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# Shore HOME & GARDEN

July 2025

## 12

Grow a better tomato?

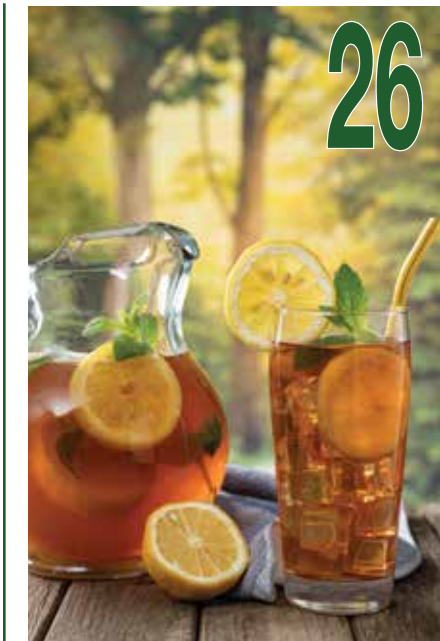
Getting tomato plants off the ground as they grow is pretty much universal practice. Where gardeners may differ is on what's the best way to do it.



## 18

Listen to your weeds!

Weeds aren't just free-loaders crashing our garden party. They're messengers with important information that requires our attention.



## 26

Make your summer fit to a tea!

Once summer arrives, a refreshing iced tea on a rocking chair on the front porch on a hot summer day always seems to hit the spot.



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# Local getaways that make summer simple

It's July, and if you're feeling some serious FOMO from all those Instagram posts of your friends on tropical beaches or European adventures — don't worry.

You can get your own summer vacation vibes going right here on the Eastern Shore — without booking a flight or spending a ton of money. From charming small towns to sandy beaches, scenic parks to backyard staycations, our region is packed with easy ways to unwind, recharge, and make the most of summer — on your own terms.

Whether you've got a weekend or just a free afternoon, these stress-free ideas will have you relaxing like a pro.

## Sweet Simplicity



By Kristine George

• *Beach Bliss in Ocean City, Rehoboth, or Bethany:* Delmarva's coastline delivers when it comes to sand, surf, and boardwalk fun. Ocean City is known for its vibrant energy, rides, and endless eats (hello, Thrasher's fries!). For a quieter vibe, head to Bethany

Beach or Rehoboth Beach, Del., where you'll find charming downtowns, clean beaches, and plenty of family-friendly fun.

*Tip:* Go early or midweek to avoid traffic and crowds — and consider renting a beach cruiser to explore.

• *Small-Town Strolls: St. Michaels, Berlin and Lewes:* Delmarva is dotted with storybook towns perfect for a relaxing day trip or overnight stay.

St. Michaels offers boutiques, harbor views, and seafood galore. Berlin (voted "Coolest Small Town in America") charms with its historic streets and artsy vibe. Or check out Lewes, Del., where you can shop, dine, and hop on the Cape May-Lewes (PAGE 45)

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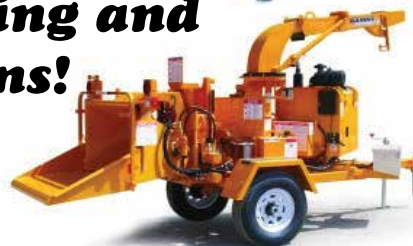
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Never mow more than a third of the total height of your lawn, and remember to mow to a height of 2-3 inches high.

## Help lawn bulk up for entertaining

As July begins, so does picnic and outdoor entertainment time. Let's talk about ways to keep your lawn and landscape looking good for summer entertaining as well as for your personal enjoyment.

Lets begin by discussing the proper way to water your lawn. Grass needs water every week, and it is good to do a slow soaking watering.

This allows the moisture to go deeper into the ground and helps the root systems to grow deeper, growing away from the heat and dryer upper surface.

A healthy lawn needs between an inch to an inch and a half of moisture each week. If it doesn't rain you need to provide the moisture.

If your sprinkler doesn't spray

### Ken-Do Attitude



**By Ken Morgan**

the water slowly consider watering a third of an inch of the needed moisture and then wait an hour or so to finish irrigating.

This will avoid run-off and still allow for a good soaking.

In our zone it's a good idea to water in the morning between the hours of 5 and 10 a.m. to reduce evaporation and the possibility of scorching the lawn.

Remember grass that is consistently and deeply watered will develop deep roots and will be just fine during the heat and dry spells of summer.

A few more lawn care tips for this month include, never mow more than a third of the total height of your lawn, and remember to mow to a height of 2-3 inches high.

A University of Virginia study showed that by cutting your lawn higher, especially in the summer, you will have a lesser chance of weed germination and the (PAGE 44)



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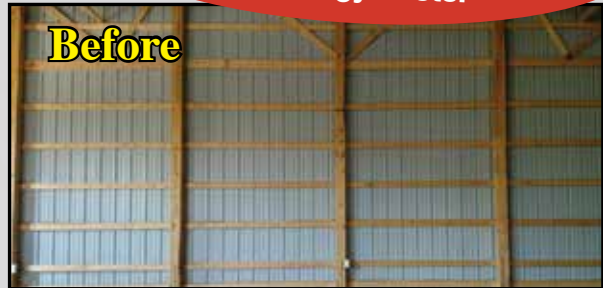
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# Butterfly flowers a joy for gardens

Butterfly flower or Asclepia tuberosa used to be called the Butterfly weed, which never seemed right for this brightly colored flower that offers so much for the Monarch butterfly.

It's very nice that this herbaceous perennial is now called the "butterfly flower!"

These bright-orange flowering plants grow in clumps to a foot to two and a half feet tall and wide, with lance shaped narrow green leaves that seem to wait until spring has finally warmed the soil to emerge and begin to grow again.

The 3- to- 6-inch-long leaves are arranged on the hairy stems in an alternate to whorled fashion, climbing up almost to the flower clusters.

From June to August, crown-shaped small, bright-orange or yellow flowers appear in a flat cluster that floats above the foliage.

The flowers mature into spindle shaped seed pods filled with silky tailed seeds that float on the airy breezes like tiny ballerinas.

The seeds will germinate quickly but the new seedling plants need to grow for two to three years before blooming.

The plants prefer to grow in medium to dry well drained soils in full sun. They are drought tolerant and slightly salt tolerant, and fit into the Shore landscape perfectly.

The butterfly flower should be planted together in threes or fives and the Monarchs will be able to find them faster if they are planted at the edges of the flower bed, with

## Gardening Tips



**By Ginny Rosenkranz**

other pollinator flowers in the center of the flower bed.

Bright yellow and red flowering the native Indian Blanket flowers pare well with the butterfly flower, or plant cooler blue flowering plants like Anise Hyssop.

The beautiful flowers are not just pretty, they provide a nectar source for many butterflies and other pollinators.

The plant itself is a host for the Monarch caterpillars, the gray hair-streak, the Queen and Milkweed tussock moth caterpillars.

Don't worry if they feast and eat the plants almost to the ground, the Butterfly flower will come back quickly to bloom again.

