



Cheap Tricks
Designers on the items they never spend big on—and where to source them **D5**

OFF DUTY

Curb Appeal
Dan Neil finds the Lucid Air irresistible, warts and all **D13**



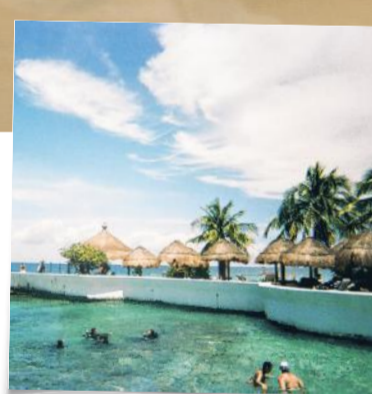
FASHION | FOOD | DESIGN | TRAVEL | GEAR

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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MILLENNIALS ROCK THE BOAT

As cruise lines navigate back to normal, they're finding a surprising new wave of customers: millennial and Gen Z travelers. These younger passengers have their own reasons for thinking the boating life is cool. We sent a reporter to discover what they are.



By SARA BOSWORTH

ON EASTER MONDAY, atop the deck of a 963-foot cruise ship floating somewhere north of Cancún, Mexico, Macda Hailu and DeShun Gilchrist were planning their evening. On the agenda: dinner, a comedy show, then hitting the club. The couple was there to celebrate Mr. Gilchrist's 26th birthday. "It's my first cruise," said Ms. Hailu, a 24-year-old audi-

tor from Byron, Ga. "It's a good time. Lots of things to do." The trip had its surprises, however. "There's a lot of little kids. Sometimes I'll need to watch my language, I'll turn around and there's an 8-year-old behind me," she said. The pair was lured by a ceaseless flow of tropical drinks, an all-you-can-eat buffet, three pools, a casino and more—all included in one price. They are part of a generation exposed to cruises in the early 2000s, when companies increased their family-friendly programming. They had

now returned on their own dime. Among them: me. The difference was this was my first cruise, having grown up with a father as scared of deep water as my mother is of being confined to any one place for more than a few hours. With four days on board the Carnival Pride, sailing from Tampa to Cozumel and back, I was curious to see why millennials and Gen Zers were paying \$1,000 and up for week-long trips to a number of far-flung places (See "See-Worthy Spots," page D4).

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SHORT SAIL On a recent four-day trip from Tampa, Fla., to Cozumel, Mexico, the writer snapped photos of Gen Z and millennial shipmates on the Carnival Pride. From left: A guest lounges on deck; travelers on a shore visit; the onboard waterslide; a dip in the Caribbean Sea. Above: The author poses on Holland America Line's MS Rotterdam in New York Harbor.

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CORK VALUES
Don't overpay for Sancerre. Lettie Teague found 5 bottles priced right **D10**



CHANGE YOUR STRIPES
Move over ticking. Adios pinstripes. Now trending: loose, painterly, linear motifs **D5**



HOW ABOUT A GAME OF CROQUETTE?
These potato-prosciutto snacks make a winning addition to any cocktail party **D9**

TIES GET BRAWNY
Why stylish men are knotting up terrifically chunky designs **D2**



ANNIKA REED (WALLPAPER)

F. MARTIN RAMIN/ THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (SELFIE); SARA BOSWORTH/ THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; GETTY IMAGES (LIFE PRESERVED)

STYLE & FASHION

NECK AND NECK Two shirts, two collars—a sturdy design (left) and a flat camp style (right). Our goal? Lively, face-framing takes on the former.



Wanted: A Structured, Unstuffy Collar for Spring

Flat, splayed camp-collar shirts now dominate men’s warm-weather lineups. But the style isn’t for everyone. Here, charming alternatives that aren’t boring old Oxfords.

By Ashley Ogawa Clarke

LIKE AN ancient, evil deity, this shirt goes by many names: bowling, Cuban, cabana, lounge, pajama-collar or, most famously, camp-collar. Even if none ring a bell, chances are you’ve seen the style, distinguished by a splayed, notched collar that exposes clavicles and lies pancake-flat against the chest. You might well have spotted one on a rakish sort at a rooftop bar—or on actor Theo James, who wears little else in the second season of HBO’s smash-hit series “The White Lotus.” Though camp collars reportedly arrived in the U.S. from Cuba in the 1950s, in recent years they have come to dominate men’s casual-shirt offerings, especially in

warmer months. Today’s camp styles range from \$990 Celine designs with palm-tree accents right through to \$33 Old Navy takes. Athleisure giant Lululemon offers a head-scratching version in a sweat-wicking fabric better suited to gym clothes. Countless trendy brands sell few other collar styles come spring and summer. Trying to source a cool, appealing, non-camp-collar shirt has become the wildest goose chase in men’s fashion. While camp collars have their die-hard fans, they aren’t for all guys—or all occasions. Sure, they’re fun, comfortable and raffish, but their flattened forms don’t frame the face like a proud, upstanding collar might. More annoyingly, as New York City stylist Mac Huelster notes, they always look chill. “Even though camp

collars can be elevated, they just have a more laid-back look versus the standard collar [on], say, a button-down Oxford,” said Mr. Huelster. A structured collar reads as timeless, he said. It “looks less ‘vacation’ than the camp collar.” That supreme casualness has prompted Chris Olberding, president of New York City-headquartered shirt brand Gitman Vintage, to embrace alternatives to camp collars. This year, Mr. Olberding, 52, put in a record personal order for colored dress shirts. And when he heads to Europe for work this summer, he won’t be packing any camp shirts. His desire to wear sturdier collars, he explained, is a reaction to having dressed so casually during the pandemic. Other fashionable folks are turning their backs on

camp collars because they find the ubiquitous style a bit of a snore. Several years ago, these shirts “seemed fresh and compelling and a way to stand out,” said Jon Aagaard, who works in investor relations in Chicago. Now that every second guy seems to own one, the fash-

For a shirt brimming with easy swagger, consider a popover.

ionable 41-year-old has begun gravitating toward neck bands that feel surprising and less played out. Good news: If you know where to look, charming alternatives can be found; you needn’t settle for a staid striped Oxford. Mr. Aa-

gaard’s current pick? Club-collar shirts, which are marked by a subtly, quirkily curved collar and tend to skew a little dressier. He enjoys versions from Thom Browne and Ralph Lauren; they’re “great under a blazer and stand out a little bit,” he said, praising their “cheeky, almost punky-prep vibe.” The stylist Mr. Huelster, 40, another camp-collar defector, likes plaid Madras shirts with regular button-down collars, a design that’s low-key without being blah. For special occasions, he favors a guayabera shirt that he bought in Mexico City. This summery style, popular in Latin America, often has a sturdy collar and charms with its rows of vertical front pleats. Last summer Mr. Huelster buttoned up his short-sleeve guayabera for a wedding in Lake Como, Italy. “It was like ‘The Talented Mr. Ripley’ style,” he said of his breezily elegant choice, noting that he didn’t twin with any other guests. Men seeking a clean, understated look might consider a polo with a twist, said Andrew Weitz, a style consultant in Los Angeles. He often steers clients toward a Johnny-collar polo, notable for its total absence of buttons. “It’s a different take on a regular polo. It’s sexy,” said Mr. Weitz of the style, which can be found in various light, spring-worthy knits. For a shirt brimming with easy swagger, consider a popover, suggests George Vlagos, founder of Chicago menswear store Independence. This irreverent, smock-like style often comes with a sturdy pointed collar; more notably, its buttons stop around the sternum rather than descending all the way down, meaning you swiftly yank it over your head before running out the door. (Mr. Olberding calls it “the summer hoodie,” because of the way you pull it on.) Pick a popover to match your mood. Grab a short-sleeve, beach-appropriate linen take from Engineered Garments or an oversize, artsy design from cooler-than-thou Swedish brand Our Legacy. “A popover makes guys feel more fashionable,” said Mr. Vlagos, “because it’s not something everyone has.”

THESE TOPS DON'T FLOP / FIVE SPRING SHIRTS WITH STYLISHLY STURDY NECKS



Karu Research Shirt, \$275, MrPorter.com



Barena Popover Shirt, \$265, CuevaShop.com



Auralee Boxy Shirt, \$405, MyTheresa.com



Seersucker Shirt, \$99, Cos.com



Chambray Shirt, \$200, GitmanVintage.com

By Andrew Barker

CHARLES AMINE, a retail consultant in New York City, wears a tie to the office every day—by choice. “I enjoy wearing a tie...when no one would expect you to,” said Mr. Amine. Lately, the 22-year-old’s neckwear game has been particularly strong. While home for the holidays last year, he discovered a trove of chunky, 1990s-era silk ties in his dad’s wardrobe. One, a 3.5-inch-wide red beauty by Parisian luxury brand Charvet, caught his eye and followed him back to New York. He likes to team it with navy suits and loafers. “I was drawn to its elegance,” he said. “It’s the widest [tie] I’ve ever worn.” Few guys need to sport a tie for work these days, but dapper contrarians like Mr. Amine are using the accessory to enliven outfits and perhaps make a strong impression on management. Other tastemakers, like Manhattan producer and stylist Jahil Fisher, 40, enjoy knotting up a colorful tie for social occasions. Whether they’re embracing neckwear for meetings, nights out or wedding season, these stylish sorts seem to agree on one thing: It’s time to ditch the slender ties of years past and go big. Whippet-thin ties—sometimes as narrow as 2 inches across at their broadest point—have been a trendy fixture for much of the past decade. In 2016, J.Crew caused an uproar in menswear circles when it upped the width of its ties from 2.5 to a still-slim 2.75 inches, suggesting a change in the wind. Now? The market’s most fashionable styles, at 3.3-plus inches wide, are stockier than a well-fed bulldog. In the past 2 to 3 years, Charvet has seen a decline in sales of slimmer ties and growing demand for 3.5 and 3.75-inch beasts, said brand

Today’s Trending Tie Style: Broader Than an Ox

Slim ties have been the rage for much of the past decade. But for fashionable guys embracing neckwear, there’s no such thing as too wide.



