprisingly simple. Desert air is dry, humidity is low, and there are often fewer clouds and less atmospheric moisture to scatter light. Add vast stretches of protected land with very few nearby cities, and you've got nearly perfect conditions for stargazing. That's why places like Big Bend, Death Valley, Canyonlands, Natural Bridges, and Great Basin have become bucket-list destinations for everyone from astrophotographers to first-time campers who simply want to remember what darkness looks like.

Of course, the stars aren't the only things waking up.

While most visitors are settling into camp, the desert is beginning its busiest shift. Coyotes call across the landscape, bats zigzag through the air hunting insects, owls glide overhead, and kangaroo rats bound across the sand on oversized hind feet. Even some of the desert's most beautiful flowers wait until after sunset to bloom, opening their petals for moths and nectar-feeding bats instead of daytime pollinators.

Then there are the scorpions.

By daylight they're remarkably good at staying hidden. But take a UV flashlight into the desert after dark and suddenly scorpions become much easier to spot. Ultraviolet light causes compounds in their exoskeleton to fluoresce an eerie blue-green, turning an otherwise well-camouflaged creature into something that looks almost radioactive. Scientists still aren't completely sure why scorpions fluoresce, but whatever the reason, sweeping a UV light across the desert floor can make an ordinary nighttime walk feel like a visit to another planet.

If you're lucky enough to visit around a new moon, the sky gets even better. Without bright moonlight washing out the faintest stars, thousands can come into view, and on clear nights the Milky Way can look more like a luminous cloud than the faint smudge most of us know. It's a glimpse of the night sky humans experienced for thousands of years, before porch lights, parking lots, billboards, and glowing skylines softened the darkness.

That's exactly what Dark Sky Parks are protecting. Recognized by DarkSky International, these places preserve natural darkness through responsible outdoor lighting, education, and conservation. Turns out darkness isn't just what happens when someone switches off the lights. It's a natural resource worth protecting.

Road trips are usually about discovering new places, but occasionally they introduce you to something much older than anything on the map. The stars that guided travelers, inspired storytellers, and fascinated civilizations for thousands of years are still putting on the same show every night.

Sometimes the best roadside attraction is about 100,000 light-years wide. ▪



NATURAL BRIDGES NATIONAL MONUMENT

### THE ORIGINAL DARK SKY PARK

Natural Bridges National Monument in Utah became the world's first International Dark Sky Park in 2007, recognized for its exceptionally dark skies and commitment to preserving natural darkness.



DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

# wait, you can see that?

**The night sky has a few tricks you'll never notice from a parking lot.**

## THE ZODIACAL LIGHT

That mysterious pyramid-shaped glow rising from the horizon isn't leftover sunset. It's sunlight reflecting off tiny particles of dust floating between the planets. Your best chance of spotting it is under very dark skies around twilight.

## THE MILKY WAY'S DARK SPOTS

Those black patches running through the Milky Way aren't empty holes in space. They're enormous clouds of interstellar dust blocking the light from millions of stars behind them. Turns out even the Milky Way has shadows.

## SATELLITES

See a tiny point of light moving steadily across the sky without blinking? Probably not a UFO. Satellites can often be spotted with the naked eye as they reflect sunlight while orbiting hundreds of miles above you.

## PLANETS WITHOUT A TELESCOPE

Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn can all be seen without a telescope when conditions and their positions are right. Venus is so bright that people have been known to mistake it for an aircraft, or something a little more extraterrestrial.

## SHOOTING STARS

They're not stars at all. Most are tiny bits of rock or dust hitting Earth's atmosphere at tremendous speeds and burning up. And yes, you can still make a wish. Science hasn't outlawed that part yet.

## YOUR OWN SHADOW, BY STARLIGHT

Under exceptionally dark conditions, the combined glow of the night sky, particularly the Milky Way, can be bright enough for your eyes to pick up faint shadows. No streetlight required.

## LOOK UP

Give your eyes 20–30 minutes away from bright lights to adjust. The longer you stay in the dark, the more the sky starts giving away its secrets.

Great Basin National Park, Nevada

THE UNKNOWN ISN'T EMPTY. IT'S SIMPLY UNWRITTEN.


*the darker the road gets,*
*the more the sky has to say.*



## LET YOUR EYES ADJUST

We spend so much time trying to keep everything illuminated, mapped out, and certain. But some things only become visible when we're willing to sit in the dark for a while. Stars are like that. So are answers. So are parts of ourselves we can't hear over all the noise.

There's an instinct to rush toward the light, to figure things out, to know what comes next. But uncertainty isn't always something that needs to be fixed. Sometimes there's something worth noticing in the space between knowing and not knowing.

Not every dark stretch means you're lost. Sometimes your eyes just need a little time to adjust.



# DANIEL GLICK

## Co-director, Producer, Writer, and Editor of *Bring Them Home*

Sometimes conservation is about protecting wildlife. Sometimes it's about restoring something much deeper. As co-director, producer, writer, and editor of *Bring Them Home*, Daniel Glick spent eight years documenting the Blackfeet Nation's effort to return wild bison to their ancestral lands—a story of healing, culture, and reconnection that reaches far beyond the animals themselves. We spoke with Daniel about what the project taught him and why repairing our relationship with the natural world begins with changing the way we see it.

**Tattle Magazine: What was your role in *Bring Them Home*, and why did you choose to be part of this documentary?**

**Daniel Glick:** I was one of the directors, one of the producers, and a writer and editor, and some photographer. I was involved in a lot of the whole aspects of the project. It was an eight year process to make it.

I'm not Blackfeet, but I was originally attracted just because of the animal, because of the American bison. I was wanting to really spend time and learn about the animals. I'm not from Montana either. I'm from New York City originally. So I was really curious to kind of see more and learn more about the animal.

As I learned about what the Blackfeet were doing, the work to bring buffalo back, I just really fell in love with their mission for many reasons. That was the impetus. Then for me this became this incredible story, this microcosm story that has macro implications. How do you bring back an animal that maybe doesn't fit so easily into the Western system that we all live in now, the Western system of private property and fences? And the competition with cattle. There are just so many pieces of the story that were interesting, especially the role of bison in creating healthy ecosystems. I could give a much longer answer, but that's a nutshell.

**TM: The film makes it clear this story is about much more than conservation. What does bringing the buffalo home really mean to the Blackfeet people?**

**DG: I** have to preface this, I'm not Blackfeet, but I've spoken with many, and my co-directors have answered these questions and I've heard their answers before, so I'm echoing them.

Bringing buffalo back is reconnecting to a part that was forcibly taken. It's making their culture whole again. It's making their way of life whole again. It's bringing back a relative, a relative that was stolen, really. Stolen and killed off.

It's a question of justice, it's a question of reconciliation, it's about healing, a healing wound, and helping make Blackfeet way of life whole again, their traditional ways.

There are many ways that bringing bison back is an act of healing. It's about healing the land, it's about healing people, it's about healing culture and healing ecosystems. And then honoring and giving back to an animal that's gonna sustain them for thousands and thousands of years.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THUNDERHEART FILMS







**TM: Was there a particular moment during filming when you realized this story was about something much larger than conservation?**

**DG:** Spending time talking to the elders, especially Lee or Little Bear, who's in the film a bunch of times, this elder from the Blood Reserve, the Kainai Nation, part of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the way that he spoke about the Blackfeet relationship to buffalo and the significance of buffalo beyond simply conservation.

This wasn't one moment that suddenly it became clear that this is more than conservation. It was this process of hearing 50 people or more share about the deeper significance of bison to spirit and to culture that opened my eyes personally.

Although for my co-directors, Ivan and Ivy McDonald, they grew up on the Blackfeet Reservation practicing their traditional Blackfeet ways, and they knew all of this. I was the one who was being initiated, educated, but they knew all of it.

**TM: The film highlights collaboration between Indigenous leaders and conservation organizations. What do you hope other communities can learn from that type of partnership?**

**DG:** When it comes to conservation, I think Indigenous people are the leaders of the world. Their ways of relating to the natural world are so much more healthy, in my opinion, than the Western perspective of we deserve to dominate everything and we are above and separate from everything else in nature.

The Indigenous perspective, the holistic perspective, is that we are part of everything and we owe it, as a part of creation, to do our part to sustain creation. It helps us just to help everything else.

Sometimes it is a tendency of conservation groups to come in and be like, "We know what to do. You listen to us." In the case of this story, it is very much a partnership. The conservation folks, the partners of the Blackfeet, came in and listened. Like, okay, how can we help you? How can we serve? How can we work together and listen to each other and learn from one another?

There is a real deep respect for Indigenous traditions and knowledge and then offering to support the vision. The respect between the conservation groups and the Indigenous communities in our story, I hope that can be a model for other work for conservation around the country or around the world.

**TM: The buffalo are often described in the film as relatives rather than simply wildlife. How does that perspective change the way you think about our relationship with the natural world?**

**DG:** It's a linguistic reminder that we are not separate from everything else.

The Western perspective, the one I grew up with, is that humans are at the top of the food chain. We can do what we want. The economic incentives of the world far outweigh ecological health, and it's okay if we destroy ecosystems. As long as we're making money, then it's fine to do whatever we want.

I think that separation is a sickness, to not see and experience and realize that we are literally related to everything else, all life. We share DNA with everything. I think it's like we share 50% of our DNA with bananas. Don't quote me on that number, but we share DNA with banana trees. We are literally relatives. We are part of nature.





To use that language of we are relatives with everything else is a way to remember our deep, profound connection and place within this web of life. I think it's critical for our survival as a species and the survival of so many other species to remember that.

Because then we want to take care of our relatives. We want to take care of our families. We want to do right by our families and the people and the beings that we're connected to. That language is so valuable in having a constant reminder that we're not separate from everything.

**TM: After someone watches Bring Them Home, what is the conversation you hope they're still having the next day?**

**DG:** I think it's connected to what I just said. I think it is this question of what is the proper relationship of human beings with the rest of existence?

How do we repair our relationship with the natural world? I think that more than anything for me is what I hope people take away.

How do we honor the rest of creation? How do we give back? And how do we begin to heal the damage that we've clearly done and are continuing to do at a rapid pace to the rest of existence?

