

Compliments of Jodee Harris

essential living

September 2026

48 Hours of Vermont Charm



Jodee Harris

Vice President, First
Commonwealth Advisors,
Senior Financial Advisor,
Osaic Institutions, Inc. •
4509033



Office: 724-832-6181
2501 Sharkys Dr Latrobe, PA 15650

jharris@fcadvisor.com • www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris

\$6.99 Issue #609



Investment and insurance products and services are offered through OSAIC INSTITUTIONS, INC. member FINRA/SIPC. First Commonwealth Advisors is a trade name of First Commonwealth Bank. Osaic Institutions and First Commonwealth Bank are not affiliated. Products and services made available through Osaic Institutions are not insured by the FDIC or any other agency of the United States and are not deposits or obligations of nor guaranteed or insured by any bank or bank affiliate. These products are subject to investment risk, including the possible loss of value.

essential living



Jodee Harris

Vice President, First Commonwealth
Advisors, Senior Financial Advisor,
Osaic Institutions, Inc. • 4509033

Office: 724-832-6181

2501 Sharkys Dr
Latrobe, PA 15650
jharris@fcadvisor.com
www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris



Life offers plenty of ways to explore, experiment and enjoy what's right in front of you. Morning coffee is the perfect place to begin. Small tweaks can instantly elevate your average cup and turn simple moments into something worth savoring.

Even small adjustments can make a big difference at home. The Trend-Driven House is full of ideas and inspiration to help you add style and personality to everyday rooms without a major renovation.

For a change of scenery, spend a weekend in Vermont and discover how much can fit into just 48 hours. Scenic drives, charming small towns and time outdoors make for a perfect mix of adventure and relaxation. Even a short trip provides variety and the chance to experience something new.

From small updates at home to quick escapes and playful recipes, there are countless ways to make everyday experiences feel more inspired.

— From the Publisher



What's your top tree choice?

Scan the QR code to cast your vote!



Jodee Harris

Vice President, First Commonwealth
Advisors, Senior Financial Advisor, Osaic
Institutions, Inc. • 4509033



Office: 724-832-6181
jharris@fcadvisor.com
www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris



Lemon Blueberry Mug Cake

- ¼ c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. coconut oil,
melted
- 4 tbsp. milk
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. blueberries

1. In a small mixing bowl, add your dry ingredients and mix well.
2. In a microwave-safe mug, mix lemon juice, coconut oil, maple syrup and milk. Add in the dry ingredients and mix well. Fold in the blueberries.
3. Microwave for 1-2 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean from the center. Allow to cool for 2-3 minutes and enjoy!

Contents

02 **How to Make Better Coffee at Home**
Easy coffee hacks you'll actually use

05 **Exploring Rocky Mountain National Park**
Get ready for peaks, trails and alpine views

09 **The Trending Home**
Refresh your space for modern living

14 **48 Hours in Vermont**
Make the most of a short escape to the Green Mountains

20 **Urban Boatbuilders**
Paddling the way to a better future

23 **Climbing Your Way to Fun**
A beginner's guide to reaching new heights

26 **4 Foods on a Stick You Can Make at Home**
Delicious foods on a stick you never knew you could make

30 **Visual Guide to the Coolest Trees**
Explore the weird, wonderful and wildest trees around the globe

essential living

Publisher

Josh Kimball

publisher@essentialengine.com

Editorial

Tisha Davis, Creative Director

Emily Schaffer, Executive Editor

Erin Ragan, Editor-in-Chief

Sarah Prescott, Graphic Designer

editorial@essentialengine.com

Sales

Zack Viscomi, VP of Sales

sales@essentialengine.com

Marketing

Becky Truhler, Marketing Coordinator

marketing@essentialengine.com

Operations

Jonathan Wesser, VP of Operations

Mindy Stansbarger, Production Manager

Brianna Jahangir, Production Manager,
Marketing Services

Shelly Martin, Controller

operations@essentialengine.com

Partnerships

Bjorn Piltingsrud, VP of Strategy and
Business Development

partnerships@essentialengine.com

© 2026 Essential Engine

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express written consent of the publisher. This publication is for information and entertainment purposes only; it is not an attempt to solicit business. Real Connections. Real Results. Essential Engine helps you go beyond surface-level marketing with strategies that build genuine, lasting relationships with your audience. Ready to elevate your marketing?

Visit www.essentialengine.com to learn more.

