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VINEYARD GAZETTE MEDIA GROUP | HOLIDAY | DECEMBER 2018



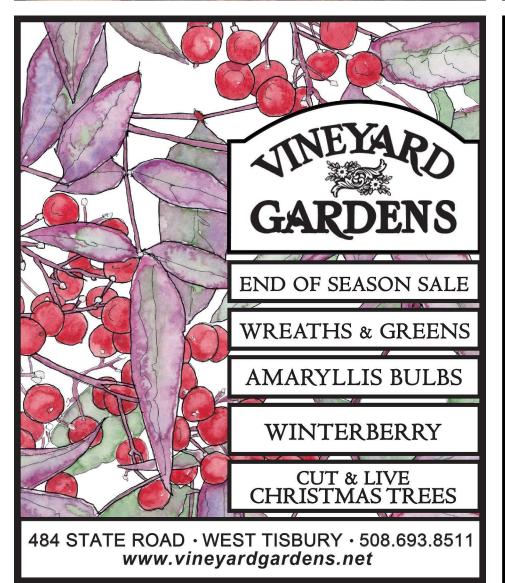












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置VINE

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Cover photo: Sonia Destefani of Sweet Bites bakery. Photo by Jeanna Shepard.

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At the Tisbury Marketplace

From the Editor

An All-Island Holiday

ere on the cusp of the holiday season, we're making a plan: We're thinking of going 100 percent local this year. We'll visit L&W Tree Farm to cut down our tree (page 19), and we'll schedule a Main street shopping expedition—in both Edgartown and Vineyard Haven—for all of our gifts. (See our Holiday Shopping Guide on page 13.) What we don't find downtown, we'll pick up at one of the many popups and artisan fairs around the Island (page 18). And don't forget Small Business Saturday (November 24) in Oak Bluffs and all around the Island.

We'll make our holiday meals from local ingredients whenever possible (page 10), and if we need a special dessert, we'll check out a local bakery (page 22).

Don't worry, we won't look aghast if we see you getting on the ferry—but it better be for a trip to Grandma's and not to the mall!

Happy Vineyard holidays!

—Susie Middleton

THE VINE

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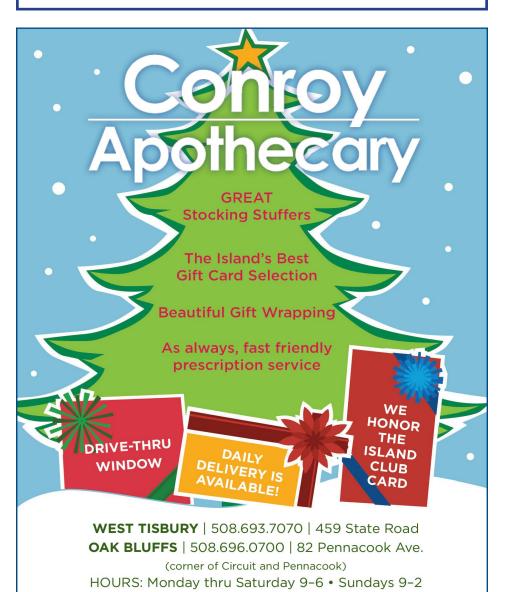
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VINEYARD GAZETTE



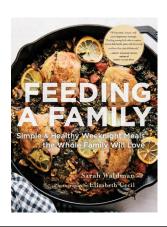
The Wish List

Make the season warm and delicious.

BOOK IT

New in Paperback

Great news for us and for local cookbook author Sarah Waldman: Her latest cookbook, Feeding a Family, has just been released in a brand new paperback version. While all the content is the same as the original — 40 seasonal meals and 100 recipes, beautiful photographs from Elizabeth Cecil — there is a stunning new cover design and a slightly smaller trim size. The paperback version will be priced at \$24.95 and will be available at Bunch of Grapes bookstore if you wish to purchase it locally. For more information, visit SarahWaldman.com



THE PLUM LINE Aged to perfection

Those of you with close ties to the British Isles may like to serve a traditional plum pudding (aka Christmas pudding) at the end of your holiday meal. Unless you want to make and age one yourself (for a whole year, as Jan Buhrman of Kitchen Porch Catering and Back Porch has done), you might have trouble finding a good one. Look no further; Jan's bourbon-soaked puddings are ready to go. They're available at the fall farmers' market (\$40) or call 508-645-5000 to order for pick up at Back Porch.



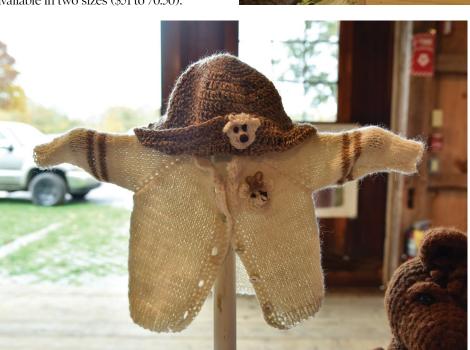
LOCAL YARN

Warm and Woolly

Along with turnips and carrots, jams and jellies, honey and cheese, the fall farmers' market at the Ag Hall (Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. except Thanksgiving weekend) is a great place to find non-edible farm products as well. Be sure to check out the beautiful one-of-a-kind hand-knit goods from two Island farms.

Teaming up with retired Island doctor Michael Jacobs, who has a small flock of Cormo sheep, knitter Debby Ware is selling her designs at the Pasture Prime booth. Michael's sheep (a cross between Corriedale rams and Saxon Merino ewes) produce soft, superior wool that is processed in Putney, Vermont, without chemicals or dyes. Debby, who is the author of several knitting design books including Holiday Hats for Babies and Too Cute, turns the wool into adorable baby hats and sweaters, toy bears and lovely cowls for adults (top two photos). Every piece is unique, so you'll see something slightly different from her each week at the market. Prices range from \$45 to \$50 for booties and bears, and \$85 to \$120 for sweaters. Cowls are \$145.