Like a lot of the other milkweed plants, the butterfly flower has a strong taproot that allows the plants to grow back quickly after the native caterpillar's feast on it.

There are a lot of ways to plant the butterfly flower, (PAGE 45)



**From June through August, crown-shaped, small bright-orange or yellow flowers appear in a flat cluster that floats above the butterfly flower's foliage.**

*(Photo by Ginny Rosenkranz)*



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## Wire cages, T-posts ... or weave?

*There's more than one way to grow those juicy summer tomatoes*

Story, photos by Sean Clougherty

**G**etting tomato plants off the ground as they grow is pretty much universal practice for home gardeners and larger farms alike. Where they may differ is on what's the best way to do it.

Wire cages are popular for those with a few plants. Sturdy fencing “T-posts” often come into play with growers who have more than a couple rows, and many large farms up and down the Eastern Shore pound in wooden stakes to start their trellis system.

At Quarter-Acre Farm in Ridgely,

tomatoes are the main crop and farmer Andrea Davis-Cetina keeps a specific criteria for staking tomatoes to ensure lots of quality fruit.

With a few thousand plants on her farm, pounding heavy T-posts every two plants is too laborious. She found early in her career that electric conduit works great and is



Andrea Davis-Cetina's Quarter Acre Farm focuses on heirloom tomatoes and seedling plants, selling at the Easton Farmers' Market. Running her own farm since 2008, she said she swears by electrical conduit as a lightweight but sturdy trellis system for her tomato crop.



reusable year after year.

"I think I've gotten five years out of some of it," she said.

A standard 10-foot length of conduit cut in half makes two stakes at about the third of the cost of a T-post and goes in the ground much easier.

"It's plenty strong," she said of the conduit. "The important thing is having the T-post (at the end of the rows) as the anchors."

She also puts a T-post about every 50 feet on long rows for

adequate support.

While Davis-Cetina aims to limit the plastic that gets used in her fields, baling string is a crucial component because it doesn't stretch after it's strung upon the stakes.

On Quarter Acre farm, Davis-Cetina wants the twine "guitar string tight" to hold the plant up as it grows.

As the plants grow, Davis-Cetina and crew go up and down the rows at least three times with

## *Drip lines give gardeners control*

**A**long with a solid trellis structure to hold the plant and all its fruit up off the ground, Andrea Davis-Cetina has a few other growing tips she swears by.

Using drip lines for irrigation, she can maintain some control over how much water the plants get. She's found that when they're tying on string, running the irrigation seems to make the plants more pliable and lower the risk of damage as they work up and down the rows.

But once the tomatoes start "breaking" or get just a hint of red color, she cuts off the irrigation for the rest of the season. Excess water after that point will likely lead to cracking on the tomatoes.

Those aren't desirable by most customers, but also greatly shortens the tomato's shelf life after harvest.

Whenever there is rotten or unsaleable fruit on or near the plants it's gathered up quickly and taken out of the field. Nothing good happens if it's left to rot further in the field. It can draw more bugs, spread disease and just make a mess altogether.

"We're just trying to provide a clean environment where we're not going to have a fungal issue coming through later," she said.

—Sean Clougherty



Based on the Florida Weave method, Davis-Cetina said the basic concept is to sandwich the plants between two strings. After tying the string to the end post, she runs twine on one side of the plants and loops around the conduit. For the next two plants, she runs the twine on the side of the plants, looping around the conduit and pulling the string tight each time.

about 12 inches of space between strings. If there's more space on the four foot-plus conduit, and time on the farm to do it, she'll add a fourth string. The trellis helps with air flow in the field too, gets fruit off the ground and contributes to plant health and vigor.

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After tying the string to the end post, she runs twine on one side of the plants and loops around the

conduit. For the next two plants, she runs the twine on the other side of the plants, looping around the conduit and pulling the string tight each time.

She'll zig-zag that way to the other end of the row, loop around the other end post and come back down the row, mirroring the other side. She said it might be a little more complicated than other farmers, but she's found it's been the best for her to keep the string tight throughout the process and hold up the plant through the season.

"Everyone has their own technique," she said.

Davis-Cetina said her system makes sense if you're growing more than half a dozen plants, less than that, she says just put a stake at each plant and tie off the plant to the stake.

She said she's not a fan of cages as they limit space for the plant.

A sound trellis is part of the package that will have she and her crew picking tomatoes until Halloween or later.

"We're able to keep them in a



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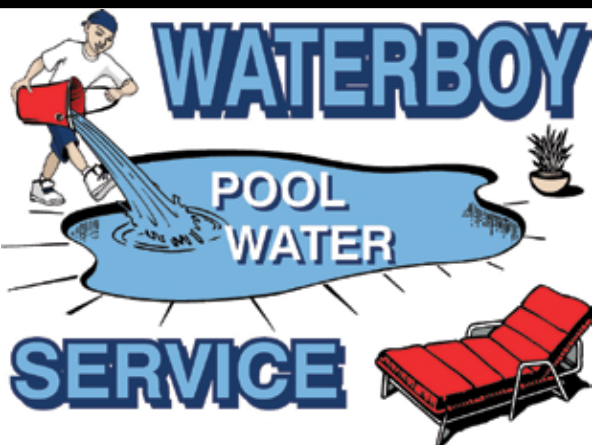
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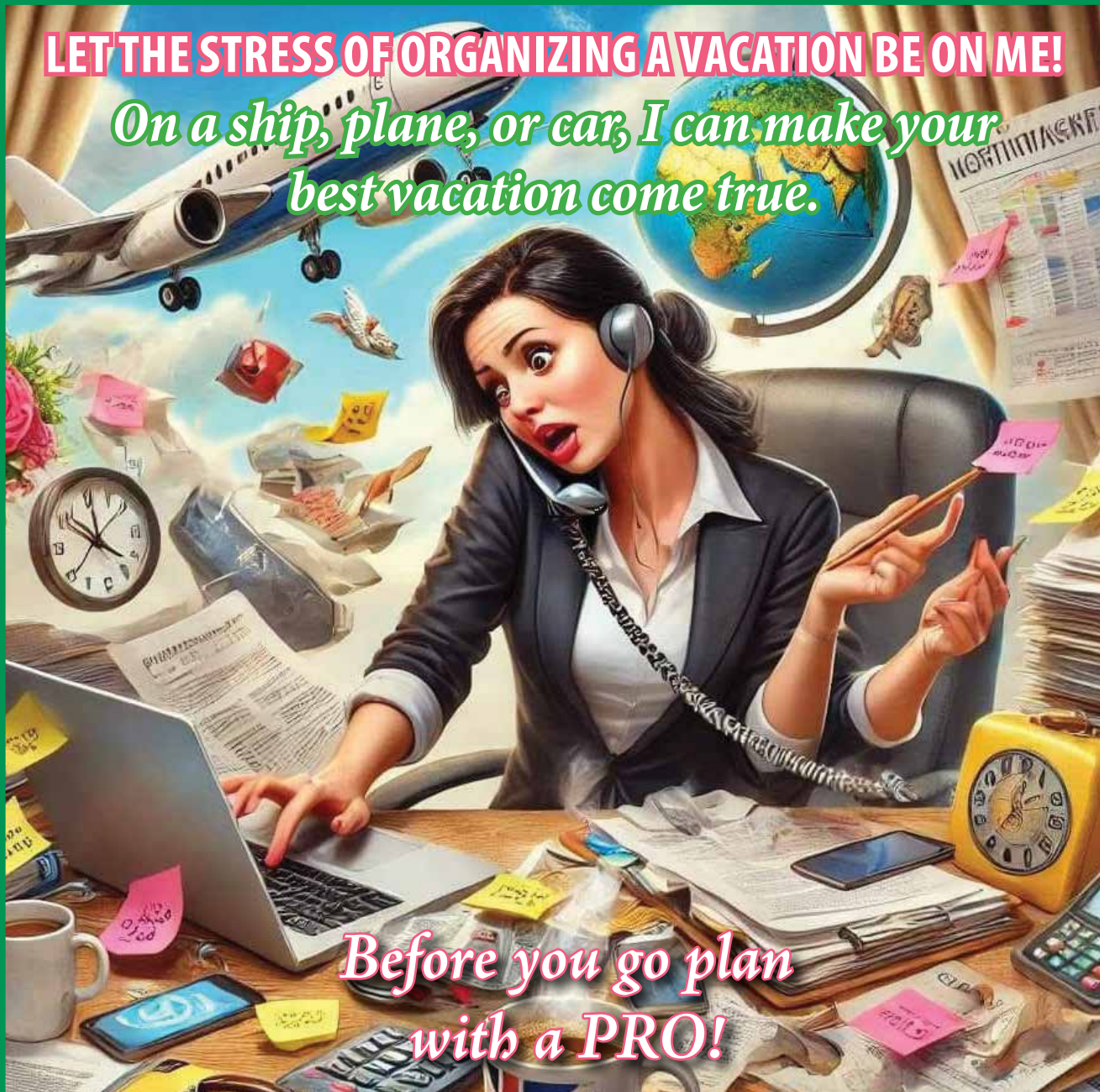
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# A growing conversation?