How do we take our place as a respectful piece of the whole and regain some humility and recognize that we depend on everything else for our survival? It is incumbent on us to give back to everything else as well.

Like we really are, it's a web of relationships. As Libra Little Bear says, everything, all of life is a web of relationships. You start knocking out pieces of that web, we're gonna hurt ourselves. So we owe it to ourselves as well as everything else to be better stewards and offer more respect to all of life. ▪




**WATCH THE FILM**

Continue the story beyond these pages. *Bring Them Home* is now streaming in the U.S. on PBS, the PBS app, Apple TV, and Prime Video, and in Canada on CBC Gem.


A STORY SURVIVES EVERY TIME SOMEONE CHOOSES TO TELL IT.

# jessica matten

Actor, Producer & Indigenous Film Advocate



For Jessica Matten, storytelling has always been about more than what appears on screen.

While many viewers know her from her role on the AMC series *Dark Winds*, Matten's work in Indigenous communities began long before her career in film and television. She was working alongside her family to support Indigenous communities through programs focused on wellness, self-esteem, mentorship, and opportunity. Those experiences shaped a lifelong commitment to helping others find their voice and imagine a future larger than the circumstances around them.

That mission now lives at the heart of the Indigenous Film Academy, where aspiring creators gain more than technical skills. They gain access, mentorship, community, and a deeper understanding of how storytelling can become a tool for healing and change.

We spoke with Matten about the path that led her here, the evolving landscape of Indigenous representation in media, and why she believes the next generation of storytellers is already changing the future.

**Tattle Magazine: The Indigenous Film Academy feels like the culmination of years of community work. How did that journey lead you to creating the program?**

**Jessica Matten:** It's something that I've actually been involved with even before my acting days. I've been working to better our native communities since I was a child really. And that is very much part of the work that my mother created. That's just always been a part of my life of – whatever you're doing in life, you make sure that you're uplifting others.

We are all highly aware that we all come from a background of intergenerational trauma and looking at ways to heal that. My mom, for example, started one of the first successful native modeling agencies back in the late eighties, early nineties. What we discovered, and as I discovered as I got older, it was less about being pretty and walking a catwalk as opposed to creating self-esteem amongst a group of women who were coming from domestic abuse situations at home, coming off reservations into a city for the first time and not having a sense of belonging.

I realized when we got older that what my mother had accomplished, unbeknownst to her as well, was a sense of community.

I ended up creating my own program for the youth. Again, it was about building vision boards and manifesting before that was even a thing. It was about helping them to see beyond the reality of what their world was and believing that whatever they dreamed possible really could come into fruition.

As I got older, I developed a company for my mother called Lemon Cree. It was a fitness and wellness program that traveled to the most isolated native reserves across Canada. We helped people lose hundreds of pounds, lower their diabetes medication. I've worked a lot in suicide prevention, addiction counseling, and all of that.

I never thought I'd be an actor. I Googled it in my mid-twenties. I did that because I was pivoting from working in advertising and marketing to try to find a way to increase visibility of indigenous people in media in general. Then I finally hit a point where I'm just like, you know what? I'm just going to be one of those.

I just knew strategically I'd hit a certain point of my career and that I would be able to get the resources and the connections that I needed to continue to help my community. Pretty much this has been the game plan since day one in a lot of ways.




**STORIES START SOMEWHERE**

This summer, the Indigenous Film Academy brought aspiring Indigenous filmmakers together for hands-on experience, mentorship, and a closer look at what it takes to bring their stories to the screen. Led alongside industry partners and creatives, the program is helping open doors for a new generation of Indigenous storytellers.

**TM: The Indigenous Film Academy isn't simply teaching filmmaking, it's creating pathways into an industry. Why was that distinction important to you?**

JM: The interesting thing about a lot of film schools is it's all theory-based, and nothing has prepared me for this industry like having hands-on experience. It's just impossible to translate something from a classroom into what it's like to work on a set.

I've been in this business now for 16 years, and I still feel like I'm only really beginning to learn and understand the ins and outs of it within the last five years because of Dark Winds. I understand how rare that is to consistently be a series regular on the show and be in that position to learn everything behind the camera, not just the front.

The difference with this program is also that we focus a lot on mental health and well-being and infusing cultural aspects into the program that have never necessarily been done before.

We really bring that into the program because, as studies have shown, it's impossible to teach someone new information when their brain is constantly in fight-or-flight mode. What we work on first is how to calm down that part of the brain.

We are highly aware that a lot of the indigenous students that come to our program are dealing with real-time trauma, whether that's domestic things happening at home, or it's very multilayered within our communities of that intergenerational trauma that we need to heal.

What I do is give them coping mechanisms and techniques – we like to call it art and wellness integration. In order to ensure that they're absorbing the information, we need them to process so that I can get them working on an actual set right away.

The cool thing about this program is its intensiveness. It's two weeks of guests from Hollywood coming in from all cast and crew, and then after that we go right to work on a miniseries that has already been greenlit for the AMC Networks.

Kristin Dolan, who is the CEO of Global Media for AMC, has been just the kindest, humblest, most supportive CEO of a company. She saw and she understands what our program is doing to help others and how we could use film and television to really save lives.

I'm just eternally grateful that we also work with an amazing network of executives who also believe in what we're doing and to utilize film and media to actually save lives. It's pretty wild, but it works.

**TM: What do you believe young Indigenous creators need most right now?**

JM: I think all of it and that's what's interesting about our program is we encompass all of that.

**TM: Is there a moment with a student or graduate that perfectly captures why you started this work?**

JM: Quite a few. A great success story of this academy is based in the states and Canada. One of our students, after graduation, not only did I get them on a TV series a week after graduation, but they have also gone on to successfully intern on AMC's Interview of the Vampire in Toronto.

They've been able to work with another crew. They've been able to work on commercials for WestJet Airlines and Calgary Tourism. We've also been able to get them finance for their own short film to talk about what it's like to live on a reservation. That just made its world premiere at the largest indigenous film festival in the world last month called imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival. We've also been able to get a bunch of Blackfoot members on the TV series that they all worked on collectively.

When it first launched last November, it made it into the top 10 in Amazon's US most watch list without any marketing, and with a very, very low budget. That just proves that there is definitely an interest in indigenous stories and that you could have an indigenous crew working on a project that makes it on the streaming platform.

**TM: What are some misconceptions about Indigenous communities that authentic storytelling has the power to change?**

JM: I think that's an interesting question now as our industry continues to evolve and include Indigenous stories.

I feel like at the beginning it was more about getting rid of old Hollywood stereotypes, but I feel like the TV

# Our *souls* are meant to *create*.

shows and feature films that are out there and have been out there for the last five years have eradicated those stereotypes.

I feel like we're actually at the next phase now. We've done a great job collectively, not just as Indigenous people with our Indigenous allies, to eradicate a lot of the stereotypes.

We've done a great job of normalizing Indigenous people in media, so now it's just like what is that refined version looking like. I think that's the next step that we're currently in.

I feel it's important that the next phase is about indigenous people working with allies and non-native people alike, because that is the real world.

**TM: Throughout your work, you've advocated for Indigenous youth. What gives you hope when you look at this next generation?**

**JM:** What I'm really excited about is that the next generation has access and is open to working on their mental health. They're highly aware that that may have been an obstacle for their parents or grandparents, but it doesn't necessarily have to be the same kind of obstacle for us moving forward. Because of that there's just more of an openness, there's more of an emotional intelligence behind this generation and I'm really excited about that.

**TM: Success is often measured in awards, ratings, and recognition. How do you personally measure success when it comes to community impact?**

**JM:** I'm the kind of person that really doesn't care about awards. They're great. I understand accolades help others to look at you and take you seriously if they don't know who you are, but for me personally the definition of success is how many lives have I changed.

**TM: What kind of legacy do you hope you're helping build, not for yourself, but for Indigenous storytellers who come after you?**

**JM:** When I'm done with my time on Earth, I hope that I'm able to change the infrastructure of what indigenous storytelling looks like in TV and film. That is the ultimate goal.

I always say that I don't see myself as healing a nation, but I see myself as a plumber in the sense that I want to be able to go and zoom in on where the leak is coming from, and I want to patch up that leak so that the next generation could flow, that things flow easier so that they get over the next phase of hurdles of healing our people.

**TM: When you think about the next generation of Indigenous storytellers, what opportunities do you hope they have that weren't available when you were starting out?**

**JM:** I think just access to direct communications with how to, for example, get into the union. There are hundreds of crew jobs. There are hundreds of other jobs that exist to make these TV and film productions.

I don't want them to be limited to just thinking ... I got to be a writer, a director or an actor. I want them to understand that it is very realistic for them to work in this business.

Hollywood is in this crazy shifting period where there is a lot of lack of work right now. But I always believe that when chaos is happening, it's the opportunity to also grow and create new systems and infrastructure.

I think it's very important that all indigenous youth keep that in mind as they continue to create and that they're not limited to having to get into the union to create. Our souls are meant to create. They could create on YouTube. There are so many apps out there. There are ways that they could create their own shows.

I think a great example of that is the new movie that's out, Backrooms, which was created from a viral YouTube series developed by a 16-year-old. A24 Studios saw that and gave him this huge budget. There's a great example of the access of the internet and what that could do for the youth and how they could continue to evolve.

**TM: Why do you think creativity is such an important part of healing and community?**

**JM:** I'll share my medicine, my medicine woman always said this too, our souls are meant to create. So as long as you're creating something, and I believe helping others, Spirit will always help you out as well and guide you. Doors will open unbeknownst to you as you continue marching forward on your path.

One thing I love about us creatives — we're always creating and that's super important. It makes our world turn. ▪



There's something worth noticing about the place between where you've been and where you're going.

Every roadside map has one. A little red dot planted somewhere between the parking lot and the overlook, confidently announcing: **YOU ARE HERE.**

It's such a simple thing. Before you figure out where you're headed, you have to know where you're standing.

We're not nearly as good at doing that in the rest of our lives.

