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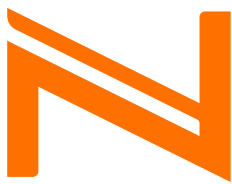


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## EDITOR'S NOTE: CELEBRATING THE INFINITE LOVE HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY 2024

BY JENNY LYNN, PUBLISHER & OWNER



**M**other's Day, a day to honor and celebrate incredible women who have shaped our lives with boundless love, care, and sacrifice. In 2024 as we mark this special occasion, it's not just about the flowers, cards, or gifts; it's about recognizing and appreciating the profound impact mothers have on our world.

As a mother myself, I find that in a world that's often defined by its relentless pace and ever changing dynamics, the role that was given to me remains steadfast and invaluable, no matter the ups and downs. My children, Kyle, Chloe, Michael, Bryanna, and Sylvia are all grown and my bond with each of them, although different, continues as we all navigate through the highs and lows of their lives, as well as me, their Mother.

This Mother's Day we celebrate all maternal figures who have enriched our lives and continue to do so. From stepmothers to grandmothers, aunts and even mentors. It's a day to express gratitude to all of those who have embraced the spirit of motherhood and made a positive difference in the lives of others.

In essence, Mother's Day 2024 is a celebration of love in its purest form- a love that transcends time, distance, and circumstance. It's a day to express gratitude, cherish memories, and reaffirm the profound bond between mothers and their children. As we honor the mothers in our lives, let us seize the opportunity to reflect on the immeasurable impact of their love and selflessness, and strive to emulate their spirit of compassion and resilience in all facets of our lives.

Happy Mother's Day to all of the extraordinary women who inspire, nurture, and uplift us each day. May your hearts be filled with love, joy, and appreciation not just on this special day, but every day of the year.



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# CAUGHT YOU BEING AWESOME (EVEN WHEN YOU WEREN'T)

BY DR. LINDA TRAVELUTE, CEO, MAXIMIZED LEADERS



Remember those awkward childhood moments we'd rather forget? Well, I certainly do. But one in particular not only sticks out in my memory – it also taught me a crucial lesson in leadership: the transformative power of catching people doing right. Let me take you back to a pencil-scrawled table in kindergarten...

Yes, it was me. And before you raise an eyebrow at my past exploits, trust me, I was (mostly) a model student. Except for, well, the table incident.

At 5 years old, armed with a brand-new eraser, I discovered the irresistible smoothness of a freshly cleaned tabletop. My name, scrawled in a kindergartener's penmanship glory, seemed invincible against the magic eraser. Until my teacher loomed over me and (gasp!) I faced my first-ever reprimand. Mortified, I learned a crucial lesson: Rules matter.

Then I cried.

But here's the surprising part. My teacher didn't label me a troublemaker. Instead, she did something remarkable – she made me wash all the tables and then welcomed me back into her good graces, acknowledging my beautiful penmanship but also noting it was best for paper, not tables.

In that simple act, she taught me more than any scolding ever could. She showed me that mistakes were opportunities for learning, not just punishment. This experience was a profound lesson in the power of positive reinforcement over negative criticism.

## Catching People Doing Right, Not Wrong

This isn't just a kindergarten anecdote. It's a fundamental leadership secret: focus on catching people doing right, not wrong. We're conditioned to criticize, but that negativity breeds defensiveness and stagnation. And that's not something you want in a team member, is it?

Catching someone doing good, however small, ignites a spark. It fosters confidence, encourages growth, and makes them yearn to be even better. This secret sauce takes a team player and makes them better.

Here's another example from earlier in my life that echoes this principle. During my first job at a Dunkin' Donuts, one of our servers, Emily, accidentally mixed up orders during a particularly busy shift. It cost us a customer that day.

Instead of scolding her, our manager took her aside and calmly showed her a more efficient way to organize orders. He then publicly praised her for her usually stellar performance and her quick adaptability. Emily's face lit up with pride, and her efficiency improved significantly from that day forward. She felt valued and motivated to uphold the trust placed in her.