## Weeds aren't just nuisances, they're messengers: What they can tell you

Story, photos by Jessica Damiano

**G**ot weeds in your lawn? Me too. And although it's tempting to reach for a spray bottle, that doesn't have to be your first impulse.

Believe it or not, weeds aren't just freeloaders crashing our garden party. They're messengers with important information that requires our attention. We just have to learn to speak their language.

### *What common lawn weeds tell us*

A dandelion popping up in the lawn is there because the soil is infertile and the grass is too thin. Fertilize and sow seeds for a fuller turf, and the opportunists will move on.

Black medic is a demure, clover-like weed with small yellow flowers that's holding an invisible bullhorn, shouting, "What's a girl got to do to get some nitrogen over here?" Check your soil's nutrients and fertilize accordingly.

Both broadleaf and buckhorn plantain won't grow unless the soil is compacted. Core aerate the lawn in spring and fall to allow water and air to circulate through it freely.

Likewise, prostrate knotweed thrives in high-traffic, compacted areas. If you have kids or a large dog running laps in the yard — or if passersby consistently cut



Depending on your perspective, blooming clover could be one of the "good guys" of volunteer plants, showing up to help when soil is lacking water or nutrients, or just another tough-to-control weed.

through a portion of your lawn — chances are you have made its acquaintance.

Again, core aeration is your best bet. Do it several times a year and incorporate compost to create an inhospitable environment.

Both mouse-ear and common chickweed flourish in shady spots, so cut back nearby tree branches to allow more sun to reach the soil.

The lawn will appreciate the extra light, too. Common chickweed also loves cool weather, but that is



out of our control.

*Clover: One of the good guys?*

I'm conflicted about telling you how to get rid of clover, because I don't believe you should. I actually mixed it into my lawn deliberately, and I'm not alone.

In fact, years ago, clover was a standard component of American grass seed mixes — it added a natural source of nitrogen to the soil that reduced or eliminated the need for fertilizer. But when the first weed killers were marketed to homeowners in the 1950s, clover was suddenly villainized. I wonder why.

Clover is a good guy that shows up to help when soil is lacking water or nutrients. But if you really want it gone, water and fertilize the lawn regularly.

And try to accept some imperfections. Nobody needs a flawless lawn — just a healthy one.

*(Editor's note: Jessica Damiano writes weekly gardening columns for the AP and publishes the award-winning Weekly Dirt Newsletter.)*



A dandelion popping up in the lawn is there because the soil is infertile and the grass is too thin.



A thriving broadleaf plantain, left, is a sign the soil is compacted. Mouse-ear, right, flourishes in shady spots, so cut back nearby tree branches to allow more sun to reach the soil



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*How Enlightening!*

# 'How long 'til it's done?'

*Cooking times for grilling steak and chicken are different. Here's help below*

- *1/2- to 1-Inch-Thick Steaks (like Flank and Skirt):* Cooking Time: Direct heat, 4-6 minutes per side (medium-rare); Internal Temperature: 130-145 degrees.
- *1- to 1½-Inch-Thick Steaks (like Strip and London Broil):* Cooking Time: Direct heat, 5-6 minutes per side (medium-rare); Internal Temp: 130-145 degrees.
- *2-Inch Thick Steaks (such as Ribeye or Porterhouse):* Cooking Time: Direct (uncovered) for 3-5 minutes per side, then indirect (covered), for 8-10 minutes. Internal Temperature: 130 degrees for medium-rare.
- *Inch-Thick Hamburgers:* Cooking Time: Direct heat, 5-6 minutes a side (medium). Internal Temperature: 155 to 160 degrees.

- *Boneless Chicken Breasts:* Cooking Time: Direct heat, 5-6 minutes per side; Internal Temperature: 160-165 degrees.
- *Chicken and turkey cutlets:* Cooking Time: Direct heat, 2-3 minutes per side; Internal Temperature: 160 to 165 degrees.
- *Chicken wings:* Cooking Time: Indirect heat, covered, turning occasionally, 25-30 minutes; Internal Temperature: 165 degrees.
- *Bone-in Chicken Breasts, Thighs, and Drumsticks:* Cooking Time: Indirect heat, covered, turning occasionally, 40-50 minutes; Internal Temperature: 160-165 degrees.



While lemon and peach have been tea flavor mainstays, the produce section is your oyster. Go tropical with pineapple or mango, or explore other citrus flavors like limes or oranges. Go berry with strawberries, blueberries and raspberries.

## Nothing like tea to cool off in summer

Story by Leslie Milby

**S**ummer and sweet tea, or Iced Tea in general. It's a thing!

When the weather gets hot, the relaxing power of hot tea in a cozy chair in front of a fire in the winter transfers over to a refreshing iced tea on a rocking chair on the front porch on a hot summer day.

Whether you stick to a classic family recipe (which may seem

more like genetic muscle memory than a recipe) or love trying new and different kinds, there are lots of ways to customize your own perfect glass.