We tend to measure things by what comes next. The next town. The next job. The next relationship. The next version of ourselves who will supposedly have everything a little more figured out. We keep moving the imaginary red dot farther down the road, convinced that there is where things really begin.

Meanwhile, here keeps happening.

Here is the conversation you almost rushed through. The view outside the window. The person sitting beside you. The ordinary Tuesday you'll someday realize belonged to an entirely different chapter of your life.

That doesn't mean you have to love where you are. Some places are meant to be temporary. Some seasons are uncomfortable. Some stretches of road are mostly construction, questionable gas-station coffee, and wondering how much farther you have to go.

But even those places count.

Because someday you'll look back at the person you were standing right here and realize they were already becoming the person you were trying so hard to reach.

So keep the destination. Make the plans. Take the next exit when it feels right.

Just every once in a while, look around.

**You are here.**

And for now, that's somewhere worth being. ▪


YOU
ARE
HERE



# JOHN KIM

For years, John Kim has challenged the way people think about relationships by trading therapy jargon for honest conversations. Known to many as *The Angry Therapist*, he's built a career around reminding people that growth isn't about perfection — it's about ownership, vulnerability, and showing up differently. In his newest book, *Love Hard on Purpose*, Kim encourages readers to let go of outdated relationship blueprints and create something more intentional, more authentic, and ultimately more human.

**Tattle Magazine: Why this new book? *Why* Love Hard on Purpose?**

**John Kim:** Because I feel like my story started with love, meaning losing love at 35 ... divorce. And so now at 53, I've kind of come full circle after writing seven books, and I kind of wanted to end on love. Everything I've learned as a 53-year-old, but also as a therapist, and also helping my clients. I just feel like in the world, it's lacking, not just romantic love, but just love, because you're so divided.

So it's the end of the trilogy of *Single on Purpose*, *Breakup on Purpose*, and now *Love Hard on Purpose*. It's just a great way to end. Not that I'm going to end my writing career, but it's a nice period after publishing nonstop. I think I'm on seven or eight books now.

**TM: You described this as the book you wish you had when you were getting it wrong. What are some of the biggest ways you misunderstood love back then?**

**JK:** Oh man, back then love was about how I felt, putting weight on things like chemistry or the feeling, the dopamine, without realizing that's a feeling. Love is the ability to build a safe container for the love to grow. I think that's one of my biggest revelations.

The other one is that love is bigger than you, that it's a living, breathing thing. Two people create something that is greater than its parts. That elevates love. It makes love higher. There's a lot less ego.

When we think about our kid, of course we're gonna do everything for our child, even if it means something that's gonna affect our own life. There's a lot of sacrifice. But when it comes to love, I don't think people see it that way, and they should. Not sacrificing self, but to not just make it about you.

I think in my 30s I was very selfish with love. A lot of grabbing, a lot of taking, a lot of, "Here's what I want. Here's how you should love me." Now I'm 53, I'm trying to rewire myself by knowing that I'm creating a space for love to grow and become bigger than me, or bigger than us.

**TM: A lot of people mistake insecurity, attachment, or the fear of losing someone as love. How do you learn the difference?**

**JK:** I think all those things are part of love as in they all come from wounds. It's sad, but I think as adults we are basically healing from what happened in our childhood. That's what life is.

But I feel like the mystery and magic of love is that if you do that with another person, then you're creating a greenhouse where the relationship itself can be healing. This idea that you can heal through love is one of the concepts in the book. It's not just about finding your one because that's what society says, but healing you and the other person through this thing that you guys are creating that's greater.

I think that's the power of love. The gift of love is that it can be healing.

In the book, the big thing I talk about is giving yourself a corrective love experience. What would be a corrective love experience for you? What would be something where your body's like, "Oh, this is new and different?" Your body may also reject it, but you're rewiring and re-giving your body a corrective love experience where it never felt this new kind of love. So there's healing in that.

**TM: Do you think people put too much pressure on themselves to feel like they need to be fully healed before they deserve love or before they can get into a relationship?**

**JK:** Yeah, and I think it's a misconception. I don't know even what truly healed looks like. I like the word evolving. I think we're always evolving, and love is a living, breathing thing. So I think until we die we're going to evolve, and with that evolution comes, of course, lots of healing.

But I don't think this idea that you're fully healed and then you love someone is true. I think that's a misconception. You never know who's gonna meet when, and then you guys decide to kind of start this together.

Unless you're raging at an addiction and you're trying to stop heroin, yes, we might want to be clean before building a relationship. But the idea of fully being healed before loving someone else, I don't think that's true.

**TM: Why do you think so many people confuse emotional intensity with real connection?**

**JK:** Because I think a lot of it is what we grew up with. Rom-coms and advertising and songs and media where everyone's looking for that lightning in the bottle. It's young love too. When you're young, I don't even think we have the tools to override the feeling of love. When you're in high school everything's heightened.

Then we look back and we're like, "Oh my gosh, he didn't ask me to the prom," and now looking back, that's so silly. But at that time it really was like that. I think young love is where we don't even have the tools or capacity to not let it hijack us.

Then I think we have to turn the corner as we get older to realize, "Oh, that's the feeling." I've got to know where it's coming from. Usually the more powerful the feeling, the more toxic.

Love also comes with a mundane, sort of boring low hum. Consistency can feel boring for many people who grew up with a lot of trauma and chaos. So that's the work. That's what's hard, to sit in that. That's where the rewiring happens. That's the reconditioning of your body.

**TM: The cover of the book encourages readers to "toss the blueprints" and build something honest. What does that mean?**

**JK:** The book says, "Toss the blueprints. Build something honest with love."

Most of us live because of our blueprints or because of what's been passed down, whether it's our parents or religion or whatever. The idea of finding the one, running toward the picket fence, having the 2.2 kids – that whole blueprint may not feel honest to us.



## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

Find more from John Kim, The Angry Therapist, at theangrytherapist.com. His latest book, *Love Hard. On Purpose*, is available now wherever books are sold.




If we're chasing something that's not honest to us, we're not building a love that feels real. We're basically living our parents' definitions, or our friends', or media's. So I think the first step is to toss all blueprints.

Especially now where people are talking about things like monogamy or long distance. Right now my partner and I sleep in separate bedrooms. Before I was like, "Oh, that's horrible. That's not love. What is that? Are you guys like roommates?" But it works. We have different clocks. There's a cat I'm allergic to. So many situations. When she gets better sleep, we're closer and more intimate. She's more regulated.

**TM: You mentioned Love Hard on Purpose is the final book in this series, and that it's really about breaking the blueprint. It's for relationships, but it's also about the world needing to love harder. How do you see this book fitting into everyday life and what people need right now?**

**JK:** I think looking inward. I don't think love means just to grab, but the ability to look at yourself or your judgments. It's not just romantic love, but just love in general. The human exchange. Friendships, family, strangers. What is your ownership in that human exchange? How are you growing from it? How are you learning from it? What are you willing to own?

I think the world right now is very divided. I think more than ever, women and men are divided because of dating apps where we become baseball cards. We're kind of loving outside in instead of inside out. So to go back to, or maybe for the first time, humanizing ourselves, especially with technology. I think that's... and it's all hard. It's not easy to be vulnerable.

**TM: If readers walk away from *Love Hard on Purpose* with one shift in perspective about love, what do you hope it is?**

**JK:** Man, I think love being greater than you is kind of overarching, that love should be elevated. Either that or that love is about co-creating. There's no right or wrong anymore. You can co-create, you can customize any kind of love you want.

Whether that is, living separately, or it could be non-monogamy or it could be multiple apartments. Whatever works for you. At the end of the day, it's whatever works for you and your partner or partners. That's where we're headed. To me, that's more honest than like, "Okay, I got to get married at a certain age, I got to have a kid." ▪





NATURAL BRIDGES, SAMUEL H. BOARDMAN STATE SCENIC CORRIDOR, OREGON

### NATURE'S ARCHITECTURE

Natural Bridges is home to seven remarkable rock arches and blowholes, sculpted by the relentless force of Pacific waves. Some formed when the roofs of ancient sea caves collapsed, leaving natural stone ridges behind

### 12 MILES OF WOW

Stretching along Highway 101 near Brookings, Oregon, the Samuel H. Boardman State Scenic Corridor packs secluded beaches, towering sea stacks, forested cliffs and breathtaking overlooks into just 12 miles of coastline.

# AND THEN, THE PACIFIC



After all those miles, the road finally runs out of continent.

There's something strange about reaching the Pacific after crossing the country. For thousands of miles, there was always somewhere else to go. Another highway. Another town. Another state line promising something different on the other side.

And then, the Pacific.

Suddenly, west isn't a direction anymore. It's water.

The edge of the country doesn't exactly ease you into it, either. Along much of the West Coast, the land seems to end dramatically. Cliffs drop toward crashing waves. Sea stacks rise from the water like somebody forgot to clean up after building the coastline. Redwoods grow within reach of salty air. Fog rolls across roads that twist above an ocean so big it makes everything you worried about three states ago feel considerably smaller.

This is a coastline made for pulling over.

Not necessarily because there's a famous landmark waiting for you, but because the Pacific has a habit of making ordinary roadside moments feel worth stopping for. A whale spout on the horizon. Harbor seals piled onto a rock. A tide pool temporarily holding an entire tiny universe. Surfers walking barefoot across cold sand in wetsuits because apparently hypothermia is negotiable when the waves are good.

And then there are the sunsets.

Maybe it's because you've reached the western edge of things, but watching the sun disappear into the Pacific feels different. People stop. Conversations quiet down. Cars pull onto overlooks. Strangers stand beside one another facing the same direction as the sky turns pink, orange, gold, and eventually blue.

For a few minutes, nobody seems particularly concerned about what comes next.

Which might be the best part about reaching the end of a very long road.

You don't have to immediately turn around.

