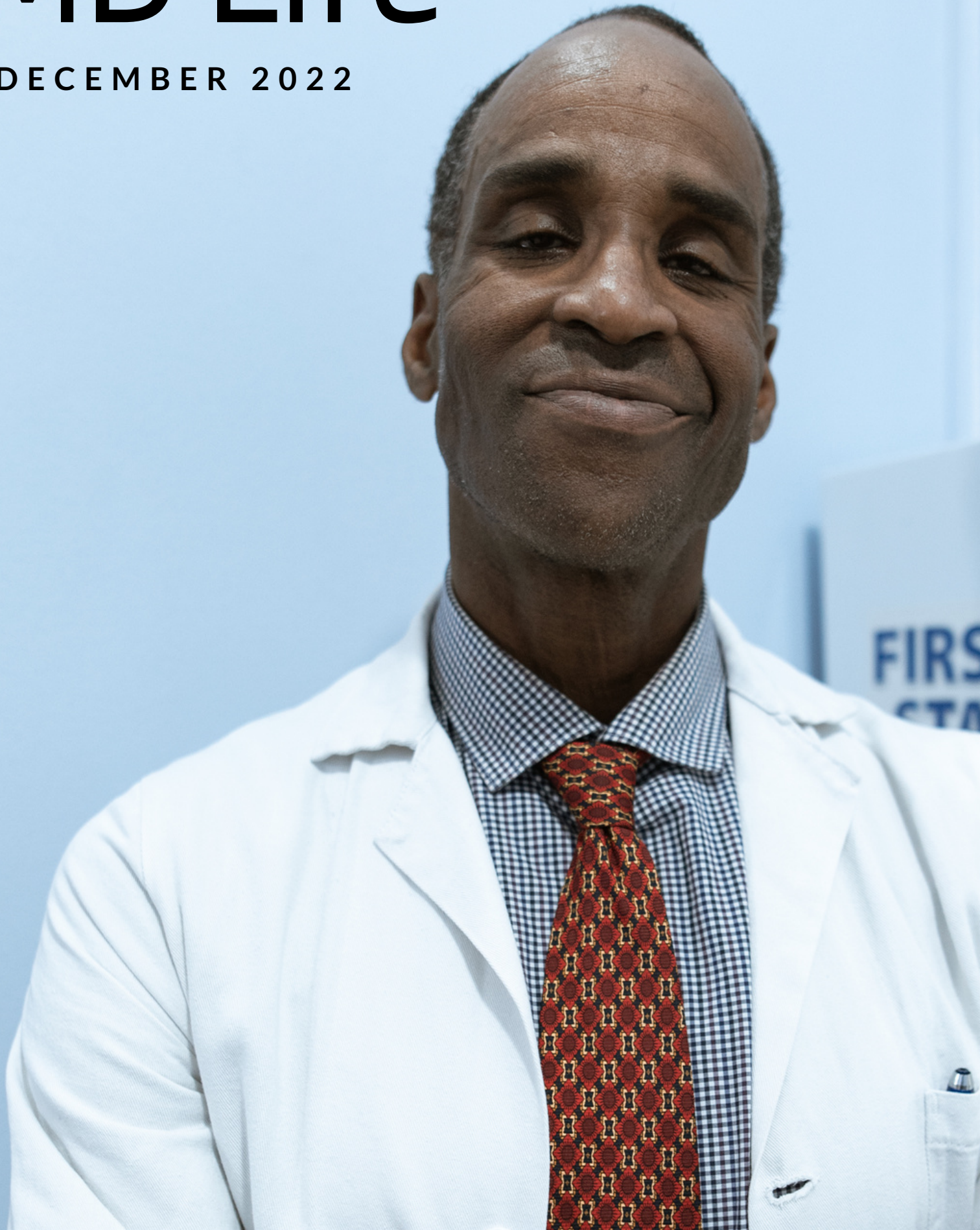


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Holiday Stress-Busting Strategies for Physicians

By Mary Ellen Lewis, for MDLinx



The perfect storm of family drama, rich foods, festive alcoholic beverages, and precariously positioned decorations often increase the demand for medical services around the holidays. While doctors can count on long hours and missing some family fun this time of year, there are myriad strategies to manage seasonal pressures at work and home.

[Doctors are under immense stress](#) in general, according to Dr. Rodger Goddard, chief psychologist at Trinitas Regional Medical Center in Elizabeth, NJ. Around 45% of primary care physicians say they want to quit their jobs, and medical students have 15% to 50% higher rates of depression than the general population.

“That stress gets magnified over the holidays,” Dr. Goddard said. “Statistically, [doctors experience 15 times more burnout](#) than other professions, and one-third are in a state of burnout at any particular time. We're almost always working—there really is no holiday or break, because we're responsible for people's lives.”

Beat Holiday Stress with The Big Four of Wellness

Doctors tend to forget their own physical and emotional needs as is, Dr. Goddard said, but the problem amplifies under the holiday schedule crunch and increased patient demands.

“Very often for myself and other doctors, our schedules are hectic and not in our control. It's hard for us to find time for renewal and refueling,” he explained.

Renewal is not only possible, but it is essential to ensure success at home and in the workplace. Dr. Goddard recommended that doctors build skills in the four key areas of life: body, mind, heart, and soul.

“A physician’s whole mindset and training is about saving and healing other people, and very often they are not set up to think about what they need and want. A car can only run so far if we don't bring it into the shop for maintenance,” Dr. Goddard added.

For area number one—the body—doctors can begin maintenance by running a diagnostic: Does anything hurt? If so, what can be done to heal? Avoiding the seasonal temptations of lounging and overindulgence in food and drink bolsters these efforts.

To improve mental well-being, Dr. Goddard recommended focusing on problem-solving vs problem-dwelling.

“This time of year is a great time to take stock of the biggest problems we're facing and ask ourselves what we can do to solve those issues,” he said. “As for the heart—our relationships and our emotions—I suggest for myself and other people to get the support we need and ask for what we need from others.”

Soul can be broken into two parts, Dr. Goddard explained. The first is the inner-self, which requires nurturing and self-esteem. Spirituality is the second, and the holidays are the perfect time to revisit personal values and mission.

“We're all on a life journey, and this is a great time to remind ourselves of our meaning and purpose in life,” he said. “Beyond New Year's resolutions, what are my key principles to live by and make the world lighter and brighter?”

Holiday Stress-Busting Techniques from Doctors

For Dr. Matt Letizia, a practicing emergency room specialist at Trinitas and the father of 7-year-old twins, choosing between working Christmas day and Christmas Eve is an annual necessary evil.

“I can’t have my kids excited for Santa on Christmas Eve and miss that,” he said. “Especially at their age. I think that would kill me.”

Dr. Letizia, who also acts as medical director for Elizabeth and Union Fire Departments and EMS, said part of being a doctor is accepting that the emergency department never closes. People get sick and hurt, even when the rest of the world is sleeping or at home with their families.

While Dr. Letizia appreciates the talents and education he was given to help others and feels a strong command to service, being away from his family is easily the worst part of his job, he added. There is no substitute for quality time spent with his family, although looking at photos and texting his wife during his downtime in the ER helps.

“Sometimes you see a baby being born, sometimes you find someone dead, sometimes you save a life with your hands. But other times, something catches you completely off guard and reminds you why you're there,” Dr. Letizia said. “Maybe it's because I see [death] a lot in the ER—these people who died too young. You have to realize there needs to be a balance. Be home and enjoy what you have.”

Dr. Michael Zabolski, an internal medicine specialist at Trinitas, can relate to the strain of juggling young children and a chaotic work schedule. With three adult children, a 3-year-old, and the challenge of being the primary cook at home, holidays can get a little dicey.

“Even though you may rank your family as the most important, the responsibilities of your job override that,” he said. “You have to make sacrifices.”

Dr. Zabolski—although mindful of the moments he misses while at work—manages the stress that accompanies those sacrifices by drawing energy from helping his patients. Service begets service, he said, which can be a powerful force for doctors facing adversity.

Quality over quantity is another tool that Dr. Zabolski employs to strike a balance between work and family during the holidays. Remaining present and engaged helps to reinforce positive, lasting memories that shape family traditions.

“When I’m with my family, I give them a lot, and I have a lot of knowledge and experience they can benefit from,” Dr. Zabolski added. “I also feel that by leading by example and being good at what I do, my kids see that and they’re proud.”

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Political Creep: Government Intrusion in Health Care

ARTHUR LAZARUS, MD,

The American Medical Association (AMA) would have you believe that the biggest threat to the medical profession is “scope creep” – the intrusion of advanced practice providers into medical practice. The way I see it, this is no big deal; the movement will reach equilibrium, and everyone will play nicely in the sandbox.

In my opinion, the biggest threat to the medical profession is “political creep” – the increasing government intrusion in medical matters.

At first, it was abortion, with the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v Wade*. Now it’s transgender youth, with the state of Florida moving to ban gender-affirming treatments and other states considering it.

Despite scientific rationale and support for gender-affirming treatment by the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and the Health and Human Services Office of Population Affairs, politicians in Florida have managed to shove evidenced-based guidance documents down our collective throats to act on their own agenda. They want to codify their ill-advised guidance document into law.

The most frightening aspect is that in Florida, only a few elected officials hold the power and can control medical decision-making, amounting to fascist-like authority over medically-trained individuals while potentially turning like-minded states into medical wastelands of backward science.

Turn back the clock 50 years, and you’ll see that “homosexuality” was considered a mental illness. However, only one medical organization – the American Psychiatric Association – was required to reverse that grievous error. It was never necessary to consult with politicians or seek their approval to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of a few gay activists in the early 1970s, Dr. John Fryer most notable among them, homosexuality was eliminated from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), providing an overnight “cure” for millions of Americans. Today, it’s not that simple (not that it was easy for Dr. Fryer and colleagues). The issue for children and adolescents diagnosed with gender dysphoria is not the diagnosis – it’s the treatment: puberty blockers, hormone therapies, and gender-reassignment surgery. Florida’s ban would prohibit these treatments as well as psychotherapy.

