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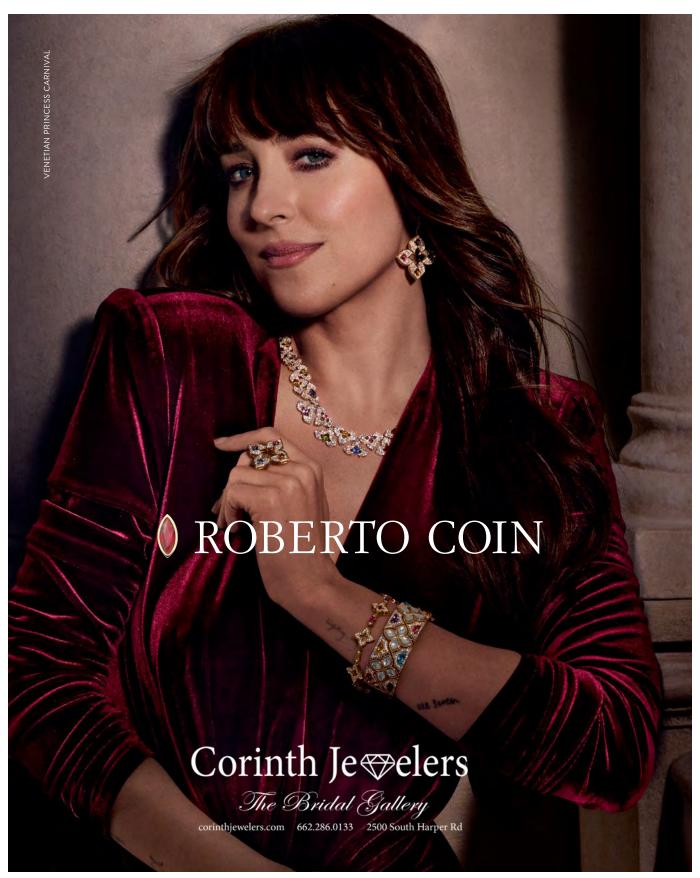


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Sweet TRADITIONS for the SEASON

Bake, sip, and savor the season with cookies, candies, liqueurs, and festive treats made to share.

hristmastime is the only time when it is perfectly acceptable and suitable to bake as many cookies or savory snacks as possible, guilt-free and without self-loathing. I am a baking and mixing machine when the holidays roll around, and I enjoy every minute of it.

As Southerners, food is the answer to most questions in life, especially when it comes to doing something special for someone else. Cooking for our families is a given, but cooking for others sometimes takes a bit more thought. According to my favorite holiday movie, "Elf," "The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear." I beg to differ and believe the best way to spread Christmas cheer is by baking madly for all to be indulged!

These recipes are perfect for gift-giving or desserts for a small gathering. Chocolate-dipped Ritz crackers with smoked sea salt are perfect for giving homemade sweets to a group of people. They are simple to make and are perfectly delicious. I collect pretty bottles throughout the year, and some of them are perfect for bottling homemade liqueurs. They are so festive-looking and luscious-tasting; they are almost too pretty to drink. Peppermint meringues are extremely easy to make, and they make the perfect sweet treat, piled up in a cute cookie tin. Indulge your friends with some homemade gifts, which will be much more appreciated than a store-bought gift or a Christmas tune. Dust off that mixer; this is your time of year to bake and mix to your heart's desire, free from judgment! Merry Christmas, y'all! M

Butter Cookies

2 cups flour 1 cup sugar 1/4 teaspoon salt 1 egg

½ teaspoon baking powder
 ½ teaspoon baking powder
 ½ teaspoon vanilla

Sift flour, salt, and baking powder onto a sheet of wax paper. Set aside. Using an electric mixer with a paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar until sugar is completely incorporated. With mixer running, add egg, brandy, and vanilla; beat well. Add dry ingredients a little at a time and mix until well blended. Wrap and chill dough for at least 30 minutes before rolling. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. On a lightly floured board, roll out one-third of dough at a time. Roll to about ¼ inch thick and cut out with mitten cookie cutter. Put cookies on parchment paper-lined pans, and bake for 10 minutes. Do not allow cookies to brown. Cool on racks.

FOR ICING:

1 cup confectioners' sugar 1 egg white

In bowl of a mixer, mix sugar and egg white until smooth. Remove 1/2 cup of icing (for mitten cuffs), and add a few drops of red gel food coloring. Beat icing until red color is completely blended and desired color is achieved, adding more food coloring if needed. Fill a pastry bag with a small tip attached with the red icing. Pipe an outline of the mitten just to the top of the cuff. Fill in the cookies with remaining red icing. When red icing has dried, fill another pastry bag with white icing for the cuff. Add sprinkles if desired for decoration. Let cookies dry completely before storing them.