How to Make

Better Coffee

at Home



Coffee is more than just a morning pick-me-up. With a few simple tweaks and creative additions, you can turn your daily cup into a delicious, café-worthy experience without leaving home.

Vanilla Lavender

Latte

Yield: 2 servings

- 1 c. hot coffee
- 1 c. milk
- 2 tsp. culinary lavender
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. honey

1. Heat the milk, lavender, vanilla and honey in a small saucepan until just simmering. Remove from heat, let stand for five minutes and then strain.
2. Pour the hot coffee into mugs and top with the warm milk mixture.



1 Grind Your Beans Fresh

Coffee starts with the beans, and grinding them just before brewing makes a noticeable difference, with the right coarseness ensuring optimal extraction based on your method. Pre-ground coffee loses flavor quickly, while freshly ground beans preserve the oils and aromas that give coffee its richness and depth — coarse like sea salt for French press, medium like sand for drip or fine like table salt for espresso. Using a burr grinder ensures a consistent grind across these sizes, which allows for even extraction and a smoother, more balanced cup.

2 Use the Right Ratio

Using the right ratio makes a world of difference. Too much coffee tastes harsh, while too little tastes flat. A good starting point is a 1:16 ratio — 1 part coffee to 16 parts water, or about 2 tablespoons of coffee for every 8-ounce cup. For a stronger brew, try 1:14 or even 1:12, especially with darker roasts or if you prefer bold flavor. Keep in mind that brewing style, grind size and water quality can all influence the ideal ratio and the final taste.

3

Master the Bloom

For pour-over or French press methods, letting your coffee “bloom” improves flavor extraction. Pour just enough hot water to saturate the grounds, roughly twice their weight, and wait 30–45 seconds for the foaming to subside. This allows trapped carbon dioxide to escape, preventing it from repelling water during the full pour and ensuring a more flavorful cup.

4

Pay Attention to Water Temperature

The temperature of your water can make or break your brew. If the water is too hot, coffee can taste bitter. If it is too cool, the coffee may taste weak or under-extracted. Aim for water between 195 and 205° F, just below boiling, for the best results.

For drip machines, most automatic brewers reach this range. If you are using a kettle, let the water come to a boil and then rest for 30 seconds before pouring. Consistently using the right temperature ensures your coffee extracts evenly, bringing out its full flavor and smoothness.

Cinnamon Ginger Iced Coffee

Yield: 2 servings

- 2 c. coffee, brewed
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. orange extract
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 1 c. ice cubes
- Whipped cream

1. Combine the brewed coffee, ginger, orange extract, cinnamon and honey. Chill, allowing the mixture to rest until the honey fully dissolves.
2. Fill mugs with ice cubes and pour the chilled coffee mixture over the ice.
3. Garnish with whipped cream and a light dusting of cinnamon.





EXPLORING
ROCKY MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL PARK



Just 90 minutes from Denver, Rocky Mountain National Park feels like a world apart. Stretching across the Continental Divide, the park is shaped by more than 60 towering summits and features a breathtaking mix of snow-capped peaks, wide alpine meadows and shimmering glacial lakes.

One of the easiest ways to experience the park is by driving Trail Ridge Road. Open seasonally, this scenic highway climbs above 12,000 feet, making it the highest continuous paved road in the United States. Overlooks such as the Gore Range and Forest Canyon offer sweeping mountain vistas and frequent chances to spot elk, marmots and other alpine wildlife.



MOST POPULAR ADVENTURES

With over 350 miles of hiking trails, Rocky Mountain National Park offers something for every type of traveler.

Bear Lake Trail

A short, flat loop with picture-perfect reflections of Hallett Peak. It's an ideal first stop for families or anyone acclimating to altitude.

Alberta Falls

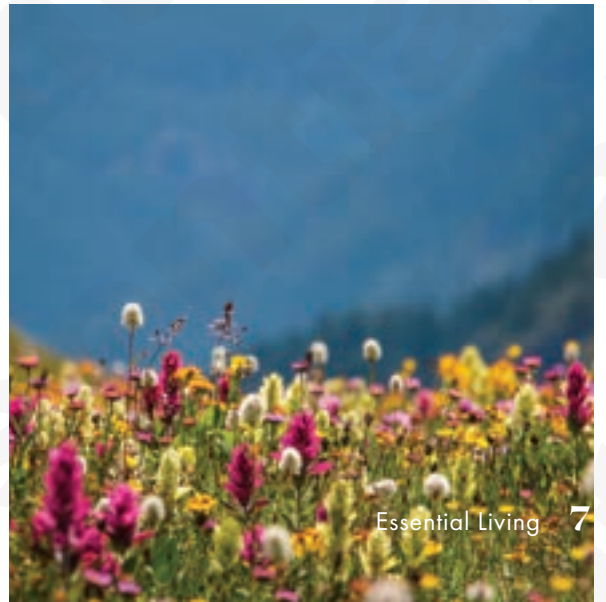
Just 1.6 miles round trip, this trail winds through forest to a dramatic waterfall that's especially powerful during spring snowmelt.