Politicians feel they need to govern therapy because gender transition may be irreversible, and children and adolescents lack decision-making capacity. However, sensitive medical concerns can and should be handled between doctors, parents (or designated surrogates), and medical experts, like other complex conditions in medicine. If Florida has its way, even social gender transition (e.g., name, pronoun, hair, and clothing changes) will be taboo. The fact is, two recent studies, one published in *Pediatrics* and the other in *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, both found that most transgender youths stuck with their new gender identity.

Florida officials preferred instead to use the Merck Manual and other dubious sources to organize their case. That’s OK with me because even the Merck Manual recognizes “there is no conclusive research to guide [the]



decision” regarding the medical transition of prepubertal children with gender dysphoria. Why is Florida banning it if no reputable sources provide a scientific basis for barring transition-related care for transgender minors?

It seems wrong and unnecessary to do so given that the goal of therapy in gender dysphoria is laudable – that is, to align patients’ physical appearance with their experienced gender. It doesn’t require an army of politicians to dictate how to do it to doctors. Politicians don’t belong in doctors’ offices.

Doctors who are against assisting minors and their parents can refer them. But before they dismiss them, doctors should realize that gender dysphoria is so severe that it is associated with clinically significant distress and impairment in social, school, or other important areas of functioning. Gender dysphoria is not a contrived disorder or phase of life. Patients should not be used as political pawns.

To be sure, there are many areas of medicine other than reproduction and gender identity where the government has overstepped its authority. Martin Merritt, a health care attorney in Texas, writes: “Virtually every federal regulatory concern currently plaguing the modern practice of medicine also existed in some form in the 1950s.” He cites medical coding, billing, advertising, and off-label prescribing issues.

Federal offenses have grown to include Stark Law, the Anti-Kickback Statute, HIPAA, and the Medicare law, commensurate with Title 42 of the United States Code, which contains civil rights and health and human services laws. Merritt concludes, “Many fear, and rightly so, that as health care insurance exchanges offered at healthcare.gov become fully operational, the federal takeover of the practice of medicine will soon be complete.”

Government meddling is nearly universal when it comes to mandated electronic health records (EHRs). EHRs have disrupted and exploited the patient-physician relationship. Excessive evaluation and management documentation requirements take time away from patient care and make it difficult to locate pertinent medical information in a patient’s record.

Intrusive government regulations and mandates of various insurance plans have caused patients to shift from plan to plan – and from doctor to doctor – so that the concept of patient-centered care has been diluted and, in many cases, lost. What good does it do to tell Florida parents “to reach out to their child’s health care provider for more information [about gender dysphoria]” when their provider is constantly changing? Besides, under Florida’s proposal, Medicaid will not reimburse treatment.

Former CMS Administrator Seema Verma became embroiled in controversy, in part because she sought less health care regulation and more free-market competition. She was certain that redirecting the U.S. health care system away from government regulation would be an improvement, allowing physicians to compete on cost and quality and patients to make their own decisions about their care.

The government’s regulation of reproductive health and mental health has upped the ante. As a psychiatrist, I know a lot more about mental health, and what’s clear to me is that the American mental health care system was founded on principles of humane treatment and scientific inquiry – not on the backs of political hacks that depend on voters for their livelihood. Where did they receive their medical education?

Physicians and patients were once relatively free to contract for services in any way they see fit. That adage no longer applies. The medical profession has been gradually caving into arm-twisting politicians. Politicians now dictate the rules and regulations under which physicians practice. Scientific truths have become inconvenient, circumvented, ignored, or labeled conspiracy theories.

Increasingly, state medical boards have become the targets of political creep. A majority of board members are appointed by states' governors. Consciously or unconsciously, their decision-making is affected by state-wide politics, not unlike the way physicians have been influenced by drug companies. It's all too easy (and convenient) for practicing doctors to be punished when medical boards are held hostage by reigning political ideology.

Dr. Jeffrey A. Singer, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, said the government has "killed" the medical profession: "Governments and hospital administrators hold all the power, while doctors – and worse still, patients – hold none."

The AMA's Code of Medical Ethics states that physicians should work to change unjust laws. However, other than opposing the government's intrusion and criminalization of medical procedures, the AMA has been powerless to effect change. Simply put, the medical profession has lost its grip on the autonomous practice of medicine. The American health care system is dominated by the government instead of medical leaders and experts.

The sad part is not the elimination of personal liberties by the government; rather, it's that political leaders have coopted physicians and censored those who can lend a voice to patients in need. Unchecked, the government will arrogate the power to resolve thorny medical issues and arbitrarily change medical rules.

[Arthur Lazarus](#) is a psychiatrist.



**people: "you always look so
unapproachable."
me: "and yet, here
you are."**



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Best Holiday Punch Recipes

Tasteofhome.com

Champagne Party Punch



Makes

18 servings (about 3-1/4 quarts)

To make this punch even more festive, float an ice ring in the punch. —Taste of Home Test Kitchen, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups unsweetened apple juice
- 2 cups unsweetened pineapple juice
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 1/3 cup thawed orange juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 2 cups ice cubes
- 1 quart ginger ale, chilled
- 1 bottle (750 ml) champagne, chilled

Directions

In a large pitcher, combine sugar and water; stir until sugar is dissolved. Add the apple juice, pineapple juice, lemon juice, orange juice concentrate and lime juice. Refrigerate until serving.

Just before serving, pour into a punch bowl and add ice cubes. Slowly add ginger ale and champagne.



Slow-Cooker Christmas Punch



Makes

10 servings

This holiday, why not indulge in a warm ruby red punch made in the slow cooker? We use cinnamon and Red Hots to give it that cozy spiced flavor and welcome-home aroma. —Angie Goins, Tazewell, TN

Ingredients

- 4 cups unsweetened pineapple juice
- 4 cups cranberry juice



1/3 cup Red Hots
2 cinnamon sticks (3 inches)
Fresh cranberries and additional cinnamon sticks

Directions

In a 3- or 4-qt. slow cooker, combine the first 4 ingredients. Cook, covered, on low until heated through and candies are melted, 3-4 hours. Garnish with cranberries and additional cinnamon sticks.

White Christmas Sangria



Makes

21 servings (3-3/4 quarts)

This punch has a pleasant fruity flavor. It's not too sweet so everyone will enjoy it! —Taste of Home Test Kitchen

Ingredients

6 cups white cranberry juice, chilled
3/4 cup thawed lemonade concentrate
3 bottles (25.4 ounces each) sparkling grape juice
Pomegranate seeds and sliced grapefruit, oranges and kiwi, optional

Directions

Combine cranberry juice and lemonade concentrate in a punch bowl; pour in sparkling grape juice. If desired, add pomegranate seeds and sliced fruit. Serve immediately.



Holiday Wassail Punch



Total Time

Prep: 10 min. Cook: 4 hours



Makes

16 servings

This festive and fruity punch is made with five kinds of juices plus cinnamon and allspice for a unique, well-balanced flavor. —Jennifer Stout, Blandon, Pennsylvania

Ingredients

4 cups apple juice
4 cups orange juice
2 cups cranberry juice



1 can (11.3 ounces) pineapple nectar
1/2 cup sugar
2 teaspoons lemon juice
3 to 4 cinnamon sticks (3 inches)
8 whole allspice
8 to 10 orange slices
Optional: Apple slices and fresh cranberries

Directions

In a 5- or 6-qt. slow cooker, mix the first 6 ingredients. Place cinnamon sticks and allspice on a double thickness of cheesecloth. Gather corners of cloth to enclose seasonings; tie securely with string. Place spice bag and orange slices in slow cooker. Cook, covered, on low 4-5 hours to allow flavors to blend. Discard spice bag and orange slices. If desired, top punch with apple slices and cranberries. Serve warm.

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Has Medicine Lost its Why?

BEVAN CHOATE, MD

From the halls of ancient Greece to the heights of television screens, the myth that the physician is more god than mortal has stood the test of time. As such, we are held to moral and superhuman standards no matter how tough things get. And thanks to our friend Hippocrates, we are oath-bound in our virtues to help anyone in need; while putting OUR personal needs aside, of course. Many of us have felt that visceral rush of piety coursing through our veins after a brutal night of call when you stayed at Mr. Johnson's bedside five more minutes than you had to. "A golf clap for you," I say. How could we not get an inflated ego knowing if it weren't for the chemical properties of water, we could walk on it.



Is this good? I'll complicate the answer with a question. In what other careers are we bound by oath in some kind of pseudo-religion that is older than Christianity? The police? Policemen take an oath. Maybe lawyers do too, but those two have historically been privileged to immunities that doctors don't quite share. And who stands to benefit from a Spartan unit of medical soldiers that are oath-bound to care for patients under any circumstance? Politicians? Drug companies? The Media? Can they not change our circumstances to benefit themselves? Certainly, they can. Because we will take care of patients no matter what. We took an oath, remember? But what if the circumstances they create are injurious to our patients? Now, don't get me wrong, I whole-heartedly agree that most of the tenets of the Hippocratic oath are admirable, aspiring, and applicable in helping doctors not lose sight of their roles, but Hippocrates' world was much different than the modern doctor's. Hippocrates found his idyllic logos, or meaning, in medicine. Despite making invaluable contributions, his camp of medicine was much more focused on patient care and prognosis than diagnosis. Did Hippocrates put the chariot before the horse? Perhaps. But his stoic peers might add that we cannot control what happens to us. We can only control how we react to it.

Hippocrates was essentially a rural-medicine doctor on an island of roughly 40,000 inhabitants. He believed in the four humors. In modern medicine, we are now down to one humor, and it's mostly dark and sarcastic. Though small scale and governed only by his morals, at least his art was pure and patient-centric.

Nowadays, we couldn't be further from the mark. Threatened with ever-growing patient censuses, government regulations, and laws generated by megalithic pharma and health insurance companies, we are facing immense pressures. Now more than ever, like animals, we are being more driven by fear than purpose. Our logos is sick.

A long-time friend of mine just recently told me about his grandmother, who entered a hospital with a broken thumb and left with a urinary tract infection, a torn rotator cuff, a kidney cyst, and a broken thumb. He was frustrated that it took them twelve hours to address the problem for which she sought treatment. He asked how this happened? I laughed. "It's fear-based medicine, man. This is the way things are now. I can sure as hell tell you that the docs treating your grandmother did things mostly out of fear of being sued. Lemme guess, she went in there saying her thumb was broken? They then took a detailed history and a comprehensive

review of systems, as mandated by their hospital's billing department, and ordered an all-out assault of lab work and tests because she might have answered 'Yes' to one of their trip-wired questions?"