Yield: 2 dozen cookies



DARK CHOCOLATE-DIPPED

Ritz Crackers with Smoked Sea Salt

40 Ritz crackers 16 ounces dark chocolate, melted with 1 teaspoon shortening 2 tablespoons smoked sea salt 2 tablespoons sparkling sugar

Line 2 baking sheets with aluminum foil and lightly spray with vegetable oil. Keep chocolate warm over a pan of hot water to keep it melted and silky. Dip a cracker in melted chocolate and shake off any excess chocolate. Place cracker on foil-lined pan and sprinkle lightly with smoked sea salt and sparkling sugar. Repeat process until all crackers have been dipped and sprinkled. Leave chocolate-dipped crackers on pan until chocolate has hardened and is dry. Store crackers in an airtight container until ready to serve.

Yield: 40 crackers

PEPPERMINT MERINGUE Kisses

6 egg whites Pinch salt ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar 1 teaspoon peppermint extract 1½ cups sugar Red gel food coloring

Preheat oven to 225 degrees. Line 2 large baking sheets with aluminum foil. Beat egg whites until foamy. Add salt, cream of tartar, and peppermint extract, and continue beating. Add 1 teaspoon of sugar at a time, beating about 1 minute between each addition. When all sugar has been added, beat an additional 6 to 8 minutes until egg whites are very stiff, glossy, and extremely smooth. Using a large piping bag fitted with ½-inch star tip, take a paintbrush and paint stripes with red food coloring on inside of bag about ½- to 1-inch apart, beginning as close to tip and almost to top of bag. Stand bag up in a large glass or jar and carefully spoon whites into bag, leaving half of bag unfilled. Twist top of bag. Pipe kisses onto pan leaving 1 inch between each kiss. Reduce heat to 200 degrees, and bake for 1½ to 2 hours, being careful not to let meringues brown. When meringues are completely dry to touch, remove from pans and let cool completely before storing in an airtight container. Keep covered until ready to serve.



WHITE CHOCOLATE-DIPPED

Ginger Cookies

2¼ cups flour 1 teaspoon baking soda ½ teaspoon salt 2 teaspoons ground ginger

1 teaspoon cinnamon ¼ teaspoon ground cloves

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened 1/2 cup plus 4 tablespoons sugar, divided 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar 1 large egg 1/4 cup molasses 2 teaspoons vanilla

2 tablespoons shortening Holiday sprinkles or tinted icing (optional)

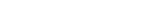
2 cups white chocolate





In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg until well combined. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream together butter, ½ cup sugar, and brown sugar until well combined and sugar is dissolved. Mix in egg, then add molasses and vanilla. Reduce mixer speed to low and slowly add dry ingredients. Mix until well combined. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and chill for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scoop dough out, about 2 tablespoons at a time, and shape into balls. Roll each ball in remaining 3 tablespoons sugar. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper and place balls 2 inches apart on the baking sheets. Bake cookies for 8 to 10 minutes. Remove pans from oven and cool on wire racks to cool completely. Set a heat-proof bowl over a saucepan of barely simmering water and add chocolate chips to bowl. When the chocolate begins to melt, add shortening and gently stir until mixture is melted and smooth. Remove bowl from pan of water, being very careful not to let any water get into melted chocolate, or it will seize, and you must start over. Dip half of each cookie in melted chocolate, running bottom of cookie against edge of bowl to remove any excess. Return cookies to clean parchment paper and let chocolate harden. If decorating with sprinkles, add to cookies before chocolate completely hardens. Decorate as desired.

Yield: approximately 30 cookies





DARK CHOCOLATE Cake Shots

with Ice Cream and Salted Caramel

2 cups flour 2 cups sugar ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup butter 4 heaping tablespoons cocoa

powder 1 cup boiling water ½ cup buttermilk 2 eggs, beaten 1 teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon vanilla

2 cups vanilla ice cream ½ cup whipping cream 2 tablespoons sugar

1/4 cup caramel sauce

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, and salt. In a saucepan, melt butter. Add cocoa, stirring to combine. Add boiling water and allow mixture to boil for 30 seconds. Remove pan from heat and pour over flour mixture. Stir lightly to cool. Pour buttermilk in a measuring cup and add beaten eggs, baking soda, and vanilla. Stir buttermilk into cake batter and mix well. Grease an 18 x 13-inch sheet cake pan and bake for 20 minutes. When cake has completely cooled, flip pan over onto a sheet of parchment paper. Choose serving glasses that you want to use and cut cake into circles that will fit inside glass. You will need 2 to 3 cake rounds for each serving. Allow ice cream to soften a bit. While cake is cooling, whip cream and sugar together until soft peaks form. Set aside in refrigerator until ready to serve. To assemble shots, place 1 cake round in bottom of each glass, and add a heaping tablespoon of ice cream, a teaspoon of salted caramel sauce, and another circle of cake. Repeat process until glass is full. Top with a dollop of whipped cream and a drizzle of salted caramel sauce. Garnish as desired with mint leaves, candy canes, or crushed peppermint.

RASPBERRY and STRAWBERRY Liqueurs

2 cups sugar1 cup water1 pint fresh raspberries

1 pint fresh strawberries, green tops removed 2 cups brandy, cognac, or rum

To make simple syrup, pour sugar into a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add water. Swirl pan over medium-high heat to dissolve sugar completely. Cook syrup to 230 degrees and remove from heat. In 2 jars with tight-fitting lids, fill one with raspberries and one with strawberries. Pour 1 part of desired liquor to one part simple syrup. (The amount used will be determined by the size of the jar or bottle.) Seal jars tightly and refrigerate for several weeks before opening. Strain and serve in cordial glasses.