At the other end of the Ag Hall, Island Alpaca is selling a big selection of items from their gift store, including baby sweaters, hats, booties and finger puppets that are hand-knit on the Island from 100 percent alpaca wool and feature knitted alpaca decorations (photos below). Baby sweaters come in different sizes and range in price from \$103.50 to \$133.50. Baby hats are also available in two sizes (\$51 to 70.50).









Jeanna Shepard photos





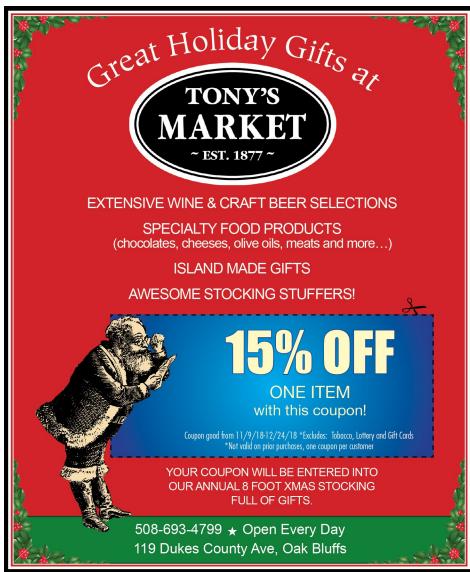




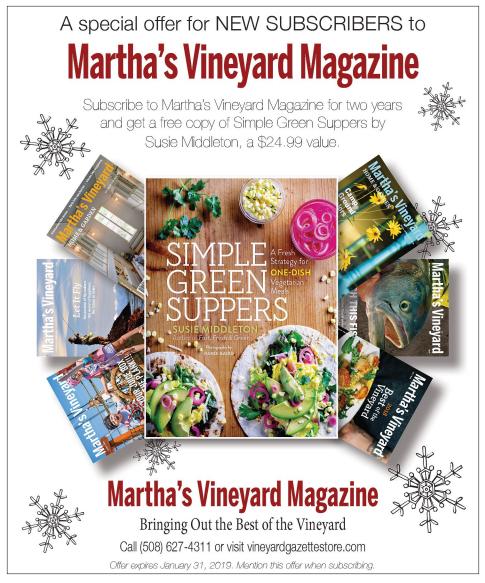












Q&A / VINEYARD VOICES



The Bookseller of Main Street

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAWN BRAASCH

BY PAULA LYONS

NAME: Dawn Braasch

PROFESSION: Owner, Bunch of Grapes bookstore, Vineyard Haven

WASHED ASHORE FROM: South Carolina, though raised in the Boston area

YEARS AGO: 13

IN A FORMER LIFE: Caterer, trucking company owner, pre school teacher

FAVORITE SPOT ON ISLAND: The walk between Bend-in-the-Road Beach and the Jaws Bridge

FAVORITE SPOT IN HER HOUSE: Parked on the sofa in the living room, reading

As long as she can remember, Dawn Braasch has loved reading and has adored books. She credits her happy, television-free upbringing in Medfield and Hanson, Massachusetts, where she learned to love the outdoors and to treasure her quiet time with favorite authors.

After college, Dawn married, raised two boys, taught pre-school in South Carolina and somewhere along the way become co-owner of a trucking company with her brothers. She moved to the Island on her own in 2005. She worked part-time as the events coordinator for Bunch of Grapes bookstore and ultimately became its owner after the massive Fourth of July fire in 2008 damaged the building at 44 Main Street where the bookstore was then located. (It has sinced moved first to 35 Main street and now is at 23 Main street.)

Q. Why did you decide to buy the business?

A. When the fire happened, Jon Nelson,

the owner, had recently moved to Texas. It seemed like the bookstore might not reopen, and I just didn't know what I would do on this Island year-round without that bookstore! So...

Q. It certainly is a beloved bookstore on this Island. Did that contribute to your decision?

A. We are lucky to have a year-round population that really supports us. Literature and reading are prized here, and that is not necessarily true in other parts of the country.

Q. Who are your favorite authors?

A. Oh, that's easy. As a young girl growing up, my favorite was Louisa May Alcott, because I was Jo in Little Women!

Living in the South for a long time, I grew to love Pat Conroy. Greg Iles is a favorite for sheer readability. He's a great writer and a beautiful storyteller. Coming here, I discovered Ward Just, who to me is one of the greatest living authors. And we're lucky that we have an embarrassment of riches here: Geraldine Brooks, Tony Horwitz, Susan Branch, David McCullough and Nicole Galland to name just a few.

Q. And yet we all read of bookstores struggling due to Amazon and e-books. How does that affect you?

A. Well, book-buying is not going up. But I feel we've positioned ourselves well [by moving into a smaller store]. Our new location at 23 Main street is a little small in July and August, but ten months out of the year it's kind of perfect. But yes, the bookselling business is becoming harder and harder. If summer business is down, as it was this year, it really sets the tone for the rest of the year.

Q. How important is the holiday season to your business?

A. We do two-thirds to three-fourths of our business in July and August. Summer is so frenetic here! The holiday season is like summer, but in a much kinder, gentler way. We love the holidays. We stay open late at night, and that's great for business. But it's so much fun for us too because we can talk to our neighbors and talk about books we love.

We carry on the Nelsons' tradition of serving eggnog on Christmas Eve. Ann [Nelson] was kind enough to give me her eggnog recipe. It's a great time of year.

Q. You also stock gifts?

A. Yes, we had to do that in response to the downturn in bookselling. I never wanted to be anything more than a bookseller, but there are things that go with books, like puzzles and games. We do a lot with cards, boxed note cards, journals, a few kids' things. I try not to step on anyone's toes in the gift business, but having a few gifts allows me to add to the bottom line just a bit.