Physicians are now in a disconcerting paradox. Our profession, sold to us in medical school as a calling abundant with meaning, is devolving into a state of fight or flight. Flee from the lawyers, fight with the administrators, flee from blame. If medicine is a wooden scaffold, our faithless overlords these days seem more concerned with the nail sticking up than the one holding the whole damned thing together.

Acclaimed author, psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor, Viktor Frankl, knew all too well about being the loose nail. It is well described in his ground-breaking work *Man's Search For Meaning*. From his heart-wrenching retelling of life in the concentration camps, he made it very clear that being neither seen nor heard often meant evading torture or death. At least for a time, anyway. But central to his life's work, for man to thrive, he must have meaning. He relates that those who overcame the pitiful odds of surviving concentration camps did so by not losing sight of what gave their lives meaning, e.g., a loved one, a divine power, or a hopeful future. We've all probably had at least one patient that seemed ok on paper after a major medical event that later tanked after they mentally and spiritually threw in the towel. Nietzsche said it best: "He who has a why to live for can bear almost anyhow how."

Has medicine lost its why? It is paramount that we acknowledge our why before we tackle the how. Furthermore, if we cannot work in parallel with our why, how can we help patients achieve theirs? As doctor Harvey Cushing put it, "A physician is obligated to consider more than a diseased organ, more than even the whole man-he must view the man in his world." Do we continue peddling the myth of our greatness by speaking the cloak-and-dagger language of obscure syndromes and medications? Why not? It makes us look educated. Yet, stroking our egos does nothing more than put a tree so big between us and our patients that they no longer see the forest.

Viktor Frankl taught us how to live when faced with death. He also challenges us to live life as if we had a shot at living it one more time. Medicine is overdue for a second life. But before we forge onward, let us confirm our why. We owe it not only to our patients but to ourselves.

[Bevan Choate](#) is a urologist and author of [The Stroke Artist](#).



8 Smart Ways to Use Bluetooth Trackers Like the AirTag and Tile

BY SERENA O'SULLIVAN, KOMANDO.COM

You've probably heard all the buzz about Bluetooth trackers, from Apple AirTags to Tile trackers.

Whichever one you choose, you're buying a popular piece of lost and found software that can save your hide in times of crisis. Bluetooth trackers are most famous for helping people track down lost or stolen items. But there are a few different uses you might not have known about.



Here are some insider secrets to help you get the most out of your AirTag or Tile trackers. We'll start with the basics.

1. Ever lost your wallet? Attach a tracker for peace of mind

You come home after a long, stressful day. Patting your pockets, you look for your wallet so you can put it away. Cold sweat breaks out once you realize it's gone.

Just think about all the important stuff we keep in our wallets, like:

- Insurance cards.
- Driver's license.
- Other forms of ID.
- Cash.
- COVID vaccination record.
- Credit cards.
- Coupons.
- Receipts.

When you find out it's gone, it's easy to go into panic mode. If someone steals your wallet, they have a goldmine on their hands. After all, private data makes big money these days.

Someone could even use the information in your wallet to steal your identity. Even worse, someone could commit crimes in your name that can stain your record for decades.

To keep your wallet safe, slip a Bluetooth tracker into one of the pockets. They're slim, thin and light so they won't add any bulk or weight. Plus, it'll give you much-needed peace of mind when disaster strikes!

2. You can also attach one to your keys

After your wallet, your keychain is the second scariest personal item to lose. After all, you can't go home without it. You've probably got your parking card there. Or maybe you can't access your workplace without the access card on your keychain.

From AirTag and Tile to SmartTag or Chipolo, there are a ton of key finders on the market. Just buy one, attach it to a smartphone app and you can track down your lost keychain from anywhere. The only problem is finding the right one!

Firstly, the Tile Pro has a loud alarm and a range of 400 feet. The blaring sound will cut your search short when you're ambling around your home, opening drawers and lifting curtains. That means you can get out of the door ASAP.

Plus, you don't need to buy Tile Premium for it to work well. Even better, the Tile Pro, Chipolo and SmartTag all come with built-in holes. This allows for easy attachment to your keychain.

Discerning shoppers may be especially attracted to the SmartTag. That's because it can connect to other smart devices so you can automate your routine. You'll need Samsung's SmartThings app to access your smart home features, but it's as easy as pressing a button.

Unlike the other item trackers out there, Apple's AirTag doesn't have any openings you can use to attach it directly to a keychain. That's intentional: Apple wants you to spend extra money on accessories like colorful leather key rings..

However, many customers love that it doesn't come with built-in holes. They like the creativity of picking out an accessory that matches their aesthetic. Customers love the way it works, too.

There is another reason why customers love AirTags. Earlier, we mentioned that Tile trackers have a range of 400 feet. Apple AirTags don't have a range in the same way since they work on Apple's Find My network.

That means you can track your items as long as your tracker is in the Bluetooth range of *any* iPhone or Apple device. Cool, huh?

3. Luggage

Vacations are about relaxing, but losing luggage can sink a torpedo into any zen state you hoped to achieve. Luckily, GPS trackers can help you find your lost luggage. So when you're carting your bags around the airport or the hotel, slip a Bluetooth tracker into a pocket for that extra peace of mind.

Then again, exposing the tracker instead of hiding it inside the bag might be better. You don't want anything to block the signal.

You can slip it into an outer pocket or attach it to the zipper with a small key ring. If you went so far as to buy a combination lock, you could wind the tracker around that as well.

4. Keep track of your pets

That's right — Bluetooth trackers aren't just for your gadgets. They're also a great way to keep track of your furry friends. Kim put one of these bad boys on her dog, Abby. (It's the black attachment to her pink collar.)

Humans have jewelry and sunglasses. Dogs can have Bluetooth trackers as snazzy accessories.



One Amazon reviewer bought a silicone case for her AirTags and attached it to her dogs, who she says love to escape for wild adventures around the neighborhood.

“This way I can find my dogs before I get the nasty messages that the dogs are loose,” [she said](#). “I can track them right from my iPhone and set up was so simple. Worth the money and no monthly subscription needed like other pet trackers.”

5. Cars

Do you always forget where you parked? Try slipping a tracker into your glove compartment. Or maybe, instead of fuzzy dice, you can slip a tracker on a ring underneath the rearview mirror.

Then, all you have to do is open up your smartphone app. Follow the coordinates and you can find your car. Thanks to your tracker, you just saved yourself 15 minutes of wandering around in the hot sun.

As a side note, a Bluetooth tracker won't work if you want to track someone else who is driving. Maybe you're suspicious of a cheating spouse or want to watch over a kid who just learned how to drive. Bluetooth trackers typically have a range of around 200 feet. You should look into a GPS or GSM tracker instead.

Did that make you afraid someone could slip a tracker into *your* car? We've got you covered.

6. Motorcycle

Don't have a car? Bluetooth trackers also work for motorcycles. You'll just have to find a good place to attach it since you have less space to work with.

ABC7 reports that one motorcycle owner lost his ride for three days. Since it was a rare Italian motorcycle, he stashed a Tile under the seat ahead of time in case someone snatched it. His worst dream came true: One day it went missing, so he reported it to Tile as stolen.

Three days later, he received a notification that it had been discovered. There were no arrests ... but the bike had 300 extra miles. So if you own a fancy ride you don't want to lose, do what he did and insert a tracker. It's better to be safe than sorry!

7. Guns

That's right — you can also use these gadgets to keep track of valuables like a gun. Attach one to the bag or case where you keep a rifle, shotgun or pistol.

If anyone ever gets their hands on it, a tracker can help you find its location immediately before anything dangerous happens.

8. Elderly parents

If you live with your parents, you're probably worried about them falling down and not being able to get up. Maybe your older parent likes to putter around in the garden and has lost their balance in the past. Either way, asking them to put a tracker in their pocket could help them stay safe if they get hurt.

Caring for aging parents or relatives is a huge responsibility that can often feel daunting. Luckily, tech can go a long way in reassuring you that your family member is safe. From medical alert systems to smart assistants, many tech gadgets can help you keep a digital eye on your loved one.



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From Uber Driver to Harvard Medical School

OSCAR A. LEYVA

“What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?”
— “Harlem” by Langston Hughes



“\$23.46,” the Walmart cashier distractedly mentioned to me as I got ready for my first ride. I had signed up and passed the background check. My car was inspected for basic safety features at an Uber service station. I was going to put my 2015 Toyota Corolla to good use. I had my first medical school interview in a few weeks, and I needed about \$600 to cover the plane and expenses. I was feeling nervous but also emboldened by my initiative to do something I never expected. As I exited the Walmart with iPhone and Android chargers, a new phone mount, and mini water bottles, I felt a sense of independence and ownership I had never felt before. I was on a mission, and it was time to launch.

I cleaned the car and emptied the trunk. The car smelled of California cherry. I put my seatbelt on and put music on. I adjusted the volume, opened the Uber Driver app, and tapped on “GO.” A few seconds of suspense were overtaken by a bell sound: my first ride. I picked up my first rider, an elderly man who came out of a convenience store. He was heading home. I said hello and drove him from point A to point B. The first ride seemed uneventful, but inside I felt that I was one step closer, or more like one ride closer, to my dream of going to medical school and becoming a doctor.

Applying to medical school as a low-income, first-generation student has additional challenges that can limit one’s stance in the application process. I was ecstatic and determined when I began the medical school application process during my gap year. I was working full-time at a Silicon Valley startup, but all my income was going to rent and necessities. It just wasn’t enough to cover flights and lodging across the country. I had worked so hard to get to this point, interviews at hand, and I felt that my future was slowly vanishing because of finances. I was desperate and exasperated about to do something to fix this.

Talking to my mom, we were trying to figure out how to make it through this year. My mom told me I should wait another year and postpone my dream after saving some money for the process. At this point, I already

had my first interview lined up, all the way in Michigan. I started thinking about what I could do on the side to make extra money to make the interviews and my future a reality. So I used what I had, my car.