If you go to any restaurant or drive thru, you know they love to tempt you with a new flavor combo in a bright sugary drink!

Have one you really love that almost makes you want to battle beach traffic to go buy? Experiment at home and make your own recipe,

suited exactly to your taste, without all the sugars and often, food dyes.

You can also of course, google a good "copycat" recipe.

While lemon and peach have been tea flavor mainstays, the produce section is your oyster. Go tropical with pineapple or mango, or explore other citrus flavors like limes or oranges.

Go berry with strawberries, blueberries and raspberries. Chances are, any fruit you have on hand will



work just fine.

Once you pick your flavors, there are several ways to bring these flavors in.

Simple syrup is a great way to flavor a whole pitcher of tea, or by the glass, especially if you are already making your own simple syrup to brew. Use the typical 1:1 sugar to water ratio but then add in your fruit, such as peaches, while boiling.

Finish by running through a fine strainer. Store the excess in an airtight container or mason jar. Bonus — you can use the boiled fruit for topping ice cream/oatmeal/etc.

Not in the season of life where you have time for making your own? Flavored simple syrups can be picked up at your grocery store or even shop around at your farmer's market for a specialty vendor who sells them!

Another method for flavoring a whole pitcher is to splurge on an infuser pitcher, which has a core that you can not only steep the tea in, but add fruit in without a pulpy mess.

Muddling in the fruit glass by the glass is also a great way to release flavor, though it won't work as well for an entire pitcher that might go back into your refrigerator for another time, as it can look cloudy. Simply press and twist the fruit of your choice to the bottom of your glass, such as raspberries, to bring also the juicy goodness into your sip.

Other methods can include freezing pureed fruit into cubes to drop in or for a very no fuss way, drop in some freeze dried fruit like strawberries for some flavor.

Several tea companies are also



**Keep in mind that fruit adds a natural sweetness, so you may need to adjust the base of your tea.**

broadening their offerings with tea bags and leaves featuring fruity notes that you can find at your local grocery store, or find at a specialty shop like Topiary & Tea located in Dover Station in Easton. Dress them up with more fruit or drink as is.

Top off your drink with some fresh mint or rosemary, or fold in some sophisticated lavender or sweet hibiscus, or other goodies you may have in your garden. Use your spice drawer for adding zips of ginger or cinnamon.

Keep in mind that fruit adds a natural sweetness, so you may need to adjust the base of your tea. Tea leaves themselves fall into three main categories — green, black and herbal. The earthy flavor of green tea makes it a great candidate for

sweetening up with sweet fruits like strawberries.

Not a fan of just green tea? Brew black and green together to get a just right custom taste, or even make it a trio by adding tea bags already using fruity notes.

Is there a best way to brew tea? Any tea maker with a brown tinged pitcher in her cabinet — if it ever even makes it in there — surely has a strong opinion on the matter, but when it all boils down, there are several suitable ways to brew your potion.

The biggest thing to keep in mind is whichever way you choose to brew, the key is to not over or under steep.

Cold brewing of steeping the tea bags in cool water for 6-12 hours is the best hands off way that also

won't heat up your kitchen. It's also said this is the way to get the crispest tea without the bitterness, and it will keep that freshness longer.

If a steam facial is not something you mind, there is of course boiling to brew which can be slightly quicker.

If using this method, be sure to cool your batch down to room temperature before chilling to prevent cloudiness.

If your summer is just plain busy and you don't want a whole production of boiling or waiting for it to steep every time you want tea, you could also experiment with making your own concentrate.

With this method, you'll put in the work once with the method of your choosing and then be able to put tea together in a flash the next

few times. Plus, your stash won't take up the entire refrigerator shelf. (Because, seriously, how much weight can those things support!?)

A good ratio for concentrate whether boiling on the stovetop or soaking in a mason jar with cooled water overnight, is two cups of water and 12 tea bags, or the equivalent in leaves. Potent stuff! And then, when ready to enjoy, mix it in with one part concentrate to seven parts water as you need it.

A healthy perk of tea is that it is rich in antioxidants and when you brew at home, you can control other considerations like sugar.

To add in some sweet that's not necessarily sugar, try honey, agave syrup or maple syrup.

Not wanting to totally cut refined sugar? Or have a picky husband?

(aren't they all?) Use a ratio of both sugar and an alternative sweetener.

To store your liquid gold, the best container is a tightly sealed glass one to keep any other food in your fridge from absorbing in.

Glass is also the best to serve it in as tea tends to absorb a metallic taste easily.

If you find yourself having so much fun brewing tea that it feels like a party, try adding it at your next actual party. Start out with the tea (and lemonade) bases and include ingredients for your guests to experiment with their own flavors.

This is a popular trend for teenage parties this graduation season.

Slow down and sip in the sweetness of summer with your own tea recipe!



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# Ruby-throated hummingbird a popular visitor

*(Editor's note: Suzette Stitely is a member of the Talbot Bird Club and travels extensively for birdwatching.)*

**O**ne of the most popular birds to feed during our summer months is the ruby-throated hummingbird.

You can buy hummingbird feeders at many local retailers and then make your own nectar by adding a quarter-cup sugar to a cup of water — just stir until dissolved as no boiling is necessary.

Please do not add nor feed nectar with red food dye. Studies have shown that the color is not necessary and it may harm the birds.

If you've just started feeding "hummers" it may take a few days for them to find your feeder. Once they've found it, you'll have these tiny jewels annually as they usually return to the same area to nest.

These birds also feed on native plants blooming throughout the summer as well as spiders and small insects.

Feeding hummingbirds does not delay their migration, but it may make them more susceptible to predation by cats and window strikes.

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are truly beautiful birds. Their backs are metallic green with the wings being blackish and they have mostly white underparts with some green mottling on the sides.

If you see the male's gorget in just the (PAGE 34)

## Backyard Birds



**By Suzette Stitely**



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By DeeDee Wood

## From the Time of Seagoing

*(Editor's note: DeeDee Wood is the owner of Black Cat Curiosities, an online antiques research and sales venue.)*

**T**he Victorians and people from even earlier eras were often told by their doctors to go “soak in the sea,” a medical advisement to go get some sea and salt air to cure what ailed you.

Antiques were involved, of course, which include umbrellas, sand pails, your bathing suit, literature to read, hats, games to play and more. The scene was a very different one from today's beachgoers, and defined an era of early tourism that went hand-in-hand with medical practices for the ill.

The Romans and Italians had “seaside resorts,” a place of respite for weary travelers or residents of those countries to have a leisure day of sand and surf in the waves of the ocean. As time progressed, especially in 17th and 18th century Europe,



and more narrowly focusing on England, doctors suggested a dip in the ocean to cure what ailed you. It was thought the sea air and calming gentleness of the waves could cure anything from tuberculosis, anxiety, skin conditions and more.