Q. Is there a particular gift you'd recommend this year?

A. I'll tell you the gift that I think is beautiful. They're expensive, I won't lie, but perfect for book lovers. They're handmade birdhouses featuring old books. They can't go outside, but the gentleman who started making them rescued books from schools and libraries that were going to be discarded. The top of each birdhouse is an actual book, and then he decoupages the pages around the outside. They're beautiful. Puzzles and games always do well at Christmas too.

Q. What do you want to say to the buying public this holiday season?

A. Come in! We have a loyalty program. After you buy ten paperback books, you get 25 percent off the eleventh. After five hardcover books, you get 25 percent off the sixth. We honor the Island Card on hardcover books.

I think now more than ever, if you value your downtown, your Main street, then you should be buying local. It keeps your money in your community. I hire local people. I spend my money locally. I don't go off-Island. I pay taxes, the business pays taxes, I contribute to charities. There are many reasons why I hope people will continue to support us.

Q. It sounds like, stresses aside, you love what you do.

A. I love walking into the store and smelling the books. I love who I work with; I have a great group of people. I love talking to people about books. How lucky am I, living on this Island, one of the most beautiful places I've ever been, and having people come into the store every day and you get to talk about what you love?

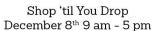
Paula Lyons is a former ABC and CBS television consumer journalist. She lives in Vineyard Haven.







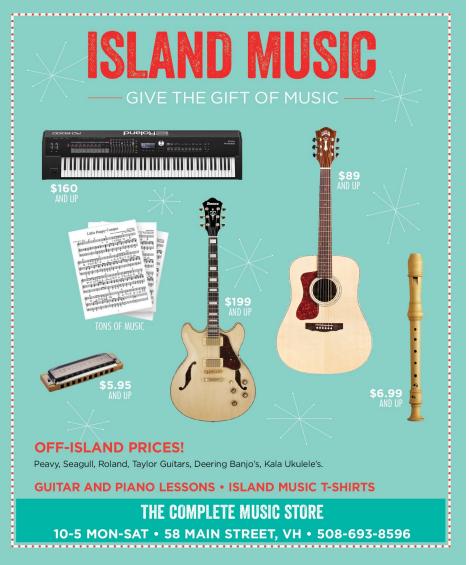
Nibbles + Mocktails Friday, December 7th 5 - 9 pm





Visit www.katamageneral.com for gift ideas, apparel and more.

170 Katama Road, Edgartown • 508.627.5071





VINE & DINE



Stuff this!

Local shiitakes, leeks and sourdough bread star in a versatile turkey stuffing.

BY TINA MILLER • PHOTOS BY JEANNA SHEPARD

The Thanksgiving feast is really about guilty pleasures. Sure, every year there's an attempt to add healthy things like crunchy salads, roasted vegetables and sautéed greens. But what everyone is really looking forward to are the special dishes that you generally only eat (and cook) once a year. They tend to be a bit caloric and they take some time to make, but that's okay. It's Thanksgiving, and it's all about the rich, silky gravy, the green bean casserole, the spicy-sweet pumpkin pie, the zesty cranberry sauce, and of course the stuffing.

Making a meal with all of these delicious components requires planning, shopping, and lots of prep, followed by a full day in the kitchen chopping, stirring, baking and smelling the spices unique to this holiday. It isn't quick and easy, but it is a labor of love.

While you can't go too crazy changing up family favorites at holiday time, it is fun (especially for the cook) to add a twist or small change to one of last year's recipes. An easy way to do this on the Vineyard, with the lasting fall growing season, is to look to the local harvest for some creative choices.

One item I like to change up slightly

each year is the stuffing, depending on what I find at the fall farmers' market. I always use my recipe for Linguiça stuffing from my cookbook Vineyard Harvest as a base. I swap out ingredients, bread types, veggies and meats, but the measurements and ratios remain pretty much the same.

This year I used the abundance of shiitake mushrooms grown on Martha's Vineyard as my inspiration. Right now I'm also seeing a lot of beautiful local leeks, and I love to use them in all kinds of dishes but especially stuffing. I also found local celery at the the Grey Barn farm stand. And I decided to add some tang to this year's stuffing by using sourdough bread.

Stuffing styles can vary a lot, and we all have memories of what we grew up eating. Some stuffings are almost like custard—very soft with finely chopped ingredients. Others can be chunky, bready and even dry. My stuffing recipe is a bit of both. It's my tried-and-true formula and it holds up in the bird or in a pan.

Tina Miller is a West Tisbury-based chef, writer, and entrepreneur. She is the author of the cookbook Vineyard Harvest.



Tina Miller shopped locally to find ingredients for her Vineyard stuffing: MV Mycological shiitakes, Grey Barn celery and Cinnamon Starship bread.

Vineyard Stuffing with Shiitake Mushrooms and Leeks

This stuffing is delicious and easy to make even when there isn't a holiday meal on the horizon. Try it alongside roast chicken or roast pork.

Serves 10, enough to stuff a small bird with a small pan of extra stuffing

Ingredients

10 cups large-dice sourdough bread

6 tablespoons butter

3 cups shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, thinly sliced

2 cups thinly sliced leeks, thoroughly rinsed

11/2 cups sliced celery

1 cup diced onions

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary

11/2 cups chicken broth

Kosher Salt

Freshly ground pepper

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spread the bread cubes on a sheet pan and bake them for about 20 minutes or until crisp throughout.

2. In a large saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté, stirring occasionally, for 4 to 5 minutes or until softened and somewhat shrunken. Add the leeks, celery, onions, parsley and rosemary. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, reducing the heat if necessary and stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are softened but not browned. Add salt and pepper to taste. Don't be too conservative; the bread will absorb a lot of seasoning. Add the chicken broth. Bring just to a simmer and remove from the stove. Let the mixture cool slightly.