HEAVYWEIGHT LINEUP Three great, chunky ties at home alongside other tremendously broad things. Clockwise from top left: 3.5-inch-wide Tom Ford Silk Tie, \$270, BergdorfGoodman.com; 3.35-inch-wide Silk Tie, \$150, TheArmoury.com; 3.5-inch-wide Wool Tie, \$90, JCrew.com; an ox; folk hero Paul Bunyan; a bulldog; the Michelin Man; a jumbo truck.

director Jean-Claude Colban. Non-luxury labels are also broadening their ambitions. J.Crew sells patterned styles that look like they’ve eaten the brand’s ties of 2016. And Chicago company Tie Bar, which sells \$22 silk designs, reports wider ties now make up 60% of total sales. That’s the inverse of a few years ago, when skinny styles held the majority share, said Abby Wheeler, Tie Bar’s VP of merchandising. Mark Cho, co-founder of the Armoury, an upscale haberdasher in New York City and Hong Kong, links demand for thicker ties with a resurgence in oversize, ’80s-style suiting featuring wide lapels. These go hand-in-hand, noted Mr. Cho, because the width of the tie and the jacket lapels should be proportionate. (As should the width of the tie and the shirt collar; one shouldn’t overwhelm the other.) To make the most of your broad tie, Charvet’s Mr. Colban recommends choosing an “interesting” pattern—i.e. one that’s slightly irregular or features larger prints. That capitalizes on the extra real estate. “There is no design justification for a wider plain tie,” he said. Beyond being on trend, why embrace chunky neckwear? A wide tie grants its wearer swagger, notes the producer and stylist Mr. Fisher, whose meaty ties are inspired by the “kipper” style that thrived in the ’70s. When pairing a brawny design with a striped shirt, vintage Levi’s and a cap, Mr. Fisher feels like he’s Andy Warhol and “can get into the main room at Sant Ambroeus without a reservation,” he said, referencing the popular Manhattan restaurant chain. For the consultant Mr. Amine, the appeal is obvious. A beefy tie accents outfits in a way its slim comrades could never dream of doing. “I love how it stands out,” he said.

STYLE & FASHION

BY MARISA MELTZER

FOR MOST women in traditional offices, assembling a workplace wardrobe is excruciating—and not for reasons you might expect. While the post-WFH era ushered in the “How casual is too casual?” guessing game, the most pressing workwear problems predate Covid 19. These age-old issues are decidedly unsexy conundrums—How do I stop sweating through my blouse? Do wrinkle-resistant blazers exist?—that few women openly discuss and even fewer brands adequately address.

Fit is an especially irksome issue for women of all shapes and sizes. Although fashion is becoming more size-inclusive—H&M U.S. recently extended its women’s sizing to 4X—most brands don’t account for the fact that no two bodies are identical shapes, even if they’re both technically a size 10. Fit is a game, said Betty Halbreich, the founder of Bergdorf Goodman’s Solutions personal-shopping department. “You have to try on every designer, every piece.”

It’s easy to preach body positivity, but even the most confident among us would feel defeated if each button-down she tried gaped awkwardly at the bust or every blazer she found had oppressively snug sleeves. Just ask Karen Ortiz, an administrative judge in Manhattan. “I had a couple of comments from colleagues like, ‘Oh that looks tight on you,’” said Ms. Ortiz, 51. That’s when she hired a pro to help her shop.

Having a personal stylist on call isn’t the only fix. Here, experts and working women solve five vexing office-wear headaches.

Work That Wardrobe

Dressing for the office is frustrating at best and defeating at worst—but it doesn’t have to be. Here, expert advice for solving five universal workwear dilemmas.



SAY YES TO NO STRESS Not everyone has access to designer work duds like Anne Hathaway in ‘The Devil Wears Prada,’ shown, but a few hacks will help you avoid shumpy fare like Pam (Jenna Fischer) wore on ‘The Office’ (top).

1 My work pants violently dig into my waist. Does anyone make polished trousers that won’t cause me physical pain by 11 a.m.?

Vince’s classic High-Waist Bias Pant (below) has a subtle elastic waistband that affords sweats-level ease, said Mary Orton, a blogger in Milwaukee who doles out advice on office style via her website Memorandum. Also worth considering: Athleta’s secretly stretchy Brooklyn Ankle Pant (below).

Vince creative director Caroline Belhumeur advocates broadening your definition of “polished” and pairing easy wool cargo pants with an oversize blazer. “I went out in mine and didn’t have a bag!” she said.



2 I have a sweaty commute to a freezing office. WFH in PJs sans bra was so much better. How can I stay comfortable all day?

At her office in scorching Phoenix, Amy L. Johnson, 45, is blasted with A.C. But she finds carrying a cardigan to her job in a tech department “annoying.” Brooklyn stylist Karyn Starr advises those in similar situations layer *under*, not over, their clothes. Numi’s Tencel-blend undershirt has underarm gussets that absorb sweat before it shows. “They’re game-changers,” said Ms. Starr.

For actual underwear, Washington, D.C., stylist Lauren A. Rothman suggests replicating WFH comfort with wireless bras and seamless briefs—the latter of which will help you avoid panty lines and thongs.



3 I am not a sneaker person but I refuse to abuse my feet with heels. What are some comfy-but-chic shoes?

Ballet flats are for-sure chic but high-end options can cost four figures and the style doesn’t offer a lot of support. “I love the idea of an oxford shoe for women because it sends a subtle nod to old-school men’s dress,” said New York City stylist Joanna Lovering, who sends clients to Cole Haan. Want some height without the toe-pinching pitch? “Platforms are a problem solver,” said Ms. Rothman. Her preferred purveyors are Stella McCartney and Clergerie. Prada also offers a menagerie of platform styles that work equally well with tux pants and jeans.



4 Why do all button-down shirts gap at my bust, and how do I make it stop?

“Let’s be real,” said Ms. Lovering. “The old secure-it-with-a-safety-pin trick is overused. And we can always see the pin.” She points her clients to Universal Standard, whose Elbe Popover Stretch Poplin Shirt (right) dispatches the button bulge via its half-placket design, generous arm holes and a smidge of elastane. For a more casual look, Ms. Starr, who said that her “clients with breasts tend to almost give up” on shirting, recommends Toteme’s Signature Cotton Shirt. The top’s intentionally oversize cut prevents buttons from misbehaving.



5 I love how blazers make almost any outfit office-ready, but why do so many have shrunken arms and wrinkle-prone fabric? Where have all the crisp, adult-size jackets gone?

According to Ms. Orton, they’re on the e-comm sites of M.M. LaFleur and Theory. Both brands sell blazers in versatile knit or stretch fabrics that appear polished even after you’ve wrangled your toddler into a car seat, she said. New York designer Rachel Comey makes jackets in a cotton-polyamide blend called Foam. Her New Amboy Blazer is cut from this spongy jacquard, the pebbled texture of which helps resist and mask wrinkles. Bonus? Its oversize silhouette allows for maximum movement.



MONTBLANC

1858 Iced Sea.
Inspired by the Mont Blanc glaciers.

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Since When Do Millennials Like Cruises?



OH BUOY! While in port at Cozumel, Mexico, the author photographed a cruise ship docked nearby.

Continued from page D1

Cruise ships have historically been havens for snowbird retirees and multigenerational family reunions, both parties drawn to their efficiency and relative affordability. But increasingly, those advantages are attracting people like me, a 20-something tourist looking to spend a few days in the sun without decimating her savings. Cruises are a tempting bang-for-your-buck option, cramming as much as possible into a few precious vacation days. The boat hops islands and passengers spend afternoons exploring port cities with scenic selfie spots. When the boat departs, the guests return to food galore, water parks, concerts and more. Options at the lower end of the price range hover at \$100 per night, including food.

Young customers are most often on board to celebrate, for a birthday, gradua-

marketing officer at Royal Caribbean International. According to the Cruise Lines International Association, millennial customers—the generation famous for spending their money on experiences rather than things—are the most likely age group to say they intend to cruise again.

“When I was a kid, I was scared of cruises,” said Jonathan Brown, 25. “I’ve seen ‘Titanic.’” But during Covid lockdown, the New York City restaurant manager found himself stuck at home watching travel videos on TikTok and YouTube. Again and again, the algorithms served him cruise ships. “I was like, this is a different method of traveling than I’ve been used to,” said Mr. Brown. In 2022, he took a four-day Caribbean cruise with his best friend. A few months later, he booked his second.