Emerald Lake Trail

A moderate 3.6-mile round trip that takes you past Dream and Nymph Lakes before reaching the sparkling turquoise waters of Emerald Lake.

Sky Pond via Glacier Gorge

A tougher 9-mile route through waterfalls and alpine meadows to one of the park's most rewarding viewpoints.





WHEN TO VISIT

Each season in Rocky Mountain National Park brings its own kind of beauty. Summer offers warm days, clear skies and full access to high-country trails. In fall, the hillsides glow gold with aspen leaves and elk calls echo through the valleys. Winter turns the park into a quiet wonderland perfect for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Spring unfolds gradually, as melting snow feeds rushing waterfalls and wildflowers begin to bloom along the lower trails.

RELAX AND UNWIND

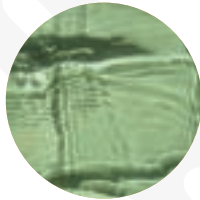
After a day of adventure, the nearby town of Estes Park provides the ideal basecamp. The town is full of rustic lodges, local restaurants and mountain-inspired shops. Whether you're grabbing breakfast after a sunrise hike or watching the peaks glow at sunset, Estes Park offers the perfect blend of comfort and mountain charm to end your day in the Rockies.





The Trending Home

Home decor trends right now are less about chasing perfection and more about creating spaces that feel welcoming and reflective of real life. Instead of perfectly matched rooms and stark finishes, today's interiors feel collected, comfortable and full of personality. From rich earthy palettes to bespoke details, here's how the biggest trends are showing up throughout the home.

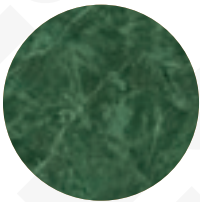




Earthy Tones and Textures

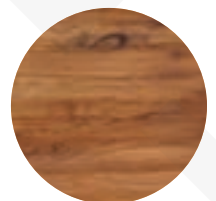
Shades like terracotta, sandy beige and muted olive are defining the modern palette. To make these colors truly sing, tonal decorating has become a go-to technique. This involves layering different shades and saturations of a single color within one room to create a sophisticated, cohesive look that feels peaceful rather than repetitive.

To keep these monochrome palettes from feeling flat, focus on natural textures and materials. A jute rug paired with a linen sofa and a reclaimed wood coffee table adds visual depth and tactile variety. Throw blankets, woven baskets and ceramic accents make the space feel lived-in rather than staged.



Seamless Surfaces

In kitchens and bathrooms, extending countertop materials onto backsplashes is becoming increasingly popular. This approach produces a polished, cohesive look that feels modern yet effortless. Matte finishes, subtle veining and natural stone textures add understated luxury without overpowering the space.



Curves, Patterns and Character

Rounded edges are everywhere, from sculptural furniture to curved sofas and archways. This shift away from sharp lines softens interiors, creating spaces that feel approachable and cozy. Curves also add a sense of flow, helping rooms feel connected and comfortable.

Meanwhile, layering different patterns brings instant charm and warmth to any space. From playful rugs and patterned throw pillows to wallpaper or accent chairs, patterns add visual interest without needing to match perfectly. Mixing different scales and textures keeps the room balanced, collected and full of life.



Mismatched Furniture

Gone are the days of identical chairs and perfectly coordinated sets. Mixing furniture styles and finishes creates a multidimensional, collected look that feels personal and curated. Pairing vintage pieces with contemporary finds adds character and tells a story, making every room feel unique.



Big Art and Statement Pieces

Large-scale art is a key way to make a personal statement. Bold canvases or oversized prints create focal points that define a room's mood and spark conversation. Combine artwork with textured wall hangings, sculptural objects or vintage finds for a one-of-a-kind look.



Outdoor Living, Reimagined

The boundary between indoor and outdoor spaces continues to blur. Overlapping rugs, cozy seating and weather-resistant textiles transform patios and decks into true extensions of the home. Potted plants and natural materials connect outdoor areas to interior aesthetics, creating seamless, inviting spaces that encourage relaxation from the inside out.