Yield: 2 pints liqueur







ABERDEEN Christmas Open House

ABERDEENMSMAINST.COM

November 2, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. | Downtown Aberdeen

Celebrate the season at downtown Aberdeen's Annual Christmas Open House! Discover unique gifts, festive decor, and hometown hospitality as our shops sparkle with holiday cheer. This cherished tradition brings friends, family and neighbors together - it's more than shopping, it's a joyful homecoming for all.



BOONEVILLE Holiday Open House

November 8, All Day | Historic Downtown & Around Boonville

VISITBOONEVILLE.COM

Visit Booneville for a festive Holiday Open House filled with shopping, laughter, and cheer. Discover unique gifts, seasonal treats, and enjoy a merry time with Santa & Friends. Bring your friends, your holiday spirit, and get ready to shop, dine, & explore all the holiday sparkle and celebrate the season!



BRANDON Christmas Open House & Lighting of the Christmas Tree BRANDONMAINSTREET.COM

November 15, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Tree lighting immediately following

Visit Brandon for Christmas Open House—downtown and around town to celebrate the season with festive shopping, holiday cheer, and community spirit—supporting local merchants while making magical memories for the whole family.



CLEVELAND Christmas Open House & 10th Annual Tree Lighting

50NIGHTSOFLIGHTS.COM

November 8 & 9, | Downtown Cleveland

Celebrate the season in Downtown Cleveland with Christmas Open House shopping, raffles, ice skating, and holiday fun! On November 8, enjoy photos with festive characters, dancing, and the 10th Annual Tree Lighting at 7 p.m. featuring the Okra flipping the switch and the DSU Choir, launching 50 Nights of Lights.



CLINTON Santa Claus Crawl

MAINSTREETCLINTONMS.COM

December 4, 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. | Olde Towne Clinton

With a keepsake mug in hand, Santa Claus Crawl attendees stroll through the brick streets of Olde Towne Clinton to sample cider and enjoy special promotions at local businesses. Participants are also entered to win door prizes from each business during the after-party.



COLUMBIA Holiday Open House

FACEBOOK.COM/MAINSTREETCOLUMBIA.ORG

November 7, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. & November 8, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Downtown Columbia

Experience the magic of Columbia's Holiday Open House! Stroll through the "City of Charm," discovering unique shops throughout historic Downtown Columbia and beyond. It's the perfect way to jump-start your holiday shopping and lift your festive spirit!



COLUMBUS Christmas Open House

COLUMBUSMAINSTREET.COM

November 7 & 8, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., November 9, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. | Downtown Columbus

Retail businesses showcase holiday items and specials to kick off the Christmas season. Enjoy door prizes, in-store discounts, food samplings, holiday music, and even a visit with Miz Claus while you explore our fashionable boutiques, gift shops, bookstore, and coffee houses.



HERNANDO Christmas Open House

HERNANDOMS.ORG

November 9, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. | Downtown Historic District

Experience the magic of our Hernando Christmas Open House in downtown Hernando! Stroll through charming shops decked in festive décor, enjoy seasonal treats, holiday music, and exclusive deals. Discover unique gifts, support local businesses, and soak up the joyful spirit. Don't miss the holiday magic! It's the perfect way to celebrate the season!



LAUREL Cadence Bank Cookie Stroll and City Tree Lighting

FACEBOOK.COM/LAURELMAINSTREET

December 5 & 6 | Downtown Laurel

Join us Friday, December 5, in Downtown Laurel for the Cadence Bank Cookie Stroll and City Tree Lighting! Enjoy cookies, shopping, festive music, Santa photos, snow machines, and the United Way Prancer Path's 100+ trees decorated by local businesses. The celebration continues December 6 with Kiwanis Club Pancake Day and the Sertoma Club Christmas Parade, Mississippi's longest Christmas parade!



LOUISVILLE Jingle Bell Jubilee Christmas Open House FACEBOOK.COM/WINSTONCOUNTYCHAMBER

November 7 & 8 | Downtown Louisville

Louisville Main Street's Jingle Bell Jubilee Christmas Open House is Friday, November 7th and Saturday, November 8th. Shop for everyone on your shopping list in downtown Louisville! Register for door prizes and enjoy holiday refreshments in all our shops. Shoppers will receive a complimentary Louisville shopping bag to fill up with lots of unique gifts!



OCEAN SPRINGS Holiday Open House

OCEANSPRINGSCHAMBER.COM

December 5 & 6, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Downtown Ocean Springs

On Friday, Dec. 5, and Saturday, Dec. 6 beginning at 10 a.m., the shops, restaurants, and galleries come alive with holiday cheer offering specials on clothing, jewelry, holiday décor, and more for the Holiday Open House. Start your fun by visiting the Ocean Springs Visitors Center located at 1000 Washington Avenue for hot chocolate and grab a holiday shopping guide. Spend \$200 during the two-day event and bring your receipts to the Visitors Center for a chance to win prizes valued at over \$500!