You can just stand there awhile. ▪

## Playlist #4: And Then, the Pacific

**California**
Joni Mitchell

**Going to California**
Led Zeppelin

**California Nights**
Best Coast

**Pacific Coast Highway**
The Beach Boys

**San Francisco**
The Mowgli's

**West Coast**
Coconut Records

**Malibu**
Miley Cyrus

**Big Sur**
Jack Johnson

**Free Fallin'**
Tom Petty

**The Coast**
Paul Simon

**The Ocean**
The Bravery

**Sweet Disposition**
The Temper Trap

**Rivers and Roads**
The Head and the Heart

**(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay**
Otis Redding

**Ends of the Earth**
Lord Huron

You can find the entire **And Then, the Pacific** playlist on Tattle's Spotify profile

# HOPE IN THE WATER



PHOTO BY SAM JOHNSON



SHAILENE WOODLEY MOVING KELP TO FEED THE URCHIN

PHOTOS BY ERIC WOLFINGER

Executive Director, Impact Producer & Ocean Advocate

# jennifer BUSHMAN





CHEF RHODA MAGBITANG

For Jennifer Bushman, protecting our oceans begins with understanding what ends up on our plates. As Executive Director of Fed by Blue and an impact producer for the Emmy-nominated PBS docuseries Hope in the Water, she's working to change the conversation around seafood, sustainability, and the communities that depend on our waters. Through storytelling, education, and a belief that everyday choices can create meaningful change, Bushman is helping people see the connection between what we eat, where it comes from, and the future of our oceans.

**Tattle Magazine: Many people think of ocean conservation as something that happens far away from their daily lives. How do you help people understand that the choices they make at the dinner table are connected to the future of our oceans?**

**Jennifer Bushman:** I think it starts with provenance and storytelling. When people understand where their food comes from, when they hear the story of the fisher, the shellfish farmer, or the seaweed grower, they begin to see that every choice they make at the dinner table matters. Every time they order seafood at a restaurant or purchase food from water, they have an opportunity to align their dollars with their values. There's also something deeply personal, and perhaps even romantic, about our connection to the ocean. We imagine fishing boats heading out at dawn or farmers tending oysters and kelp in pristine waters. But beyond that imagery lies something incredibly tangible: the food we eat. Water-based foods are among the most powerful tools we have for building a more sustainable global food system, yet many of us don't fully appreciate that connection.

For us, the goal is to help people see that the ocean is not separate from their everyday lives-it's on their plates, in their communities, and in the choices they make every day. When people understand that we can produce food from the ocean in ways that also protect and restore it, they begin to see that conservation and nourishment are not opposing forces. They are deeply interconnected, and they are central to the future of our food system.

**TM: Why was *Hope in the Water* created?**

**JB:** *Hope in the Water* was created because we believed that if we wanted to drive meaningful change, we needed a powerful storytelling platform—something that could spark conversation and serve as the foundation for broader impact campaigns. We were fortunate to partner with Andrew Zimmern early on. Together, we developed the concept for Hope in the Water and then brought it to



KELP USED FOR FEED AT THE CULTURED ABALONE FARM

PHOTO BY SAM JOHNSON

our friend, the acclaimed Hollywood producer David E. Kelley. David helped us sharpen our focus on character-driven storytelling. He encouraged us to tell stories about people-innovators, fishers, farmers, and scientists-who were doing inspiring work on the water and creating solutions rooted in hope. That perspective became the heart of the series.

Our partnership with PBS was equally important. Every scientific claim had to be rigorously vetted, which gave us the credibility to tackle complex issues while showing audiences that there is genuine reason for optimism. We wanted to demonstrate that the story of our oceans isn't only one of decline or crisis. It is also a story of innovation, resilience, and possibility. At its core, Hope in the Water explores how we can align water protection with water production in service of a healthier and more sustainable food system. And once the series was created, our work was really just beginning. The next step was building an impact campaign around the content-one designed to inspire people to make different choices and ultimately change consumer behavior in ways that benefit both people and the planet.

**TM: One of the things that stood out to me is your effort to move beyond the debate of wild-caught versus farmed seafood. What are some of the biggest misconceptions consumers have today?**

**JB:** I often start by asking people, "When was the last time you asked if your hamburger was wild-caught?" It usually gets a laugh, but it makes an important point.

Just as we can raise chickens well or poorly, the same is true for food from water. In the United States especially, there has been a long-standing narrative that wild-caught seafood is inherently better than farmed seafood. The reality is much more nuanced. It depends on the species, where it's raised, the farming practices, and the people behind it.

That brings us back to provenance-knowing your farmer and understanding where your food comes from. That's where we believe the real education needs to happen.

There are extraordinary water farmers around the world producing seafood in ways that are responsible, regenerative, and incredibly innovative. And this conversation extends far beyond salmon, which has become a particularly divisive topic and is often what people think of when they hear the words "farmed seafood." We're talking about a remarkable diversity of species and farming systems—from tilapia farms in the rainforests of Costa Rica, to oyster farmers along the coast of Maine, to seaweed farmers in Alaska. Together, these producers are helping supply a growing share of the seafood Americans eat.

The truth is, most people are already eating farmed seafood. The more important question is: Was it raised responsibly? And do consumers have access to the information they need to make informed choices? That's exactly why we created Seafood Scout. It's a simple resource that encourages people to ask a few essential questions: What species is this? Where did it come from? Who raised it? And then it provides the tools and resources to help people find those answers and make choices that align with their values.

**TM: When people hear the phrase "responsibly sourced blue food," what does that actually mean in practice?**

**JB:** It's actually not that different from the questions we already ask about the rest of our food. When you shop at a grocery store, visit a farmer's market or join a food co-op, you want to know who grew your food and where it came from. Foods from water deserve that same curiosity. The first questions are simple: What species is it? Where is it from? And then you can go a little deeper. If it's wild-caught, how was it caught? The fishing method matters. There's a big difference between seafood harvested by a small-scale fisher using hand lines and seafood caught by large industrial fleets. Understanding those distinctions helps consumers support fisheries that are managed responsibly and designed to endure.

If it's farmed, does it carry a certification? Organizations like the Aquaculture Stewardship Council certify farms that meet rigorous environmental and social standards. There are also resources such as the Marine Stewardship Council and Seafood Watch from the Monterey Bay Aquarium that help consumers make informed decisions. Ultimately, we want people to stop asking the simple question: Is it wild or is it farmed? If they probe just a little bit deeper, then they can decide what aligns with their own values.

For some people, that means eating as close to the source as possible. If you live in a coastal community like San Diego, you might buy directly from local fishers or shop at a dockside market. If you live in Indiana, you're more likely to rely on trusted certifications and consumer guides to help you navigate your choices.

For us, responsibly sourced blue food is really about being active and engaged. Consumers have tremendous influence. Their choices can help support fisheries that are well managed, farms that are raising seafood responsibly, and food systems that protect the health of our oceans. The future of our oceans won't be determined by a single policy or a single technology. It will also be shaped by millions of everyday decisions by



MARTHA STEWART GOES SCALLOP FARMING WITH ANDREW PETERS OWNER OF VERTICAL BAY

PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER



people choosing to ask questions, seek transparency, and support the producers who are doing things the right way.

**TM: What have you learned from coastal communities that people living inland don't often understand about our relationship with water?**

**JB:** What I've learned from coastal communities is that water isn't simply a resource-it's a living ecosystem and a way of life that, in many places, has been sustained for generations. Fishing is often a family legacy. A boat may be the greatest asset a fisher owns, and if they're fortunate, it's passed from one generation to the next. Along with it come traditions, knowledge, and a profound sense of stewardship for the water. But many of these communities are changing rapidly. Coastal development is reshaping local economies in ways that don't always support working waterfronts. Docks that once welcomed fishing boats are disappearing, replaced by marinas for recreational vessels or luxury developments. As those spaces disappear, so do opportunities for fishers to bring in their catch and sustain their livelihoods.

That's something we urgently need to preserve.

A big part of Fed by Blue's work is helping young people especially students in grades 6 through 12, see a future for themselves on the water. That might mean becoming a fisher, farming oysters or seaweed, or learning how to adapt as ecosystems change, or just making a seafood choice for dinner! If your family has fished one species for generations, perhaps the next generation learns to cultivate another. These are not abstract ideas. They're deeply personal and deeply connected to identity. This work is emotional. It's economic. In many ways, it's political. It's about jobs, community, food security, and ultimately, our shared humanity.

I think we've lost sight of some of that because we've commoditized seafood. We see it wrapped in plastic at the grocery store and forget the people and ecosystems behind it.

One of my favorite moments in our docuseries, Hope in the Water is when Baratunde Thurston goes out on a fishing boat. Terrible weather keeps them from making a successful catch, and when Baratunde returns to shore, he looks into the camera and says, "Rough day. Rough day at the office."

It's such a simple moment, but it reminds us that behind every seafood choice is a person whose livelihood depends on the health of our waters. He concludes "Most people don't think about that when they're standing in the grocery aisle but perhaps they should." That is for sure!

**TM: Fed by Blue is invested in educational resources for schools. Why is it important to start these conversations with young people?**

**JB:** It's extraordinary what happens when you engage young people at this stage of their lives. Middle school and high school are such formative years. A time when students are discovering what excites them, what they care about, and what they might want to do in the future. When *Hope in the Water* was released on PBS, we chose that partnership very intentionally. We knew we wanted to create impact through education, particularly for students in grades 6 through 12, and by working with PBS LearningMedia we could reach nearly 90 percent of schools across the United States.

Together with Stanford, the Food for Climate League, and PBS LearningMedia, we developed five custom educational toolkits that could be integrated into STEM and career education. We wanted students to explore questions like: What does it look like when an Indigenous community begins farming seaweed? How is that seaweed used? What does it mean to use 100 percent of a fish—not just for food, but for products like fish leather, collagen supplements, or even fish skin that can be used in burn treatments? The possibilities are fascinating, and you never know what spark you might ignite in a young person's imagination.

For students in grades 6 through 12, these conversations come at a pivotal moment. They're beginning to think about their future what they'll study, what careers they might pursue, and what kind of impact they want to have on the world. Blue foods and careers on the water can become part of that vision. And sometimes the impact is even simpler. A student might watch an episode, learn about salmon or oysters, and decide they want to try it for the

PHOTO BY SAM JOHNSON



HI'ILEI KAWELO PREPARES FISH FOR A COMMUNITY MEAL

first time. In the United States, we eat far less fish and seafood than many other parts of the world, so part of our mission is simply to broaden that perspective to open the aperture, spark curiosity, and build excitement around the incredible diversity of foods that come from water.