So, Maximized Leaders, take note:

- Become a table-writer hunter.** Scan your world for moments of excellence, big or small. A helpful colleague, a child sharing, a spouse making coffee without being asked – celebrate them all!
- Praise with sincerity.** A genuine "thank you" or "I appreciate that" goes a long way. Make it specific, and watch faces light up.
- Build a bridge with behavior.** Positive psychology tells us that reinforcement strengthens behavior. Build a bridge between desired outcomes and positive behaviors by acknowledging and rewarding them.
- Embrace the ripple effect.** When you empower one person, you inspire others. Positive energy becomes contagious, fueling a culture of success.

## Focus Shifting

Let's strive to shift our focus from what's going wrong to what's going right. Even when what's going wrong is staring us in the face. This approach doesn't just apply to managing teams or raising children; it's equally effective in our daily interactions with friends, family and strangers.

Commit with me to ditch the criticism and unleash the potential within our teams, families and ourselves. Let's become leaders who see "10s" everywhere and watch them rise to meet that belief. Who knows, maybe even a table-writing kindergartener can become an incredible leader someday.

Ready to rewrite the leadership narrative? Start catching good today! The goal is not to catch people failing; it's to catch them succeeding. This positive outlook will not only transform your leadership style but also create an environment where everyone can thrive.

*Leadership whisperer Dr. Linda Travelute blends leadership legend John Maxwell's magic with psych savvy at Maximized Leaders. Think zingy workshops, insightful coaching, assessments that score, and magnetic keynotes, all sprinkled with behavioral mojo to maximize your leadership. Dr. Linda would love to connect with you on Facebook @DrLindaMaximizedLeaders and BONUS, grab her FREE "Delegation Made Easy" infographic for a taste of maximized leadership at MaximizedLeaders.com!*



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# LET'S TALK LAKE NONA: INTRODUCING SURVEY 4.0 OF THE LAKE NONA LIFE PROJECT

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*Your connection to the development team behind Lake Nona's vibrant community. Read more from the master-planners each month for the latest updates and a behind-the-scenes look at what's going on in Lake Nona.*

Imagine a neighborhood where your daily routines – be it the serene morning jogs, the weekly yoga sessions or your quest for the perfect work-life balance – could shape the future of health and wellness not just for your community but as a model for the whole world. This month, as the Lake Nona Life Project's newest iteration, Survey 4.0, launches, we're inching closer toward that vision right here in Lake Nona.

The Lake Nona Life Project is a longitudinal health and wellness study in partnership with UCF College of Medicine that aims to understand "What keeps someone well?" As people who live, work and play in Lake Nona, we have the opportunity to come together to shape a healthier tomorrow for ourselves and future generations. Like the renowned Framingham Heart Study before it, the Lake Nona Life Project aspires to uncover new global health insights, guiding not just our community but the world toward optimal wellness.

The project team, led by Dr. Eric Schrimshaw at the UCF College of Medicine, is committed to transforming your valuable input into actionable health wisdom that can truly make a difference.

As a longitudinal study, the project will take place over many years and final results won't be immediate, but don't let that discourage you from participating annually. Year over year, a selection of behavioral and health insights are extracted from the study to help Lake Nona better support organizations and social networks that promote optimal wellness. With over 1,200 surveys completed to date, here are some preliminary findings from our most recent version, Survey 3.0:

- 2.4% of Life Project participants report using regular or e-cigarettes as compared to the U.S. national averages of 17%
- 10.6% of Life Project participants report drinking soda on a daily basis as compared to the U.S. national average of 48%
- A small but significant increased risk of depression and anxiety was correlated with every additional hour spent using technology

As you look around Lake Nona today, pocket parks, trails and artwork have been thoughtfully placed to encourage stress-relieving activities

such as walking, meditation and connecting with the community, while new office buildings are wrapped in View Glass and have been shown to provide a better night's rest. You never know what innovations that future insights might bring to Lake Nona's living lab.