48 hours in VERMONT

**THE GREEN MOUNTAINS OFFER A PERFECT BLEND OF
NATURAL BEAUTY AND SMALL-TOWN CHARM.**

In two days, you can wander bustling streets,
explore scenic trails and taste some of
Vermont's most iconic treats.

DAY 1

Start your Vermont getaway in the heart of the **Green Mountains**, a region famous for its ski slopes and farm-fresh ingredients. Kick off your morning by arriving in the charming town of **Waterbury**, the perfect gateway to your weekend.



COLD HOLLOW CIDER MILL

Your first essential stop must be **Cold Hollow Cider Mill** to grab a hot cider and one of their legendary, fresh cider donuts — a true taste of Vermont.

BEN & JERRY'S FACTORY

Just down the road, indulge your sweet tooth further with a tour of the **Ben & Jerry's Factory**. While the factory tour is fun, don't miss paying your respects at the whimsical Flavor Graveyard dedicated to past ice cream flavors.



STOWE

The afternoon calls for scenery and fresh mountain air. Drive north on the famously scenic Route 100 toward the picturesque **village of Stowe**. This drive alone is worth the trip, especially during the vibrant fall foliage season. Depending on the season, you can either drive or take a short, beautiful hike through the stunningly narrow pass of Smugglers' Notch State Park, a winding, historic route between towering cliffs. Alternatively, if time is short, take a shorter hike to the cascading water of **Bingham Falls** near the town center.



For fans of *The Sound of Music*, don't miss a visit to the **von Trapp Family Lodge** in Stowe. This gorgeous, Austrian-inspired resort sits on 2,600 acres and offers stunning mountain vistas that make you feel transported to the Alps. You can take a fascinating von Trapp history tour or wander the beautiful grounds, but the real treat is stopping at the von Trapp Brewing Bierhall. Here, you can relax on the patio and soak in the panoramic views.

End the day by strolling through **downtown Stowe**, browsing the charming shops and unique art galleries that line the streets, before settling down for a well-deserved dinner at one of Stowe's cozy eateries.

DAY 2

Day two begins in **Burlington**, a lively city where small-town charm meets artsy energy. Grab a coffee and pastry from a local café, then stroll along the **Lake Champlain waterfront**. The calm waters and swans gliding by offer postcard-perfect views of the vast lake and the distant Adirondack Mountains. Families or curious travelers will also enjoy the **ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain**, a hands-on science and nature museum focused on the lake's ecology.



SHELBURNE FARMS

Next, continue south of the city to visit **Shelburne Farms**. This stunning 1,400-acre working farm and National Historic Landmark is dedicated to conservation and sustainability, and it's where some of the **state's best cheese** is made. Wander its scenic trails, explore the gardens and stop by the Farm Store to pick up Vermont staples like **cheddar cheese**, **maple syrup** and other artisanal treats to take a taste of Vermont home with you.





CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

Then, head back downtown and immerse yourself in the city's pulse at the Church Street Marketplace. This stunning, pedestrian-only cobblestone avenue is the heart of Burlington's downtown. You'll find everything from unique local boutiques to eclectic restaurants where you can enjoy a fresh farm-to-table dinner.



As your 48 hours draw to a close, there's one final, essential Vermont tradition to check off your list: a creemee.

This is Vermont's name for its uniquely delicious, milky soft-serve ice cream. Seek out a local stand or shop for a final sweet treat. Try a maple creemee, which perfectly encapsulates the state's famous flavor.

URBAN BOATBUILDERS

WHAT IS A BOAT, REALLY?

A watercraft?

A small, floating vessel?

For the nonprofit organization Urban Boatbuilders, and for the young people they serve, a boat is a future.



Formed in 1995 in St. Paul, Minnesota, the organization has been helping kids and adults learn about woodworking, watercraft and life itself for more than 30 years. Urban Boatbuilders

invites kids to step out of their comfort zone, moving beyond the classroom and setting aside video games, to learn how to build canoes, kayaks, paddles and longboards (skateboards).



“(THE KIDS)
GROW THEIR
CONFIDENCE
AND SEE NEW
POSSIBILITIES FOR
THEMSELVES.”