One antique from this era to discuss would be the contraption known as the bathing house. A small carriage with four sides, a roof, and steps, it provided a private place for seagoers to don their modest bathing suits and soak in the ocean's

“nutrient-filled medicine.” As a litmus for this time period, modesty was paramount and revealing clothing or showing too much skin was taboo, thus the bath house provided some accommodation. A small flag fit into the roof in some cases and let the attendant know that the bather was ready to be rolled back into shore. Like many of these ocean-going activities, most were for the affluent who could afford these early tourism-type resorts.

One of the most sought-after





antiques from Victorian or early beach-going would be that of the sand pail. Usually made of metal or lithographed images, the innocuous sand pail has become a darling of ocean or beach antique collectors. Brightly painted images of children at play, waves of the ocean, letter graphics describing sea time fun and other colorful images adorned these pails and were manufactured by companies like U.S. Metal Toy Manufacturing Company, Ohio Art Company and others from around

the world. They are collected today as a bit of nostalgia from the beach.

Antique bathing suits from this era are also a collector's item. Modesty was king during the time period from early prescription medical advisement on beachgoing in the 1700s, all the way into the 1950s. A span of time and fashion finds a vintage clothing collector having choices of early beachwear, including heavy layers, collars, hats and even footwear (basically street clothes in the water,) all the way

up to 1950s beachwear the still involved covering the body from collarbone to mid-thigh. Men had it easier in this department, but early men's bathing costumes did cover the entire body, and did not leave room for exposing too much skin.

Ettiquite, costumes and materials available, as well as social norms on what was appropriate ruled beach-going all the way into the 20th century. Many people collect these antique bathing suits for nostalgia and interest.

Other antique items to consider in the days gone by of beach visitation and early tourism would be magazine ads for early resorts, games played on the beach, such as croquette or ball games, paintings of the sea painted by travelers or artists interested in beaches and ocean themes as the traveling became popular, and other accoutrements, such as umbrellas, hand fans, hats and footwear.

Whether people of antiquity used the beach for medical advisement, artistic inspiration, or early tourism, one thing is clear-people loved and still love going to the beach. Next time you venture down to the ocean with your family or friends, consider the myriad of reasons people have come before you, and the antiques involved in the beach experience.

Clothing choices, bathing houses, toys in the sand and literature to consider all have transposed into our modern era, but have echoes of beachgoing of the past, all with one general theme-people love the sea and sand in the summertime.





**There are more than 300 species of hummingbirds in the Americas, but the ruby-throated hummingbird is the only one that breeds in the Eastern United States.**

*(Photo by Suzette Stitely)*

*(FROM PAGE 8)*

right light, you'll be dazzled by the brilliant ruby color. Older females may also have a few red feathers in this area.

Interestingly, the female alone has white tips on her outer tail feathers.

There are more than 300 species of hummingbirds in the Americas, however the ruby-throated Hummingbird is the only one that breeds in the Eastern United States.

The most amazing feat for these birds is their migration: Ruby-throated hummingbirds winter

primarily in Central America and begin their journey north in April.

Weighing only about 3 grams (the weight of a penny) they increase their weight about 25-30 percent before migrating. Many of these tiny birds fly nonstop across the Gulf Of Mexico! Their return flight begins in September.

Ruby-throated hummingbird females are busy birds. They choose the nest site, build the nest and raise the young all without the help of the male. There isn't any pair bonding in this species —males and females are only together for

courtship and copulation.

Usually two eggs are laid and the eggs hatch after about two weeks.

After about 22 days, the young fledge and the female continues to feed them for about a week. If the young can avoid predation by cats or hawks and window strikes, they may live about eight years.

Learn more about birds, including the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, by joining the Talbot Bird Club. The club offers local birding trips weekly and welcomes anyone who has an interest in birds. Visit the club on Facebook. ➡





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# Change is constant; acceptance is necessary

*(Editor's note: Deborah Walker is the author of "An Eastern Shore Special: Recipes from the Heart." She has written about food and recipes for 15 years, She resides in Ocean City.)*

**T**here was a time when youth prevailed and life could not be better..

Modeling in New York City landed me a national campaign with St. Pauli Girl beer.

This memorable experience was exciting and stands as the high-

Shore Home & Garden • July 2025

## Food For Thought



**By Deborah Walker**

light of my career.

A few years later, I was on scholar-

ship at the Lee Strasberg Institute for acting in Los Angeles and New York City, and was invited to study in London.

Before I knew it, I was jet-setting across the country, dining in the finest restaurants, and enjoying a life of luxury.

Now that I have turned the ripe age of 67, I cannot remember a time where a little extra belly padding has not graced my waistline.

Wrinkles seem to magically appear out of thin air and my \$200

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jar of face cream doesn't seem to do the trick anymore.

And if that is not enough, reminders are posted throughout my home since my memory has turned to a path of slight decline. The mirror of constant reflection is not always easy to digest.

Change is an intricate part of life and acceptance is necessary if one values their sanity. As progression follows,

I have come to relish the art of entertaining with all of its incredible wonders.

Cooking is about following carefully calculated recipes.

However, the freedom to incorporate one's style and improvise is also important.

And while we are on this subject, let us not forget the importance of minimalism. Achievement is not always based on complexity.

Simplicity is intricacy in its infantile state.

Finally, food is connected with recollections.

Each plate holds a lifetime of recollections that can never be replaced.

By incorporating these reminiscences into the menu, one embellishes the past, present, and future.

That being said, summer is synonymous with grilling, but how often do we think about grilling fruits?

Grilling intensifies the flavors as the natural sugars caramelize.

Juicy fruits can even get juicier, and the smoke from the grill adds depth of flavor.

Specificity equates knowledge, let us discuss the possibilities of grilled fruit in more detail.

## Grilled watermelon with crumbled feta and reduced balsamic vinegar

### Ingredients

- Sliced watermelon
- Feta cheese, crumbled
- Balsamic reduction \*\*

### Directions

1. Place slices of watermelon on a grill. Grill for four minutes on each side or until sear marks are achieved. Once the slices are placed on the grill, do not move them, or you will have a confusion of grill marks.

2. Remove watermelon and place on serving plates or platter.

3. Drizzle balsamic reduction on the slices and follow with a dusting of crumbled feta. Serve immediately. If you wait, the balsamic reduction will bleed on the watermelon and will not be as attractive.

(\*\* Balsamic reduction can be found in the vinegar or dressing section at your favorite supermarket.)

Fruit kabobs with a spiced Cool Whip dip are delicious and simple to make.

Always clean the grates of your grill, followed by a dusting of cooking spray.

Cook whole pieces of fruit, then cut into desired shape. Skewer the fruit, be mindful of shape and color.

Add a few pinches of cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, and Chinese 5 spice to the Cool Whip. Adults and

children will be a fan of this dish.

Salsa is popular year-round.

Take advantage of the summer and offer a grilled fruit salsa.

This tasty twist can be served with chips or be presented as a side with grilled meats or fish.

Grilled fruits, poblanos, tomatoes, sweet onions, and cilantro are finely chopped and mixed with agave syrup, lime juice, and kosher salt.