PASCAGOULA Holiday Open House & Downtown for the Holidays MAINSTREETPASCAGOULA.COM

November 6 - 9, December 5 | Downtown Pascagoula

Holiday Open House November 6-9th and Downtown for the Holidays December 5th in Pascagoula On Nov. 6-9, shop local FIRST and explore all the festive fun that Pascagoula's Flagship District and Market District business have in store. Enjoy special deals, treats and kick off the holiday season in style! On Dec. 5, enjoy a traditional Christmas parade of lights, photos with Santa, and local performances from 5-8 p.m. Our Pascagoula Downtown for the Holidays is fun for the whole family!



SENATOBIA Christmas Open House

SENATOBIAMAINSTREET.COM

November 8 & 9, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Tate County

Join us for a weekend long shopping experience! This festive event takes place from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. all over Tate County. It's a great opportunity to kick off the holiday season with local shopping, food, and fun activities for the whole family!



STARKVILLE 53rd Annual Holiday Bazaar presented by Bankplus STARKN

STARKVILLEHOLIDAYBAZAAR.COM

November 5 & 6, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. | The Mill at MSU

Join us for Starkville's annual Holiday Bazaar November 5-6th at the Mill at MSU. Shop 80+ vendors and find specialty & handmade holiday gifts this Christmas season. The event is \$10 for admission and runs 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. each day.









Where you'll find beautiful surroundings for your holiday celebrations, the perfect holiday attire for you, and the gifts you know they'll love.

Join us for our Renaissance Holiday Open House Sunday, November 23rd, 2pm-5pm

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The Wonder of MERREHOPE

THE BELOVED HOLIDAY TRADITION RETURNS
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nvision a holiday wonderland filled with towering 12-foot trees, twinkling lights, merry mantels, and festive tablescapes at every turn. This season, TREES OF CHRISTMAS AT MERREHOPE CELEBRATES ITS 57TH YEAR, inviting guests to "Experience the Wonder" beginning November 23. The historic Meridian mansion transforms into a Christmas lover's paradise, offering the perfect setting to make memories with friends and family.

"We have over 70 different trees, mantels, and displays," says BJ Hatten, co-chair of the event. "Each one is unique and always evolving." Decorators travel from across Mississippi and neighboring states—including Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky—to design their assigned



spaces throughout the 20-room mansion. From doorways and tables to trees and mantels, every corner offers something new to admire.

Businesses, nonprofits, and schools also contribute to the décor. The Mississippi Children's Museum in Meridian creates bird feeder ornaments for the garden patio, while local businesses sponsor and decorate trees. Teachers from area schools provide handmade ornaments crafted by their students. "They're very talented young people; it's unbelievable what they come up with," adds Hatten.

ABOVE: Merrehope, also known as the Frank W. Williams home, is a Neoclassical Revival mansion. The home is now a historic house museum and plays hosts to numerous events in Meridian. OPPOSITE: Decorators travel from across Mississippi and surrounding states to design and decorate every space in the historic 20-room mansion.





HISTORIC TOUCHES REMAIN AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE CELEBRATION.

"We also try to bring back a historic tree, called our 'Vintage Tree,'" says Bet Deweese, co-chair. "This year, we're also bringing back something that Merrehope used to be known for-Red Riding Hood flip dolls." These handmade "topsy-turvy" dolls are designed to feature different characters, depending on which way they're held. One end features Red Riding Hood, while the other end represents the grandmother. Pull the grandmother's bonnet back, and there's the wolf. "Back around 1969, when the dolls were made, they were sold in the gift shop," says Deweese. Visitors can also explore an exhibit tracing the event's history and evolution. The gift shop, which historically featured only handmade items, some of which were found on the Christmas trees, also features handcrafted stained glass, Mississippi-made items, and other unique finds.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Each room is artfully styled by individual designers, local schools, nonprofit organizations, and businesses. Guests can enjoy different themes and displays at every corner of the mansion. Photographs are welcome in front of the towering 12-foot trees. OP-POSITE, TOP AND BOTTOM: In addition to Christmas trees, guests can view other decorated spaces in the mansion, including tablescapes, mantels, and more. The timeless charm and historical touches remain integral to the holiday wonder during the Christmas season.



"WE HAVE OVER

70

DIFFERENT TREES, MANTELS, AND DISPLAYS.

EACH ONE IS UNIQUE and ALWAYS EVOLVING."

- BJ HATTEN



Throughout the season, Merrehope hosts a series of special events. The festivities begin November 23 with the Experience the Wonder Unveiling, featuring live music and holiday refreshments. On December 7, Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive for photos, cocoa, and cookies. December 13 brings Mimosas at Merrehope, a brunch with live music, while December 16 offers a serene yoga and meditation session under the glow of Christmas lights. "All the lights are cut off, except for the Christmas lights," says Hatten. "It's a really unique experience."