3. Put the bread cubes in a large bowl. Pour the vegetable and broth mixture evenly over everything, stirring and tossing at the same time if possible to make sure the liquids are evenly distributed and that one area isn't softer than another.

4. Let the mixture cool, tossing occasionally, before stuffing your bird. Put any extra (or even all of it) in a baking pan and bake it separately (until warmed through and the top is brown) when the time comes.













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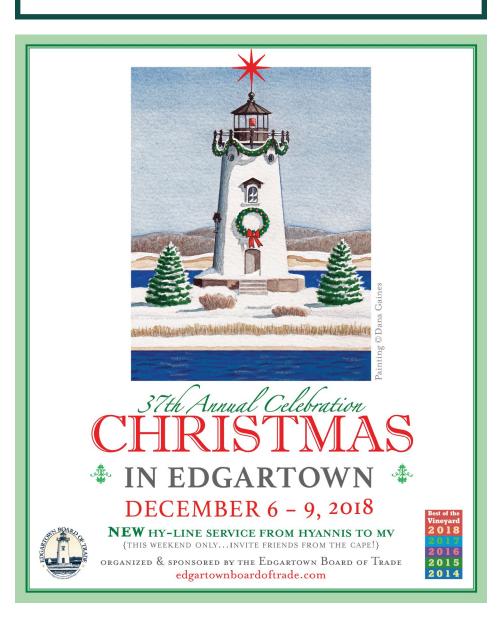
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Jeanna Shepard

Holiday Shopping Guide

Spend a morning on Main Street, shopping the old-fashioned way—locally.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LOUISA HUFSTADER AND SUSIE MIDDLETON

This year the Vine is celebrating the spirit of Main Street — the fun of shopping downtown on a crisp, sunny Saturday or on a brightly lit holiday evening, the idea that you can still do all of your holiday shopping without hitting a keyboard or getting on the ferry.

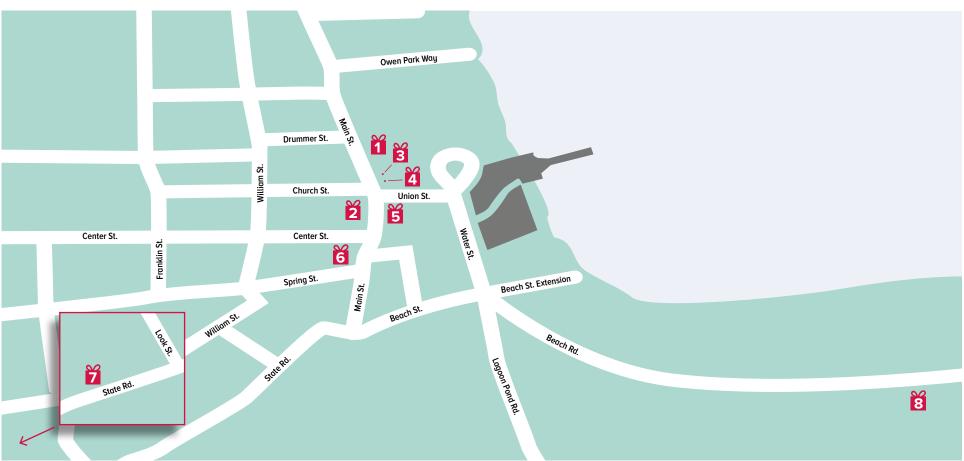
The proverbial "Main Street" may be an old-fashioned concept. But here on the Island, Main Street actually still exists — in both Vineyard Haven and Edgartown. Granted you might have to veer off of Main Street to hit all of the best

shops, but a downtown shopping trip in either of these towns is the real deal.

Along the way, stop in for a hot mocha or a glass of wine with friends. Browse in the bookstore, try out a toy, maybe even catch a movie in a downtown cinema after shopping. And be sure to pick up something for yourself — a wreath or a box of fudge — on your way home.

Shopping on Main Street supports local businesses and artisans, and it's a whole lot more fun than facing the off-Island crowds.

Vineyard Haven



THE GREEN ROOM

71 Main Street

There's no shortage of warm woollies at the Green Room, where fashion meets comfort at the north end of Main street. But we hear that this year's hot sellers are these felt slippers, made in slip-on and bootie styles for men and women by the Danish company Glerups.

Glerups Slippers \$95 to \$155



66 Main Street

The gift shop with something for everyone, Rainy Day is a festive place to visit during the holidays: Gorgeous tree ornaments, Christmas crackers, seasonal dishware and plenty of Martha's Vineyard-themed gifts, like these wooden wall hangings that advertise the zip code of your favorite Island town.

Zip Code Wall Boards \$52.95



65 Main Street

Across the street from cookware and houseware destination LeRoux at Home, sister store LeRoux Gourmet is stocked with everything your pantry desires. For the first time this year, LeRoux's signature oils and vinegars are now available in collections of four sample sizes (two oils, two vinegars) with themes ranging from Southeast Asian to Sweet Heat.

Oil and Vinegar Sample Packs \$19.99

4 REFABULOUS DÉCOR

Corner of Main Street and Union Street Anne-Marie Eddy's painted furniture and gift store has found the perfect home in the space that once housed Mix. In addition to home furnishings, her expanded inventory includes work from local artists as well as beautiful jewelry, both of her own and from other artists. These cobalt-blue beaded necklaces (and sweet bracelets) caught our eye; they're African, made

African Recycled Bottle Beads, Necklaces and Bracelets \$55 to \$70

E C. B. STARK JEWELERS

53A Main Street

from recycled bottles.