This colorful dish is not only eye catching but will add a wow factor to any menu.

Years ago, I was staying at the Four Seasons Hotel in Hawaii.

Breakfast is predictable, but not in this case.

A slice of pineapple that had been soaked in dark rum and grilled was offered as a garnish on my plate.

I have never seen such effort go into an embellishment.

Marinate four slices of pineapple in one cup of dark rum, two tablespoons brown sugar, and a teaspoon of ground cinnamon, two teaspoons vanilla, and a pinch of salt.

Allow the rum mixture to drip off and grill two minutes on each side.

Preparing grilled fruits are as easy as it gets and the options are endless.

Above is a recipe that is comprised of grilled watermelon slices adorned with crumbled feta and a drizzle of balsamic reduction.

The sweetness of the watermelon, saltiness of the feta, acidity of the balsamic glaze and smokiness of the grill make a delicious bite. Enjoy!

## Secret ingredient is 'Harvest.'

*"Judge each day not by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant."*

— Robert Louis Stevenson



# Neon dreams and nature scenes make for two very different home decor trends in 2025

Story by Kim Cook

**H**ome decor's got a split personality this year: Call it "city glow" and "cottage flow."

But three years of patience is a small price to pay for up to 20 years of relatively effortless tender green shoots.

At the two international design fairs that I attended — Maison et Objet in France, Ambiente in Germany — acres of exhibition booths were full of Art Deco furnishings, island-vibe rattan seating and lighting, and lots of emphasis on sustainably produced materials.

But a couple of aesthetics drawing crowds were especially interesting.

## *Capturing the 'city glow'*

One was an exuberant urban vibe I'm nicknaming "city glow." It's full of highlighter-hued throw pillows, edgy surrealism, street art and hefty, Brutalist-style furniture — lots of sharp-cornered steel or concrete consoles and lamps that loomed over rooms — as well as rugs and wallcoverings covered in graffiti-style motifs or swaths of vibrant color.

Gretchen Rivera, an interior designer in Washington, D.C., sees it as a look that resonates especially with "younger generations who grew up with digital influences.

"There's surrealist art, energetic



**Consider using sliding partitions from one room to another. You'll create a little style "journey," such as this glass sliding door to a kitchen.**

colors and playful, almost toy-like design," she added.

Interior designer Anton Liakhov

in Nice, France, agrees: "For a generation clamoring for creativity and self-expression, it's loud



and in-your-face.”

For surface colors, look at Benjamin Moore’s spicy orange Bryce Canyon or the bubblegum-pink Springtime Bloom. Daydream Apothecary has a whole collection of neon wall paints for intrepid decorators.

Sisters Ana and Lola Sánchez use art as a bold form of self-expression at their luxe brand Oliver Gal, in South Florida. It’s known for its handcrafted, statement-making pieces — including large acrylic gummy bears, graphic surfboards and wall art inspired by fashion, pop culture and modern surrealism. The result is a vibrant, edgy aesthetic.

A new collection, Rococo Pop, introduces rococo-inspired frames in high-gloss acrylics paired with playful graphic imagery. “We wanted to take the opulence of 18th century rococo,” notes Ana Sánchez, “and give it a cheeky, pop-art punch.”

“These frames are like little rebels in ballgowns — elegant, over-the-top and totally unexpected,” adds Lola Sánchez.

The style, her sister says, “celebrates contrast. Old World charm meets modern mischief.”

### *Following the ‘cottage flow’*

The other impressive decor style at the design fairs was very different from the urban look. I’m calling this one “cottage flow,” and Liakhov describes it as evoking a “peaceful sanctuary, where you can play around with textures that are anchored in, and in tune with, nature.”

Think nubby woolen throws

in mossy hues. Softly burnished wooden tables. Vintage quilts, and dishware. Gingham and garden florals. Landscape prints. Imagery of birds and woodland animals on textiles and wallcoverings.

Etsy’s 2025 spring/summer trend report showed that searches for “French cottage decor” were up over 26,000% compared to 2024.

“I see people embracing a slower pace to life where they can,” says New York-based interior and decor designer Kathy Kuo about the country cottage style.

“The past two decades or so were dominated by a glorification of fast-paced ‘hustle culture’ — trends like cottagecore and coastal grandmother are evidence that the pendulum’s swinging toward taking pleasure in simpler, more nature-adjacent things in life, whether or not you actually live in a country cottage,” she says.

Paint colors are also reflecting the trend. A calming sage green called Quietude is HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams’ color of the year. Little-Greene’s collection has names like Rolling Fog, Tea with Florence and Hammock.

### *Mixing the styles*

Watching design show visitors excitedly discovering new finds among the aisles, I thought THIS is what’s fun about home decorating: You can think as creatively as you like when it comes to your own home.

You’re all about high-octane city nightlife? Come this way.

Scottish crofts, Scandi cabins and cozy porches more your

thing? Right over here.

And if you want to mix these two aesthetics? Go for it. There’s space to blend elements of both, says Kuo.

“Design trends are so fluid. I absolutely see the potential to merge these into each other,” she says. “Many city dwellers love time in nature and have an affinity for a more rustic look, while still feeling called to honor their urban environment in their home. I see plenty of modern interior design motifs that are sleek and urban on the surface, but in the details, they’re infused with organic textures and biophilic elements.”

“Really, the best designs are the ones that are personal, rather than perfect,” she adds.

You could display an array of contemporary glass bowls on a curvy walnut credenza. Mix botanical patterns in vibrant, unexpected colors. Soften room elements like a sleek table and industrial-style lamp with boucle or velvet cushions and a fluffy rug. Pair polished concrete floors with vintage-inspired wallcovering.

If you don’t want to mix elements in one space, consider using sliding partitions from one room to another. You’ll create a little style “journey.”

If the recent international design fairs are any indication, you’re going to find loads of fun home decor in stores over the coming months. Get ready to flow.

*(Editor’s note: New York-based writer Kim Cook covers design and decor topics regularly for The Associated Press. Follow her on Instagram*



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(FROM PAGE 8)

grass develops a deeper root system, which helps during times of high heat and drought.

Remember only mow when the grass is dry, keeping the blades sharp.

Vary your cutting pattern, which makes it easier on the grass and use mulching blades to recycle the clippings and provides added nutrients for the lawn.

Japanese beetles will be coming out of the ground soon, and have enormous appetites.

They feed on cherry and plum trees, grapevine plants, crape myrtles, Japanese maples, roses and hibiscus.

If you choose to use traps, place them away from any of your desirable plants and be sure to install a

new lure, as this is also their mating season and this is how the traps will be effective.

We also suggest using Bonide's Yard and Garden Eight, which will kill them on contact and provide about two weeks of protection.

Two or more sprays, two weeks apart will take care of them for remainder of the season.

Deadhead flowering annuals and perennials as the blooms fade.

This is particularly important as many annuals and perennials that tend to spread by self-sowing, can take over the entire flower bed if left to seed.

Flowering annuals and many times flowering perennials will offer a second blooming period if you cut them back.

