



*A Room with a View.*

## DECEMBER 2022



## NOTES & NEWS

### Hot Chocolate History

Warming up with a mug of hot chocolate is a sweet and simple winter ritual. We have the Indigenous peoples of Mexico and Central America to thank for coming up with the concept of grinding cocoa beans into a rich, foamy beverage. The original version was a lot different from what we enjoy today, though; for starters, their drink was served cold! But you can still raise a toast to tradition by adding in a complementary warmth with ground cayenne pepper, one of the key ingredients in Mexican hot chocolate.

### Sleep on Your Side To Stay Sharp

Getting enough sleep is crucial for a properly functioning brain, and scientists say the position you sleep in is important, too. Research has shown that snoozing on your side allows the heart to beat more efficiently, pumping cerebrospinal fluid around the brain to filter out waste chemicals that can otherwise lead to cognitive conditions like Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Memorable Melody: 'Celebrate Me Home'

Homesick during the holiday season, Kenny Loggins penned this sentimental song for his solo debut album, released in 1977, following years of success as one half of a duo with Jim Messina. The words "celebrate me home" were originally intended as a placeholder, but his producer encouraged him to keep them, even making the phrase the name of the record. The theme of celebrating with family, along with the opening line of "Home for the holidays, I believe I've missed each and every face," made the tune a modern-day seasonal staple.

### Very Peri 2022

Every year, the Pantone Color Institute chooses a hue that they believe will be popular and present in the coming year. For this past year, that color was Very Peri, a periwinkle blue with violet-red undertones. Pantone hoped Very Peri, with its blend of faithful, dependable blue and energetic, excitable red, would enhance creativity and support a lively attitude. This is the first time that a new color was created instead of choosing an already existing color—reflecting a fresh optimism Pantone believed the world needed. Do you think this year was "Very Peri"? What do you predict the 2023 Pantone Color of the Year will be?

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# TRIVIA WHIZ



## 'Nobel' Americans

Theodore Roosevelt, Albert Einstein and Martin Luther King Jr. are all famous for their contributions to society, which earned them each a Nobel Prize. Announced in the fall, these prestigious prizes are awarded at a special ceremony every December. Study up on some other notable Americans who were awarded for their groundbreaking work:

*Albert Michelson.* Recognizing his experiments measuring the speed of light, this scientist's 1907 Nobel Prize in physics was the first given to any American in a science.

*Pearl S. Buck.* As America's first female author to be awarded the Nobel Prize in literature (in 1938), Buck wrote many influential books about life in China, where she was raised as the child of missionaries.

*Ralph Bunche.* Bunche's efforts as a mediator for the United Nations were recognized in 1950, when he became the first African American to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

*Barbara McClintock.* At age 81, McClintock received the 1983 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for her decades-long research of "jumping genes," which provided insight into the cause and treatment of various health conditions.

*Mario Molina.* With colleagues F. Sherwood Rowland and Paul J. Crutzen, Molina was awarded the 1995 Nobel Prize in chemistry for establishing a link between chlorofluorocarbons and the ozone layer.

*Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo.* This married couple shared the 2019 Nobel Memorial Prize in economic sciences with fellow American Michael Kremer. The trio studied global data to develop a new approach to alleviate hunger and poverty around the world.

## Handmade for the Holidays

Cookies baked with love, a DIY wreath, handmade gifts: For many, these are some of the things that paint a sentimental portrait of the holidays. These traditions are good for your mental health, too. Putting time and effort into making something with your hands has been shown to relieve stress and enhance your self-esteem. It's not necessary to have a completely homemade holiday, but choosing to DIY one or two aspects can help make the season shine a little brighter.

A simple place to start is food. Look up recipes for cookies, fudge, breads and snack mixes, which are all easy to share with others. Evenings at home can be even cozier when you simmer sliced apples for cider or make hot cocoa from scratch, rather than buying premade versions.

When it's time to deck the halls of your home, add a personal touch

with some DIY decorations. Tutorials for wreaths, ornaments and other adornments range in difficulty and style, so there's a project for all ages and personalities. Even cutting out paper snowflakes can fill you up with warmth and nostalgia.

Although scarves are always nice, you don't need to be skilled at sewing or knitting to give a handmade gift. Other presents that you can make include body scrubs, herb-infused olive oils, houseplant terrariums or a personalized playlist. You can also create your own greeting cards or doodle designs on plain wrapping paper.



## Tips for Flexible Travel

Weather, illness and cancelled flights are just some of the reasons why your travel plans might go off course. A little preparation will make it easier to handle any disruptions so you arrive at your destination with minimal stress.