## Exciting Updates in Survey 4.0

The newest survey iteration is tailored to be more insightful, engaging and easier to take than ever. You'll notice new questions sprinkled in that reflect the latest health and wellness trends – think mindfulness practices, dietary choices and even social media use. When you take Survey 4.0, you'll receive an exclusive all-access day pass to the Lake Nona Performance Club to use for yourself, a friend or family member.

If you're over 18 and live, work, study or play here, your voice is important. Your participation brings us closer to understanding the complex dance between daily choices and long-term health outcomes.

Ready to join this movement? To take part in Survey 4.0, which kicks off May 9 at Docksider and for further details, follow along on social media @LakeNonaLifeProject or visit [liveworkparticipate.com](http://liveworkparticipate.com). Your insights are invaluable, and, together, we can create a legacy of health that will inspire for generations to come.



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# OUC RECEIVES TWO GOLDEN BRICK AWARDS FROM DOWNTOWN ORLANDO PARTNERSHIP

OUC – The Reliable One received the Sustainability and Resiliency Award and the Award of Excellence in Downtown Orlando Partnership’s 2024 Golden Brick Awards, which recognize people, projects and initiatives that propel downtown Orlando forward.

OUC was honored in the Sustainability and Resiliency category for opening one of the largest electric vehicle charging stations in the state, the Robinson ReCharge Mobility Hub. Located in the heart of downtown Orlando, the Robinson Hub features 21 high-speed chargers that make EV charging accessible and convenient to increase the city’s EV readiness and improve air quality.

OUC also received the Award of Excellence for its OUC100 campaign – a year-long celebration that highlighted the utility’s 100-year history of providing safe, dependable, affordable electric and water service to Central Florida.

“As we come to the end of our centennial anniversary year, OUC is proud to be acknowledged by the Downtown Orlando Partnership for the contributions we’ve made – and will continue to make – to this community that we’re deeply invested in,” said Clint Bullock, General Manager and CEO at OUC. “As the city’s hometown utility, we remain steadfast in our mission to continue innovating for a brighter, greener future for generations to come.”

OUC has several projects in the works to keep pace with electric and water demand as the city of Orlando grows, and to work towards its goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. A second high-speed EV charging facility is under construction at the Orange County Convention Center South Concourse parking lot. The utility is also currently building two 74.5 MW solar farms and recently installed a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to improve grid resiliency. In 2025, OUC will begin construction on an alternative water supply project known as the Southeast Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant.



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# NONA.LIFE.STYLE: SASSY SPRING TRENDS (TO COPY NOW)

BY MARISSA BURNS

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LOTUS EYES PHOTOGRAPHY

This is our window, friends. Before long, we will be sweltering and donning swimsuits and flip-flops. But now – right now – this pause before relentless heat is an opportunity to showcase some sassy, spring style.

I recently had the pleasure of volunteering at the **Kids Beating Cancer** Hats and Roses Luncheon and Fashion Show. And lucky me (and you!), we were treated to a runway show by Saks Fifth Avenue. Let me tell you, friends, Saks sure showed up for spring. We were transported to a world of fresh florals, fun frocks and glamorous gowns. Here are the top spring trends I observed that you will want to copy this season.

## Head-to-Toe Prints

Move over, monochromatic. We are deep divin' into the matchy-matchy trend with head-to-toe prints. Wait! Before you stop reading and declare me insane, let me explain this one. This is a new take. It's not your grandma's floral curtain, collared, floor-length dress that swept the early '90s scene. I am talking sleek and sassy separates with rich textures and high style. Like this sequin skirt and silk top combo by Prabal Gurung. The different materials provide texture and sheen. So, while the prints are the same, they vary just enough to keep things interesting. The overall effect of this head-to-toe print is fresh and chic and not at all crazy cat lady.