If we can inspire the next generation to care about our oceans, to explore careers connected to them, and to make thoughtful choices about what they eat, then we've created something that extends far beyond a television series. We've helped shape the future.

**TM: Overfishing, pollution, habitat loss and climate change can feel overwhelming. Where can individuals make the most meaningful impact?**

JB: My answer is actually very simple: eat more seaweed, especially seaweed produced in the United States and eat more bivalves, like oysters, clams, and scallops!

These are what we call low-trophic species, and many of them are regenerative by nature. They require very few, if any, inputs. Seaweed doesn't need freshwater, fertilizer, or feed to grow, and some species can grow several feet in a single week. Bivalves, meanwhile, feed naturally from the water around them and can actually improve water quality as they grow. The benefits extend far beyond the plate. Seaweed can be used as a biostimulant to help regenerate soils, and certain species can even be added to cattle feed to significantly reduce methane emissions. Oysters are remarkable natural filters, cleaning the water as they grow and helping support healthier coastal ecosystems. They have just announced the first ever oyster farm in the San Francisco Bay. Progress!!!

So when you choose these foods, you're doing more than making a sustainable seafood choice. You're supporting water farmers, strengthening coastal economies, and investing in food systems that work with nature rather than against it. I know conversations about overfishing, pollution, habitat loss, and climate change can feel overwhelming. But one of the most powerful things we can do is rethink what we eat. We can fight climate change, support biodiversity, and help restore our oceans through the choices we make every day.

What I always tell students is this: you can help shape the future of our oceans simply by the way you snack. Choosing a kelp chip instead of a potato chip might seem like a small act, but millions of small acts add up. That's how change happens one meal, one purchase, and one generation at a time.

**TM: Could you tell me about *The Blue Food Cookbook*?**

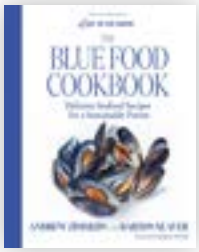
JB: I would love to talk about *The Blue Food Cookbook* because it was part of the vision from the very beginning of Fed by Blue! Before founding the organization, I was a cookbook author. I had written cookbooks before I became immersed in blue foods, and I understood the power that a cookbook has not just to teach recipes, but to change how people think about food and the choices they make. From the start, we wanted Fed by Blue to have something tangible that people could hold in their hands. Something that would show not only what blue foods are, but how easy, delicious, and joyful they can be to prepare at home.

We partnered with Andrew Zimmern and the renowned cookbook author and blue foods advocate Barton Seaver to bring that vision to life. Together, we created *The Blue Food Cookbook*, which was released on October 28, 2025. The response was extraordinary. The book became the number one bestselling celebrity cookbook and the number one seafood cookbook on Amazon. Through the cookbook tour and extensive media coverage, millions of people were introduced not only to the recipes, but to the mission behind them. Like the Hope in the Water series, the cookbook became a pillar of impact for Fed by Blue.

What makes it especially meaningful is that it was the first book ever called The Blue Food Cookbook. For many people, the term "blue foods" was entirely new. Yet internationally, blue foods are understood as all foods that come from water-streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, the sea, and the ocean. We felt it was important to create a cultural moment around that idea to give people a language for understanding these foods and to invite them into a conversation they may never have encountered before. Because ultimately, that's what the cookbook is about. It's not just



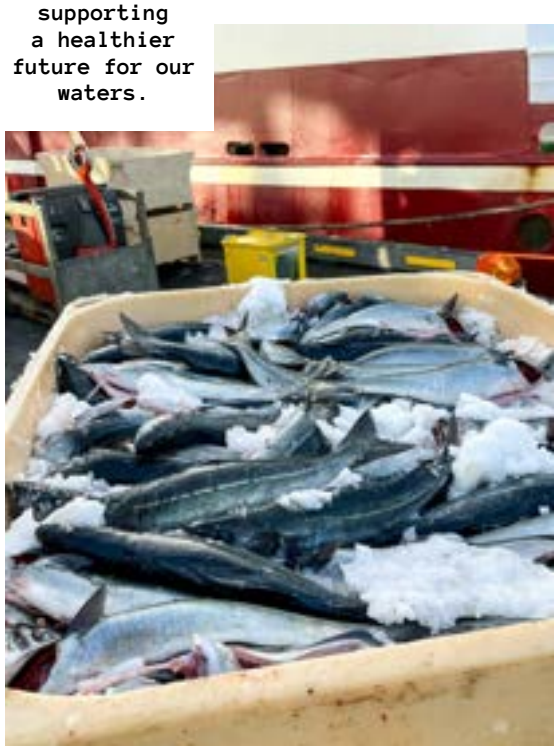
ECONOMIST, THOR SIGFUSSON AND SKIPPER, ÓSKAR MATTHÍASSON LOOKING AT RED FISH




## EXPLORE THE COOKBOOK

**Bring the blue food movement into your own kitchen. The Blue Food Cookbook explores delicious, sustainable ways to enjoy foods from our oceans, lakes, and rivers while supporting a healthier future for our waters.**





PHOTOS BY SAM JOHNSON

## KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

**Fed by Blue**
**fedbyblue.org**



PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER

recipes. It's an invitation to discover a whole new way of thinking about food—one that connects delicious meals to healthier people, thriving communities, and a more sustainable future.

**TM: Your work is ultimately about protecting one of the planet's most important resources while helping feed people. When you stand near the ocean today, what gives you the greatest sense of hope?**

**JB:** What gives me hope is the sheer number of people who have dedicated their lives to protecting our waters. I think about the funders and investors who are supporting innovation, the nonprofits working tirelessly to drive change, but also the fishers, the seaweed farmers, the oyster growers, and the companies that are committed to doing things the right way. There are so many people working every day to protect our waters while ensuring they continue to nourish us.

This work isn't easy. The ocean exists beyond most of our horizons literally and figuratively. Especially for people who live inland, it's difficult to fully grasp the scale of the ocean, the complexity of its ecosystems, and the profound role it plays in sustaining life on Earth. But when I think about the more than three billion people who rely on foods from water for part of their daily nutrition, and I stand at the edge of the sea looking out at that vastness, I feel two things simultaneously: responsibility and hope.

That's what keeps me going every day.

I believe deeply that if we care for our waters, they will continue to care for us. Throughout human history, oceans, lakes, rivers, and coastlines have nourished communities and sustained civilizations. In many ways, our waters have been the world's largest food bank. The challenge before us is not whether our waters can provide. It's whether we will choose to protect it, steward it, and value it for generations to come.

And when I look at the people doing that work today, I have every reason to be hopeful. ▪

**(BELOW) DUNE LANKARD AND BRANDYN ASHLEY COMPARAN PREPARE KELP CAKES**



PHOTO BY SAM JOHNSON

## WATCH THE SERIES

**Discover the stories of hope and innovation happening on our waters. The Emmy-nominated PBS docuseries Hope in the Water is available to stream on PBS Passport and Amazon.**

THE OCEAN EXISTS BEYOND MOST OF OUR HORIZONS LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY.



# west of ordinary



From Washington to California, expect winding roads, weird rocks, wild residents, and absolutely no reason to rush.

## RUBY BEACH

**WASHINGTON**

Olympic National Park doesn't believe in ordinary beaches. Ruby Beach looks like something out of a fantasy film, with towering sea stacks, enormous driftwood logs, and tide pools full of marine life. The sea stacks are remnants of harder rock that survived as waves wore away the surrounding coastline. Bring sturdy shoes, check the tides, and don't expect to leave with dry socks.

## CANNON BEACH

**OREGON**

If this stretch of Oregon looks familiar, you may have watched The Goonies a few dozen times. Haystack Rock rises 235 feet above the beach, surrounded by tide pools full of colorful marine creatures. Add a charming town of galleries, cozy cafés, and a little morning fog, and you've got a place that feels suspiciously cinematic.

## CAPE PERPETUA

**OREGON**

Just south of Yachats, the coastline starts showing off some unusual geological tricks. Thor's Well is a bowl-shaped opening in volcanic rock that appears to swallow the Pacific as waves rush in and drain away, while nearby Spouting Horn shoots seawater into the air. It's dramatic, loud, and an excellent reminder that the ocean is considerably stronger than you are. Admire both from a safe distance.

## SAMUEL H. BOARDMAN STATE SCENIC CORRIDOR

**OREGON**

Along 12 miles of southern Oregon coastline, the landscape looks like someone couldn't decide between a rainforest and a dramatic ocean cliff. So they went with both. Natural Bridges reveals stone arches carved by thousands of years of pounding waves, while scenic overlooks offer glimpses of secluded beaches and offshore rock formations. Stick to established viewpoints because those spectacular cliffs don't come with guardrails everywhere.



## REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS

**CALIFORNIA**

Just when you think the ocean has stolen the show, Northern California introduces trees that make you feel approximately the size of a garden gnome. Coast redwoods can grow taller than 350 feet and live for more than 2,000 years. Wander through Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, where sunlight filters through the canopy and Roosevelt elk occasionally graze in open meadows.



GO WHERE CURIOSITY TAKES YOU.





## BIG SUR
### CALIFORNIA

Here's where the road trip starts looking suspiciously like a car commercial. Highway 1 twists along dramatic cliffs, with the Santa Lucia Mountains on one side and the Pacific stretching endlessly on the other. Bixby Creek Bridge may be the celebrity of the route, but the hidden coves, coastal wildflowers, and jaw-dropping overlooks deserve some attention, too.

## PIEDRAS BLANCAS
### CALIFORNIA

Just north of San Simeon, there's a beach where the locals are enormous, loud, and have absolutely no interest in entertaining tourists. Thousands of northern elephant seals return to Piedras Blancas throughout the year to breed, molt, and lounge around like they've never had a responsibility in their lives. Males can weigh several thousand pounds, and free viewing areas let visitors watch the spectacle from a safe distance. ▪



### KELP BY THE NUMBERS

If giant kelp were measured the way we measure trees, it would rank among North America's giants. Individual plants can exceed 100 feet in length, creating underwater canopies that shelter hundreds of species. Some kelp forests cover miles of coastline, forming habitats so rich and productive that they're often compared to tropical rainforests. The difference, of course, is that most people will never walk through one. They exist just offshore, hidden beneath the waves, carrying on largely unnoticed.