Gift-givers have been delighting their loved ones with Island-themed jewelry by silversmith C.B. Stark for more than 50 years. The newest collection, Vineyard Colors, frames Island outlines with semi-precious materials including mother-of-pearl, coral, lapis lazuli and turquoise. Sterling silver and 14 karat gold finish off the earrings, bracelets, rings, pendants, charms and necklaces, which are all under \$200.

Vineyard Colors Necklace, adjustable 16-18 inches

\$195 with gold design, silver chain; \$165 with silver design and chain

THE BEACH HOUSE

30 Main Street

A year-round treasure trove of appealing gifts, linens, ceramics and housewares awaits you at Jane Chandler's friendly shop. One of her favorite New Englandmade finds is a range of high-quality sleigh bells on colorful leather cut-outs, each suspended from a brassy ring. The many designs include a deer, dog, star, snowman, tree, lighthouse and even a lobster. Single-bell loops can go on a dog's collar or serve as napkin rings.

New England Bells \$12 to \$30

MORRICE FLORIST

149 State Road

You won't be sorry to veer off Main street and head up State Road to this breathtaking floral and gift shop. In addition to flowers and plants, the store has a curated selection of gifts that all reflect a pretty and peaceful aesthetic. Look for dishware, table settings, locally made products (like the Cape Higgon wooden utensils pictured on the facing page), books, cards and linens.

Rifle Coaster Set, \$15.95

Cape Higgon Woodcraft cheese spreaders, \$30.95

Lazy Bones Dishware (Bowl, \$15.40; Plate, \$19.80; Platter, \$66.00)

BEYOND MAIN STREET

Tisbury Marketplace, 79 Beach Road

TISBURY TOY BOX

At the Tisbury Toy Box, find classic toys like dolls, kites, balls, puzzles and blocks alongside prized brands such as Lego, Playmobil, recycled-plastic Green Toys and colorful Magna-Tiles, a building toy for ages 3 and up that introduces youngsters to the fun side of math and physics.

Magna-Tiles \$32.95 to \$68.95

MARTHA'S VINEYARD FILM CENTER

The gift of a membership in the nonprofit Martha's Vineyard Film Society will provide the movie lover in your life with reduced-priced tickets to every screening — not only at the year-round film center, but also at the Capawock on Main street and the Strand in Oak Bluffs.

Annual Memberships

Student, \$15; Senior, \$25; Individual, \$40; Dual \$70

NET RESULT

If you want fresher seafood than you can get at the Net Result, you'll have to catch it yourself. Famous for its daily blackboard specials, this Beach Road institution sells top-quality finfish, shellfish and lobster, along with smoked fish, salads, chowders, bisques, sushi and more.

Gift Certificates

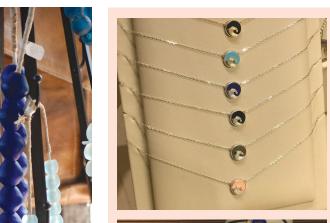
Any Amount

HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE











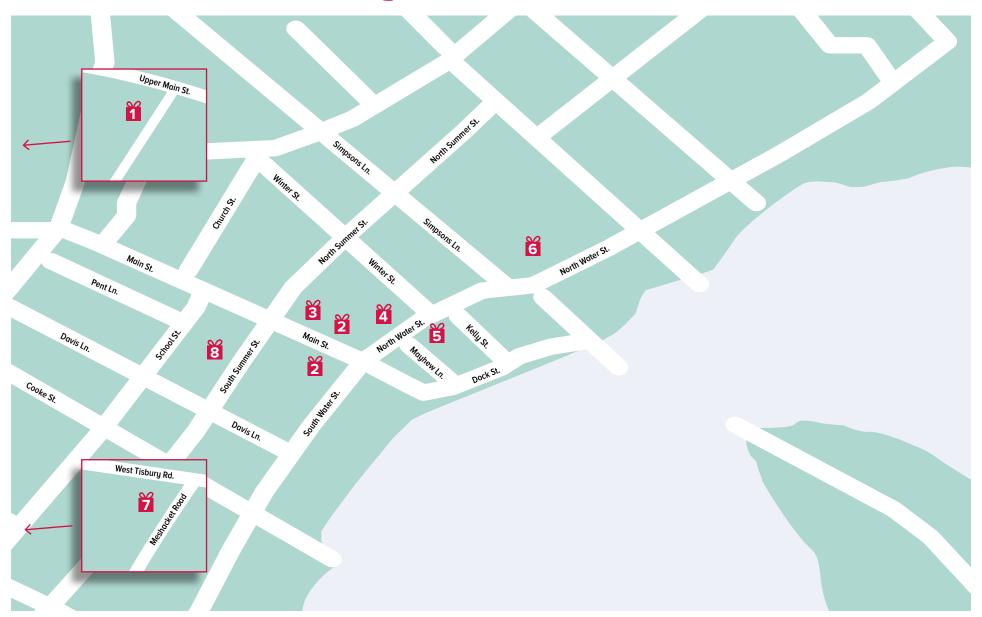








Edgartown



M DONAROMA'S

270 Upper Main Street

Creative holiday landscaping and floral displays have made Donaroma's a must-stop on the Edgartown Christmas trail. It's a must-shop too, with a busy floral department and a wide assortment of gifts. Bird lovers will appreciate seed-coated wooden birdhouses or pinecones, ready to hang and attract backyard songsters.

Mr. Bird Pinecone Pair or Wren Casita \$13, \$17

PAST & PRESENTS

37 Main Street

This pair of shops, located across Main street from each other, bring together a well-chosen assortment of antique furniture, vintage decor and modern home furnishings with an Island angle. Vineyard-designed floor mats by Carnegie Blair include the new "Delft" theme featuring images including a scalloper, lobster, Ocean Park bandstand and Edgartown Lighthouse in the blue and white of 18th-century Dutch pottery.