Guests can enjoy the mansion by night during the Spirits of Christmas tour on December 18, a bring-your-

own-spirits evening that showcases the house aglow. "Our usual tours run in the daytime," says Deweese. "SO, YOU CAN ONLY IMAGINE THE WHOLE HOUSE LIT UP AT NIGHT WITH ALL THE CHRISTMAS TREES; IT'S JUST BEAUTIFUL." On December 20, families can join the Grinch Porch Party, featuring whimsical Whoville refreshments and photo opportunities with the Grinch. The season concludes December 31 with the Toast Together reception, where visitors raise a glass to the new year. "We see a lot of people who wait until that last day to come just so they can help us toast to the new year," adds Hatten.





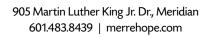
Though the mansion closes in January, planning for the next Trees of Christmas begins almost immediately. "Our decorators like to know the theme well in advance so that they can start their own planning for their tree decorating," says Deweese. "Some of our early planning is to be able to give information out to them."

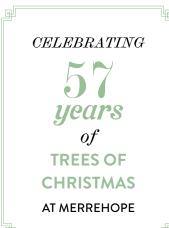
Whether you're looking for a holiday outing or hoping to begin a new tradition, Trees of Christmas at Merrehope offers an enchanting way to celebrate the season. All proceeds go to continued restoration efforts of the historic mansion. $\[Mathemath{\mathbb{M}}$

TOP AND BOTTOM: Guests can occasionally find ornaments on the trees for sale in the gift shop, along with other unique finds and Mississippi-made items. The displays and décor are always revolving and different, so there's something new and fresh to see year after year. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Each room in the mansion is uniquely decorated for guests to experience and explore. Trees of Christmas at Merrehope has been recognized by USA Today's "10 Best Holiday Historic Home Tours." Private events can be scheduled during the Trees of Christmas season for guests to enjoy the holiday décor. In addition to regular tours, there are special events sprinkled throughout the season.

































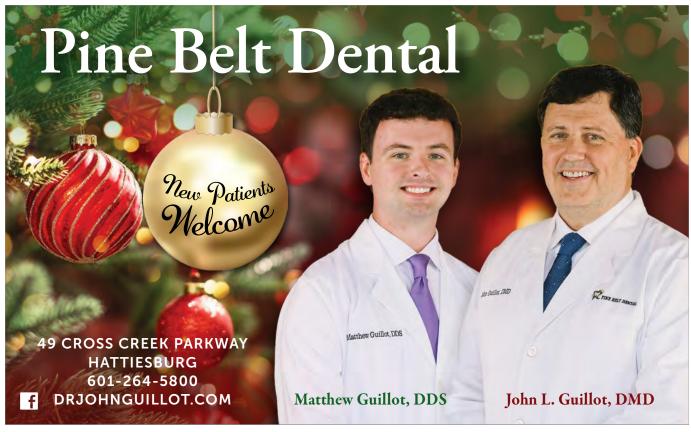








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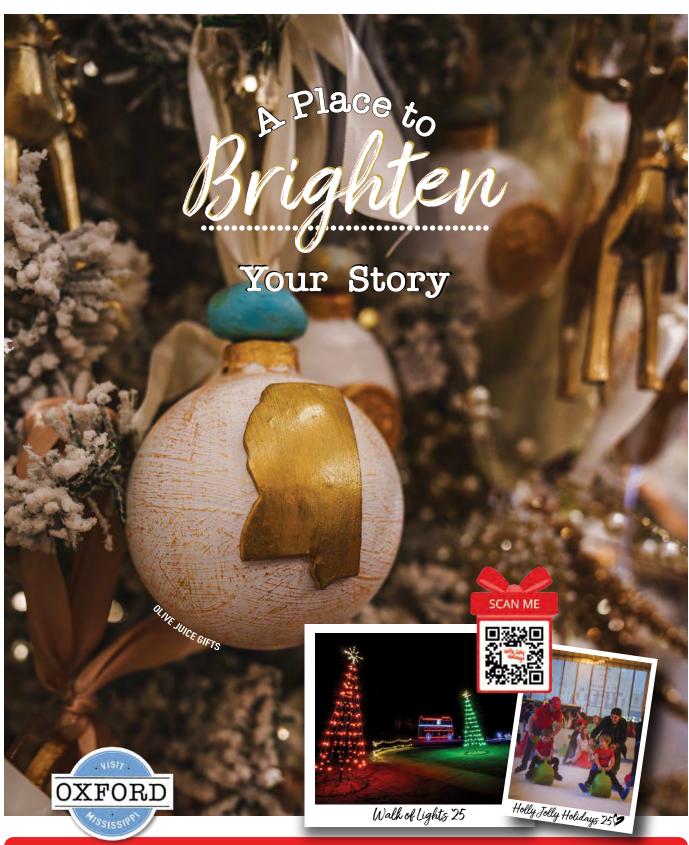