Remember this rule: Earlier is always better. Book flights, train rides or other transportation for as early in the day as possible, since those are less likely to be delayed. On each leg of your trip, leave with plenty of time to spare in case you run into heavy traffic or long lines.

Packing light saves you from checking luggage, which can cost you extra time and money. Even on road trips, fewer bags are easier to manage and will make your ride feel roomier. If you do have to check a bag, consider equipping it with a Bluetooth-powered tracking device, so you'll know where it is if you have to switch flights.

The best way to prevent overpacking is to bring clothing items that will work with multiple outfits. You can even pack a bar of laundry soap so you can wash items in the sink.

Do make room in your suitcase for snacks! Protein-rich options like energy bars or trail mix will curb hunger pangs if food is not readily available.

Whether experiencing a minor hiccup or a major delay, pause and take a deep breath. Don't panic. Take a 10-minute breather to collect your thoughts before rushing into your next decision.





## WIT & WISDOM



### Many Ways To Give Back

Volunteering not only helps others, but it's also very fulfilling. Serving at soup kitchens or donating your decluttered goodies are popular activities that are always appreciated, but there are lots of ways to shake up your volunteering schedule:

**Cook a caring meal.** Nonprofits like Lasagna Love allow you to connect with your community while also giving a home-cooked meal to someone in need. Lacking confidence in your culinary skills? Pick up some treats from your favorite bakery and pass them out to neighbors instead.

**Improve internet accessibility.** Sharing a funny video, meme or other online content is something many of us do every day. Descriptive subtitles, which can be either read or played aloud, help people with hearing or vision loss enjoy these same kinds of posts. By signing up on various websites to be a volunteer who creates these captions, you can make a difference from the comfort of your own home.

**Spread positivity.** Something as simple as a kind word can go a long way. It's easy to give compliments, but it's also easy to get caught up in life and forget that someone might need a self-esteem boost. Remind others that you care about them with a quick text or social media post. Another fun project is to leave anonymous encouraging notes in public places—such as in library books, on restroom mirrors or on car windshields—to turn a stranger's day around for the better.

## What's Cooking

### Gingerbread Pecans

Celebrate a sweet taste of the season with this festive snack.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 large egg white, beaten
- 2 cups raw pecan halves
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons gingerbread spice blend
- 1 pinch salt

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 300° F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk beaten egg white with a fork until frothy. Add pecans and stir until coated.

Sprinkle pecans with granulated sugar, brown sugar, gingerbread spice and salt. Stir to coat evenly. Spread pecans in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet.

Bake pecans for 40 minutes, stirring halfway. Allow pecans to cool completely before serving.

Store pecans in an airtight container for up to four days.

Find more recipes at [AmericanPecan.com](http://AmericanPecan.com).



"In the right light, at the right time, everything is extraordinary."

—**Aaron Rose**

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

—**Elisabeth Kübler-Ross**

"How beautiful the leaves grow old. How full of light and color are their last days."

—**John Burroughs**

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

—**Martin Luther King Jr.**

"There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

—**Leonard Cohen**

"I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars."

—**Og Mandino**

"Everything sounds better with colored lights!"

—**Nancy Wilson**

"There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."

—**Edith Wharton**

"Be a good person when all the lights are off. When everybody doesn't need to see you, shine and know that you know you did the right thing at the end of the day."

—**Jabari Parker**



## December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>DECEMBER</h1>				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>Christmas</b> 25	<b>Christmas (Observed)</b> 26	27	28	29	30	31

## “This Month In History” DECEMBER

**1903:** Orville and Wilbur Wright fly the first powered airplane. Although each brother flew for less than one minute near Kitty Hawk, N.C., the event signified the beginning of a new form of transportation.

**1911:** The South Pole is discovered! A team led by Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen became the first people to reach the elusive South Pole.

**1933:** The 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, ending the Prohibition era. It remains the only constitutional amendment to repeal a previous amendment.

**1946:** Tide detergent, the first heavy-duty laundry soap in the U.S., hits the market.

**1956:** The Montgomery Bus Boycott ends, and integration of the Alabama city’s public bus system is implemented. The civil rights protest was spurred on by Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat over a year earlier.

**1967:** The coldest game in NFL history is played in Wisconsin between the Green Bay Packers and the Dallas Cowboys. With a thermostat reading of 13 degrees below zero and a wind chill of minus 47, the referees weren’t even able to use their whistles, as the metal would freeze to their lips.

**1980:** Detective drama “Magnum, P.I.” debuts on television, making Tom Selleck—and his iconic mustache—a star.

**2017:** Astronauts on the International Space Station have the first pizza party in space.