Deadheading also encourages healthier growth and better vigor of

the plant. Be sure to water all newly planted trees, shrubs and perennials at least twice a week.

Water all gardens weekly if no rain is present.

As a general rule of thumb, most established trees and shrubs need an inch of water each week.

Finally, keep your vegetables harvested daily to keep them producing all season.

Keep the weeds out and look at least twice weekly for signs of insects, fungus and plant diseases.

Finding these problems early will only help in keeping them in check.

As always if you have a question, or have any plant problem, bring us a sample and we will be happy to help. Happy Summer! 🍷

*(Editor's Note: Ken Morgan is the owner of Robin's Nest Floral and Garden Center in Easton, Md.)*

## *Looking for something to do this summer?*

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(FROM PAGE 6)

Ferry for a mini adventure.

*Don't Miss:* Local ice cream shops, independent bookstores, and small museums that bring these towns to life.

• **Paddling & Wildlife at Blackwater or Chincoteague:** For outdoor lovers, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (near Cambridge) is a peaceful spot for kayaking, birdwatching, or just soaking in nature. Or visit Chincoteague, Va., home to wild ponies and stunning natural beauty at Assateague Island. Whether you hike, bike, or paddleboard, these spots help you unplug and reconnect with the outdoors.

*Pack:* Bug spray, water shoes, and your camera!

• **Foodie Escapes & Crab Feasts:** Craving a local culinary adventure? Grab a table at one of Delmarva's many waterfront crab houses. Top picks include Suicide Bridge Restaurant (Hurlock), The Crab Claw (St. Michaels), Harris Crab House (Grasonville), and Woody's Dewey Beach Bar & Grill (Del.). Or host your own backyard feast with a bushel of crabs, corn, and cold drinks.

*Pro Tip:* Hit up a roadside pro-

duce stand for fresh corn, peaches, and tomatoes on your way home. We love CD Produce (Cordova) and Emily's Produce (Cambridge) for fresh local produce!

• **Family-Friendly Fun in Easton, Salisbury & Dover:** Looking for easy trips with the kids? Easton is a great family-friendly hub with parks, art galleries, and cute cafes. Check out the Avalon Theatre for live music or a show, and visit Idlewild Park for a picnic and playground time. During summer, you'll find festivals and farmers markets nearly every weekend. Salisbury has the free Salisbury Zoo and beautiful trails at Pemberton Park. In Dover, Del., the Air Mobility Command Museum is a hit fall all ages.

*Bonus:* Many of these towns host summer festivals, concerts, and farmer's markets — check local calendars!

• **Cabin, Cottage, or Campground Retreat:** Sometimes all you need is a cozy rental or campsite to reset. Delmarva has it all — from rustic cabins and glamping tents to lakeside cottages and state park campgrounds. Look for peaceful options near Trap Pond (Del.), Tuckahoe (Md.), or Kiptopeke State Park (Va.).

*Book early:* These fill up quickly in peak summer weekends!

• **Staycation With a Twist:** Can't travel? No problem! Create a vacation vibe right at home with a little creativity.

*Backyard Beach Day:* Set up a kiddie pool, play beach tunes, and make tropical smoothies.

*Around-the-World Theme Nights:* Pick a different country each night and cook, watch a movie, or do crafts based on that place.

*Delmarva Day Trips:* Pretend you're a tourist. Visit a museum, try a new restaurant, or take a sunset drive to a nearby small town you've never explored.

*Home Spa Day:* Bubble baths, DIY facials, and comfy robes — relaxation on a budget.

*Final Thoughts:* You Don't Need a Plane Ticket to Escape

Whether it's a weekend in a beach town, a paddle through a quiet marsh, or a staycation with a homemade crab feast, Delmarva makes summer vacations easy and memorable. The charm is in the simplicity — and in knowing that sometimes, the best getaways are the ones closest to home. ➡

*(Editor's Note: Kristine George is a freelance journalist who resides in Easton.)*

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in a sunny meadow, along walkways, in small spaces, in pollinator or butterfly gardens, native gardens and drought tolerant gardens.

Although the butterfly flower does not weep with white sap, care should be taken when handling these plants because when they are trimmed, the clear sap is still a latex sap — and those who have latex allergies should wear protective gloves. ➡

*(Editor's Note: Ginny Rosenkranz is a commercial horticulture specialist with the University of Maryland*

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*Now we're cooking!*

# ELEVATE SUMMER HOSTING

## Southwest Black Bean-Lentil Burgers with Charred Grape Salsa

Servings: 8

### Grape Salsa:

- 4 cups red or black Grapes from California
- 3/4 medium white onion, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 1 medium jalapeno pepper, halved, stemmed and seeded
- 1/3 cup lightly packed cilantro leaves
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced

### Burgers:

- 2/3 cup cooked black or green lentils
- 2/3 cup cooked brown rice
- 1/2 cup walnut pieces
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) black beans, rinsed, drained and patted dry
- 2 eggs
- olive oil cooking spray
- 8 wheat burger buns, toasted
- lettuce leaves (optional)
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled, pitted and sliced

To prepare salsa: In grill basket over medium-high heat, grill grapes, onion and jalapeno pepper 10 minutes until lightly charred, stirring occasionally. Let cool then place in food processor with cilantro, lime juice and garlic. Process until finely chopped.

To prepare burgers: In food processor, pulse lentils, rice, walnuts, onion, breadcrumbs, lime juice, chili powder, cumin, beans and eggs until coarsely chopped with some small pieces still visible, scraping down sides and moving mixture from bottom of bowl to top to blend evenly.

Using wet or lightly oiled hands, shape into eight patties. If mixture is too soft, freeze briefly to firm. Coat on both sides with olive oil spray and, in two skillets over medium heat, cook 10 minutes, turning occasionally and coating with additional olive oil spray. Burgers should be browned and cooked through.

Place lettuce on bun bottoms and top with burgers, avocado slices, grape salsa and top buns.

### Nutritional information per serving

(with bun): 480 calories; 17 g protein; 75 g carbohydrates; 15 g fat (28% calories from fat); 2 g saturated fat (4% calories from saturated fat); 0 mg cholesterol; 290 mg sodium; 15 g fiber.



Southwest Black Bean-Lentil Burgers with Charred Grape Salsa

## with Refreshing Grape Recipes

### FAMILY FEATURES

**G**earing up for outdoor entertaining this summer calls for seasonal decor, plenty of seating, yard games and more, but just about everyone's favorite element is the main attraction: the food.

Make fresh, delicious Grapes from California the star of your summer show to elevate celebrations and get-togethers ranging from your nearest and dearest to entire crowds. Grapes are perfect for incorporating into warm-weather recipes as a flavorful addition to main courses, sides and desserts. Or you can simply serve them as an easy, compatible snack that complements an array of your favorite summer dishes.

For a plant-forward option that's anything but ordinary, vegetarians and burger lovers alike can enjoy Southwest Black Bean-Lentil Burgers with Charred Grape Salsa. Hearty black bean patties are perfectly complemented by the smoky-sweet flavor of homemade charred grape salsa. Plus, added spice from cumin and chili powder mixed with fresh avocado and cilantro make a satisfying mix of Southwest flavors.