The program matches up student apprentices with experienced mentors and boatbuilding projects. Inside the Urban Boatbuilders facility, dozens of canoes and kayaks line the rafters, and paddles and longboards hang on the walls. Mentors mill around with apprentices, pointing out projects that need work or boats that are ready to sell. It's a true working shop filled with woodworking machines and partially finished projects.

The kids who go to Urban Boatbuilders find mentors who teach them the fundamentals of boatbuilding, impart the core tenets of woodworking and also show them how to grow their confidence and see new possibilities for themselves.

Youth who get into Urban Boatbuilders learn how to manage responsibilities, take instruction and learn on the go. They also make connections within the community, both with other apprentices and with mentors. In short, Urban Boatbuilders breaks down barriers to getting future jobs by expanding apprentices' networks and teaching them how to overcome day-to-day challenges. Moreover, all apprenticeships are paid positions, so the kids not only learn how to show up on time, work hard and be accountable, but they also make some money while they're at it.



In addition to life skills, the kids also learn how to build beautiful and functional watercraft. Lashing is the skill that most challenges apprentices, says Development Director Noah Gerding. Apprentices spend hours using rope or string to bind together the parts of a canoe. And the most exciting part of boatbuilding?

Launch day. Kids, mentors and their supporters show up to local lakes — Lake Como and Lake Phalen in Saint Paul — to see if their project holds water. Many have never boated before. There's a lot of apprehension heading into launch day. But most of all, there are feelings of hope and accomplishment.



Like the program and feel like supporting their work? Buy yourself a youth-built boat — from canoes and kayaks to skiffs and prams — online! Visit www.urbanboatbuilders.org/buy-a-youth-built-boat.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black tank top and black leggings, is climbing a grey rock wall. She is seen from behind, reaching up with her right hand to a blue hold. Her left foot is on a blue hold, and her right foot is on a blue hold. She has a yellow and black climbing bag on her back. The wall is covered with various colored holds (green, blue, yellow, orange, red). A red rope is visible on the left side of the wall. The background is a dark grey wall with more holds.

CLIMBING

YOUR WAY TO FUN

Top-rope climbing is one of the safest and most beginner-friendly ways to get into rock climbing. With a rope anchored at the top and a belayer managing your line, you can focus on technique, movement and building confidence without worrying about long falls.

Essential Living does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Any information in this publication is not intended as a substitute for medical advice, and you should not take any action before consulting with a healthcare professional.



GEAR UP

You don't need a lot to start, and most climbing gyms provide rentals. You will need:

- **Harness** – Secures you to the rope and keeps you safe.
- **Climbing Shoes** – Snug shoes with sticky soles help your feet grip holds.
- **Helmet** – Essential outdoors to protect against falling debris.
- **Chalk and Chalk Bag** – Keeps hands dry and improves grip.
- **Carabiners**
- **Belay Device**



LEARN THE ROPES

Before you start climbing, it's important to understand the essentials.

- **Belaying** – The technique your partner uses to manage the rope and keep you safe. As you ascend, the belayer keeps the rope taut, catching you if you slip and lowering you smoothly when you're done.
- **Knots** – The figure-eight knot is the most common for tying into the rope. Make sure it's tied correctly and securely, as it plays an important role in safety.
- **Belay Checks** – Always double-check your harness, knots and rope setup before climbing. Both climber and belayer should confirm everything is secure.
- **Climbing Commands** – Clear communication keeps everyone safe:
 - **"On belay?"** – The climber asks if the belayer is ready to manage the rope.
 - **"Belay on"** – The belayer confirms they are ready.
 - **"Climbing!"** – The climber signals they are starting the ascent.
 - **"Climb on"** – The belayer acknowledges the climber can begin.
 - **"Take"** – The climber asks the belayer to tighten the rope for rest or adjustment.
 - **"Lowering"** – The climber signals they are ready to be lowered back down.



BEGINNER CLIMBING TIPS

- **USE YOUR LEGS** – Push with your legs instead of relying solely on your arms.
- **PLAN YOUR MOVES** – Look ahead to spot your next hand and foot placements.
- **RELAX YOUR GRIP** – Avoid over-gripping; it tires your muscles quickly.
- **STAY CLOSE TO THE WALL** – Keeping your hips in improves balance and efficiency.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Once you've gained confidence indoors, outdoor top-rope climbing is a whole new experience. Start with easy routes, double-check all anchor points and consider hiring a guide for your first outdoor climbs.

In the U.S., the Yosemite Decimal System (YDS) rates climbing difficulty. Most top-rope climbs fall in Class 5. Typically, 5.0–5.4 routes are beginner-friendly, 5.5–5.7 are moderate and 5.8+ gradually increase in difficulty. This rating system helps climbers choose routes that match their skill level.