Floor Mats

2'x3',\$108;3'x5',\$260;30" by 79",\$298

E CLAUDIA

51 Main Street

Whatever kind of fine jewelry you're looking for, you're likely to find it at Claudia, where the cases are filled with both classic and contemporary designs. Claudia also offers a selection of wampum pieces by Island jewelers Linda Smith, Adam Thibodeau—who adds hand-crafted solid gold and silver beads to his work—and Giles Welch.

Wampum Bracelets

\$400 to \$3,150 (with solid gold beads)

II STEFANIE WOLF DESIGNS

12 North Water Street

Stefanie Wolf's colorful glass-bead jewelry is sold in museums and galleries around the U.S., but the best place to see it is in her roomy second-floor gallery inside a historic Edgartown house around the corner from Main street. Her Trilogy collection, available in more than two dozen colorways, includes strands than can be worn as necklaces or wrap bracelets.

Trilogy Convertible Necklaces 44 inches, \$115; 60 inches, \$130

MURDICK'S FUDGE

21 North Water Street

Sweet, buttery, crunchy peanut brittle—is there anything better? Yes, if you love cashews even more than peanuts. Fortunately, Murdick's makes both peanut and cashew brittle, both available in attractive 24-ounce tins that can be shipped in the U.S. or overseas. Order at the shop, online at murdicks.com or by phone at 1-888-55-FUDGE (553-8343).

Peanut Brittle or Cashew Brittle, 24 oz. \$36.95

6 THE CARNEGIE

58 North Water Street.

The original Edgartown Public Library has been reborn as a neighborhood maritime museum with a reading room and a gift shop. The shop carries a selection of goods made by local artisans, including felted-wool ornaments, boards and bowls made from local wood and lampshades in two sizes, featuring the famous Eldridge Map of Martha's Vineyard.

Lampshades \$58 to \$69

MORNING GLORY FARM

290 West Tisbury Road

Farms, by their nature, tend to be far afield; but Morning Glory Farm is the closest to Edgartown. Just over a mile from Main street on the road to West Tisbury, "Moglo" raises flowers as well as vegetables, meat, poultry and eggs. This time of year, the greenhouse staff makes longlasting, colorful wreaths and swags—no two alike—with dried flowers from the fields

Dried Flowers

Swags, \$23.95; wreaths, \$29.95-\$69.95

B ROSEWATER MARKET

20 South Summer Street

Just off Main street, Rosewater Market is a great stop for a latte and a scone or a sandwich during your holiday shopping spree. In addition to food and drink, the market has a wonderful selection of Island-inspired gifts, including dishware, linens and decorative items. This time of year there are lovely stocking stuffers too, like these town sign tree ornaments that are sure to please any Vineyard fan.

Town Sign Ornaments \$12.95

HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE

















Holiday Pop-Ups and Fairs

In addition to shopping Island retail stores this holiday season, you can visit a range of seasonal fairs, shows and pop-up shops for all manner of Island-made artisanal products. Here's a listing of events by date.

Please visit calendar.vineyardgazette.com for more event listings.

ISLAND-MADE ARTISANAL GIFTS

Holiday Gift Show

November 17 to December 16, noon to 4 p.m. daily. Featherstone Center for the Arts, 30 Featherstone Lane, Oak Bluffs

Vineyard Holiday Gift Shop

November 17 to December 24, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Spring Street, Vineyard Haven

Island Made Holidays

November 23 to December 24, 10 a.m to 6 p.m. Alley's Farmstand, 1045 State Road, West Tisbury

Vineyard Artisans Thanksgiving Weekend Festival

November 23 to 24, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society Hall, 35 Panhandle Road, West Tisbury

Katama General Store Holiday Pop-Up

December 7, 5 to 9 p.m., December 8, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 170 Katama Road, Edgartown

Arts & Crafts Festival

December 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Edgartown School, 35 Robinson Road, Edgartown

Handmade From the Heart

December 8, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dr. Daniel Fisher House, 99 Main street, Edgartown

Vineyard Artisans Holiday Festival

December 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Grange Hall, 1067 State Road, West Tisbury

HOLIDAY WREATHS

Festival of the Wreaths

November 29, 4 to 6 p.m. Federated Church, 45 South Summer street, Edgartown

Christmas Faire

December 1, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. West Tisbury Congregational Church, 1051 State Road, West Tisbury

Wreath Making

December 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Donaroma's Nursery, 270 Upper Main street, Edgartown

Get your Gift Wrapped at the Gazette!

December 7 & 14, 9 to 4:30 p.m.
Vineyard Gazette,
34 South Summer street, Edgartown











Island Grown

Choose your size, shape, and variety; then cut your own Christmas tree at L & W Tree Farm.

BY LOUISA HUFSTADER • PHOTOS BY MARIA THIBODEAU

If you want a Christmas tree with Martha's Vineyard roots, the place to go is L & W Tree Farm on Panhandle Road in West Tisbury. It's the only farm on the Island where you can choose and cut an Island grown Christmas tree—or bring one home alive to plant outside after the 25th.

"You can't get any fresher," said Norman Lobb, who co-owns and runs the farm with Heather and Vincent Maciel on 10 acres of land leased from Whiting Farm.

"Even if you get your tree on Dec. 1, on the 25th it's still going to be really fresh, if you keep it watered," Heather added.

The farm is open for Christmas tree shopping the first four weekends in December, Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Families are welcome and the choices are wide, from tabletop-size trees to towering 12-footers.

"The longest lasting Christmas trees are the fir trees," Heather said. "They

hold their needles, they have a great smell. We have Fraser firs and Canaan firs and we also have some balsams."

Other Christmas trees include the concolor fir, also known as white fir, which has long, soft blue needles, Heather continued.