Keep guests' appetites at bay with fresh, tangy, visually stunning Dill Pickle Marinated Grapes and Cheese that let the natural sweetness of grapes shine through. Each bite pairs that familiar sweet flavor of grapes with the creaminess of Havarti and savory pickles to create a vibrant yet easy appetizer.

A welcome addition to the menu on those hot summer days, Frozen-Yogurt Grape and Coconut Bites are fun, simple to make and refreshing. Each bite features a sweet California grape dipped in creamy Greek yogurt and rolled in shredded coconut so you'll feel like you're on a tropical retreat. All it takes is three ingredients for a cool healthy snack you can share with loved ones.

Discover more summertime recipe solutions by visiting [GrapesFromCalifornia.com](http://GrapesFromCalifornia.com).





Frozen-Yogurt Grape and Coconut Bites

### Frozen-Yogurt Grape and Coconut Bites

Servings: 10

- Bamboo skewer
- 60 medium Grapes from California
- 1 individual cup (5.3 ounces) vanilla or lemon Greek yogurt
- 3/4 cup unsweetened coconut flakes

Using bamboo skewer, pierce one grape on tip and swirl stem end into yogurt, covering about 3/4 of grape to show color. Sprinkle with coconut, turning skewer to coat all sides.

Place on waxed or parchment-lined tray and remove skewer. Repeat with remaining grapes, yogurt and coconut. Freeze several hours, or overnight. Transfer to tightly covered container and store in freezer.

**Nutritional information per serving (6 bites):** 80 calories; 2 g protein; 9 g carbohydrates; 4 g fat (45% calories from fat); 3.5 g saturated fat (39% calories from saturated fat); 0 mg cholesterol; 10 mg sodium; 1 g fiber.

### Dill Pickle Marinated Grapes and Cheese

Servings: 8

- 3 cups whole Grapes from California
- 1 1/4 cups dill pickle juice
- 3 tablespoons minced red onion
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 package (6-8 ounces) dill Havarti cheese, cut into bite-size cubes
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper
- toothpicks or small skewers
- fresh dill leaves, for garnish (optional)

In medium bowl, combine grapes, pickle juice, onion, olive oil, Havarti cheese and red pepper. Stir well then cover and refrigerate overnight, or up to 24 hours, to marinate, stirring occasionally.

Remove from refrigerator and let sit at room temperature 1 hour, or until olive oil has softened. Stir again then thread grapes and cheese onto decorative toothpicks or small skewers. Garnish with fresh dill leaves, if desired, and serve.

**Nutritional information per serving:** 170 calories; 5 g protein; 11 g carbohydrates; 11 g fat (58% calories from fat); 7 g saturated fat (37% calories from saturated fat); 20 mg cholesterol; 240 mg sodium; 1 g fiber.



Dill Pickle Marinated Grapes and Cheese

## July events

# Free summer concert series show on July 19

VIENNA — Music On The Nanticoke Free Summer Concert Series will hold a show on July 19 from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Fireworks will follow at around 9 p.m.

The free outdoor, waterfront concert will be held on the shore of the Nanticoke River. Seating is on the lawn.

The event, parking, dockage and adjacent boat ramp are all free.

Millies Roadhouse Bar & Grill will be on site, as well as other vendors.

Visitors are welcome to bring family, friends and a blanket or lawn chairs and enjoy The Solitude Road Band from 4-8:30 pm. There will be

lawn games for the kids. Leashed pet friendly.

Parking is ample and free, located at 113 Old Ocean Gateway, across from Millies Roadhouse. Follow the signs.

Upon parking, the tram will take you to the waterfront. Water Street will be closed. ➡



# Sudlersville Peach Festival slated for Aug. 1-2

SUDLERSVILLE — The Sudlersville Peach Festival will be held at Godfry's Farm on the first weekend in August.

Festivities at 302 Leager Rd., will be on Friday, Aug. 1 from 6 p.m. through the fireworks at dusk. On

Saturday, Aug. 2, the public is welcome from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m.

Many popular local bands will provide live music as community non-profit groups will serve great homemade food from pit beef to peach cobbler

Local vendors will offer their best hand-made crafts, and lots of great family activities, this event is a true community gala that promises to be a great time for the whole family.

There is no admission fee or tickets to attend this event. ➡



# Trappe VFC Fair reps welcome volunteers

**TRAPPE** — The Trappe annual Volunteer Fire Company Fair will be held Friday through Saturday, July 31 and Aug. 1-2, 6-10 p.m. each day, at the Trappe Firehouse Grounds

There will be fire truck rides, hay rides featured, as well as food, games and prizes and live entertainment, including a Saturday parade at 6 p.m.

To donate cakes for the cake

booth, call 410-310-9727. To donate items for the silent auction, call 410-924-1764. To volunteer to work a booth, call 443-496-1761, and to participate in the parade, call 443-614-9670. ➡



## Fireworks celebrations in Mid-Shore towns

- Kent Island, Wednesday, July 2 over Kent Narrows.
- Rock Hall, Thursday, July 3, over Rock Hall Harbor.
- Oxford, Thursday, July 3, over Tred Avon River.
- Cambridge, Friday, July 4, over Great Marsh Park.
- Chestertown, Friday, July 4 over Wilmer Park Waterfront
- Easton, Friday, July 4, over Easton Parkway & St. Michaels Road.
- St. Michaels, Saturday, July 5, over St. Michaels Harbor.

# Annual Hobby Fair scheduled for July 26

**FEDERALSBURG** — The Federalsburg Historical Society will host its annual Hobby Fair on Saturday, July 26, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Federalsburg Heritage Museum.

The event was started in 1930 as a

school project and exhibit initiated by Federalsburg High School industrial arts teacher Max Chambers. It was then held yearly through the '30s as a community event but was discontinued for a number of years.

The tradition was revived in 2002

and has become an annual showcase. This year's Hobby Fair, with both adult and children's exhibits, promises to have something for everyone. All are invited to this free event, and the museum is handicap-accessible. 🐞



## Youth fishing tourney on Kent Island on Aug. 16

**STEVENSVILLE** — The Kent Island Fishermen Post 276 is hosting its 19th annual youth fishing event on Saturday, Aug. 16 at Romancoke Pier off south-bound Route 8

The activity is split into three age groups for boys and girls: 3-5 years old; 6-10 years old ND 11-16 years old. All participants must be

accompanied by an adult.

Participants are urged to bring their own fishing rods, though a minimal number of loaner rods will be available. Bait will be provided.

Registration begins at 8 p.m., before fishing lasts from 9-11 a.m.

Wristbands from registration are required for fishing and lunch admittance.

Prizes for each age group will be rewarded for largest fish, smallest fish, most unique fish and most fish caught.

Kent Island American Legion Post 278 will host post-fishing prizes and refreshments from 11:30 to 1 p.m. Participants must be present to claim a prize. No more than one trophy per winning child. 🐞



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