Climbing offers new challenges at every level. Remember to stay curious, keep learning and enjoy the climb!





4 Foods on a stick you can make at home

Skewered snacks make eating playful and effortless, turning familiar flavors into something new. From casual gatherings to outdoor parties, these treats are as convenient as they are delicious. Whether you're in the mood for savory egg rolls or creamy peanut butter s'mores, these foods on a stick bring fun, flavor and a playful twist to every bite.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tube crescent roll dough
- 10 mozzarella string cheese sticks
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. pepperoni slices
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. marinara sauce, plus more for dipping
- 2 tbsp. melted butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. oregano
- Wooden skewers (pre-soaked in water for 30 mins)

PIZZA *on a stick*

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Cook Time: 12 minutes | Yield: 10 servings

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 450° F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly grease it.
2. Unroll the crescent dough on a clean, floured surface.
3. To assemble, lightly spread marinara across the dough before placing 3–4 pepperoni slices on each rectangle, then top with a mozzarella stick.
4. Roll the dough tightly around the cheese, pinching the seams and ends to seal.
5. Mix the melted butter, garlic powder and oregano. Then brush over the tops of each roll.
6. Bake for 10–12 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through.
7. Insert a skewer into each baked roll. Serve warm with marinara sauce for dipping.



Pizza on a stick turns a classic favorite into a fun, easy, grab-and-go treat.

The creamy peanut butter layer, melted chocolate and sea salt topping make these campfire classics irresistible!

PB S'MORES

on a stick

Prep Time: 15 minutes | Chill Time: 1 hour
Yield: 10 servings



INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 tbsp. milk
- ½ c. creamy peanut butter
- 15 large marshmallows
- 10 graham crackers
- 1 c. chocolate chips
- 1 tbsp. coconut oil
- Popsicle handles
- Flaky sea salt, for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and lay out the graham cracker squares.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the peanut butter and milk. Add extra milk as needed until the peanut butter reaches a thin, creamy consistency.
3. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the marshmallows and peanut butter. Stir continuously until the mixture is melted and smooth.
4. Spoon a tablespoon of the warm peanut butter-marshmallow mixture onto each graham cracker square.
5. Insert a skewer into the center of the filling, then place another graham cracker square on top. Press gently to spread the filling evenly, then set aside to cool slightly.
6. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the chocolate chips and coconut oil. Microwave in 25-second intervals, stirring between each, until the chocolate is fully melted and smooth.
7. Dip half of each s'mores sandwich into the melted chocolate, then sprinkle lightly with sea salt.
8. Allow the chocolate to set completely before serving, then enjoy!



These egg rolls combine savory filling and crunchy wrappers into a fun, skewer-ready snack.

EGG ROLLS

on a stick

Prep Time: 20 minutes | Cook Time: 15 minutes
Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- ¾ c. shredded chicken, cooked
- 1 c. shredded cabbage
- ½ c. shredded carrots
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sesame oil
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- 10 egg roll wrappers
- Oil for frying
- Wooden skewers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a skillet, heat one tablespoon of vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the chicken and cook until golden brown on both sides and cooked through.
2. Add the cabbage, carrots, green onions, soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic powder and ginger. Stir and cook for 3–4 minutes, or until the vegetables are softened. Remove from heat and let the mixture cool slightly.
3. Place an egg roll wrapper on a clean surface. Spoon about two tablespoons of the filling along one edge, then lay a wooden skewer lengthwise in the center of the filling.
4. Roll the wrapper tightly around the filling, folding in the sides as you go. Seal the edge with a small dab of water.
5. Heat oil in a deep skillet or pot to 350° F. Carefully fry the egg rolls for 3–4 minutes per side, or until golden brown and crispy.
6. Transfer to paper towels to drain excess oil. Serve hot with sweet chili sauce, soy sauce or your favorite dipping sauce.



These crispy, golden hush puppies get a playful upgrade when served on sticks!