### SEA OTTERS SLEEP HERE

Even sea otters need a little help staying put. To avoid drifting away during a nap, these furry Pacific Coast residents often wrap themselves in strands of kelp, using the underwater forest as a natural anchor. Apparently, kelp comes with a built-in bedtime security system. Not bad for a bunch of seaweed, and a charming reminder that even the ocean's most playful residents depend on the hidden ecosystems below.

# BENEATH



The Pacific Ocean has a way of making us feel small. Stand on a rocky overlook anywhere from California to Alaska and you'll understand why. Endless horizons, crashing waves, seabirds riding the wind, and enough water to make you question just how much of the planet we've actually explored. Most of us stand there staring toward the horizon, completely unaware that one of the ocean's most remarkable ecosystems is growing practically beneath our feet.

Just beyond the breakers, stretching along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to Baja California, are vast underwater forests made of kelp. Giant kelp can reach heights of more than 100 feet and, under ideal conditions, grow nearly two feet in a single day. That's a pretty impressive growth spurt for something without a trunk, branches, or even roots. Technically, kelp is a type of brown algae, but don't let the scientific classification fool you. These underwater giants have all the makings of a forest, minus the hiking trails and overpriced gift shops. And like any good forest, they're full of residents. Fish weave between towering fronds, sea stars cling to the rocks below, and harbor seals cruise through the underwater canopy. Young fish use the dense vegetation as a nursery, finding food and protection from predators. Kelp forests are among the ocean's most productive ecosystems, supporting an extraordinary amount of life in a place most beachgoers never even notice.

Then there are the sea otters, arguably the forest's most adorable tenants. When it's time for a nap, sea otters sometimes wrap themselves in kelp to keep from drifting away. They float on their backs, paws tucked close, gently bobbing with the waves while tethered to the forest below. Nature apparently invented the weighted blanket long before we did. Sea otters also help protect kelp forests by eating sea urchins, which can devour kelp when their populations grow unchecked.

Of course, kelp has been useful to humans for centuries. Indigenous communities along the Pacific Coast have long relied on kelp and other seaweeds for food, tools, and everyday life. Today, seaweed-derived ingredients turn up in everything from ice cream and cosmetics to fertilizers and pharmaceuticals. Not bad for something most of us only notice when it washes up on the beach and gets tangled around our ankles.

But perhaps the most remarkable thing about kelp forests is how easily we overlook them. We travel hundreds of miles to stand beneath towering redwoods, photograph dramatic cliffs, and admire the coastline from every available scenic pullout. Meanwhile, entire forests are swaying just offshore, quietly going about their business without a single trail marker or admission fee.

The next time you find yourself staring out at the Pacific, remember that the best scenery isn't always above the waterline. Somewhere below, sea otters are sleeping, fish are finding their way, and a forest is growing with the tide.

The coastline doesn't end where the water begins. In many ways, that's where it starts. ▪

### THE FASTEST GROWING FOREST

A redwood may take decades to reach its full height, but giant kelp plays by different rules. Under the right conditions, it can grow nearly two feet in a single day, making it one of the fastest-growing organisms on Earth. Unlike a forest on land, a kelp forest is constantly changing. Storms tear sections away. New growth stretches toward the sunlight. Entire underwater landscapes can transform over the course of a season. What appears timeless from above is actually in a state of near-constant motion.

# THE SURFACE

# KEEPERS OF THE COAST

## WEST COAST BEACONS

The Pacific has a way of making everything feel a little bigger, a little wilder, and a little quieter. These West Coast beacons have been keeping watch for generations, inviting travelers to slow down, breathe deeply, and stay awhile.

### FIVE FINGER ISLANDS LIGHTHOUSE



**LOCATION**
Frederick Sound, Southeast Alaska

First established in 1902, this was one of Alaska's first two lighthouse stations. The original tower burned in 1933 and was replaced with a striking Art Deco-style concrete lighthouse in 1935. Its remote island setting is also prime humpback whale territory.

### HECETA HEAD LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Yachats, Oregon

Its powerful beam can be seen for more than 20 miles, and the former keeper's house now welcomes overnight guests as a bed-and-breakfast.



### DIAMOND HEAD LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Honolulu, Hawaii

Standing beneath the famous volcanic slopes of Diamond Head, this lighthouse has guided ships approaching Honolulu since the late 1800s. It even appeared on a U.S. postage stamp in 2007.

## NORTH HEAD LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Ilwaco, Washington

Perched atop cliffs nearly 200 feet above the ocean, it offers sweeping views of crashing waves, sea stacks, and migrating gray whales.



## PIGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Pescadero, California

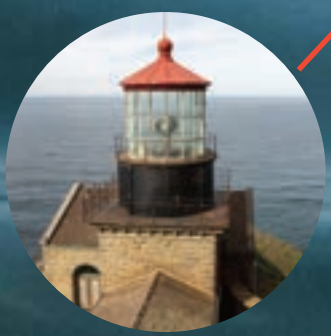
Standing 115 feet tall, it's one of the tallest lighthouses on the West Coast and has been guiding ships since 1872.



## POINT SUR LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION**
Big Sur, California

Perched atop a massive volcanic rock, this lighthouse has guided ships since 1889. Early keepers and their families lived so remotely that leaving the station meant descending nearly 400 steps before making the journey to the nearest road.



THE HORIZON WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE THE STOPPING POINT.






# diamond spratling

Author, Environmental Advocate & Founder of Girl Plus Environment

Children's books have a unique way of making big ideas feel approachable, and that's exactly what Diamond Spratling has set out to do. As an environmental justice advocate, author, and founder of Girl Plus Environment, she's helping young readers discover that caring for the planet begins with curiosity. We talked with Diamond about the inspiration behind her Sage Sails the World series, making climate conversations hopeful instead of overwhelming, and why small actions can inspire change across generations.

**KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING**

diamondspratling.com

**Tattle Magazine: What was the moment or idea that first inspired *Sage Sails the World*, and why did you decide to tell these stories through the eyes of a young girl?**

**Diamond Spratling:** When I was a kid, I came across a save the polar bears commercial, and they were talking about the campaign around saving the polar bears and adopting polar bears. For me, it was very interesting because I'm like, "Oh my gosh, what's happening to the polar bears? Why are the sheets melting?" All those things. It turned into a lot of curiosity around how do we first have wildlife? How does it affect our planet to make sure that we are doing our thing as humans?

I feel like how I saw the world just changed from there. I wanted to be able to speak up for the parts of the world that essentially couldn't speak for themselves. That is really what sparked my entire career in the climate and environmental space.

For the very first book, Sage actually goes to the Arctic and saves the polar bears, essentially. That was very beautiful and full circle for me, especially because that is exactly what brought me into the space.

But what I had noticed very early on, when I started studying conservation in school and getting into my career, was that I didn't see a lot of Black girls who looked like me. Even though I was so interested and excited about the work, a lot of times I felt very disconnected from the climate space. I wanted other people who looked like me to also care about the work.

So I really focused this book on a little girl, and specifically a little Black girl, because I thought about my younger self and what I wish I was able to take on when I was younger. I wanted other youth to better understand that this is work that you should be a part of, you can be a part of, and there are ways that you can get other people involved as well.

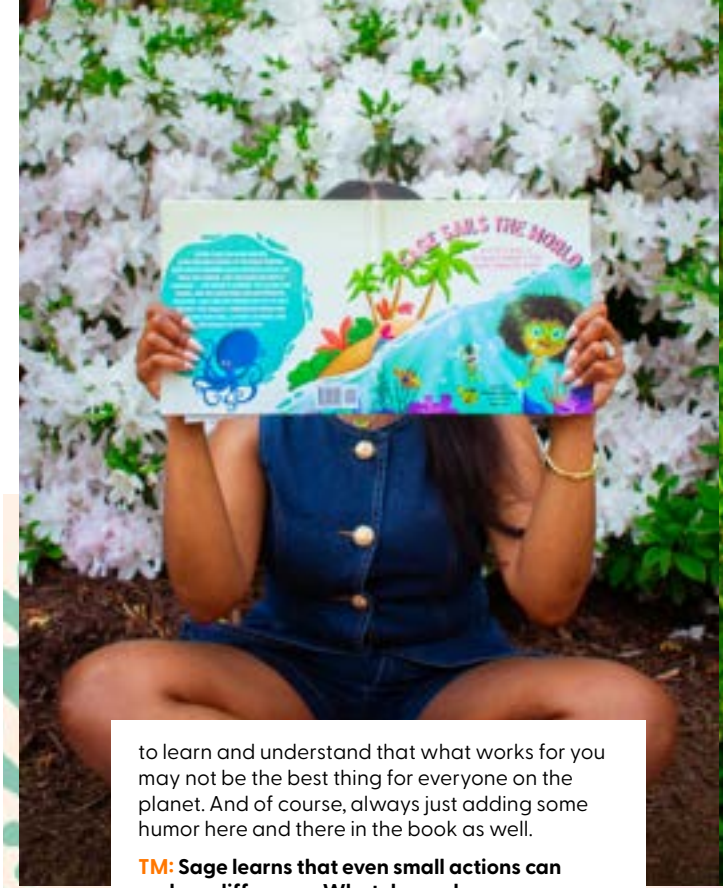
**TM: In your second book, Sage visits the Great Barrier Reef and learns about coral bleaching. How did you approach introducing a complex topic like climate change in a way that feels hopeful and empowering for children?**

**DS:** It's really interesting to talk about climate in general to kids. I think you have to be very intentional because a lot of times it is talked about in a very doom-and-gloom aspect, and a lot of people can feel hopeless. Climate anxiety is real, especially even for our youth. They see it every day.

For my second book, I relate the ocean to our bathwater. On one of the pages, Sage talks about that. She's like, "Oh, well, I love my bathwater warm, but why wouldn't we like the ocean to be warm?"