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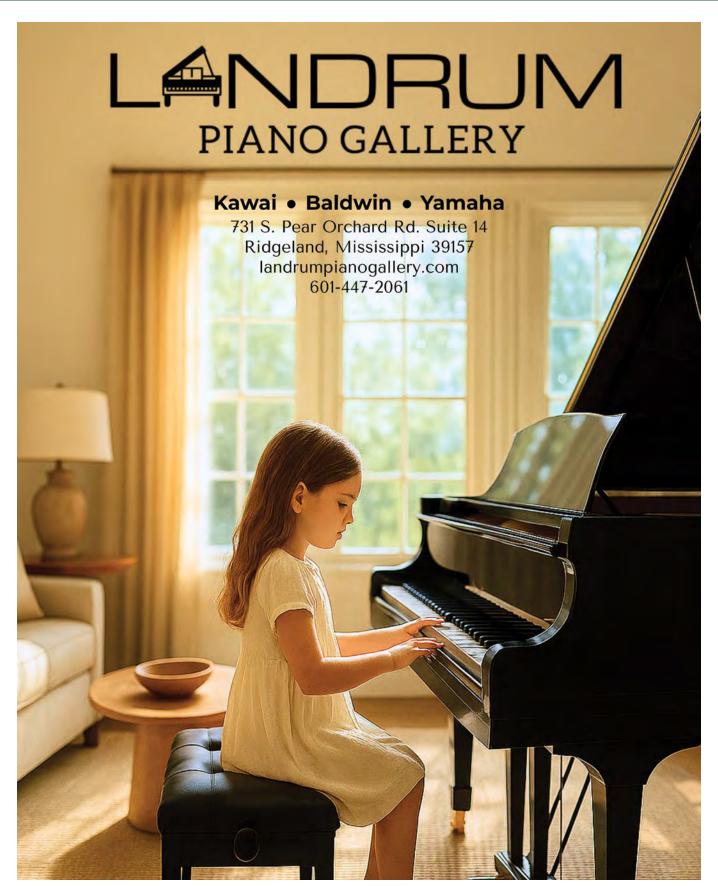
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Gail Pittman 2025 Holiday Gift Tin (16-ounce) filled with red velvet cookies and traditional cheddar cheese straws, \$34.95; Mississippi Cheese Straw Factory,

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7.27 carat diamond bracelet, \$34,500;
Van Atkins,
129 W. Bankhead St., New Albany;
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Gift card, available in varying denominations; Renaissance at Colony Park, 1000 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, renaissanceatcolonypark.com

12

Huggie Hoop earring collection in The Diana (14kt yellow gold and 1.50 carat natural round diamonds) by Carter's Collective Fine Jewelry, \$4,495.

Carter's Collective Fine Jewelry, 6093 U.S. Hwy. 98, Hattiesburg, 601.582.4222 or carterscollective.com

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Yamaha GB1K Disklavier Piano (available in multiple models, sizes, and finishes), starting at \$26,699;

Landrum Piano Gallery,

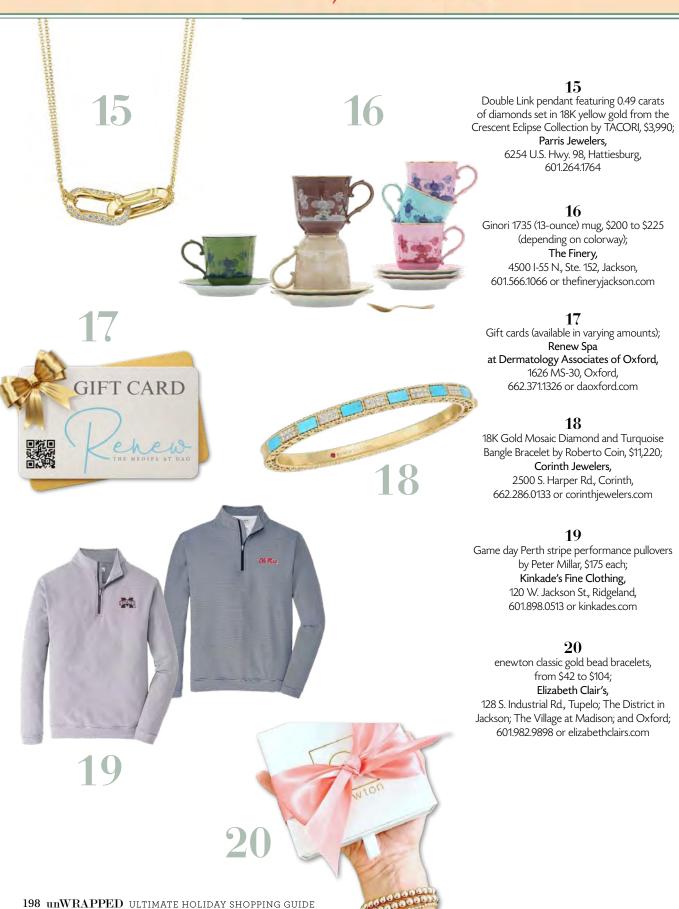
731 S. Pear Orchard Rd., Ste. 14, Ridgeland, 601.447.2061 or landrumpianogallery.com

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Scattered diamond (1.28 ct) bangle bracelet set in 14K yellow gold, \$3,999; Traditional Jewelers, 1000 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ste. 7002, Ridgeland, 601.898.3999