As I started working, I realized that it was not going to be enough to go to all my interviews. I had to be strategic about which interviews to attend and which simply to let go. One particular morning, on interview day for a medical school across the country, I got a call from the admissions director asking where I was, even though I notified them about my situation. The director was very confused when I explained I did not have the resources to attend the interview. She said other students were able to attend, so why not me? I could not avoid seeing other peers starting to fly out and interview in a myriad of medical schools across the country. Was I angry that I had to drive for Uber while other applicants had the resources to attend all interviews? Was it fair that I had to select which schools to attend, sometimes passing on great choices that represented potential futures for my life and medical career? Should I have deferred my dream? I was appalled at how much effort medical schools put into selecting applicants for an interview but how little investment there was to get students like me to actually attend and be considered. Medical schools boast diversity as an added benefit to their campus and student life but ignore the realities surrounding the specific student situations that might make it hard for students to even get their foot in the door.

For many months, I used to finish my full-time job at the startup around 5 p.m., go home to grab a quick bite, and then drive until midnight or later. I would play the same songs in every night route. I would drive up to San Francisco and see the skyline as I entered the metropolis. As I shifted lanes to get to the busiest zones of the Bay Area for the night, I turned on the Uber app to begin. Riders would come in and out of the car, one after another, sometimes in silence, sometimes with small talk, sometimes with memorable conversations. In retrospect, I realize I was practicing some skills that would be useful in a medical career. Think about it for a minute. The driver and the passenger are in an enclosed space for a limited amount of time. The driver has to make the passenger feel safe and comfortable. Conversations are often inevitable. Just as drivers provide a service with their car, doctors provide a service in an exam room.

I drove for Uber for nearly two years in San Francisco and Boston. Thankfully, driving for Uber provided enough money to attend some of my interviews. I ended up at Harvard Medical School, an unlikely ending to an unlikely experience. Driving for Uber was a humbling and eye-opening experience that now, looking back, I consider a privilege.

One of the most personal lessons was realizing that everyone has a particular journey toward the future one desires. It might not always feel glamorous or fair, but determination and zeal are a must to achieve anything we dream of. In conversation with some of my passengers, they would find out that I was working to be able to attend medical school. One particular passenger, a Mexican woman with her child, told me, "For some of us, it takes more work, but that is what makes us better and stronger. You are already a winner!" Her words resound in my head whenever I have a new challenge at school, whether paying for question banks or standardized exams or experiencing microaggressions in the hospital. Now that I am about to graduate from medical school, I have learned that there is a different path to success with more barriers and detours for students like me, yet I have realized that I am here not despite of my difficulties but because of them. Next time you take an Uber, do not underestimate your driver; that driver might just be your doctor in a few years.

[Oscar A. Leyva](#) is a medical student.

7 Year-End Tax Planning Tips for 2022

www.sdtplanning.com



With so much to look forward to during the holiday season, it is easy for busy professionals like physicians and dentists to overlook what they can do to prepare financially for the end of the year. Not all is lost, though, there is still time left to take stock of your financial situation. As the year comes to a close, you may want to review what you can do in the last few weeks of the year and what should wait until the new year. Many end-of-year tax strategies need to be implemented by December 31 to have an effect on tax filing in the following spring. Here are a few tips to help you get the most from your taxes!

1. Maximize Your Retirement - Year-End 401(k), IRA, and HSA Contributions

You may be able to reduce your taxable income as well as build your nest egg by making contributions to your retirement savings account. Depending on your situation, it can be a missed opportunity not to contribute as much as you are able for the year.

Tax-deductible contributions are capped at the following levels for 2022

- \$20,500 for a Traditional 401(k) | \$27,000 for ages 50 and older
- \$6,000 for an IRA | \$7,000 for ages 50 and older
- \$3,650 for an HSA (individual) | \$7,300 for an HSA (family) | \$1,000 more for individuals 55 and older

Remember, according to our [Financial Priority Pyramid Planning](#) - by creating a saving plan, you will be able to make a better financial plan to meet your financial goals.

Pro Tip: Did you know that you have until April 15 of next year to make tax-deductible contributions to Traditional IRAs and Health Saving Accounts? However, it is important to note that the window for 401(k) contributions ends on December 31.

2. Donate to Charity Before the End of the Year

Do you have a [charitable giving](#) plan that aligns with what you value and is tax-efficient? With the winter season quickly approaching, it is a good time to clean out your closets and go through your household goods to see what you need and can donate. Your donation of goods or clothing may not seem like much, but it can make a difference to an organization that works with individuals or families in need. Similarly, year-end giving is another way you can help support your place of worship and favorite non-profit organization in your community.

3. Review Your Taxable Investments

Have you reviewed your taxable investments to see if you have stocks in your portfolio that have gone down in value? It is possible to recognize your losses and use them to offset investment winners. You may want to consider selling the losing investment and offsetting your losses against any gains you recognized. If the losses exceed the gains, you can deduct up to \$3,000 on your federal taxes.

4. Spend Your FSA

If you have a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and there is money remaining, schedule those outstanding health care visits. While the old “use it or lose it” rule may not still apply, you may only be able to carry over \$570 worth of unused money left in your 2022 FSA account at year’s end. Another consideration is whether your plan limits the amount of time you are allowed to use your funds to 2 ½ months after the plan year.

5. Be Aware of the Other Dependent Credit (ODC)

Other Dependent Credit, or ODC, is something that many of us overlook. If you support your parents or grandparents, they may qualify as a non-child dependent. Meaning you should investigate taking advantage of the new “Other Dependent Credit” worth up to \$500.

6. Gather Receipts Related to Your Home Property Taxes or Large Purchases

Ask yourself if you pay home property taxes, pay state taxes, or did you make a large purchase and pay quite a bit of sales tax. You can still deduct the amount of state and local property, income, or sales taxes up to \$10,000. In the past, these taxes have generally been fully tax-deductible, but every situation is unique, so working with a tax advisor can help you understand what applies and does not apply to you.

7. Meet with Your Tax Advisor or CPA

The last two months of the year are typically a good time to meet with your tax advisor to have a financial checkup. They have finished their October tax filings and may have time in their schedule before the busy tax season begins after the new year. As your expenses and income may fluctuate during the year, it can be helpful to understand where you are on- and off-target when it comes to your financial plan before year-end. A tax advisor can provide advice on strategies to minimize taxes owed while staying within the bounds of the law and regulations.

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Patients Prefer Telehealth for Common Illnesses, Study Shows

By Bill Siwicki

But more than half are concerned about the quality of care they're receiving, according to the Software Advice survey. One of the firm's analysts dives into the results.



Darcy and his best friend, Lisa Hedges, associate principal analyst at Software Advice

Photo: Lisa Hedges

Telemedicine has, at long last, become very popular. But lingering concerns remain on its effectiveness for certain diagnoses and treatments.

Software Advice's 2022 State of Telemedicine Survey finds that while a majority of people prefer virtual appointments for common illnesses, more than half of patients still are concerned about the quality of care they're receiving.

Software Advice, a Gartner company, polled more than 1,000 patients on telemedicine usage after the worst of the pandemic – regarding whether they intend to keep using it and improvements that can be made.

We interviewed Lisa Hedges, associate principal analyst at Software Advice, to discuss the findings of the study and talk about the future of telemedicine.

Q. What is the overarching message healthcare CIOs and other health IT leaders should take from your study?

A. That failure to invest in telemedicine is downright foolish at this point. It's been around for a long time and fully took off during the pandemic. It isn't going anywhere now that so many patients have experienced the convenience it offers.

This also means if you are one of the healthcare organizations that adopted telehealth during the pandemic and plan to eliminate those tools in the near future, you're making a mistake.

The bottom line here is that telemedicine is a valuable tool for patients, and providers who offer remote care services for certain conditions and symptoms are going to have the edge over providers who don't.

Q. About 86% of patients rate their telemedicine experience as positive; 91% are more likely to choose a provider that offers telemedicine. Why do you think this is, and what does it mean for healthcare provider organizations?

A. Convenience and ease of use are top reasons patients like telemedicine, and that certainly makes sense when you consider the time it saves. Patients don't have to drive to a physical office, find parking, spend time in a waiting room (where they may be exposed to other contagions), and then drive back home once the appointment is over.

All of that is hassle enough even without considering the fact that most people going to see doctors don't feel great, so their baseline before doing any of that is discomfort.

What this means for providers is they're looking at a great opportunity. We're all well aware of the current shortage of qualified healthcare workers, and we know that the working conditions for healthcare staff have been particularly brutal during the pandemic.

With so many employees quitting, it's left a lot of extra work behind for those who have stayed on, which leads to more burnout and even more turnover. If practices can find a way to alleviate that burden, though, they're going to make life better for their employees.

Telemedicine can do this by shortening the average exam time, nearly eliminating [patient wait times](#), reducing the average number of no-shows, and saving money by cutting down on operational costs. All of these things can directly or indirectly impact the quality of life for healthcare workers and for patients.

Q. Only 49% prefer telemedicine visits for mental health treatment, despite it being one of the more remote-ready specialties. What does this finding say for the future of telepsychiatry?

A. This is a great question that a lot of people are puzzling over. Mental healthcare does seem to be an ideal match for telemedicine, specifically the use of video conferencing to conduct therapy sessions. So, I was a little surprised that more patients in our survey didn't indicate a preference for telemedicine.

But there are a couple of things to consider here.

First, we didn't collect data on patient history, so not every participant in our survey has experience seeking mental health treatment. That could be a factor in this dataset.

Second, 19% indicated no preference between telehealth and in-person appointments for mental health treatment when we asked this question, which means only 32% prefer in-person mental health appointments. So, it's still the majority of patients saying telehealth is their favorite option for mental healthcare.

As far as what this means for the future of teletherapy, I don't think it's any huge concern. It could simply be that some patients are still warming up to the idea of having intimate conversations with a therapist through a computer screen. It could be an age thing. It could be something else.

Regardless, I suspect that if we were to run this survey annually for the next few years, that 49% would increase every time.

Q. One-third of patients worry that an in-person exam, lab work or other testing is critical to properly diagnose and treat patients. How can telemedicine jump this hurdle?

A. I'm not convinced telemedicine needs to jump this hurdle to prove itself valuable. Sure, there are incredible advancements being made in remote patient monitoring tools and other wearable devices that can help diagnose patients from a distance, but I think it's equally worth noting that telemedicine is a tool to be used in the right circumstances – it's not a one-size-fits-all approach to medicine.