Essentially, the tour guide is explaining to her that while you like your bathwater warm, there are many animals and species in the world who cannot survive under warm conditions.

Being able to not see just only your personal gain and your personal preferences, but being able to learn and understand that what works for you may not be the best thing for everyone on the planet. And of course, always just adding some humor here and there in the book as well.



**TM: Sage learns that even small actions can make a difference. What do you hope young readers take away from the story?**

**DS:** I really hope that young readers are able to see themselves as scientists, as youth who can be in the STEM space, as potential marine biologists in every way, and to know that there is room for them in this work and in this movement. We need everyone all in on climate action.

I want you to know that even small actions that you may not think have the biggest impact, they do have a big impact. It is important to not only take the action yourself, but to also encourage others to take those actions as well.

Even though you're a kid, it doesn't mean that your voice doesn't matter. We even get adults involved as well. Yes, it's a children's book, but I think more than anything, I also stress the fact that this is an intergenerational book. This is something that even adults are still learning today.

**TM: Children absorb so much from the stories they're exposed to, and sometimes they're the ones who end up teaching the adults. Have you seen that happen with your books?**

**DS:** Kids are literally sponges. Parents have come to me and said, "My kid is telling me I need to turn the water off," all these things ... It's really sweet to see.

**TM: And that excitement can have a domino effect. Sometimes adults are resistant to change or feel overwhelmed by what they should be doing differently. But when children become passionate about something, it can inspire the people around them, too.**

**DS:** Yes! ... And they get so excited about it! So I think it definitely has that domino effect on all generations. It's so important.




**TM: You have a background in environmental advocacy, but writing for children is a very different medium. What did you enjoy most about translating your passion for environmental issues into a children's adventure story?**

**DS:** Honestly, I've always been kind of a translator in some sense, translating climate topics even when I'm trying to get my own friends to care about climate issues.

For the children's book, it was so fun to turn my written words into the illustrations. I love my illustrator. She's incredible. We were able to figure out how to really bring the story to life through visuals.

For example, in the first book, there's a page where there are penguins wobbling around in bathing suits and drinking ice-cold drinks in the Arctic of all places.

Being able to breathe joy and humor into the book is so important because that gets so lost, especially in the climate space. It gets very overwhelming. Being able to connect those two pieces has given me a different idea of best practices to communicate on climate.

**TM: I think that's such an important part of making environmental issues approachable. Sometimes people feel like they have to completely change their lifestyle to make a difference, when even small changes can have a meaningful impact, especially when more people participate.**

**DS:** Exactly. That's so true. It's so funny. I was just telling someone else this on a call earlier. You can have both. You can do both. You don't have to be vegan to enter the climate space. You don't have to be the best environmentalist.

For so long, people in the conservation field have pushed people out because people feel like, "Oh, I don't belong to this. I'm not vegan. I'm not all these things."

But it's like, no, we need everyone all in, whatever your part is.

**TM: One of the strengths of children's literature is its ability to spark curiosity. What conversations are you hoping parents, teachers, and caregivers will have with children after reading your books?**

**DS:** One of the really good things I love about the book is that there are some words in there that kids literally don't know, and honestly, some parents may not know either.

It mentions things like the sea level warming, or the water is warming, or climate change, pollution, things like that. Those are words that most kids don't know.

I love when kids can ask, "Well, what are these words? What does this mean?" And even when the parent doesn't know, that's a learning opportunity for the parents, too, to spark those conversations and the teaching of it.

What I really hope, just in general around curiosity, is for kids to better understand what their part is and how we can continue to do work in the climate space.

Kids are already really great at asking questions. I love the idea that they can ask those questions, and it forces their parents to go figure out what the answer is. Make it a learning experience for everyone.

**TM: This is the second book in the *Sage Sails the World* series. Where would you love to take Sage next, and what can readers look forward to in future adventures?**

**DS:** It's been such a joy just writing the two books. I can't believe I have two books in my series already.

I got a question from some middle schoolers a couple of months ago. They interviewed me for Earthwalk, and it was the sweetest thing. They were like, "We love the series so much. Can you also do a chapter book for middle schoolers? We want a chapter book."

And I'm like, "Oh my gosh." I'm like, "Oh, I guess you do start reading chapter books around that age." So, you know, I'm not sure. Maybe that's in the works. Of course, that takes a longer time than the book would take, but honestly, I would love to.

There are so many, unfortunately, climate and conservation issues around the world, but I think that also provides additional learning opportunities to take Sage anywhere and everywhere that she could possibly go.

Kids have already come up to me and they're like, "Oh, can she go to South Africa? Or can we take her to Canada?" All these different places.

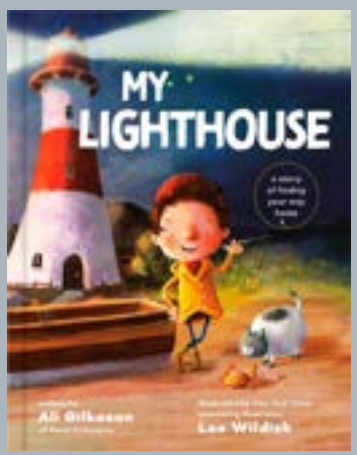
I'm really excited to do that. I love traveling, so the book is always on the back of my mind, and I'm always taking it with me wherever I go. ▪

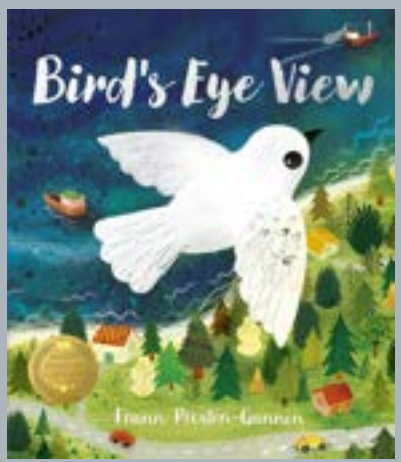
# MADE FOR EXPLORING

**A collection of stories for curious minds, animal lovers, and young adventurers discovering just how connected our world really is.**

**My Lighthouse: A Story of Finding Your Way Home**
*Written by Ali Gilkeson*
*Illustrated by Lee Wildish*

A young lighthouse keeper runs away seeking adventure, only to discover that when the sea turns dark, the light he needs most has been waiting at home.



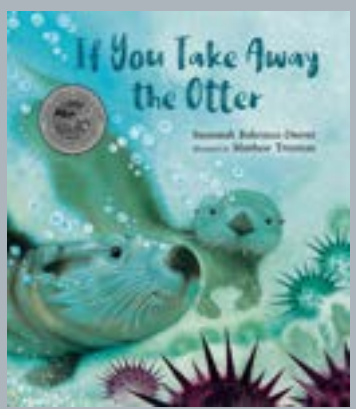




**Bird's Eye View**
*Written by Frann Preston-Gannon*

Little Bird leaves her nest to explore the world and encounters people for the first time, discovering both cruelty and greed, along with unexpected kindness, love, and humanity.

**If You Take Away the Otter**
*Written by Susannah Buhrman-Deever*
*Illustrated by Matthew Trueman*

Discover how sea otters help entire kelp forests thrive and what happened when they nearly disappeared in this beautifully illustrated look at nature's deeply interconnected ecosystems.







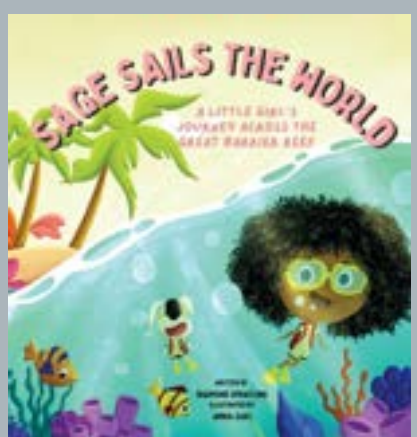
**The Puffins are Back**
*Written by Gail Gibbons*

Once nearly extinct along Maine's coast, Atlantic puffins made an incredible comeback. This illustrated story explores the scientists who helped save them and the birds' fascinating life cycle.

**With a Little Kelp from Our Friends**
*Written by Mathew Bate*
*Illustrated by Liz Rowland*

From cow burps to climate change, discover the surprisingly powerful world of seaweed and how thousands of varieties support wildlife, people, oceans, and the planet.




**Sage Sails the World: A Little Girl's Journey across The Great Barrier Reef**
*Written by Diamond Spratling*
*Illustrated by Amna Zaki*

Sage and her dog Benji journey to the Great Barrier Reef, where fading coral inspires them to help protect the ocean and discover that small actions can matter.



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**For kids' arts & craft inspiration and how-tos inspired by this issue, follow us on Pinterest!**


THERE'S A REASON THAT THE REARVIEW MIRROR
IS SMALLER THAN THE WINDSHIELD
TED LASSO

# COASTAL CLASSICS

**>>> Six films, two coastlines, and plenty of reasons to stay in for movie night.**






### JAWS
**1975 | PG**

A quiet New England beach town becomes the center of a summer nightmare when a great white shark starts terrorizing its shores. Sun, sand, and suspense make this seaside classic unforgettable.

**MOOD:** Summer vacation with a side of terror.






### MOONRISE KINGDOM
**2012 | PG-13**

When two young runaways disappear into the wilderness of a New England island, an eccentric search party sets out to find them. Quirky characters, coastal scenery, and childhood adventure create a wonderfully offbeat escape.

**MOOD:** Whimsical nostalgia and seaside adventure.




### MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE
**1999 | PG-13**

When a woman discovers a heartfelt letter washed ashore, her search for its mysterious author leads to an unexpected romance. Ocean breezes, quiet beaches, and the power of words set the scene for a story about love and second chances.

**MOOD:** Saltwater, handwritten letters, and second chances.




### THE LOST BOYS
**1987 | R**

Two brothers move to a California beach town where the boardwalk is buzzing, the nights are restless, and the local vampires have excellent hair. Equal parts horror, humor, and 1980s nostalgia.