HUSH PUPPIES

on a stick

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Cook Time: 5 minutes
Yield: 12 servings



INGREDIENTS

- 1 c. cornmeal
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ½ c. all-purpose flour
- ½ small onion, finely minced
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- Oil for frying
- 1 tsp. salt
- Wooden skewers
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ c. buttermilk

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a bowl, whisk together the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, salt, sugar and onion powder.
2. Add the buttermilk, egg and minced onion, stirring until a thick batter forms.
3. Heat oil in a deep skillet or pot to 365° F.
4. Scoop tablespoon-sized portions of batter and carefully drop them into the hot oil. Fry for 2-3 minutes, turning occasionally, until golden brown and cooked through.
5. Transfer the hush puppies to a plate lined with paper towels and let them rest briefly to absorb any excess oil. Once cool enough to handle, insert skewers into each one.
6. Serve warm and enjoy!

VISUAL GUIDE TO THE COOLEST TREES



JOSHUA TREE **NATIVE RANGE:**
Mojave Desert

- Does not produce traditional growth rings, so age is estimated using height and branching patterns
- Pollination relies entirely on the yucca moth

From towering giants to whimsical shapes, the world is filled with trees that feel straight out of a fantasy novel. Here are some of the most remarkable ones to explore.



BAOBAB TREE **NATIVE RANGE:**
Madagascar, mainland Africa and parts of Australia

- Its thick, fleshy trunk stores water, making it the largest succulent plant on the planet
- Flowers open at night and typically last only a day, with only a few blooming at a time, encouraging pollinators to move from tree to tree



BRISTLECONE PINE

NATIVE RANGE:

High mountains in California, Nevada and Utah

- Dense, resin-rich wood resists decay, insects and bacteria
- Thrives at high elevations (8,000-11,000 feet) where conditions are harsh and few other plants survive
- Aged over 4,780 years old, "Methuselah" is known as the oldest living tree on the planet

DRAGON BLOOD TREE

NATIVE RANGE:

Socotra Island off the coast of Yemen

- Produces red resin that has long been used for wood stains, traditional medicines and even as a natural hair color
- New leaves grow only from the very tips of the youngest branches, giving the tree its distinctive umbrella shape



BANYAN

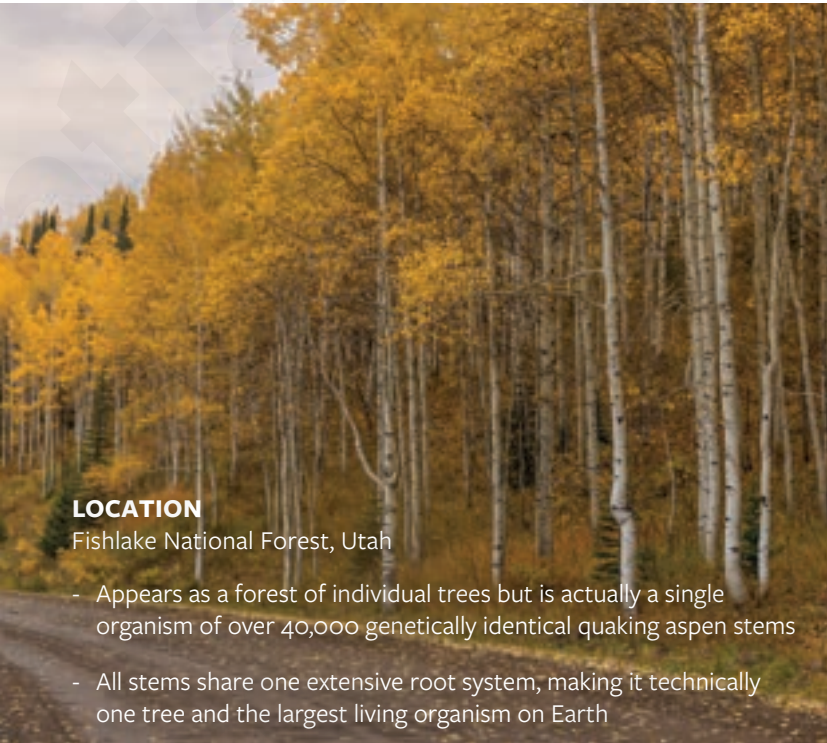
NATIVE RANGE:

India

- Sends down aerial roots that grow into new trunks, allowing a single tree to cover acres of land
- Its extensive canopy and network of aerial roots create a microhabitat that shelters birds, bats, insects and other wildlife



FAMOUS TREES



LOCATION

Fishlake National Forest, Utah

- Appears as a forest of individual trees but is actually a single organism of over 40,000 genetically identical quaking aspen stems
- All stems share one extensive root system, making it technically one tree and the largest living organism on Earth