“The main idea that drew me in

ing sunbathing session.

In their effort to get people like Ms. Shomer and Mr. Brown out to sea, some lines make their cruises available only to those 21 and up. Virgin Voyages, an adult-only cruise line, offers a karaoke lounge, Korean barbecue and even a tattoo parlor called Squid Ink. Trips are planned using an “emotional journey bible,” linking activities and even music to guests’ projected moods, catering to a generation attuned to their feelings.

Cruise companies are also adjusting their advertising techniques to suit the younger audience. Royal Caribbean promoted their newest ship within the popular videogame Fortnite. Videos on Carnival Cruise’s TikTok account use the format of popular memes and trends on the app, featuring bright-eyed 20-somethings texting their new “cruise besties.” Virgin Voyages incited a viral TikTok dance challenge with choreography set to “Karma Chameleon” that had little to do with cruises, but ended up being more than twice as effective as their standard ads, the company said.

“I might actually watch an entire 30-minute vlog of a Carnival cruise, versus 30 seconds of a Carnival commercial,” said Mr. Brown. “I would say [social media] makes up at least 50% of the decision on whether or not I’m going to go somewhere.”

Social-media use reflects young travelers’ piqued interest. On Pinterest, searches among users between ages 18 and 24 for “cruise vibes” and “luxury cruise” increased 145% and 95%, respectively, over the last year. TikTok videos with the hashtag #cruisetok have garnered more than one billion views.

Younger travelers may discover cruises on social media, but once on board, unplugging is easy. I gave up on trying to open Slack on day two of flickering Wi-Fi and found a couple of hours of solace on my room’s balcony, watching the waves.

“I think we were just so overloaded with the reality of the world around us that we—I think especially millennials—have found our own, like, little escape culture,” said Ms. Shomer, the astrologist. “And a cruise is like the ultimate escape. You are in the middle of the ocean.”

Nowadays, millennial customers—the generation famous for spending their money on experiences rather than things—are the most likely age group to say they intend to cruise again.

tion, work promotion or even a divorce, said Nathan Rosenberg, the chief brand officer at Virgin Voyages. He described a newly minted 30-something divorcée on a cruise with about a dozen friends: “She walked to the edge of the ship and threw her ring into the ocean.” For a crew vacationing en masse, cruises offer everyone plenty of space and places to eat, stake out a pair of deck chairs, sip a kale-acai-turmeric-protein booster or gossip in the infrared sauna.

Cruises have upped their long-weekend itineraries, also more doable for younger workers with limited vacation time. On a Celebrity Beyond ship, interior designer Nate Berkus revamped the Sunset Bar with palm-frond wallpaper, a look popular with younger, retro-obsessed crowds. Royal Caribbean debuted an eatery serving brunch called “The Mason Jar,” invoking a persistent symbol of artisanal hipsterdom.

So far, it seems to be working. “We see more millennials and Gen Z sailing with us than ever before,” said Kara Wallace, chief

was being able to sample different locations,” said Mr. Brown. “I don’t have to necessarily book a full trip to Puerto Rico. I can go and test it out for a couple of hours.”

Young workers in the midst of building their careers are happy to hand off planning to a cruise package that has completely mapped out daily activities. “[Cruising] hearkens to simpler times—before we had to make any sort of decisions or employ any critical thinking,” said Jordan Shomer, 34, a professional astrologist in Austerlitz, N.Y., who joined a group of friends on a cruise in February. “The idea of having to make even the decisions for the itinerary was too much for me,” she said.

For me, a perennial over-thinker, this forced go-with-the-flow mentality was the most unexpected bonus. Every evening, the cruise’s app told me where and when I would eat dinner. The hardest decision I had to make over the course of four days was which deck chair to pick for my morn-

See-Worthy Spots

The five destinations to which millennials and Gen Zers are cruising—and why—according to advisers affiliated with Virtuoso, a global network of travel planners



Portofino, a port stop in Italy.

The Mediterranean

“A cruise to multiple countries makes it an affordable way to travel the world,” said Jessica Griscavage of Runway Travel, based in Springfield, Va.

SHIP AHOY The Celebrity Edge ship hits seven ports in Italy, Spain and France in seven days. From \$1,099. [CelebrityCruises.com](#)

Alaska

Adults-only cruises are popular for millennials heading to hike and fish as well as see glaciers, wildlife and historic gold-mining towns like Juneau, according to Ruth Turpin, owner of Cruise, Etc., in Ft. Worth, Texas.

SHIP AHOY The Oceania Regatta’s Alaska Wayfarer itinerary offers that. From \$1,700 for seven days. [OceaniaCruises.com](#)



The Greek Island of Santorini

Greek Isles

“Island-hopping in Greece offers both beach days and sightseeing days,” said Nancy Yale, founder of Cruise and World Travel, based in Fairfield, Conn.

SHIP AHOY Virgin Voyages’ eight-day Greek Island Glow cruise hits Santorini, Rhodes and Mykonos. From \$2,790. [VirginVoyages.com](#)

Galápagos Islands

The Ecuadorean archipelago offers a rich history and unique wildlife. “Cruising is more than buffets and pina coladas for millennials,” said Stephanie Goldberg-Glazer, owner of Live Well, Travel Often, based in Key West, Fla.

SHIP AHOY A week-long trip on the Silver Origin explores the islands with a team of experts. From \$13,400. [SilverSea.com](#)



St. John, in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Caribbean

Like most, young travelers like smaller islands big ships can’t access, so there are less people, said Lesley Cohen, SmartFlyer in Tampa, Fla.

SHIP AHOY The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection’s Evrima cruises to St. Barts, St. Kitts and St. John. From \$4,500 for five days. [RitzCarltonYachtCollection.com](#)

—Donna Bulseco



A Boatload Of Fun

Movies set on cruise ships span all genres, said Charlie Tabesh, SVP of programming for Turner Classic Movies, from “comedy and romance to serious drama and disaster movies.” Here, a cinematic sampling, plus the newest in the cruise canon.



1931 ‘Monkey Business’
THE PLOT Four stowaways get mixed up with sketchy characters while creating havoc on an ocean liner. “Fun and wacky, it’s a good use of the stage setting,” said Mr. Tabesh about the Marx Brothers’ barrel-of-laughs romp. “In the 1930s, the life of luxury portrayed cinematically on a cruise was pure escapism,” added Mr. Tabesh, who also mentioned 1937’s “Shall We Dance,” with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.



1942 ‘Now, Voyager’
THE PLOT “The character of Charlotte Vale [Bette Davis] goes through such a transformation on the cruise, a place of freedom and liberation, where she’s away from her controlling mother, who has kept her down,” said Mr. Tabesh. With the help of a psychiatrist, Dr. Jaquith (Claude Rains), who suggests the cruise, and then her married-lover shipmate, “Charlotte becomes a sophisticated woman,” he said.



1953 ‘Gentlemen Prefer Blondes’
THE PLOT Two gorgeous gals head to Paris on the Isle de Paris ocean liner, titillating the eligible men on board, including the American Olympic team. Mr. Tabesh praises the film’s music and dancing, which includes Marilyn Monroe’s performance of “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend.” But he insists it’s the story, from a 1926 novel by Anita Loos, “that makes you pay attention to this very funny movie.”



1997 ‘Titanic’
THE PLOT This epic romance/disaster flick charts the course of two lovers aboard the luxury cruise ship that sank on April 15, 1912. “It’s not one of my favorites,” said Mr. Tabesh, “but James Cameron’s ‘big’ movie captures the details of what a ship would look like at the time and the mix of classes thrown together in a tragedy.” Indeed, the film has survived the test of time better than 1972’s “Poseidon Adventure.”



2022 ‘Triangle of Sadness’
THE PLOT Influencers and entitled Euros implode on a luxury cruise. “Ruben Östlund’s film gets at the idea that luxury is exploitative. It also plays to the guilt we feel being drawn in by it,” said Charles Bramesco, whose book “Colors of Film: The Story of Cinema in 50 Palattes” (*Quarto, 2023*) looks at how visual cues contribute to a film’s meaning. —D.B.

►For more cruise films, go to [wsj/travel.com](#).

DESIGN & DECORATING

By NINA MOLINA

EVERYONE loves a bargain—and savvy designers know that when it comes to outfitting your home, even if you have a fortune, it doesn't always pay to spend one. The trick, according to high-end stylists, is to think strategically, pinching pennies on inexpensive yet well-designed utility pieces and flexing your budget on statement items that really wow. Need guidance? Here, six items pros won't pay a lot for.

1. Accessories
Decorating with knickknacks is “all about creating an eclectic mix,” said Seattle interior designer Emily Ruff. Happily, opportunities to scout affordable smalls abound. To nail an engaging high-low vibe, the owner of Cohesively Curated Interiors recommends browsing local antique and thrift stores for

In high-traffic spots like kitchens, choose stools that can be replaced, guilt-free, as they wear.

bric-a-brac like terracotta vases and large bread bowls. Etsy is her go-to for vintage European pieces, and West Elm and Anthropologie reliably offer stylish new finds.

2. Sheets
Don't lose sleep over pricey linens, advises Gianpiero Gaglione. Instead of breaking the bank on bedding, the Los Angeles designer relies on durable and wallet-friendly Egyptian cotton sheets from Parachute. An even thriftier

‘I Never Spend a Lot On...’