I would have sworn this was a Dolce & Gabbana dress coming down the runway. It wasn't until I saw it hanging in the Saks pop-up shop after the show that I realized this was a skirt and a top. I love how this ensemble simultaneously feels both vintage and right now. The large scale of the print keeps it from looking too busy, and the amount of white space helps these flowers read bold, not sweet. The overall effect is fun and refreshing, with a slight nod to the charm and feminine glam of '50s fashion. And can we take a minute for this matching tote? (Swoon.) If, like me, you're falling for this floral, you can find it this season at Saks in various styles of dresses, skirts, tops and even swimsuits! (Yum.)

### Try the Trend

Don't be afraid to pair pieces of the same print together. Keep your accessories neutral and streamlined. Opt for simple jewelry and makeup to allow the print to be the single statement maker. Choosing large-scale prints with a good amount of background color will keep your look from feeling too busy.

## Springtime Shine

What is better than a good pair of jeans? A good pair of jeans covered in rhinestones. Obviously. As a self-proclaimed "more is more" kind of girl, this next trend sparked some serious joy. I will admit, I have always had a love-hate relationship with embellished denim. It does tend to date a piece, so they aren't the best option for long-term wear. They are, however, super-duper fun! And this pair of straight-leg, light-wash jeans by Self-Portrait are reason enough for a girls' night out. While I recommend wearing it with – ya know, not a bathing suit top, as seen here – the pairing possibilities are endless.

The final showcase look was an irresistible display of sequined formalwear. Gone are the days when sequins were reserved only for holiday attire, my friends. Saks is leading the charge into a fresh season where sequins are a staple for spring. (And I am here. for. it.) The runway featured an array of styles – from elegant gold-sequined, floor-length gowns to playful, sequined, floral-print cocktail dresses – proving yet again that fashion can be simultaneously daring and refined.

### Try the Trend

It's time to break out those New Year's Eve tops, friends. Say goodbye to reserving sequins solely for January and unleash your inner glam girl this spring with some dazzling embellishments. Whether it's sequined denim, special occasion dresses, or even weekday tops, embrace this unexpected trend with bedazzled details.

## Giving Back

I would be remiss to not end by noting the

true showstopping piece of the day – generosity. The proceeds from the Hats and Roses Luncheon and Fashion Show went to aid children battling cancer. **Kids Beating Cancer** is dedicated to facilitating access to life-saving treatments for children with cancer and providing unwavering support to those kids and their families. This wonderful organization works to fund the most promising breakthroughs in pediatric cancer treatment. During the fundraiser, the dedication and determination of the staff was clear. And there wasn't a dry eye in the room after founder Margaret Guedes shared her personal story of fighting for her son John.

The response from attendees was overwhelming. It was a remarkable fashion show and fundraiser – fun and glamorous but firmly rooted in the organization's unwavering commitment to its mission. So, as you seek to bring new life to your spring wardrobe, I also encourage you to revive your spirit of giving. Our community would benefit from your engagement and support. **Because after all, giving back is always in style!**

*If you would like to learn more about Kids Beating Cancer, I encourage you to contact Development Coordinator (and Lake Nona resident) Kelly Lyons at [kelly@kidsbeatingcancer.com](mailto:kelly@kidsbeatingcancer.com).*





## EMPOWERING SUCCESS: THE RISE OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS

As we celebrate the mother figures in our lives, it is important to take a moment to appreciate the women who have made it possible for us to all be where we are in our lives.

When it comes to entrepreneurship and corporate leadership, women are steadily carving out their place, breaking barriers and redefining norms. The narrative of women in business has evolved, shifting from a struggle for recognition to a celebration of achievement and empowerment. As we examine the dynamic landscape of business, it becomes increasingly evident that women are not just participants but pivotal contributors to economic growth and innovation.