Yes, for a lot of medical conditions, doctors actually have to see the patient to perform physical tests. Those situations aren't ideal for telemedicine, and we shouldn't be thinking of them as hurdles – or even failures.

If, instead, we reframe our thinking so that we recognize the situations that are ideal for telemedicine appointments – those that don't require physical tests for diagnosis, such as mental healthcare or common ailments like upper respiratory infection – we can see that telemedicine is a deeply valuable tool as it stands.

So, to answer your question, the real hurdle for telemedicine here is teaching patients when it is best used instead of needing to find ways to provide lab work or physical exams remotely. In essence: It's a messaging problem instead of a technology problem.

The good news is patients seem to be recognizing this on their own. If you look at patient preferences for in-person appointments versus telemedicine appointments broken down by symptom in our report, you see that patients intuitively understand which symptoms are best treated remotely and which are more likely to need physical exams.

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Last Minute Holiday Trip Ideas for 2022

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Acapulco

An affordable beach paradise known for its turquoise water and unforgettable cuisine. Top attractions include XTASEA, a zip line over the Bay of Puerto Marques that reaches 75 miles an hour, and the Rollo Aquatic park, with wave pools and waterslides for kids of all ages. Just off Acapulco's coast is La Roqueta Island for snorkeling and diving.



Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Bucks County, about 30 minutes from Philadelphia, gives a more traditional holiday backdrop. The New Hope Railroad allows passengers to relive the golden age of rail travel, and during holidays features a North Pole Express theme ride. At Peddler's Village, visitors can explore a winter wonderland that includes a whimsical gingerbread display through Jan. 8.



Alexandria, Virginia

Alexandria charms with its brick-lined streets and twinkling holiday lights — King Street is like a real-life Dickens village — and just minutes from Washington, D.C., by subway, Alexandria is also a foodie's heaven. If you're still there for New Year's Eve, don't miss First Night Alexandria, a festival that includes music, fireworks, and more. Named one of "America's Top Holiday Towns" in 2016 by USA Today.



New Orleans

If there's one thing New Orleans does well, it's celebrations. Holiday festivities continue after Dec. 25, including Celebration in the Oaks in City Park, which includes hundreds of thousands of colorful and illuminated outdoor displays, and the Audubon Zoo's Zoo Year's Eve, with music, games, prizes, and daytime countdown to the new year.



Iceland

Pure magic during Christmas and New Year's. Visitors here can spend days on snowmobile tours and adventurous glacier trekking expeditions, or dash across picturesque landscapes on husky rides, says Cammie Burke, Europe expert for travel company Scott Dunn. Once the sun sets, cozy up with a bowl of lobster bisque by a hotel fire and watch the Northern Lights dance across the sky.



Miami

Miami's December beach weather is hard to beat (hovering between the 70s and low 80s) and nonstop flights with low prices make it one of the best last-minute, end-of-year vacations. Iconic South Beach is home to some of the city's best restaurants, nightlife, and shopping. Don't miss the city's graffiti art zone, the Wynwood Walls.



Bimini, Bahamas

Just 50 nautical miles from South Florida — a mere 25-minute plane ride or two-hour ferry from Miami — Bimini is known for stunning beaches, friendly locals, and charming resorts. Ernest Hemingway was fond of deep-sea fishing here; Martin Luther King Jr. was a regular visitor. Learn Bimini's unique story at cultural and historical sites such as Heroes Park, or take guided eco-tours through lush mangroves to observe wildlife.



Chicago

Yes, it is cold in Chicago in late December. Ignore it to ice skate in Maggie Daley Park in the heart of downtown and eat your way through Restaurant Row on Randolph Street. There's also a rich art scene, with galleries and theaters offering refuge from the cold — and don't miss the iconic Buddy Guy's Legends blues club.



Hamilton, Ohio

A small community along the Great Miami River oozing historical charm — most cities in the region were built in the 20th century, but Hamilton dates back to 1791. Revitalized, with its downtown transformed into a hot spot for arts, dining, and recreation, the city includes a nine-block German Village Historic District on the National Register of Historic places.



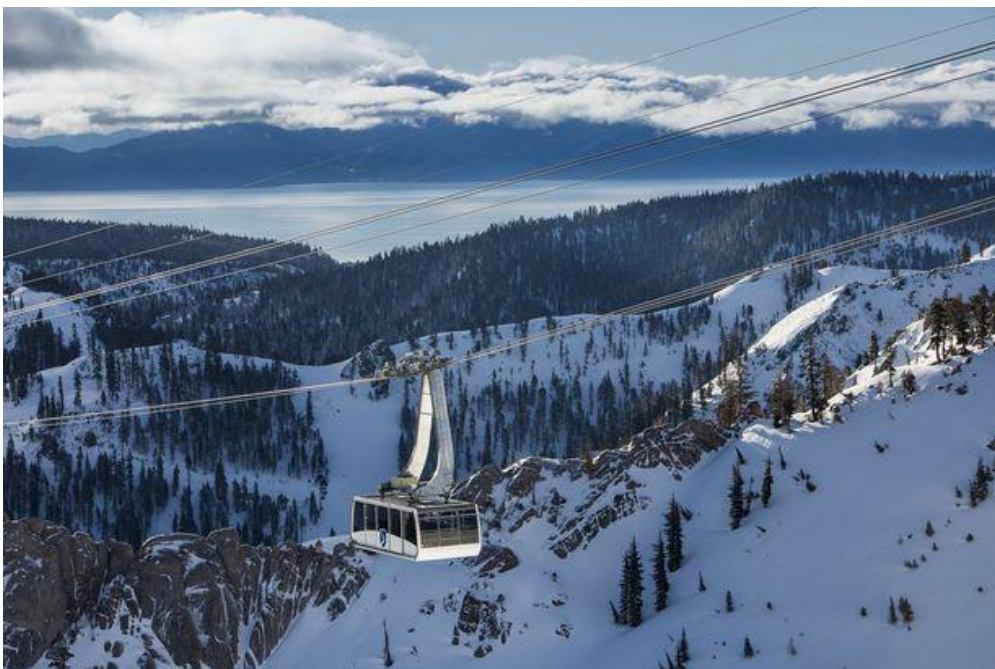
Beaufort, South Carolina

Queen belle in an underrated cluster of coastal communities, and a quiet idyll for those seeking to wind down at year's end amid 18th century antebellum homes, a richly restored historic downtown district, and coastal waters and marsh as far as you can see. Explore through temperatures in the low to mid-60s on foot, by bike, boat, or horse-drawn carriage.



Wind River Country, Wyoming

Escape the crowds and steep price tags of Jackson, and go beyond popular tourist stops such as Yellowstone. This authentic west destination offers include fat biking, skiing, and dog sledding, as well as wildlife observation.



North Lake Tahoe, California

Home to the continent's largest alpine lake and among the nation's largest concentration of ski resorts. Take sleigh and carriage rides through the snow on Sand Harbor beach, go dog sledding at the Resort at Squaw Creek, and don't miss the Palisades Tahoe Aerial Tram ride, which climbs more than 2,000 feet for 360-degree views of Lake Tahoe and the High Sierra.



Abingdon, Virginia

Downtown charms with shopping, cozy eateries, and twinkling lights. Among the Main Street highlights is Holston Mountain Artisans, showcasing traditional and contemporary crafts of the Appalachian region and one of the oldest craft cooperatives in the nation. Visitors can take in a show at The Barter, a historic 500-seat theater dating back to 1933.



Indianapolis

One of Travel + Leisure's recent "America's Favorite Cities for Affordable Getaways," and host to a number of holiday events through December, among them Winterlights at Newfields on the Indianapolis Museum of Art campus, which includes 1.5 million dancing lights and s'mores, and Christmas at the Zoo, a season of extended hours for even more light displays.



Navarre Beach, Florida

Often referred to as "Florida's Most Relaxing Place." Spend days looking for souvenir seashells on a quiet corner of white sand Gulf beach, take a short drive inland to explore sprawling Blackwater River State Forest, or stop by historic Milton, listed on the National Register of Historic places, for antiquing.



Oaxaca City, Mexico

Designated a World Heritage Site, Oaxaca offers a glimpse of various chapters of Mexican history — pre-Hispanic, colonial, independent, modern, and contemporary phases — in its architecture, museums, festivals, and colorful crafts, as well as its pre-Columbian ruins.



Monterey, California

A quintessential beach California town with some of the state's most iconic locations, including Bixby Creek Bridge, come winter Monterey hosts Ice Skating by the Bay but is also a place to witness migrating Monarch butterflies.



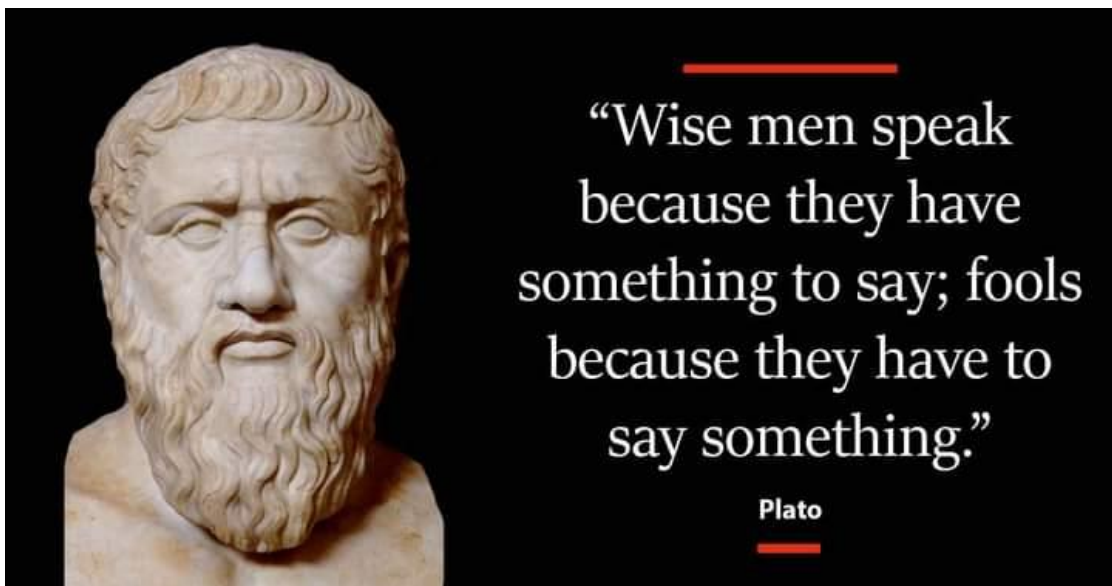
Ogden, Utah

Just 35 minutes from Salt Lake International Airport and home to three ski resorts: Snowbasin Resort, Power Mountain, and Nordic Valley. Non-skiers can visit the dark skies of wild and rustic North Fork Park (though getting around there is also by cross country ski and snowshoes, available for rent).