Designers disclose six stylish staples they won't pay a lot for—from cotton sheets to trendy tables—and where they source their low-cost scores. Plus: where they splurge



FAVE SAVES Design pros' thrifty alternatives, clockwise from top left: Karley Organic Cotton Shower Curtain, \$78, Anthropologie.com; Percale Top Sheet Full/Queen in Clay, \$80, Percale Pillowcase Set in Clay, \$59, ParachuteHome.com; AllModern Payton Bar & Counter Stool in Walnut, \$312, Wayfair.com; Iris Apfel Jingle Jungle Rug, from \$129, Ruggable.com; Gladom in Dark Gray-Beige, \$25, Ikea.com; Bettie Copper Throw Pillow With Feather-Down Insert 18 inches, \$50, CB2.com.

pick? Ashley Macuga of the San Carlos, Calif., firm Collected Interiors swears by Target's Threshold collection. “They wash beautifully and feel great after a long day.”

3. Bar Stools and Chairs
Rather than splurging on premium stools in high-traffic

spots like kitchens, New Orleans designer Hattie Collins advises choosing utilitarian pieces that can be replaced, guilt-free, as they wear. For surplus seating in dining rooms and patios, Carolina Irving, a designer living in Paris, scoops up director's chairs on Amazon and Way-

fair. “They look stylish and are super comfortable.”

4. Pillows
To refresh a neutral room without breaking the budget—or entirely committing to a new style—principal designer Erin Coren of Curated Nest in Greenwich, Conn.,

leans heavily on playful pillows from Tonic Living and Burke Decor. “They can really change an overall scheme without a big investment,” she said.

5. Side Tables
Accent tables are meant to be moved and swapped to suit



One item designers consistently shell out for? Our survey was illuminating: lighting. “No corner-cutting there,” said Kevin Klein, a Los Angeles designer. “It really is the jewelry of a home,” said Ms. Kah, who leans on retailers like Visual Comfort and Urban Electric for investment fixtures. Keren Richter, co-founder of White Arrow in New York City, agrees. “We go big on lighting, sourcing 1930s Swedish modernist pendants or unusual '70s Italian chandeliers,” she said. “A dramatic [fixture] draws your attention and defines a space.” Above: Cyrus 16-inch Flush Mount, \$1,199, Visual-Comfort.com

moods and trends, explains Los Angeles designer Linda Hayslett—so it doesn't pay to sink too much money into them. In particular, designer Bethany Adams of Louisville, Ky., praises IKEA's sleek Gladom model—a steal at \$25. “I can't tell you how many times its tray top has saved my expensive rug from certain ruin,” she said.

6. Kids' Carpets
Cushioning is key in children's rooms, but their carpets take a beating, said Caitlin Kah, a Palm Beach, Fla., designer. Her solution: Forgoing pricey hand-knotted rugs for washable polypropylene versions from Dash and Albert or Ruggable. Another upside? Less regret when a child's favorite color inevitably changes.

F. MARTIN RAMIN/ THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (SHEETS)

The Anything-But-Uptight Stripe

Let's get one thing straight: Rather than staid rows, today's in-demand wallcoverings feature loose, laissez-faire lines.

FROM utilitarian ticking to preppy pin-stripes, linear motifs never go out of fashion. But this season decorators are lining walls with a new type of stripe, one that's organic rather than rigid, undulating rather than uptight. Applied via wallpaper or hand-painted directly, the effect is a fuss-free and refreshing update on the sometimes-staid style. “There are no rules here and, if there were, these stripes would break them,” said Chicago interior designer Donna Mondì, who recently employed an irregularly striped wallpaper in a client's foyer to distract from an unsightly door.

What's behind this painterly pivot? Some designers suggest it's a rebuff of the parade of “flawless” interiors found on social media. “Experience has taught us that [picture-perfect] spaces are unattainable...and a little boring,” said British color expert and Chalk Paint creator Annie Sloan. “A wavy line still draws eyes up and emphasizes ceiling height—but in a way that's more approachable and warm than [a stripe] that's drawn with a ruler.”

One striking new example of the form comes from the British bespoke wallpaper brand CommonRoom, which this spring introduced Silk Stripe, an update of a motif created by Arts and Crafts-era designer C.F.A. Voysey. Featur-



LINE OF THE TIMES CommonRoom's riff on an Arts and Crafts design.

ing watercolor columns of varying widths interspersed with floral flourishes, it is “distinctive” rather than perfect, said company director Sarah McClean.

GENIUS STROKES

For painted lines that “wobble but don't wobble completely,” Ms. Sloan recommends starting high on the wall and slowly dragging your brush downward.

For a collection with retailer Lulu and Georgia, Grand Rapids, Mich., designer Sarah Sherman Samuel created a striped wallcovering that reveals in “the texture and inconsistencies in the line weight,” she said, which yields more personality than a flat pinstripe ever could. Installed in a child's bedroom, the motif was a simple yet classic way to bring character to a client's minimalist new build, she explained.

Others prefer to hand paint their dis-

orderly stripes. “Brushes inherently create uneven color and density—and that's exactly the goal,” said British artist and designer Russell Loughlan. On the bedroom walls of a house on the Kent coastline, he recently applied columns of cerulean and sage with soft edges that seem to undulate in the sun—much like the sea outside. Said the self-proclaimed stripe fetishist, “Im-perfections are part of the charm.”

—Allison Duncan



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Antarctic Peninsula - Photo by Steve McCurry



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DESIGN & DECORATING

MAD HOUSE In a family home near London, designers Salvesen Graham didn't want any room too perfect—in the British country-house tradition.



SIMON BROWN

HOUSE TOUR

Quirky
Done Smart

Rooms that at first appear aesthetically at odds hang together well. Here's why.

BY ANTONIA VAN DER MEER

Almsthouse is, historically, a place of refuge where all are welcome, which is an excellent ethos for a warm and comfortable family home. But when interior designers Mary Graham and Nicole Salvesen approached the transformation of this 1700s example into a residence for a young family of four, the building's layout posed a challenge. Constructed to provide housing for rotating guests, the structure outside London comprised a row of rooms, with a chapel at the end. "The house is long and thin, but we wanted to make sure each room had an identity and purpose of its own, rather than just being a walkway to somewhere else," said Ms. Graham. At the same time, the series of idiosyn-

cratic and colorful rooms that would reflect the client's "bubbly, vivacious and really fun" personality had to somehow cohere. A few of the unifying aesthetics: From a richly floral Josef Frank fabric on the family-room sofa to the blush-painted cabinets in the kitchen, "fresh, bright and breezy pinks and reds thread the property," said Ms. Graham. Wide-planked, oiled-oak flooring runs throughout. And the team left breadcrumbs along the way in the form of eye-catching details. The bronzed bamboo detailing on a chair in the dining room reminds you of the bamboo mirror hanging in the mud room as well as the rattan cart where you pour yourself a drink in the bar. Here, a breakdown of the designers' stealthy strategies for knitting together the house's décor, room by distinctive room.

LATCH ON TO ECCENTRICITY

The interior design team, London's Salvesen Graham, leaned on the fundamentals of English country houses, which "have a long tradition of adding outlandish things, including interesting designs from travels

abroad," said Ms. Graham. Nothing is too precious or perfect. The family room, including the L-shape sofa's raspberry floral print and multicolor geometric throw pillows, exudes quirkiness. "The art work was a wonderful reflection of the client's personality,"

said Ms. Graham of the parasol-toting leopard, which resides in a cherry-hue frame above the couch. The rug's scallop edge brings an informal note, and its curves introduce a motif that recurs throughout the house, softening the structure's linearity.



CONNECT THE DOTS

The snug family room opens to a light and airy kitchen. The two chambers are visually connected by cabinetry and walls painted the same pale pink, called Mash, a historic color from British cupboardmakers Plain English. Crisp green and white tiles in an oak-leaf pattern proclaim that this is, at its heart, a country house. The dark mossy-green island adds to the secret-garden undercurrent. On the windows, the designers mimicked the neat Roman shades of the den. The decorative plates hanging on the wall add another texture and dimension and remind you that the kitchen is not just a place of work, said Ms. Graham, who made it her job to inject fun everywhere. The relaxed country-house vibe is reinforced by a blend of knobs and pulls, all of aged brass but in different shapes.

STAY IN THE SAME VEIN

To be in keeping with the rest of the house, the bathroom needed color, patterns and romance. Mission accomplished with the addition of the browns, reds and greens in the Salvesen Graham Floral Trail wallpaper in Delicate, the femininity of which is offset by the aggressively veined Arabescato Oro Verde marble. The tub sits on a piece of matching stone, flush with the wood floor, another moment of continuity, as it is the same honey-brown oak that grounds the rest of the house.



ENTERTAIN A BRAVE COLOR CHOICE

The cold, drafty chapel was a head scratcher. But a door to the outside made it a perfect party space. "We chose mirrors for either side whose shapes echoed the gothic window," said Ms. Graham. The bronze 21-light chandelier nods to the room's ecclesiastical origins. (Crystal would have felt wrong.) Although the dining room, painted in Farrow & Ball's Incarnadine, is in some ways a stunning surprise, the use of similar colors in other rooms anticipates its appearance here.