PANDO

DEAD VLEI TREES



LOCATION

Namib Desert, Namibia

- Preserved skeletons of camel thorn trees that died 600–700 years ago, these trees have avoided decay thanks to extremely dry conditions. They stand in a white clay pan surrounded by orange sand dunes, creating a striking and unusual landscape

GENERAL SHERMAN

LOCATION

Sequoia National Park, California

- Standing 274.9 feet tall, this giant is the largest known tree by volume in the world. It has an estimated total volume of 52,500 cubic feet, and the trunk alone weighs nearly 1,400 tons



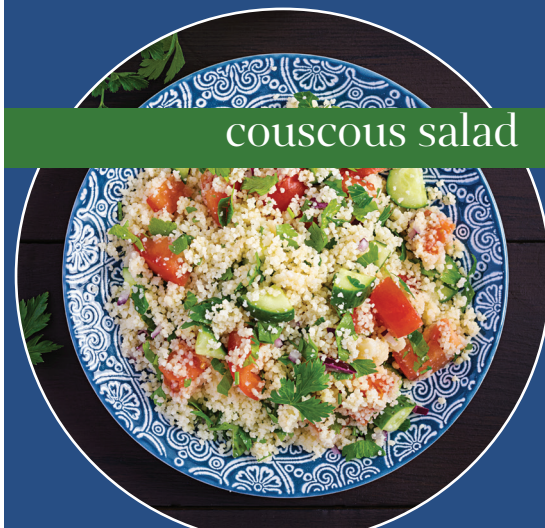


Jodee Harris

Vice President, First Commonwealth
Advisors, Senior Financial Advisor, Osaic
Institutions, Inc. • 4509033



Office: 724-832-6181
jharris@fcadvisor.com
www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris



couscous salad

Ingredients

- ½ c. couscous
- 6 ¾ oz. vegetable stock, hot
- 2 spring onions
- 1 red pepper
- ½ cucumber
- ½ c. feta cheese
- 2 tbsp. pesto
- 2 tbsp. pine nuts

Instructions

1. Tip the couscous into a large bowl and pour over the stock. Cover, then leave for 10 minutes until fluffy and all the stock has been absorbed.
2. Slice the onions and pepper, and dice the cucumber. Add these to the couscous and fork through the pesto. Sprinkle the crumbled feta and pine nuts on top before serving.

5 WAYS TO CREATE A Welcoming Entryway



1. Use a mix of ambient, accent, and task lighting for warmth.
2. Add functional storage for keys, mail, and essentials.
3. Add a rug that complements your décor.
4. Place a small bench or chair for putting on shoes.
5. Include fresh flowers or a potted plant for a touch of nature.



Jodee Harris

Vice President, First Commonwealth
Advisors, Senior Financial Advisor, Osaic
Institutions, Inc. • 4509033



Office: 724-832-6181

2501 Sharkys Dr Latrobe, PA 15650

jharris@fcadvisor.com

www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris

Investment and insurance products and services are offered through OSAIC INSTITUTIONS, INC. member FINRA/SIPC. First Commonwealth Advisors is a trade name of First Commonwealth Bank. Osaic Institutions and First Commonwealth Bank are not affiliated. Products and services made available through Osaic Institutions are not insured by the FDIC or any other agency of the United States and are not deposits or obligations of nor guaranteed or insured by any bank or bank affiliate. These products are subject to investment risk, including the possible loss of value.

Jodee Harris
First Commonwealth Advisors
2501 Sharkys Dr
Latrobe, PA 15650

3 House Plants

THAT WILL THRIVE IN YOUR KITCHEN

ALOE VERA

Prefers bright, indirect light. Water sparingly, allowing soil to dry out between watering.

SPIDER PLANT

Prefers indirect light and can tolerate a bit of neglect. Water when soil feels dry.

POTHOS

Allow the soil to dry between waterings and avoid direct sunlight.



Jodee Harris

Vice President, First Commonwealth
Advisors, Senior Financial Advisor, Osaic
Institutions, Inc. - 4509033



Office: 724-832-6181

jharris@fcadvisor.com

www.fcbanking.com/jodee-harris

Investment and insurance products and services are offered through OSAIC INSTITUTIONS, INC. member FINRA/SIPC. First Commonwealth Advisors is a trade name of First Commonwealth Bank. Osaic Institutions and First Commonwealth Bank are not affiliated. Products and services made available through Osaic Institutions are not insured by the FDIC or any other agency of the United States and are not deposits or obligations of nor guaranteed or insured by any bank or bank affiliate. These products are subject to investment risk, including the possible loss of value.