Pensacola, Florida

Abundant powdery, white sand beaches, and more than 400,000 twinkling holiday lights to boot. Each year on the Friday after Thanksgiving, downtown Pensacola is illuminated as part of the First Lights Ceremony, kicking off a season of music, shopping, food, art, and nightlife under a glowing canopy illuminating historic buildings. Take in the scene along Palafox Street by foot, by horse and carriage, or by trolley.





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34 Best Coffee Table Books to Gift Someone

Tria Wen

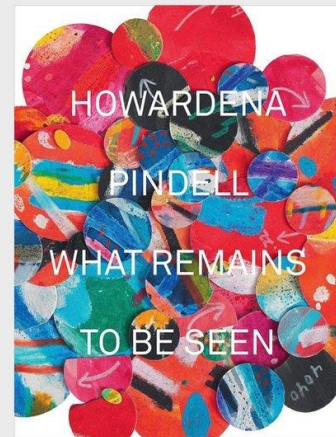
Whatever your interests are, we've found the best coffee table books for you to gift yourself or a loved one. Whether you're buying for your home or a friend's, have a large budget or a small one, we've compiled a list of the best coffee table books in popular categories like art, portraiture, food, travel, architecture, nature, and design. We've also done the research to make sure these books have positive reviews and/or awards, and will serve as beautiful additions to any home. Whenever shopping for books, keep in mind that local bookstores have had a hard time staying afloat and could use your business. If you'd rather shop online, using [Bookshop.org](https://www.bookshop.org) when possible supports local bookstores too.

1. *Howardena Pindell: What Remains To Be Seen*

This beauty of a book will instantly bring color and texture to your home. Howardena Pindell is known for her large-scale paintings and art installations that envelop visitors, and by immersing yourself in these pages, you can get a version of that feeling. The book also shows off her multimedia pieces and the thoughtful methodology to her art. It's a gift that would be equally loved by the casual appreciator of beautiful things and the modern art aficionado

Dimensions: 9.4-by-1.2-by-12.2 inches

Cost: \$40

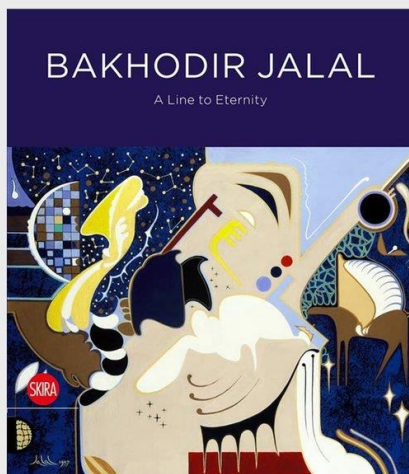


2. *Bakhodir Jalal: A Line to Eternity*

[Travel](#) across decades, art styles, and cultures with this gorgeous anthology of Uzbek artist Bakhodir Jalal's work. He is widely celebrated as a master of abstract painting and dynamic graphic art. In this coffee table book, four decades of his work shines, ready to illuminate any space it's placed in. For those who love to look behind the curtain, there's also an interview, sketches, and drawings.

Dimensions: 28 centimeters by 24 millimeters

Cost: \$63

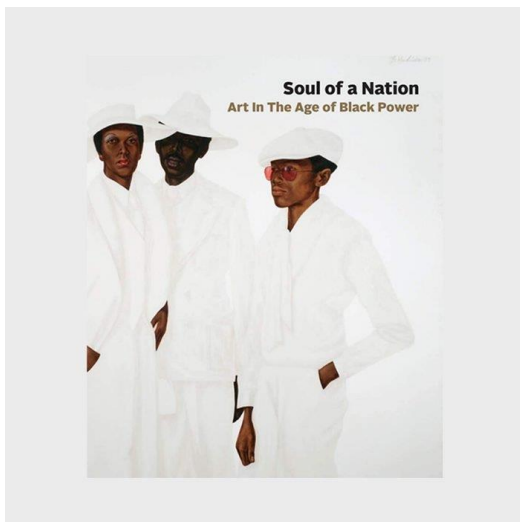
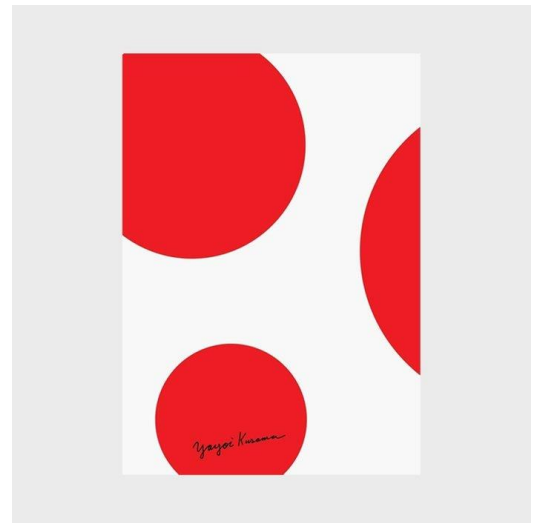


3. Yayoi Kusama: Festival of Life

If you haven't been able to attend an exhibit of Yayoi Kusama's extraordinary art, don't despair! This documentation of her 2017 New York exhibition is just the pop of color you need. It features paintings from her "My Eternal Soul" series and the Instagram famous infinity rooms.

Dimensions: 9.2-by-12.9-by-0.8 inches

Cost: \$46



4. Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power

"Soul of a Nation" began as a museum installation in 2017 and continues circulating across the country. If you're not in an area where you can see it in person, or if you've seen it and want to keep part of the experience with you, this is the book for you. Feel the arc of history and the struggle for civil rights through the art of this pivotal time, and gain more context for the time we are in.

Dimensions: 8.6-by-10.7-by-1.1 inches

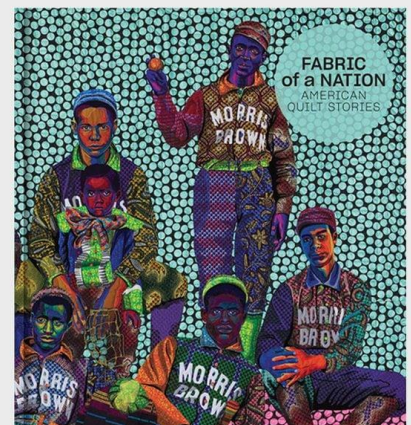
Cost: \$32

5. Fabric of A Nation: American Quilt Stories

This new coffee table book features 120 full-color photographs that show a beautiful stitching together of American cultures. The quilts and the stories behind them have been created by Americans of Native, Latinx, African, Asian, and European ancestry and show how our stories intersect, contrast, and connect. For anyone who loves history, handcrafts, or moving human stories, this is a must-have, thoughtfully curated book. We think it's a can't-miss [gift idea for grandmas](#).

Dimensions: 10-by-10.7-by-1 inches

Cost: \$36

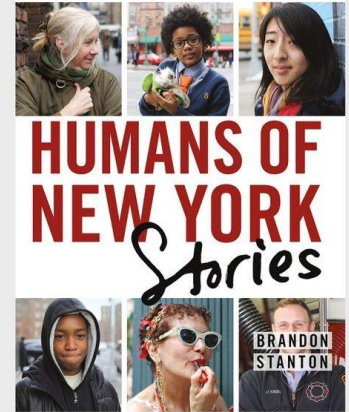


6. *Humans of New York: Stories*

A picture is worth a thousand words, and no one understands that more than photographer Brandon Stanton. Fans of his impactful blog will be delighted with this book that compiles the most compelling images and accompanying interviews of some of the most ordinary yet remarkable human beings. This is one of the best coffee table books out there.

Dimensions: 7.4-by-1.3-by-9.2 inches

Cost: \$19

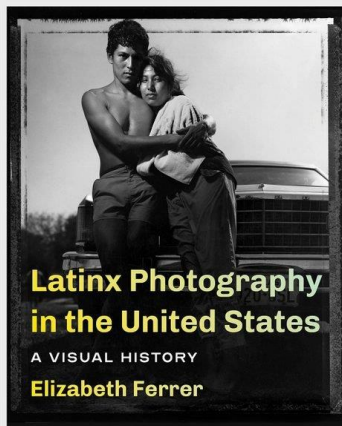


7. *Latinx Photography in the United States: A Visual History*

[Latinx](#) artists have often been overlooked in surveys of American photography. Elizabeth Ferrer shines a light on more than 80 Latinx photographers who have contributed to the art form and to documenting the history of the United States. Anyone who loves to learn about underrepresented artists and appreciates photojournalism and portrait photography will treasure this book.

Dimensions: 8.8-by-7-by-0.9 inches

Cost: \$99

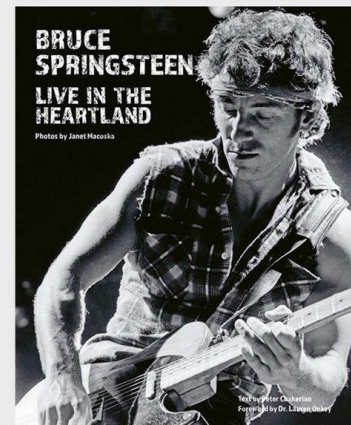


8. *Bruce Springsteen: Live in the Heartland*

There's only one boss of rock 'n' roll. Bruce Springsteen has reigned supreme for close to five decades now. This black-and-white coffee table book features 256 pages of Springsteen images captured by famed photographer Janet Macoska from 1974 to 2016. Clarence Clemons, Steven Van Zandt, and, of course, those famous blue jeans all make an appearance.