**MOOD:** Neon boardwalks and vampire mischief.




### POINT BREAK
**1991 | R**

An undercover FBI agent infiltrates a group of thrill-seeking surfers suspected of bank robberies along the California coast. Big waves, dangerous loyalties, and adrenaline-fueled action keep the stakes high.

**MOOD:** Endless waves and reckless freedom.






### THE GOONIES
**1985 | PG**

A group of misfit kids follows an old treasure map into a world of secret tunnels, pirate legends, and hidden riches along the Oregon coast. Childhood friendship and wild adventure make this an enduring favorite.

**MOOD:** Treasure maps and childhood freedom.

**Lighthouses of the Great Lakes Puzzle**
*National Museum of the Great Lakes*, **$25**

Slow down and piece together some of the Great Lakes' most iconic guardians. This 1,000-piece puzzle celebrates the lighthouses that have helped sailors navigate these waters for generations.






**Salty Seas Enamel Mug**
*Trek Light Gear*, **$24**

Made for coffee by the water, around the campfire, or somewhere between destinations. This hand-dipped enamel mug has vintage nautical charm and is durable enough to come along for the ride.




**Lighthouses of the USA T-Shirt**
*Triangle Threads*, **$35**

A wearable tribute to the beacons that have guided travelers home for generations. This lighthouse-covered tee brings a little coastal nostalgia to everyday adventures, no road trip required.

Some gifts have a way of carrying you somewhere else. Inspired by lighthouses, open water, salty air, and the pull of the shoreline, these picks bring a little coastal spirit into everyday life. From puzzles made for slow afternoons to artful mugs, stationery, and unexpected finds, consider this a collection for anyone who never quite stops looking toward the water.

# *gifts that follow the coast*



**Lighthouse Thank You Notecard Set**
*Biely & Shoaf*, **$16**

A reason to bring back the handwritten thank-you. Illustrated with lighthouse artwork by Joy Laforme, this set of ten notecards makes sending a little gratitude through the mail feel special again.

**Lighthouse Bird Feeder**
*Olive & Cocoa*, **$168**

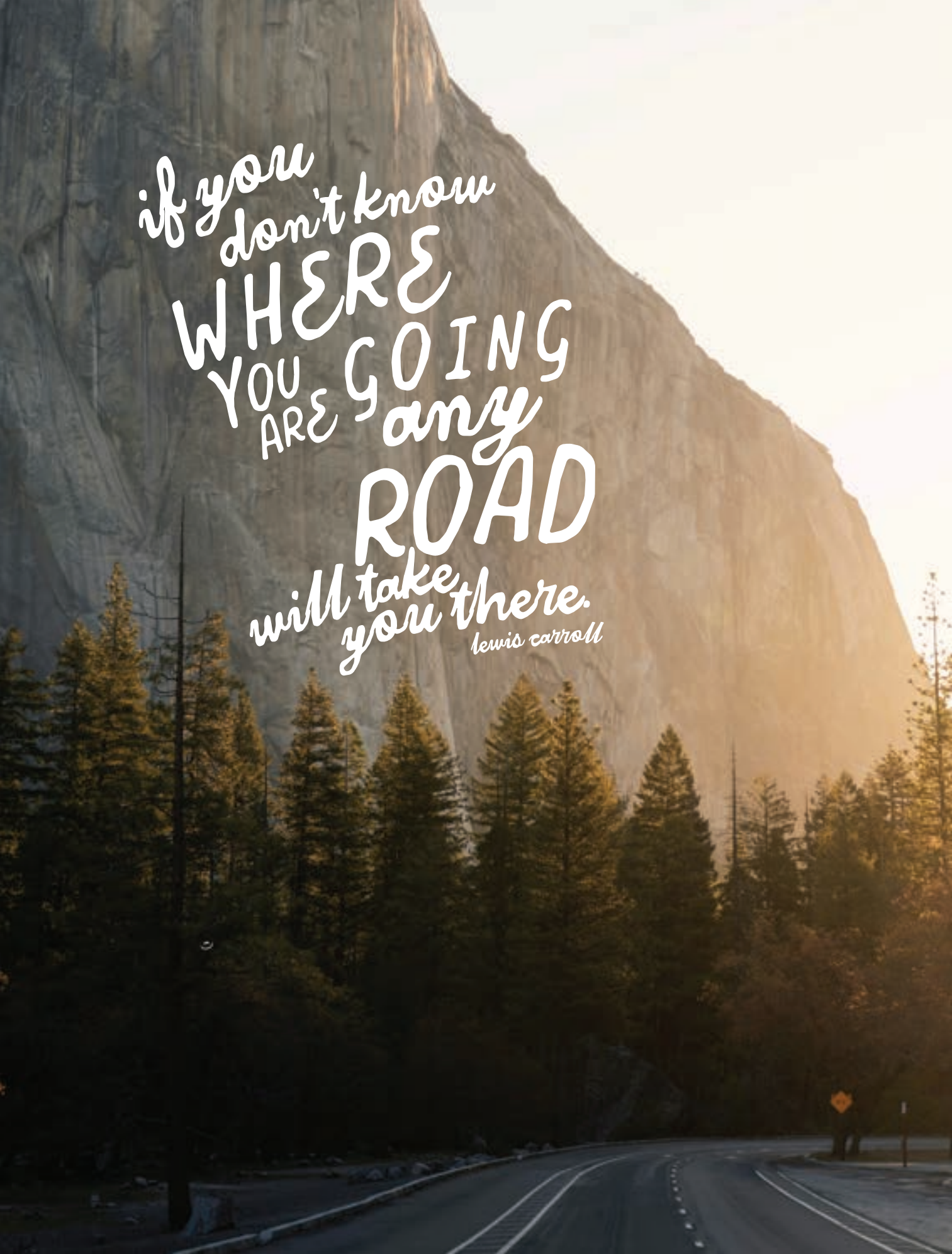
A charming lighthouse for the birds in your own backyard. Crafted from copper-tone metal, this coastal-inspired feeder turns an everyday birdseed stop into something worth looking out the window for.

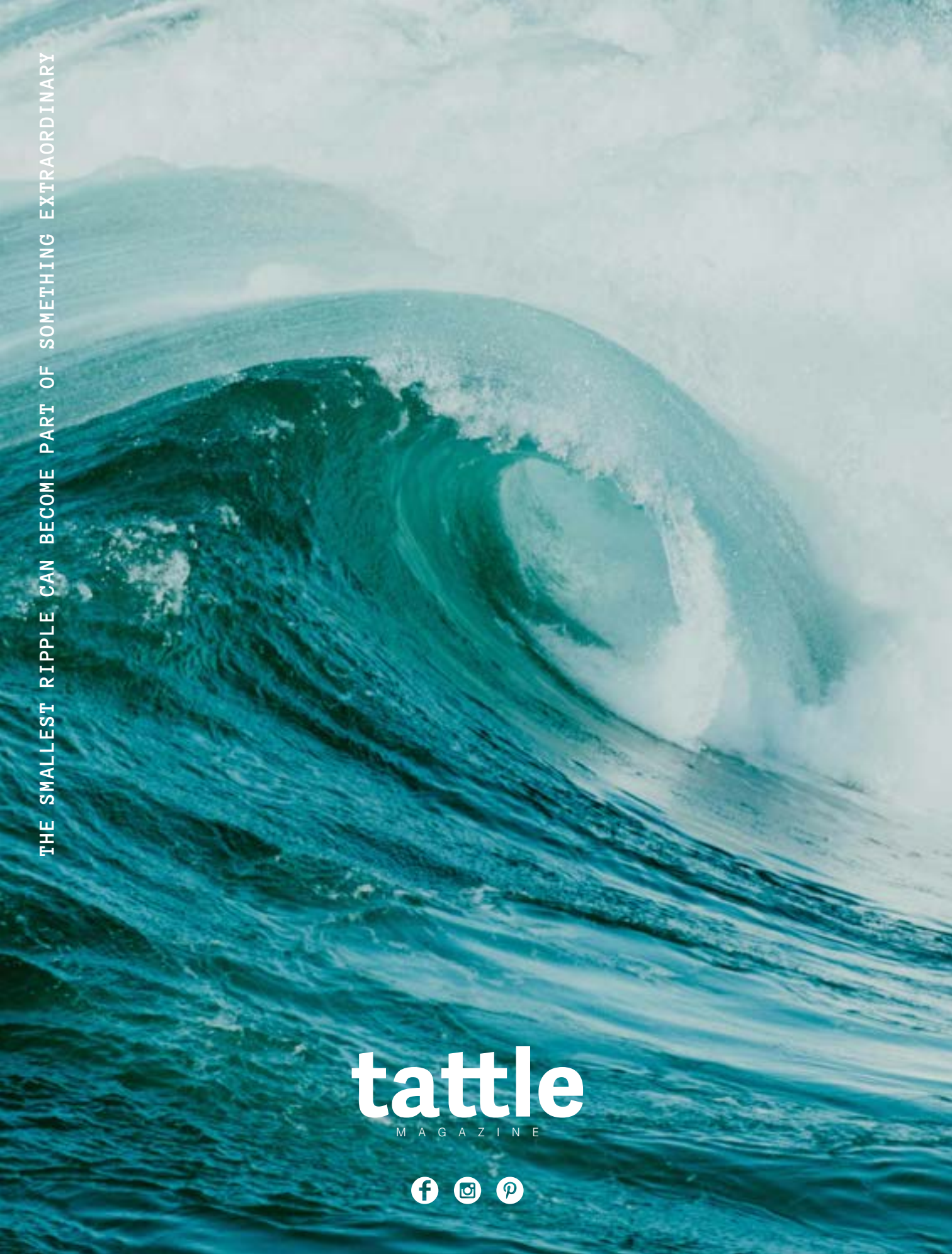




**Tidal Glass Mug**
*Terra House Co.*, **from $30**

A little piece of the ocean for your morning coffee. Hand-blown with textured waves and gradient blue glass, this artful mug captures the movement of the sea without leaving the kitchen.


if you don't know WHERE YOU ARE GOING any ROAD will take you there.
lewis carroll


THE SMALLEST RIPPLE CAN BECOME PART OF SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY
tattle
MAGAZINE