KEEP THOSE THEMES THRUMMING

In the bar, the chromatically bold wallpaper, a historic flame stitch reinterpreted by British purveyor Fromental, is accurate to the 1700s. The design team upped the ante with matching blinds, lampshade and a skirt gathered along a curved bar, one of the shapes echoed throughout the house. Millwork is painted mossy green, a kind of slant rhyme to the deeper green of the kitchen island, and a vintage cart—liquored-up and lacquered in electric blue—hits the rattan note with bravura.

EATING & DRINKING

IN MY KITCHEN

Charlotte Mendelson

The author and enthusiastic grower of food shares garden tips, frugality strategies and a recipe for pesto that’s superb on everything

THE SPACE that the novelist Charlotte Mendelson cooks in these days isn't her ideal. That was her last kitchen. Her current one, in Tufnell Park, London, is what she refers to as her “post-divorce kitchen.” At the moment, she shares it with her vegan partner and her daughter, who is home from university and refuses to eat anything with even a trace of chile. A gardener so passionate she wrote a memoir about it (“Rhapsody in Green”), Ms. Mendelson has both an allotment plot a 40-minute walk from home and a make-do micro-garden on her roof terrace. Little potted things crowd even the windowsill by her desk, where she is working on her sixth novel and planning the U.S. launch of her much-lauded last, “The Exhibitionist” (*St. Martin’s Press, July 4*). She took a break, though, to talk about what she’s currently cooking and growing. Right now, she said, “it’s all about my red Russian kale.”

The first thing people notice about my kitchen is: how very small it is. It doesn't have room for a table. There's one chair I've squished in so someone can sit and chat to me while I'm cutting up things. Its great tragedy is insufficient work surface. When I feel moany about the fact that it's very small, I remember that my maternal grandmother, who was my hero and role model, was an incredible cook, and she had this tiny galley kitchen. So I just think, Shut up.

My favorite cooking technique is: frugality. I'm quite old-school frugal. I reuse everything I possibly can. I'm obsessed with my wormery on the roof terrace. So every banana skin makes me happy because it can go to the worms. Every carrot peeling, it's part of something else. I'm growing bean sprouts. I never, ever throw out a vanilla pod, because it goes into my little jar of vanilla sugar. And I always have something else in the oven after the main dish has cooked. Last night for example, after I cooked dinner I put rhubarb in with orange juice and star anise and vanilla sugar just to use the last of the heat.

The cookbook I return to again and again is: this amazing book called “English Food,” by Dorothy Hartley. I love her passionately. It's so fascinating. It tells you how to cook dandelion leaves, and it tells you how to make a dough-rising trough

out of a bit of oak. I mean it's bonkers, but it's totally brilliant, encyclopedic and really deep-level-nerdy detail. For someone who doesn't write about food, I have a lot of cookbooks. I read them in the bath. It's almost like they're part of my larder, the stored knowledge. Diana Henry is one of my absolute stalwarts. I know who I learned to cook from: Nigella Lawson and Nigel Slater. I love Nigella. I love everything about her. And I use her cookbooks, still, a lot. I really love Claudia Roden. Oh! I'll tell you someone I really like: Meera Sodha.

My pantry is always stocked with: about five kinds of lentils because I love making dal. A lot of olives. When Covid happened, the two things I got really anxious about not having were coffee and lemons, because without which, what is life? I always have grainy mustards. Greek honey. Oats, anchovies, barley. This is the very minimum with which I can function as a human. Absolutely loads of garlic, obviously. For me, garlic cooking—it's more than the smell of home. It's like the air smells right.

A typical breakfast for me: is this bread I quite often make that I call Danish rye. It's basically extreme pumpnickel, millions of grains and seeds and caraway, lightly combined to make a brick, but it's delicious. What I love is a piece of that, spread with tahini, with a little bit of either honey or



LEAF SUPPORT Clockwise from top: author Charlotte Mendelson, plus a few of her many seedlings, in her London kitchen; homemade gin; books by Ms. Mendelson; cats Rory and Bear on the roof terrace with more of Ms. Mendelson's plantings; a beloved copper cake pan.

date syrup on it—just a little drizzle—and some salt.

If I'm not in my kitchen, I'm probably: out on my roof terrace. I can think of five different kinds of edible flowers growing there, and it's not an ambitious terrace, it's just very full of love. There are so many different kinds of things that I grow in tiny quantities that make a big difference.



► Find Ms. Mendelson's recipe for ramp pesto at [wsj.com/food](https://www.wsj.com/food).

When I cook a beetroot or a carrot, I chop off the top and I put that in a little pot of soil, and then in a few days you start getting carrot leaves or beetroot leaves. Beetroot leaves are fantastic in salads. They look amazing and they taste good, and you can grow them with so little soil.

A thing I like to make for guests is: a really spectacular salad. Friends are here, we've had dinner, and then as far as I'm concerned, it's the main act. Very occasionally—like twice ever, I think—someone has gone, “Oh my God, this is the best salad I've ever had!” It's a combination of essentially one shop-bought lettuce and 30 different leaves from the garden, but tiny quantities because that's all I have space to grow. There will be, like, five kinds of chicory, three kinds of basil, four kinds of kale, calen-

dula petals, rosemary petals. So many different tastes.

My favorite salad dressing is: extra-virgin olive oil, maybe a bit of walnut oil; mustard; a squashed clove of garlic; salt, obviously; sometimes a bit of honey; sometimes a bit of lemon juice. But the most important bit is pomegranate molasses. That way, with the salad leaves, some of which are bitter, it is sour and sweet and bitter and salty.

An ingredient I'm excited about right now is: wild garlic—ramps, you call them [in the U.S.]. On my garden allotment, there's a lot of it. Tonight I will make whole-wheat spaghetti with wild-garlic pesto. The pesto's got lots of olive oil, whatever nut I have. Then a big lump of Parmesan—unless I'm cooking for a vegan, in which case I'll use

nutritional yeast—and a bit of lemon zest and some salt. It would be amazing in salad dressing, on grilled cheese. It would be amazing mixed into a grain salad, on toast.

For dessert I like: a cake. There are three I make, two of them Nigella Lawson's. One is her chocolate tahini banana bread [from “Cook, Eat, Repeat”], and one is her clementine cake. My daughter's called Clementine, so I make that for her every year. And I once read about Marian Burros's famous plum torte—that's the other cake. We just call it “the cake,” and I make it with an absolute ton of frozen berries from the supermarket. I sometimes add ground almonds, sometimes polenta. And vanilla sugar, obviously. I'm not a monster.

—Adapted from an interview by Charlotte Druckman

PARTY TRICK

Have a Ball

These crispy prosciutto croquettes are ready to rock your cocktail hour

By ODETTE WILLIAMS



FLUFFY, cheesy, salty, steamy, crispy. Do I need to say more? If I see croquettes on a menu and I'm one drink in, I'll always order them. Just the other night a friend and I arm-wrestled over a croquette. (Why do restaurants serve appetizers in odd numbers?) Make them at home and you get to eat as many as you like. For a party you can't do better: a drink in one hand, a crispy croquette in the other. And while these croquettes are best eaten straight away, you can also fry them ahead and keep them warm in the oven. Do me a favor and make sure there are no lumps in the potato. This guarantees a velvety interior. And give the breaded croquettes an hour in the fridge before frying, to preserve their shape. I cook mine in a small, deep pan so I don't have to use a ton of oil. While you roll and bread the croquettes, listen to “Silver Springs,” by Fleetwood Mac. It's the right tempo. Then keep the “Rumours” album spinning into the party.

Potato and Prosciutto Croquettes
Total Time: 3 hours (includes chilling)
Serves 6-8

For the dipping sauce:
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

For the croquettes:
1½ pounds (2 large) russet potatoes
2 ounces prosciutto, finely diced
¾ cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
3 tablespoons finely chopped chives
3 tablespoons whole milk
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
½ teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly grated nutmeg
Freshly ground black pepper
1 cup all-purpose

flour
For the breading:
1¼ cups panko
½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup whole milk
1 large egg
Neutral oil, such as canola or grape-seed, for frying
For serving:
Flaky sea salt
Lemon wedges

1. Make the dipping sauce: In a small bowl mix all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate.
2. Make the croquettes: Place potatoes in a large pot of water, bring to a boil and cook until a sharp knife meets little resistance, 35-45 minutes. Drain potatoes. When cool enough to handle, remove skins. Pass potatoes through a ricer or the finest holes of a box grater, making sure there are no lumps.
3. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, prosciutto, Parmigiano, chives, milk, butter, egg, zest, salt, nutmeg and lots of black pepper. Gradually add flour, using

your hands to knead and bring dough together. Take 1 generous tablespoon dough, roll into a ball and place on a baking sheet. Repeat with remaining dough.
4. Bread the croquettes: Place panko and flour on separate plates. In a small bowl, beat together milk and egg. Lightly dust each ball in flour, then dip in egg wash, roll through panko to coat, and return to baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 1 hour.
5. To fry: In a small, deep pot, heat 1½ inches oil to 300 degrees. Cook 1 croquette to check temperature. If oil is too hot, it will take on too much color and not warm through. Working in batches, fry croquettes, rolling for even cooking, until golden, 3-4 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer croquettes to a rack or paper-towel-lined plate.
6. Serve warm with a sprinkling of flaky sea salt, lemon wedges and dipping sauce.