Dimensions: 9.85-by-1.08-by-12.12 inches

Cost: \$35



9. *Activist: Portraits of Courage*

This inspiring book is a must-have for the passionate activist. Black-and-white photographic portraits are paired with quotes and stories from activists ranging from singer Harry Belafonte to labor organizer Ai-jen Poo, from civil rights leader [John Lewis](#) to tennis player Billie Jean King. It's a powerful reminder of how far we have come and a motivator to keep fighting for what is right.

Dimensions: 6.7-by-1.4-by-9.8 inches

Cost: \$16



10. *American Boys*

This tenderly photographed book of portraits features individuals from the [transmasculine community](#) and shows how unique each person's identity, journey, and story are. This book is not only beautiful, but it is also boundary expanding and helps reflect those who are too rarely given space to share their stories on the page.

Dimensions: 8.2-by-10.2-by-0.8 inches

Cost: \$30

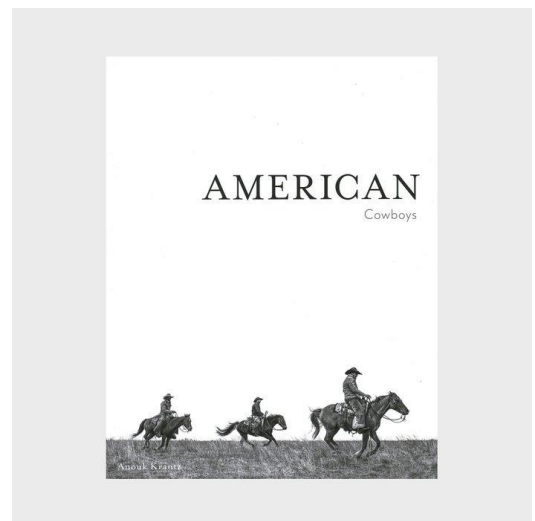


11. *American Cowboys*

Anouk Masson Krantz's stunning black-and-white photos present an honest and intimate look at the American heartland. The grand vistas are as evocative as the portraits of weatherworn faces in this collection that's edged by nostalgia.

Dimensions: 11.35-by-1.53-by-13.68 inches

Cost: \$70



12. *200 Women: Who Will Change the Way You See the World*

This is one of the most popular large coffee table books and is the perfect gift to empower and inspire young women. Lively portraits of prominent women from all walks of life are paired with their insight on personal growth, happiness, careers, and more. You'll find wisdom here from celebrated novelists like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Isabel Allende, and Margaret Atwood, as well as renowned chef Alice Waters, Olympian Lydia Ko, and community organizer Dolores Huerta.

Dimensions: 9.2-by-1.3-by-11.8 inches

Cost: \$27



13. *Chinatown Pretty*

This fun and joyful collection of photos celebrates aging with style. In these pages, you'll read interviews with elderly Chinatown residents and see their eclectic style on glossy, full-color pages. This book is a balm, especially during a time when elders in Chinatown communities have endured attacks and economic hardship. Whether as a gift for a friend or yourself, this is one of the best coffee table books available.

Dimensions: 7.4-by-9.3-by-0.9 inches

Cost: \$22

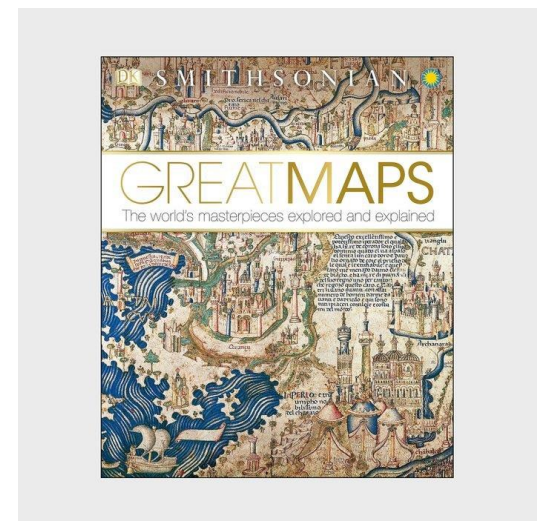


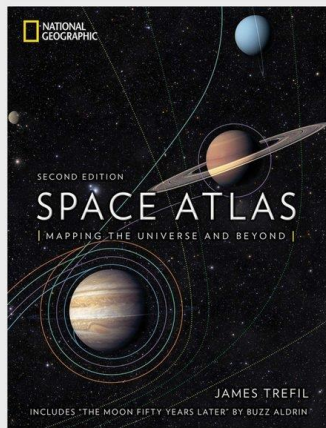
14. *Great Maps: The World's Masterpieces Explored and Explained*

This Smithsonian book will give your home the sheen of a museum gift shop. From the gold-embossed cover to the two-page spreads throughout, this book is a pleasure to peruse. Its pages will take you on journeys across continents and centuries. For anyone who loves maps, data, visualization, and history, this will be a favorite among large coffee table books.

Dimensions: 10.1-by-12-by-1 inches

Cost: \$17



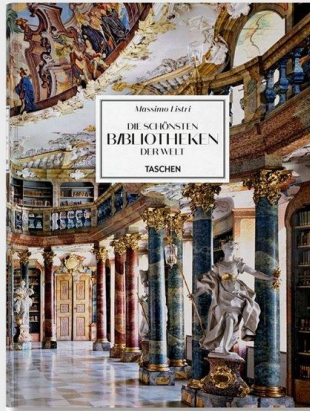


15. *Space Atlas: Mapping the Universe and Beyond*

Get a grand tour of the whole universe in one coffee table book. Space lovers will obsess over the spectacular images of the different planets and galaxies while also learning a thing or two.

Dimensions: 9.3-by-12-by-1.1 inches

Cost: \$45

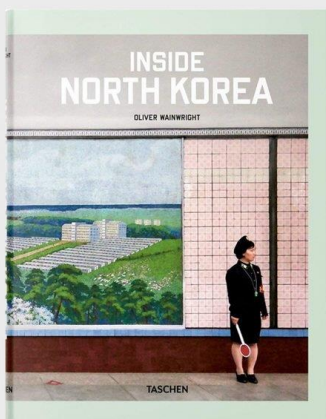


16. *Massimo Listri: The World's Most Beautiful Libraries*

This is a wonderful collection of the most stunning libraries around the world. You'll get a tour of public, private, educational, and monastic libraries with breathtaking architecture. It's the best coffee table book to give the book lover in your life, but note that it is on the pricier side. Discover [the most impressive library in your state](#).

Dimensions: 12.5-by-18-by-3.1 inches

Cost: \$182

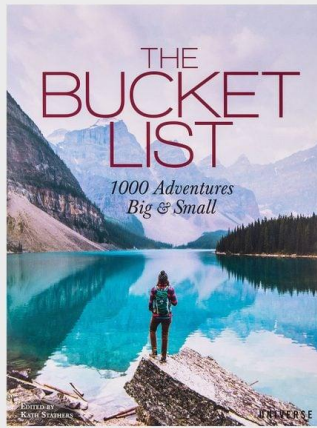


17. *Inside North Korea*

Readers get a sneak peek inside the world's most secretive country in this intriguing photo collection. *The Guardian* journalist and photographer Oliver Wainwright documents the development of North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, and showcases how its lavish architecture embodies an idealism in stark contrast to the authoritarian regime.

Dimensions: 8.5-by-11.1-by-1 inches

Cost: \$80



18. *The Bucket List: 1,000 Adventures Big & Small*

If you had endless resources and all the time in the world to make the ultimate bucket list, chances are that it would look exactly like this book. From swimming with dolphins in New Zealand to driving through clouds in Sri Lanka (yes, you read that correctly), the activities shown in this coffee table book will inspire anyone to go out on an adventure.

Dimensions: 7.1-by-1.5-by-9 inches

Cost: \$21

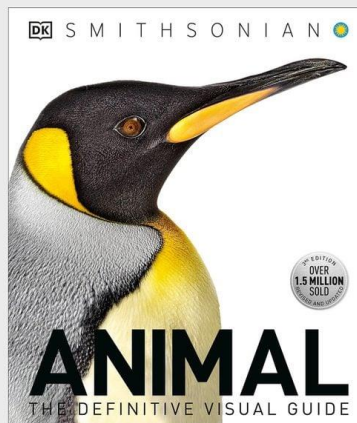


19. *Beaches*

Photographer Gray Malin is known for his spectacular aerial shots that inspire wanderlust in just about one. While reading this tome, you'll be transported to the world's best beaches in more than 20 cities across six continents.

Dimensions: 13.2-by-10.1-by-0.7 inches

Cost: \$27

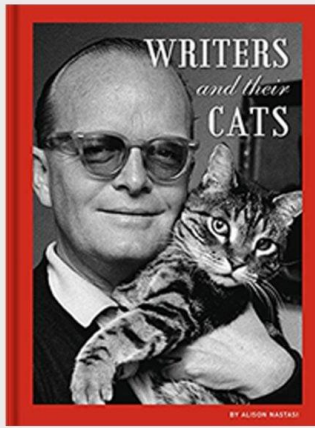


20. *Animal: The Definitive Visual Guide*

This book features both stunning photography and amazing facts contributed by 70 animal specialists. You'll find something new and surprising every time you open it, and guests will love having the opportunity to browse the colorful, detailed images. Kids and adults alike will find their favorite animals in full color and will also get to learn about rare species few people have ever seen.

Dimensions: 10.2-by-12-by-1.6 inches

Cost: \$26

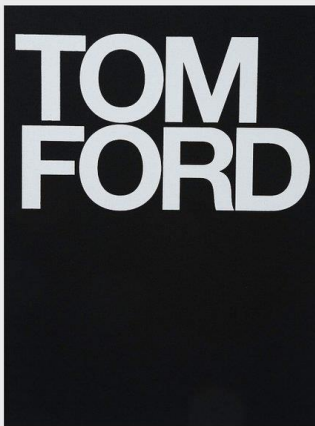


21. *Writers and Their Cats*

The world's most famous writers—Mark Twain, Alice Walker, and Haruki Murakami, to name just a few—have more than their talent with words in common. This coffee table book celebrates the special relationship they have with their cats, making it the perfect gift for the cat lover or writer in your life.