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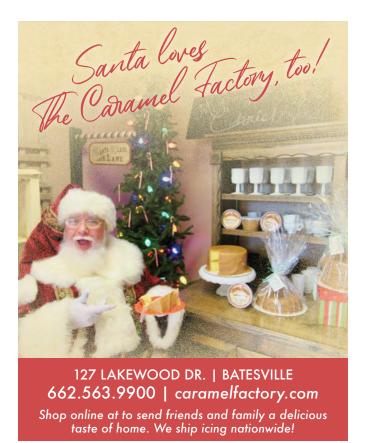
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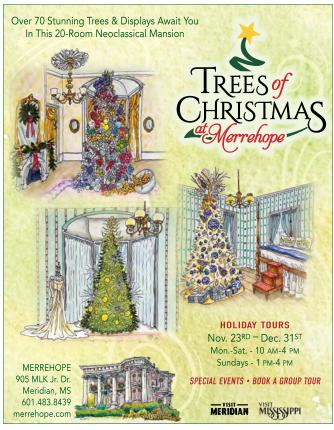


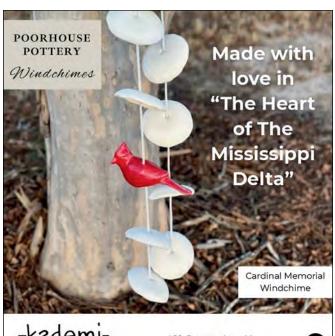
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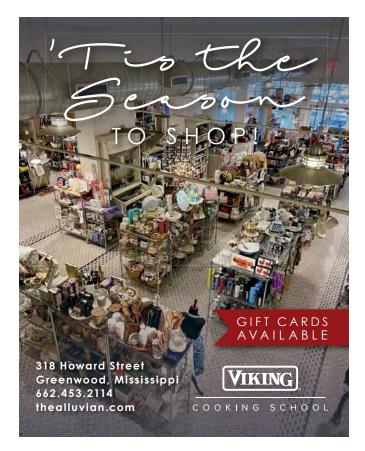
- + 2600 Beach Blvd, Ste 89, Biloxi (228-388-8984)
- + 1722 Veterans Blvd, Ste C4, McComb (601-684-6797)
- 1000 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ste 7002, Ridgeland (601-898-3999)





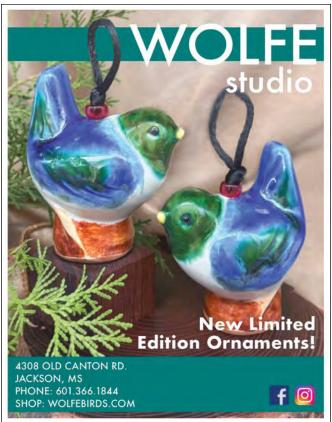


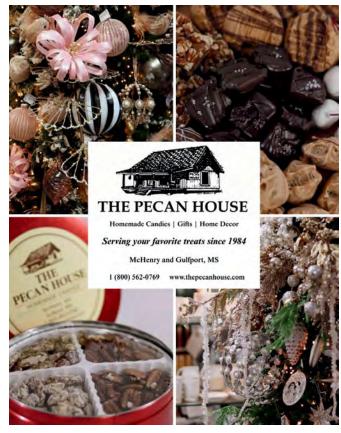
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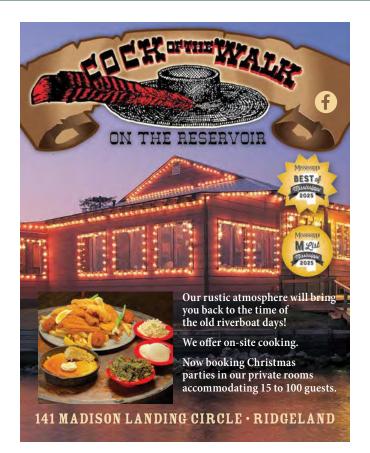
MARCO BICEGO



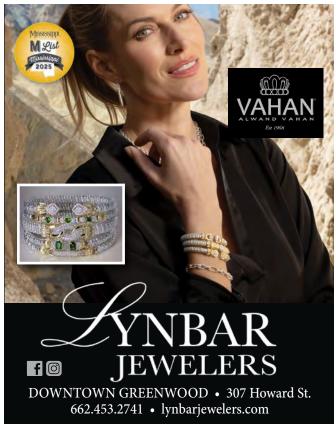




unwrapped Holiday Guide









unwrapped Holiday Guide



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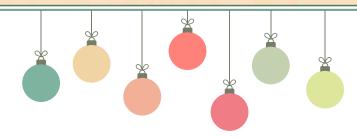


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unWRAPPED Holiday Guide



MISSISSIPPI

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSES

As dates and times could change, please visit your local Chamber of Commerce or Main Street websites to confirm details prior to planning a shopping trip.

NOVEMBER 1

CANTON: Canton Hometown Market

from 12 to 4 p.m.

GRENADA: Garrett Furniture Open House

NOVEMBER 2

ABERDEEN: Downtown Christmas

Open House from 1 to 5 p.m.