"Some people like spruce trees; they just don't last as long," she said. L & W Tree Farm grows white spruce, blue spruce and Norway spruce.

"And then, also, we still have white pines. Some people like the white pines because they really like that pine smell. They specifically say they want a pine," Heather said.

If you don't want to cut your own Christmas tree, Norman and the Maciels can dig one up for you with a tree spade.

"We stick them in baskets with burlap," Heather said, adding some expert advice:

"If you're going to do a live tree like that, it really should be in the house no



TREE PEOPLE: Landscapers Heather and Vincent Maciel (middle and right) joined Norman Lobb (left) this year in the L & W tree business.**TOP:** The next generation of Christmas trees.

SIX PICKS

Decisions, decisions. You've got six varieties of evergreens to choose from at L & W.



FRASER FIR

















more than five to seven days, kept away from a heat source and well watered," she said. "You don't want it to dry out."

Also, she recommends digging the planting hole ahead of time, in case the ground freezes before the tree can be transplanted after Christmas.

L & W Tree Farm is named for Norman and his original business partner Danny Whiting, who started it together 25 years ago. When Danny retired, he sold his share in the farm to the Maciels, who run Maciel Land and Tree in West Tisbury.

Vincent and Heather are seasoned Island lumberjacks, well known for their prowess with saws in the woodsmen's competition at the annual Agricultural Fair just across the road from the tree farm. They also move trees frequently as part of their landscaping services.

"This is kind of a natural fit to us," Vincent said. "We wanted to have a tree farm. I actually talked to Norman and Danny probably almost 10 years ago and mentioned to them that if there was ever

an opportunity, we'd be interested."

"It's great to have new blood in here," Norman said.

Christmas trees are a seasonal favorite, but the farm runs year-round providing Island-grown trees to local landscapers and landowners.

"We do Leyland cypress, we do Green Giant arborvitae and a lot of native cedar, which is probably our biggest seller," Norman said.

Island-grown trees cost no more than those from the mainland, which can come from as far south as Georgia with stops along the way, Vincent said.

"By the time you usually get a tree to your job site and get it planted, it's been out of the ground for a month," he said. By comparison, trees from L & W can be dug up, delivered to a new home and planted on the same day.

"They never skip a beat," Heather said.

Louisa Hufstader is an Edgartown-based freelance writer.



TOP: At L & W, trees like these white spruces are trimmed as they grow to make classically shaped Christmas trees. **BOTTOM:** The praying mantis prefers Fraser firs.



How Sweet It Is

Whether it's for a quick treat or an impressive custom cake, a visit to Sweet Bites is a little slice of heaven in Vineyard Haven.

BY KATE TVELIA ATHEARN • PHOTOS BY JEANNA SHEPARD

Nestled in the heart of Vineyard Haven, Sonia and Valerio Destefani's tiny café and bakery, Sweet Bites, bursts with colors warm enough to brighten up even the dreariest of Island winters: vibrant pinks, creamy caramels and every imaginable shade of chocolate. A delicious blend of Brazilian and American flavors, Sweet Bites has perfected everything from apple pie to brigadeiro, a truffle with undeniable Brazilian flair.

Sonia developed her pastry skills in her own kitchen in a small town in the state of Espirito Santo, Brazil. She had no formal training aside from the help she got from her three small children and the feedback of her outspoken friends and family. Once the kids were old enough for school, Sonia went back to work and put her culinary creativity on the back burner.

Years later, after relocating to Martha's Vineyard, Sonia gradually rekindled

her love affair with baking, first making desserts for her husband's restaurant Bite on the Go in her spare time. But before long her sweets got so popular that Sonia heeded the urging of her friends and opened her own bakery.

Her business has grown quickly in the past two years. She now employs three year-round bakers—Valeria Evangelista, Marcelo Cavalcante and Magno Costa-who all work together with Sonia to develop and perfect recipes, just like her three children did when they were young. The four of them work hard to keep up with demand all summer long, then spend the quieter winter months mining new ideas from recipes they find online, experimenting with ingredients and techniques until they perfect the final product. Sonia is humble about her process, as if anyone with an Internet connection and a little extra time could achieve what she does.







Her dazzling display cases tell a different story. They overflow with the results of not only hard work, but true talent: Golden crusted pies, vibrant fruit tarts and the real secret to the shop's success — countless varieties of triple layer cakes. Layers of chocolate or vanilla cake are filled with creamy confections ranging from peanut butter mousse to Nutella to coconut cream. Pre-made cakes start under \$25, but they are customizable for every occasion and price point.

On a recent visit, Sonia invited me into her open kitchen to admire the finishing touches going on a special order chocolate-raspberry-mascarpone cake. This particular cake took over five hours to create, mixing and baking and cooling the chocolate batter, whipping the mascarpone with sugar and cream and then assembling and layering and filling. And then there was a three-hour wait for the layers to set in the fridge before completing the final assembly and decorating.

The top of the cake was heaped with crimson and magenta berries and bright green mint sprigs, a sight to behold on its own, without taking into account the elaborate basket weave frosting around the sides.



As much as Sonia's cakes are beautiful to look at, the essence, of course, is the mysterious wonders that lurk within. The layers are at once decadent and balanced — rich, tender chocolate cake paired with the creamy lightness of whipped mascarpone and just a bit of tart raspberry in between. Extravagant chocolate ganache balanced by simple fresh berries. It is Sonia embodied — impressive, welcoming and uncommonly sweet.

Kate Tvelia Athearn is a writer and educator based in West Tisbury where she lives on a small farm with her husband and two teenage sons.

FACING PAGE: Sonia's chocolate basketweave cake with fresh fruit is a special order. Layer cakes from Sweet Bites can be as simple or as special as you like. **THIS PAGE:** Sonia (top) and her crew (left to right): Marcelo Cavalcante, Valeria Evangelista and Magno Costa. And a little slice of heaven.