DIVE IN With a creamy chive dip, these croquettes are almost too good.

EATING & DRINKING



LAURA LIEBO

ON WINE / LETTIE TEAGUE



Getting Perspective On Sancerre

WHAT WINE is recession-proof, fad-proof and seemingly immune to any bad press it gets? Sancerre, the white wine made from Sauvignon Blanc in the Loire Valley of France, has also been called overexposed, overproduced and overpriced. When restaurateurs price wines higher because they are sure to sell, it's often called "the Sancerre tax."

Sancerre certainly has become more expensive. Caroline Styne, co-owner and wine director of the Lucques Group of restaurants and wine bars in Los Angeles, told me she's had to price a bottle of Sancerre over \$90 for the first time. When I spoke to wine direc-

tor Victoria Taylor at Boulud Sud in New York last month, Sancerre by the glass was at \$22; she now offers another Sancerre at \$27 a glass. Sancerre accounts for 20% of all by-the-glass sales. By the bottle, the five Sancerres on her list run between \$80 and \$250. "They all sell well," Ms. Taylor said.

Joe Salamone, wine director at Crush Wine & Spirits in New York, noted that prices for wines from sought-after producers such as François Cotat have increased as much as 40% wholesale. Crush does not sell the 2021 François Les Monts Damnés Sancerre, but it goes for around \$115 elsewhere.

Other factors besides high demand are driving up the price. According to the Sancerre producers I contacted, they're paying more for bottles, cardboard, labels and shipping than they did pre-Covid. And there has been some fairly terrible weather. Of course, these challenges face producers of other wines, too.

As it has been 10 years since my last column on Sancerre and the wine has only continued to rise in both popularity and price, I thought it was time for another tasting. But would I be able to find good wines under \$40 a bottle?

Geographically, Sancerre is a charming if rather touristy hilltop town as well as an appellation

within the central Loire Valley covering over 7,000 acres and various terroirs. The locations generally considered best for Sancerre are around the hamlets of Bué and Chavignol, where the soils of the steep vineyards are clay and limestone, aka "terres blanches." The most famous and formidably named Chavignol vineyard is Les Monts Damnés ("The Damned Mountains"), hilltop home to wines of an appropriately formidable character.

At the same time, there are too many Sancerre producers turning out plonk from vineyards treated with chemical pesticides. A few of these simple, characterless and aggressively herbaceous wines showed up in my tasting. The bottlings I loved were produced on family-owned estates, in many cases biodynamically and/or organically.

The vibrant, thrillingly mineral 2021 Claude Riffault Les Chasseignes Sancerre (\$38) shows the depth and complexity Sancerre can achieve in the right hands. Stéphane Riffault, now 43, of Domaine Claude Riffault took over the family domaine from his father, Claude, in 2008. His certified-organic and biodynamic domaine hand-harvests fruit from a wide variety of vineyards representing Sancerre's various terroirs. (There are three main types: the clay-and-limestone terres blanches, the limestone-and-gravel caillottes and the flinty silex.)

I was particularly heartened to find a number of very good wines from the difficult 2021 vintage. Due to storms and severe frost, many Sancerre producers lost more than half their production, but some still managed to make excellent wines. Most of the 14 wines I purchased were from 2021; I also bought one 2020 wine and a few bottles from the 2022 vintage, though most 2022s have yet to show up in stores.

The 2022 vintage was a beneficent one. "It was good for the morale of the wine growers after a year like 2021," said Sancerre producer Mickaël Picard. His 2022 Jean-Paul Picard & Fils Le Chemin de Marloup Sancerre (\$22) was one of my favorites, an agreeably bright, well-balanced wine. Mr. Picard's hand-harvested grapes come from a wide variety of plots, 40 in total. "It is a real headache throughout the year but also a great opportunity to express each terroir," he wrote in an email. Mr. Picard also noted that while some Sancerre producers may turn out indifferent examples, there are "a multitude of small, passionate and exciting family estates" making quality wines.

Decidedly of the latter type, Firmin Dezat, an 18th-generation Sancerre vigneron, produces terroir-focused wines from all three types of Sancerre soils. The 2022 Firmin Dezat Sancerre (\$27) is crisp and classically styled with a clean mineral finish.

Two other terrific wines came from Gérard Boulay and Alphonse Mellot, estates long synonymous with first-rate Sancerre. The intensely mineral 2021 Gérard Boulay Chavignol Sancerre (\$30) is a blend of grapes sourced around Chavignol. Boulay's flagship Sancerre, Les Monts Damnés, is actually a blend of Monts Damnés and Comtesse, said winemaker Thibaut Boulay. The

I thought it was time for another tasting. But would I be able to find good wines under \$40 a bottle?

latter parcel, home to Boulay's oldest vines, is ordinarily bottled on its own, but with an 80% loss of fruit in 2021, its grapes were blended with those of Les Monts Damnés. The basic Chavignol is so impressive it even won over my husband, not a fan of Sauvignon Blanc. "It's so good it doesn't taste like a Sancerre!" he declared.

Just as impressive, the 2021 Alphonse Mellot La Moussière (\$30) had a crisp mineral note and a long saline finish. It is another blend of two great cuvées, Edmond and Generation XIX, normally bottled separately but combined due to a loss of fruit. The result is "a wine for the ages!" wrote Adrian Chalk, who imports Alphonse Mellot's wines, in an email. It's certainly a great deal.

The 2020 Domaine Vacheron Le Paradis Sancerre (\$75) was the only wine from the 2020 vintage that I purchased. Tasting 2020 Sancerres last year, I found many of them a bit too high in alcohol. (The 2020 vintage was quite warm.) But Vacheron is a legendary name, and I was curious to see if its 14.5% wine wore its alcohol well. Alas, while it was impressively concentrated and lush, the alcohol wore me down.

Fortunately, I tasted some Sancerres I truly loved, and I bought more of them for my own cellar. Talking to producers gave me a greater appreciation of the work it took to make the wines—and I'm sure the prices will only go up.

► Email Lettie at wine@wsj.com.



OENOFILE / THE BEST VALUES IN SANCERRE NOW

2021 Gérard Boulay Chavignol Sancerre \$30 One of the top producers in Sancerre has turned out a terrific wine—beautifully balanced with a dazzling flinty edge—from one of its top terroirs in a highly challenging vintage (including frost and hail).

2022 Jean-Paul Picard & Fils Le Chemin de Marloup Sancerre \$22 The 2022 vintage was a great deal less challenging than the previous year, noted winemaker Mickaël Picard. He made this crisp Sancerre with citrus notes from a variety of hand-harvested vineyards.

2022 Firmin Dezat Sancerre \$27 This attractively crisp wine marked by notes of citrus and a fresh acidity is the second vintage since the famed Domaine André Dezat et Fils was split between 18th-generation wine grower Firmin Dezat and his cousin.

2021 Claude Riffault Les Chasseignes Sancerre \$38 In 2008 Stéphane Riffault took over the domaine and instituted hand harvesting, strict sorting of fruit and other rigors resulting in first-rate wines like this: beautifully textured, mouth-wateringly mineral.

2021 Alphonse Mellot La Moussière \$30 One of the most respected of all the names in Sancerre, Alphonse Mellot produced this gorgeous wine of great balance and length on the palate from two prestige cuvées, Edmond and Generation XIX.

SLOW FOOD FAST / SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES



Grilled Lamb Chops With Spring Herbs and Cumin Yogurt

ANYONE CAN MAKE this recipe, the first Slow Food Fast contribution from Ali Saboor. "The elements are simple," the chef was quick to point out. "Good lamb, charcoal, yogurt and lots of herbs." But only he would have built it quite this way.

This is the same sort of personal take on Iranian cooking Mr. Saboor offers at his restaurant, Eyval, in Brooklyn, N.Y. "It's a dance between traditional dishes and envelope-pushing new ones," he said of the menu. "I use the Iranian pantry and my understanding of the cuisine. But I also use creativity."

He does very little to the lamb chops,

which cook for just a few minutes on the grill. "This is about the magic that happens over charcoal," Mr. Saboor said. He serves the chops in a big, inviting pile on top of a thick smear of cumin-scented yogurt. "I love yogurt," Mr. Saboor said. "My mother used to call me Ali-yogurt as a kid because I ate so much."