Gone are the days when boardrooms were predominantly occupied by men in suits. Today, women are making significant strides, not just as employees but as founders, CEOs and thought leaders. The rise of women-led businesses is a testament to their resilience, vision and ability to thrive in diverse industries. From tech startups to fashion empires, women are leaving their mark on the business world.

One of the driving forces behind the success of women in business is their ability to embrace diversity and inclusivity. Research consistently shows that diverse teams lead to better decision-making and increased profitability. Women bring unique perspectives, insights and problem-solving skills to the table, enriching the business landscape and fostering a culture of innovation.

Women are adept at building strong networks and fostering collaborative relationships. In an interconnected world, networking has become a crucial aspect of business success. Women excel at cultivating meaningful connections, supporting each other, and creating opportunities for growth and advancement. Whether through mentorship programs, industry associations or online communities, women leverage their networks to navigate challenges and unlock new possibilities.

The empowerment of women in business is also about economic empowerment and social progress. When women succeed in business, entire communities thrive. Studies have shown that investing in women-owned businesses leads to job creation, poverty reduction and economic development. By supporting women entrepreneurs and business leaders, we can build more inclusive and prosperous societies.

Fostering a culture of inclusion and empowerment within organizations is crucial. Companies must prioritize diversity and create opportunities for everyone to excel and advance in their careers. This includes implementing fair hiring practices, providing mentorship and leadership development programs, and ensuring equal pay for equal work.

As more women break barriers, shatter stereotypes and rise to leadership positions, the business landscape will become more diverse, innovative and resilient. By championing the success of women in business, we not only unlock their full potential but also create a more equitable and prosperous world for all.

For information about how to join the chamber or to get the most out of your chamber membership, please reach out to the Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce at [administration@lakenonacc.org](mailto:administration@lakenonacc.org) or call us at 407-796-2230. We would love to hear from you!



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L to R, Maytel Bonham, Marissa Burns, Joselyne Muszynski, Brandy Bennett, Goretti Garcia.

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# UNVEILING THE SUMMER POP-UP EXPERIENCE: THE PALM CLUB AT LAKE NONA WAVE HOTEL

BY JENNY LYNN  
IMAGES PROVIDED BY LAKE NONA WAVE HOTEL

Nestled amidst the vibrant foliage of Lake Nona Wave Hotel's Sculpture Garden, a hidden gem awaits to transport guests back to the golden era of Florida in the 1960s. Introducing The Palm Club, a summer pop-up experience that promises to immerse visitors in an atmosphere of retro glamour and leisure.

Set against the backdrop of 400 swaying palm trees and an impressive array of sculptures from one of the world's largest private art collections, The Palm Club invites guests to indulge in a variety of curated experiences designed to evoke nostalgia and delight the senses. Launching on April 19 and spanning the entire summer, this enchanting pop-up offers a repertoire of activities, from vintage cocktails to gourmet picnics and inspired photo opportunities.

The Palm Club unfolds its charm every weekend, from Friday through Sunday, with each evening boasting its own distinctive programming:

**Vintage Movies Under the Stars:** Friday evenings at The Palm Club kick off with a cinematic journey back in time. Starting April 19, guests can relish in classics like the iconic 007 film "Goldfinger" while enjoying an Aston Martin photo-op, adding a touch of cinematic flair to the evening.

**Sunset Sessions:** Saturdays are dedicated to romance and relaxation with Sunset Sessions, where live vocalists provide the soundtrack for a picturesque picnic or pre-dinner cocktail against the backdrop of a breathtaking sunset. It's an opportunity to unwind and savor the magical ambiance of the Sculpture Garden.

**Old-Fashioned Sundays:** As the weekend draws to a close, The Palm Club invites guests to wind down with old-fashioned cocktails and boozy popsicles, perfectly complementing a leisurely stroll through the Sculpture Garden. It's a laid-back affair that embodies the essence of lazy Sundays in Florida.