Dimensions: 6.1-by-8.1-by-0.6 inches

Cost: \$9

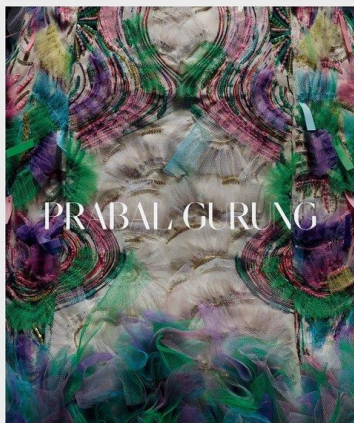


22. *Tom Ford*

Tom Ford isn't just a famous designer; he's an icon in the fashion world. Take a look through his beautiful designs for Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent from 1994 to 2004 in this ultra-chic catalog. This is a must-have designer coffee table book for the ultimate fashion lover. If you're giving it as a gift, order the sequel too.

Dimensions: 11.3-by-14.7-by-2.2 inches

Cost: \$85



23. *Prabal Gurung*

Incredibly lush and gorgeous, this heavy coffee table book chronicles the work of a fashion heavy hitter: Prabal Gurung. Gurung is known for inclusive fashion that empowers women and celebrates the strength in femininity. This popular coffee table book gives a look into his process, sketches, ethos, and work, and is perfect for any house that celebrates fashion, women, and beauty.

Dimensions: 10.3-by-12.2-by-1.1 inches

Cost: \$46

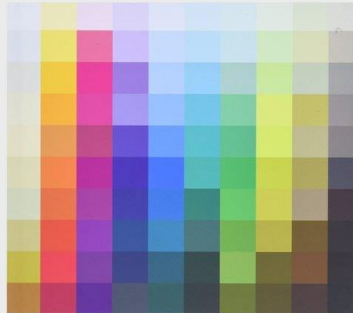


24. *Dream Design Live*

This designer coffee table book is both aspirational and instructional. Interior decorator and author Paloma Contreras gives tips and guidance on how to dream your most harmonious and beautiful life into existence while also providing light-filled images featuring color palettes that will inspire you to transform your space.

Dimensions: 8.6-by-10.1-by-0.9 inches

Cost: \$29



PANTONE
The 20th Century in Color

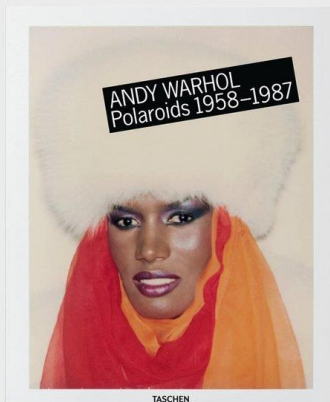
by Leatrice Eiseman and Keith Recker

25. *Pantone: The 20th Century in Color*

Fans of color theory will absolutely love this coffee table book. It goes through the past hundred years of each color of the year—from pale gold to midnight navy—and explains how the shade influences trends, art, products, fashion, and every aspect of life.

Dimensions: 9.26-by-0.94-by-11.25 inches

Cost: \$36

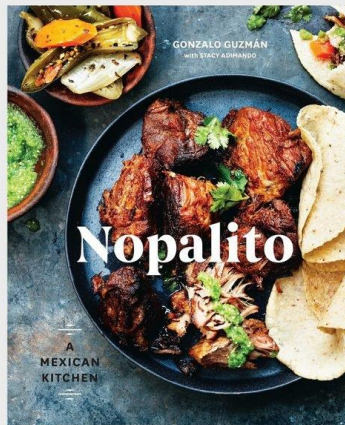


26. *Andy Warhol: Polaroids XL*

Andy Warhol is less known for his polaroids, but they are no less stunning than his most famous work. This collection showcases polaroid portraits of his infamous entourage and the most iconic people in pop culture, including Mick Jagger, Jack Nicholson, and Debbie Harry. It's the coolest gift and one of the best coffee table books out there, guaranteed.

Dimensions: 11-by-2.45-by-13.5 inches

Cost: \$170

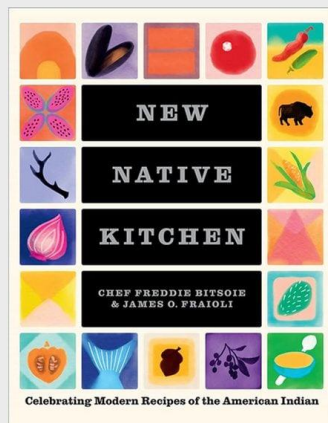


27. *Nopalito Cookbook*

This award-winning cookbook from the head chef of San Francisco's celebrated Nopalito restaurant is the perfect addition to a foodie's table. The mouthwatering photography will brighten up your living room, and the 100 recipes will make your kitchen the most envied in the neighborhood.

Dimensions: 8.2-by-10.2-by-1 inches

Cost: \$21

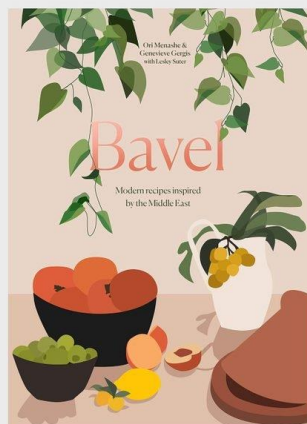


28. *New Native Kitchen: Celebrating Modern Recipes of the American Indian*

Learn about, celebrate, and taste Indigenous American foods with this beautifully illustrated and photographed cookbook. This is a brand-new one that you'll want as soon as possible. Cowritten by Freddie Bitsoie (former executive chef at Mitsitam Native Foods Café at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian) and James Beard Award winner James O. Fraioli, and illustrated by the accomplished Gabriella Trujillo, this is a book to treasure and gift.

Dimensions: 8-by-10 inches

Cost: \$40

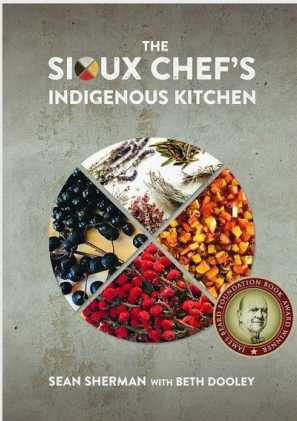


29. *Bavel*

Bavel is rich with photographs and illustrations of the most delicious-looking Middle Eastern cuisine. The book will take you from dips and spreads, like tahini and hummus, to main courses, like lamb chops, all the way through to desserts, like saffron-Meyer lemon bars. After leafing through this coffee table book, home cooks will be eager to get cooking, and foodie friends will be eager to eat.

Dimensions: 7.9-by-10.8-by-1 inches

Cost: \$23

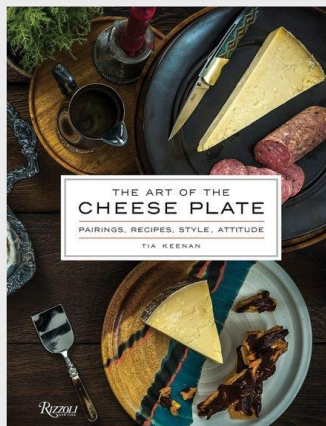


30. *Sioux Chefs Indigenous Kitchen*

Sean Sherman founded The Sioux Chef in 2014 to revitalize and reclaim Native American cuisine. In 2018, this important cookbook won the James Beard Award for Best American Cookbook. These recipes work in harmony with both the land and our bodies, creating healthier systems inside and out. That makes it the perfect book to have out on display every day.

Dimensions: 7.1-by-10.1-by-0.9 inches

Cost: \$28

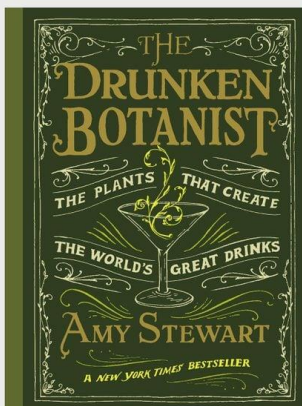


31. *The Art of the Cheese Plate*

This coffee table book is the perfect present for the ultimate host or hostess. It teaches you how to pair the right cheese with the right textures and flavors, making any cheese lover fall even more in love.

Dimensions: 7.3-by-0.9-by-9.6 inches

Cost: \$17

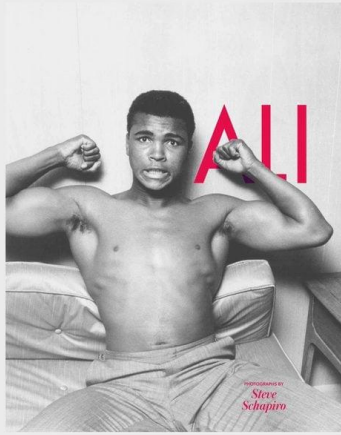


32. *The Drunken Botanist*

Explore all the herbs, flowers, trees, fruits, and fungi that make our favorite booze and learn the fun history behind them too. You never know when these bits of knowledge will come in handy.

Dimensions: 6.2-by-1.3-by-8 inches

Cost: \$14

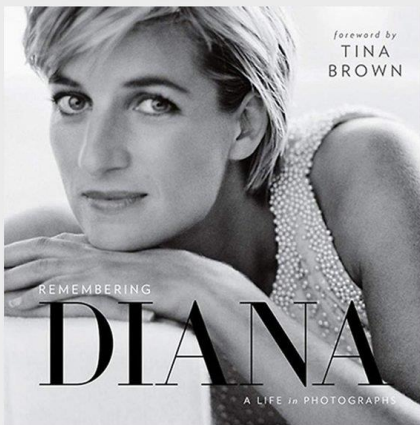


33. *Ali*

For the sports fanatic in your life, this photo album features never-before-seen images of the revered boxer as he was rising to the top. Photographer Steve Schapiro spent five days in Louisville, Kentucky, with then 21-year-old Muhammad Ali and captured the man before he became an iconic figure in sports and American pop culture.

Dimensions: 11.3-by-0.7-by-14.2 inches

Cost: \$30



34. *Remembering Diana: A Life in Photographs*

If the latest season of *The Crown* or upcoming *Spencer* film reawakened your interest in [Princess Diana](#), here's a coffee table book for you. Walk down memory lane by flipping through a hundred of Princess Diana's most defining moments, with photos starting as early as her school days.

Dimensions: 8.8-by-8.9-by-0.9 inches

Cost: \$23

FROM A LOVING PLACE

*"If you don't like something,
change it. If you can't change
it, change your attitude."*

-Maya Angelou

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