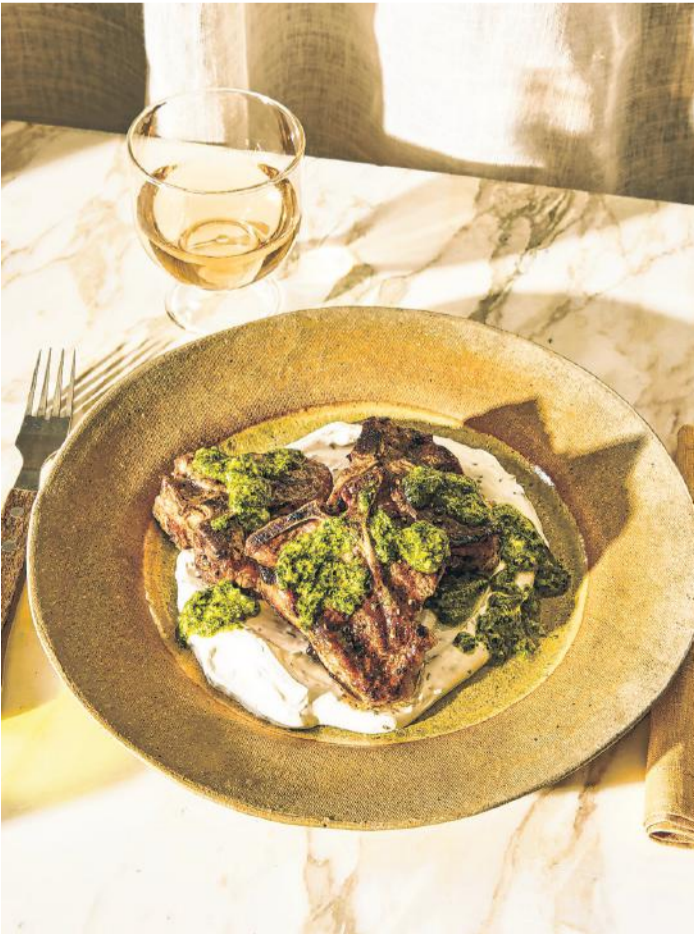
Drizzled with a bright-green herb sauce, it's a striking dish, elegantly, confidently uncomplicated. "When I close my eyes I know how everything is supposed to taste," Mr. Saboor said. "I understand this cooking intuitively." —*Kitty Greenwald*

Total Time 35 minutes
Serves 4

12-16 lamb loin chops
Kosher salt
6 whole bulbs spring garlic or large cloves garlic with skin on
¾ cup plus 1½ tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
½ teaspoon smoked paprika
½ cup parsley leaves
¾ tablespoon cumin seeds, toasted and lightly crushed
2 cups labneh or full-fat Greek yogurt

1. Season lamb generously with salt and set aside at room temperature. Set up a charcoal or gas grill for medium-high heat. (Or, heat a cast-iron pan.)
2. Make the green sauce: Toss garlic with ½ tablespoon olive oil and a pinch of salt. Grill until lightly charred all over, about 1 minute. Peel (if using regular garlic) and roughly chop. Add chopped garlic to a food processor along with lemon zest, paprika, ¼ cup olive oil, parsley and a pinch of salt. Pulse until finely minced, like a pesto. Adjust seasoning as needed.
3. Make the cumin yogurt: In

a medium bowl, mix toasted cumin into yogurt. Season with a pinch of salt and a drizzle of olive oil.
4. Coat lamb chops with 1 tablespoon olive oil and season with salt. Lay chops onto grill and cook over medium-high heat until a crust forms on both sides and internal temperature reaches 135 degrees, 2-3 minutes per side. Let lamb rest 5 minutes before serving.
5. To serve, spread yogurt sauce across a serving plate. Pile grilled lamb chops on top and drizzle green sauce all around. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice.



THINK FEAST Served hot off the grill in a gorgeous heap, these lamb chops come with a cool layer of cumin yogurt and a punchy herb sauce.

LINDA XIAO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; FOOD STYLING BY PEARL JONES; PROP STYLING BY MARINA BEVILACQUA; MICHAEL HOEWELER (ILLUSTRATION)

**You can't
replace wildlife
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GEAR & GADGETS



WHAT HUE ARE YOU iPhones of the last few years have been sold in some surprising colors, including the recently released yellow iPhone 14. Who buys a banana phone?

Color Coding

We use our phones to communicate but pay little heed to what their pigment broadcasts about us. So we asked a psychologist to read into our choices.

By Todd Plummer

BY EVERY measure, phones are extensions of us. We use them to shop, bank, find new music and make calls. And now, like children selecting backpacks for the first day of school, we’ve started to become particular about their hue.

For companies like Apple, which recently added lemon yellow to its iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus lineups, this is a mission accomplished.

“Companies have realized over the years that if you

can offer more color choices, you basically increase your consumer base,” said Reiko Morrison of consumer trend forecasting agency WGSN, who advises tech companies on colors, finishes and materials.

According to Kate Smith, an Arlington, Va., psychologist and color theorist, we gravitate toward, or away from, tints based on how we experienced them in our past. Was your after-school detention room green, perchance? When left alone in your crib, did you cuddle a comforting teddy bear with a plush, pale-blue coat?

Such memories have more influence on your adult psyche than you might expect. What does the color of your Apple iPhone say about you? Ms. Smith offers some expert insights.

Uplifting Yellow

Lovers of this sunny shade are drawn to its uplifting associations and mood-boosting effect, said Ms. Smith. She added that Apple’s banana-hue phones might inspire optimism in their users. “When there is uncertainty in the world, we are drawn to brighter colors,” said Ms. Smith.

“How can you not smile when you see a bright shot of yellow?”

Urbane Lavender

Unlike garish grape or muddy mauve, the lavender used for recent iPhones is delicate. Ms. Smith proposed that people who appreciate life’s complexity are most attracted to the color. Or, pop-culture influences could pull you toward purple. Exhibit A: Taylor Swift’s 2022 single “Lavender Haze.” “Lavender means you’re either very sophisticated or you’re a Swiftie,” said Ms. Smith.

Resolute Red

People drawn to this fiery tint are outgoing attention-seekers who place value in their strong opinions. Standing out doesn’t scare them—in fact, they prefer it. “Call it confidence,” said Ms. Smith, noting that you can always tell when someone’s favorite color is red. “I say this lovingly, having

been a red-phone owner,” she added.

Gregarious Green

Apple has released a range of green phones over the past few years, from an arboreal alpine option to a softer mint iteration. Ms. Smith said all greens indicate intelligence and a “community-focused” mind-

Trusty Blue

Blue is safe. It’s dependable, faultless, the tail-wagging golden retriever of colors. Blue-phone owners, said Ms. Smith, are likely “trustworthy or want to be seen as trustworthy.” But they have their quirks—specifically a proclivity for day dreaming. “Their minds are open to exploration,” she said.

We gravitate toward, or away from, tints in part based on our past—was your after-school detention room green, perchance?

set, but that lighter versions hint at more empathy. When working through problems, someone with a dark green phone might try to steer. Those who favor softer shades, however, are likely to take a diplomatic “Why don’t you consider this” tack instead of a heavy-handed “Do it this way” approach.

Powerful Black

Classic and classy, a black phone could confer self-assuredness and connoisseurship. It’s a shade that signifies reserved strength. Fans of this dark, handsome hue, said Ms. Smith, possess strong convictions and are easily able to justify them—regardless of how misplaced they might be.

THAT’S DEBATABLE

Should Anyone Spend More Than \$50 on an Umbrella?

YES **THOMAS SMITH**, 34, an editor in Lafayette, Calif., generally hates umbrellas, preferring to get wet “rather than schlep a fiddly, drippy hunk of metal and polyester around.” Yet the Blunt Classic stick umbrella (\$99, [BluntUmbrellas.com](#)) won him over with its light, well-balanced frame. Plus, he said, “It is so expensive that I won’t casually leave it in a store and forget to go back and get it.”

Emily Rosenthal, 44, a consultant in Oklahoma City, became a fancy-umbrella convert after living in New York City, where persistent windy rain snapped the spine of several cheap umbrellas. The Davek Mini (\$59, [DavekNY.com](#)) has proved sturdier, and comes with an “unconditional lifetime guarantee” against breakage. Ms. Rosenthal has only taken advantage of the policy once—when she fell on the umbrella, tearing its canopy. Davek quickly shipped a replacement.

Plus, where cheap umbrellas often look fine at best, more pricey parasols can turn heads. Elizabeth Borsting, 57, a public relations professional, loves the look of the \$60 umbrella she purchased from Marshall Field’s about 20 years ago. When folded, the cane appears enveloped by a floral bouquet. When opened, the pink buds contrast pleasantly with the black canopy fabric. Said Ms. Borsting, “My only complaint? I wish it rained more in Los Angeles, so I could use it on a regular basis.”



STAY DRY For the price of the Davek Elite (\$159, [Davek.NY.com](#)), you could get four Umby umbrellas (\$35, [Umby.co](#))

NO **WIND** can be an equal opportunity destroyer. Rachael Johanson, 30, a marketing consultant, learned this last summer when she paid \$110 for an Italian designer umbrella to safeguard her from the notorious summer storms of Charleston, S.C. Within a month, the button to spring open the canopy, so mechanically snazzy and convenient at purchase, malfunctioned. “I am so upset I am not even going to buy another umbrella for a while,” she said. “Newspapers over my hair will have to do.”

Some people wouldn’t dream of forking over such funds in the first place, given how easy it is to lose an umbrella. “As a busy new mom, keeping track of my bags and accessories is practically an Olympic sport,” said Dallas Waldon, 28, a real estate investor who resides in El Dorado Hills, Calif. “That’s what’s great about cheap umbrellas—they’re practically immune to the heartbreak of loss.”

Lisa Shehan, 29, a travel blogger, says expensive umbrellas have their perks, but the stress and worry of losing one on the road aren’t worth those advantages. And for the money you pay for one premium umbrella, you can often get several economical ones, she notes. “Keep one in your car, one in your house and one in your office.”