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BY THE NUMBERS

Bright Lights, Big Island

BY NICOLE GRACE MERCIER ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRIS BURRELL

2,546 **POUNDS**



NICE STRIKE. Last year, the Barn, Bowl & Bistro donated 2,546.1 pounds of turkey to the Island Food Pantry during their Bowl-a-Turkey promotion. Every time a bowler hit three strikes (a "turkey"), an actual turkey was donated.

FLIP THE SWITCH. Eleven trees outside the Dr. Daniel Fisher House in Edgartown will be decked out with holiday lights. It takes about two weeks to complete the stunning look.

11 Trees



48 KIDS



AWAY IN A MANGER. During the First Congregational Church of West Tisbury's annual Christmas pageant, 48 kids filled the roles of angels, shepherds, camels, sheep and even newborn baby Jesus.

11 HARDY SOULS



QUICK DIP. On the first day of the 2018 new year, eleven hardy souls took a polar plunge into Vineyard Sound to raise funds for the Dukes County Veterans Affairs department.



THANKS, FUDGE ELVES. As the holiday season rolls around, orders for Murdick's Fudge come in hot and workers can send out an average of 100 to 200 boxes a day of their melt-in-your-mouth fudge.

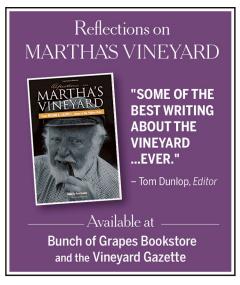
100-200 Boxes a day TURKEY TROT. 150 local turkeys trekked two miles from Whippoorwill Farm to Cleveland Farm last year before being processed and sold for Thanksgiving Day meals.

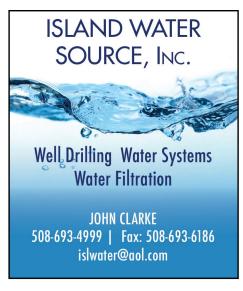
150 TURKEYS



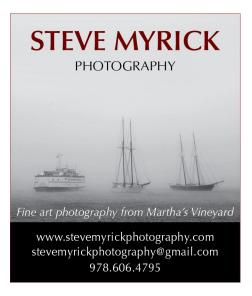
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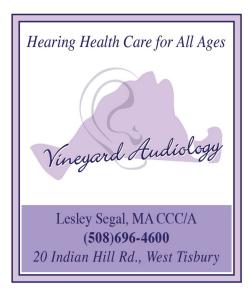










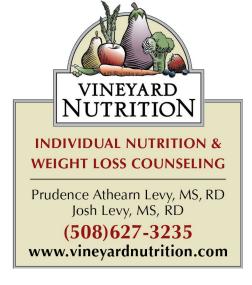














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@larryglickphotos LARRY GLICK © CHILMARK

Reading the Leaves

One of the benefits of Instagram is that we capture so many more fleeting moments in our lives—at least visually—than we ever did before. It's easy to scroll back on our Instagram feeds and watch the seasons change. For us on the Island, spring is sudden and late, nearly tripping over early summer as rhododendrons and lilacs rush to catch up with the warmer days. Fall, on the other hand, is languid, nudging us gently through a very slow-moving season—one that delivers not so much brilliant foliage, but a gradual transformation through a Crayola box of colors, from ochre to sienna. With the season of gray skies and bare branches approaching, we're happy to have those colorful photos to look back on.

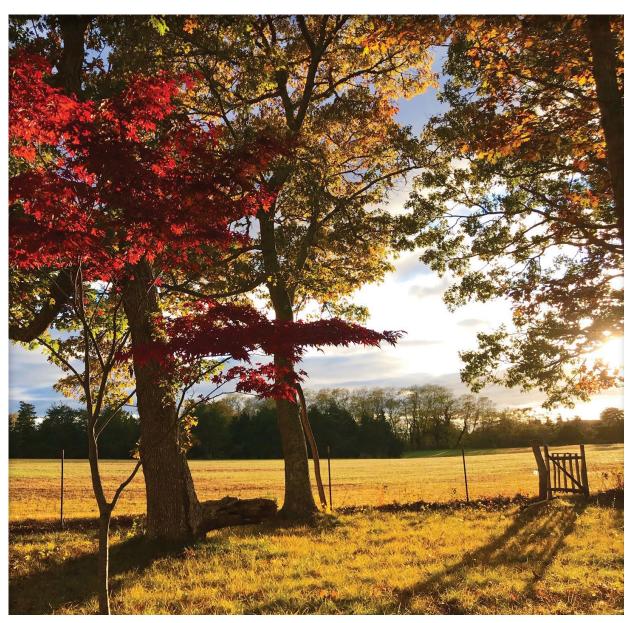
In the next issue of the Vine, we'll be featuring Instagram photos of winter sports on the Island.

Foliage//ˈfol(e)ij/

- 1. Plant leaves, collectively
- 2. Something that changes color subtly on the Island before blowing to the ground in a November windstorm
- 3. An excuse to drive up-Island or to take a walk on a favorite trail

Tag your photos:

#theVineMV #vineyardgazette @vineyardgazette or email thevine@mvgazette.com



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OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

TRAGICALLY, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HAPPENS EVERYWHERE. BUT THERE IS HELP.

CONNECT TO END VIOLENCE, a program of Martha's Vineyard Community Services, is dedicated to providing education, advocacy, safety and support for men and women experiencing sexual and domestic violence.

To help raise awareness for this important program, the Vineyard Gazette has selected CONNECT to End Violence as the beneficiary of its annual holiday subscription promotion.

HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED

From now until Jan. 31, the Gazette will donate \$15 for every new and renewal subscription we receive to CONNECT to End Violence.



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