GRENADA: Garrett Furniture Open House

NOVEMBER 5

STARKVILLE: Holiday Bazaar at The Mill at MSU

NOVEMBER 6

GREENWOOD: Downtown Open House

MADISON: Gina Diamond's Flower Company

Holiday Open House from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PASCAGOULA: Holiday Open House

SOUTHAVEN: Silo Square Christmas

Open House

STARKVILLE: Holiday Bazaar at The Mill at MSU

NOVEMBER 7

BRANDON: Heart of the South

Open House

COLUMBIA: Holiday Open House

from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

COLUMBUS: Downtown Christmas

Open House from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

INDIANOLA: Garrett Furniture

Open House

LOUISVILLE: Downtown Jingle Bell Jubilee

Christmas Open House

MADISON: Gina Diamond's Flower Company Holiday Open House from 10 a.m.

to 5 p.m.

PASCAGOULA: Holiday Open House

SOUTHAVEN: Silo Square Christmas

Open House

NOVEMBER 8

BOONEVILLE: Holiday Open House in historic downtown and around Booneville

BRANDON: Heart of the South

Open House

unWRAPPED Holiday Guide

CLEVELAND: Downtown Christmas

Open House

COLUMBIA: Holiday Open House

from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

COLUMBUS: Downtown Christmas Open House from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

INDIANOLA: Garrett Furniture

Open House

LOUISVILLE: Downtown Jingle Bell Jubilee

Christmas Open House

MADISON: Gina Diamond's

Flower Company Holiday Open House

from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MADISON: Madison Marketplace

Christmas Open House from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

PASCAGOULA: Holiday Open House

SENATOBIA: Tate County Christmas

Open House from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

SOUTHAVEN: Silo Square Christmas

Open House

NOVEMBER 9

CLEVELAND: Downtown Christmas

Open House

COLUMBUS: Downtown Christmas

Open House from 1 to 5 p.m.

HATTIESBURG: Southeast Ace Christmas

Open House from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

HERNANDO: Downtown Christmas

Open House from 1 to 5 p.m.

PASCAGOULA: Holiday Open House

SENATOBIA: Tate County Christmas

Open House from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

NOVEMBER 15

BRANDON: Christmas Open House

from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

NOVEMBER 20

RIDGELAND: Kinkade's Holiday Open House

NOVEMBER 21

RIDGELAND: Kinkade's Holiday Open House

NOVEMBER 22

RIDGELAND: Kinkade's Holiday Open House

NOVEMBER 23

RIDGELAND: Renaissance Home

for the Holidays Open House from 2 to 5 p.m.

NOVEMBER 30

VICKSBURG: Downtown Old Fashioned Christmas Open House from 1 to 5 p.m.

DECEMBER 4

CLINTON: Santa Claus Crawl in Olde Towne

Clinton from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

RIDGELAND: Christmas Open House at The Township at Colony Park from 5 to 8 p.m.

DECEMBER 5

OCEAN SPRINGS: Downtown Holiday

Open House from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DECEMBER 6

OCEAN SPRINGS: Downtown Holiday

Open House from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.





HANKSGIVING, as most Americans know it, was set in motion by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, when he proclaimed the last Thursday of November as the day of national thanks. For decades, families gathered on that day without question. But in 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt rattled the nation's sense of tradition—and gave retailers something to cheer about—when he declared Thanksgiving would be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.

At first glance, the change might not seem drastic. In most years, the fourth Thursday was also the last Thursday. But in 1939—and occasionally thereafter—November happened to have five Thursdays. That meant Thanksgiving would come a full week early.

Roosevelt made the announcement in August while vacationing at

Campobello Island in New Brunswick. He explained that merchants had lobbied for the shift, urging him to move Thanksgiving from November 30 to November 23. Tradition, he reminded the public, was not law; Thanksgiving could be held on any day the president chose.

For retailers, the change was a godsend. An earlier Thanksgiving stretched out the shopping season, allowing more time for Christmas sales, boosting employment, and easing the stress of last-minute gift buying.

But not everyone was pleased. Football coaches fumed. For years, Thanksgiving Day had been reserved for marquee college games, and schedules for November 30 had already been set. If the holiday suddenly became just another workday, who would show up in the stands? Changing the schedules midseason was nearly impossible.

The public, too, was torn. Roosevelt's order applied only to the District of Columbia and the territories, leaving each state to choose its own date. The result was chaos. Twenty-two states observed Thanksgiving on November 23, while twenty-three others stuck to the 30th. THREE STATES—COLORADO, MISSISSIPPI, AND TEXAS—DECIDED NOT TO CHOOSE AT ALL AND CELEBRATED ON BOTH DATES, PLEASING FAMILIES AND FOOTBALL TEAMS ALIKE.

The national confusion dragged on for two years, until Congress stepped in. In 1941, lawmakers passed a bill—signed by Roosevelt—that permanently established the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day. The holiday calendar was finally set, and the government could turn its full attention to more pressing matters: winning World War II. M

writer DON KERR | illustrator SAM BEIBERS

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