Certainly beats holding this broadsheet over your head.
— Perri Ormont Blumberg

GEAR & GADGETS



HOLLOW CHEEKS The sinuous Lucid Air Touring features negative draft between the wheel wells.

The packaging leaves room for a big rear trunk and a frunk the size of a locker-room whirlpool tub (22 cubic feet). I'm impressed even if the Street isn't.

Talk about friendly fire. The Lucid owners' Reddits read like "Dante's Inferno." Early customers reported a host of problems and system bugs. The company has had to address five recalls issued by NHTSA. And yet, to my mild surprise, every system and feature on our test car—every door-handle servo, every capacitively cued input, every graphical display, from

I marveled at the disconnect between the car and the share value.

the essential to the trivial—worked fast, flawlessly and, I assume, as designed. This car was supposed to be a bug hunt, man! What gives?

I'm told that among the re-trenching efforts was an omnibus over-the-air update in October, which included instant-on response for cockpit panels, overhauled graphics and screen layouts. The revised UX lives in the retractable central touch screen, where users can tap in dozens of personalizations, starting with the feature-filled front seats: heated, cooled, ventilating, massaging and position-adjustable six ways from Sunday. You can also flick the panel to pull down icons for Apple CarPlay.

Some owners had reported real-world range falling far below the estimate displayed on the info-screen. I carefully observed the range and state-of-charge figures over several days of driving, which included a few full-power launches, for the benefit of neighborhood kids. My net was 335 miles, which actually exceeded my expectations in a Bayesian way.

By virtue of its 700V+ harness, the Lucid can be recharged at up to 200 kW DC direct, which pencils out to be about 200 miles of range in 15 minutes, under ideal conditions. Lucid has partnered with Electrify America to provide owners with one year of free, and hassle-free, charging. The EA devices will recognize the cars so owners only need to plug in.

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The Air has a few crazy-making qualities. The lustrous metallic toggles mid-dash, controlling temperature and fan speed, will blind you in bright sunlight. The audio system sound reproduction is thin and weirdly wimpy. The intelligent driver-assist system and I had multiple disagreements about the location of the lane center. On a hot day and despite the heavy tinting, the glass canopy can make you feel like you're under a mean kid's microscope.

But at night? OMG. Take my money, you bastards.

The following advice is for buyers, not investors: If you're in the market for a luxury EV and your concern is whether Lucid will be around in 10 years, I would only point out the very, extremely deep pockets of the Saudis' PIF. The car is pretty great. If Lucid needs more time to get airborne, I feel sure the Saudis will provide the runway.

RUMBLE SEAT / DAN NEIL



A Highly Covetable EV Struggles to Please the Street

THE CALIFORNIA-BASED luxury EV car maker Lucid Motors—makers of our wondrous test car, the 2023 Lucid Air Touring sedan—is a bit of a hot mess, business-wise. Eighteen months ago the company opened the doors of its assembly hall outside of Phoenix and invited journalists to drive its mega-output Air Dream Edition Performance, a catapult drawn taut with 1,111 electric horsepower.

Executives then had hoped to deliver 20,000 sedans a year, even as the company added capacity for the real rainmaker, the Lucid Gravity SUV.

Since then Lucid has been trapped in the proverbial Production Hell. The company delivered

just 4,369 cars in 2022, against a backlog of customer orders that had swelled to over 34,000.

Lucid's woes prompted a selloff last year, with shares falling almost 90%. That, in turn, prompted the majority owner, the Public Investment Fund of the Saudi Sovereign Wealth Fund, to increase its position to 60%.

Nor has 2023 been great. Deliveries in Q1 only reached 1,406 units, out of 2,314 units built. What was once a production problem is starting to look like a demand problem.

The Investor Class has rendered its verdict. Lucid shares are trading in the \$7-8 range this week, down from a high of \$55.21 (November 2021).

I guess Icarus flew too close to the sun, huh? The only loose end is Lucid's desirable, delightful luxury sedan, at which neighbors stare as if there were a UFO plugged into my Level 2 charger. What a hoss. In my review of the DEP, I asked how this "swank, smart, distinctly Gallic design for a five-meter executive limousine wandered off from Citroën's studios." I remain quotable.

The DEP is no more. For 2023, the Air is available in four flavors: Grand Touring Performance (\$179,000), stuffed with 1,050 horsepower; Grand Touring (\$138,000), with up to 516 miles of range; Touring (\$107,400), with less range (425 miles) but more footage,

if you will—the smaller pack frees up space for a deeper rear footwell, providing passengers a more comfortable seating position; and the baby, the Pure AWD (\$87,400), getting by with a mere 480 hp.

Even dialed back, the Touring brings the numbers: a combined 620 hp and 885 lb-ft of torque; 0-60 in 3 seconds and a quarter-mile in 10.7 seconds, according to Car and Driver's testing. And it looks sexy doing it. Our car sported 20-inch Michelin Pilots wrapped around low-drag wheels, featuring black plastic spats in the wheel openings.

Sitting under the optional glass-canopy roof—which eliminates the windshield header to form a surreal, soap-bubble transparency around the occupants—I marveled at the disconnect between the product and the Street's notion of value.

Consider the car's next-level aero aesthetics. In the roughly 2 years since the Air debuted, legacy luxury brands (Cadillac, Mercedes-Benz, BMW) have offered their first framings of what low-drag luxury should look like. Lucid wins that posedown with ease, right? Is there no market adjustment for looks?

Crucial to both the wind-cheating exterior and super-spacious interior are Lucid's miniaturized propulsion units, some of the company's secret sauce. About the size of a dorm-room microwave, these little monsters integrate the inverter, liquid-cooled permanent-magnet motor and transmission/differential into a single component weighing about 163 pounds.

2023 LUCID AIR TOURING



Base price \$107,400
Price, as tested \$128,550
Propulsion Battery electric, with front- and rear-axle mounted permanent magnet motors, liquid-cooled 92-kWh lithium battery pack, direct drive.
Power/torque 620 hp/885 lb-ft
Overall length/wheelbase/width/height 195.9/116.5/76.2/55.4 inches
Curb weight 5,012 pounds
0-60 acceleration 3.4 seconds
EPA estimated range 425 miles
Charging 19.2 kW onboard charger, up to 200 kW DC direct
EPA fuel economy 121/120/121 MPGe
Luggage capacity 10/22 cubic feet, front/rear

Play It Loud At Any Price

These five wireless speakers can really get the party going

YOU CAN USE most nice speakers on your patio—if you have outlets in reach—but can you trust them around day-drinking parents or sticky-fingered children who might bump them into a pool or sandbox? Rest easier with a portable Bluetooth speaker designed to survive water, sand and dirt. In the past, sound quality and portability were often mutually exclusive. More recently, manufacturers have found ways to outfit still-totable shapes with beefier sonic components. Here, five that are sealed well enough against water and grime to sing through any outdoor listening scenario this summer.

THE EXPENDABLE
At 3 inches square and about the weight of a large lemon, the **IKEA Vappeby** won't blow you away with sound. But it's much punchier than it looks and boasts a battery that can last up to 80 hours. The plastic shell has one button that handles power, pairing and pausing depending on how you press it (the moves are surprisingly well-illustrated in the manual). Get two, knowing that if you lose one, you're only out the cost of a couple of tubes of sunscreen. *\$15, Ikea.com*

THE PHONE PICK-ME-UP
The **Tribit StormBox Micro 2** is a twofor: a capable speaker with a 12-hour runtime that can recharge your phone through USB-C. The size of a Klondike bar, the unit has buttons on its face that let you dictate the action, including a multifunction control for playback, taking calls via the speaker's microphone or summoning your smartphone's voice assistant. The accompanying app's equalizer lets you dial in the sound's vibrancy, and two speakers can tether together for stereo mode. *\$60, Tribit.com*

THE QUICK CHARGER
The sonic diffuser inside the pentagon-shaped **Sony XE200** ensures music comes out evenly from its stacked speakers. The sound profile is pleasantly bass-forward out of the box. If you want it to rumble even harder, the app can take you there. While the 16 hours of play time should last you through even the longest cookout, engineers made this speaker for the chronically forgetful. Just 10 minutes plugged into the wall charges up more than an hour of extra power. *\$130, Electronics.Sony.com*

THE SHOWOFF
The **JBL Pulse 5** is tuned well even without the help of its companion app, but you'll need a phone to manage its flashiest feature: customizable lights. Through 12 hours of power, the display can range from a subtle orange campfire glow to neon hues pulsing with the beat to bright white strobing flashes. (You can turn off the lights via a physical button.) Bonus: If any friends have JBL speakers, you can connect them all together with Party Mode. Just be sure to invite the neighbors. *\$250, JBL.com*

THE SYMPHONIC
The toaster-oven-size **Get Together 2 XL** lives up to its name with yard-filling vibrations. The bamboo front houses a pair of boisterous boomers that can keep the party going for up to 20 hours on a single charge, with a USB port that can juice up a phone. While it is a little less water-resistant than other speakers (and at 12½ pounds, a bit heavy), it will survive taking a water balloon on the chin, if not a dip in the deep end. *\$400, The-HouseOfMarley.com*
—Sal Vaglica



HORIZONS NEVER END

LOUIS VUITTON