To elevate the experience, guests and locals alike can indulge in gourmet picnics curated with care. From Veuve Clicquot champagne to artisanal cheeses, fresh fruit, and sweet treats, these picnics offer a delectable accompaniment to the festivities. Complete with a cozy blanket and plush pillows, they provide the perfect setting to savor the sunset and immerse oneself in the beauty of the surrounding garden.

As an added incentive, Lake Nona Wave Hotel is pleased to offer the "See, Be Seen, and Save at The Palm Club" deal, allowing guests to save \$20 on prevailing weekend rates through June 30, 2024. It's an opportunity not to be missed for those seeking to bask in the allure of The Palm Club while enjoying exclusive savings.

With its blend of vintage charm, artistic splendor, and contemporary luxury, The Palm Club promises to be a highlight of the summer season at Lake Nona Wave Hotel. Whether you're a discerning traveler or a local looking for a taste of nostalgia, this enchanting pop-up experience invites you to step into a bygone era and create memories to cherish for years to come.



# THE WINNING FAMILY: 5 SIGNS OF A STRONG, HEALTHY FAMILY



BY PASTOR RODNEY GAGE

Working on a puzzle with someone, especially with your family, allows you to work toward a common goal. Have you ever stopped to think about the most crucial part

of a puzzle? Without this one critical component, it's nearly impossible to complete it. The answer is the box top! Without a clear picture of what you're trying to assemble, even if you find some matching pieces, the task can become immensely frustrating, often leading to giving up. The puzzle remains incomplete.

This scenario mirrors the modern family. Many couples and parents attempt to piece together their homes and relationships without a clear vision of what they should look like. However, there's good news: You don't have to leave your family puzzle unfinished or broken. It's possible to fit the pieces back together.

While having the box top doesn't make the task effortless – particularly if the puzzle is complex, featuring hundreds or thousands of pieces – it does require patience, focus, determination, communication and teamwork. These are the same qualities needed to build strong, healthy family dynamics.

A guide – akin to a box top – provides a vision of what character qualities make up a strong, healthy marriage and family based on extensive research and interviews with couples and parents who have successfully established solid relationships at home.

## 5 Signs of a Strong, Healthy Family

### 1. A Clear Vision

Without a vision, a marriage and family can drift aimlessly, like a ship without a rudder. Jim Rohn said, "You cannot change your destination overnight, but you can change your direction overnight!" Whether you're single, a single parent, or part of a blended or nuclear family, it's never too late to define or redefine your vision for who you want to become and where you want to go in your family relationships.

### 2. An Attitude of Service

Imagine a world where everyone embraced the idea of "it's not about me." Consider the change in the atmosphere of our homes if we shifted from being self-centered to serving one another. Embodying what you wish to see in others is crucial as a couple or parent. An excellent way to involve the whole family in serving the needs of others is to volunteer to help those less fortunate or by sponsoring a child or taking a mission trip. Anytime we expose our children to different cultures and other people's hardships and struggles, it increases the level of appreciation and contentment and produces deeper joy and fulfillment.

### 3. Marital Intimacy Between Husband and Wife

Derived from the Latin word "intimus," meaning "inner," intimacy involves two people opening up to their inner selves. Another way to spell intimacy is "Into Me You See." When a husband and wife enter each other's lives emotionally, intellectually, relationally, physically and spiritually, they connect at the deepest level in every area of their lives. It's built on unconditional love and trust, allowing partners to share their fears, hurts and dreams without fear of condemnation. This secure, loving envi-

ronment strengthens the couple's bond and profoundly impacts their children's sense of security and love.

### 4. Parents Who Teach and Train

Teaching (from the Greek "nouthesia," meaning "putting into mind") often involves verbal instruction. Training (from the Greek "paid-eia," meaning "nurture" or "chastening") involves action and can be both positive and negative. These elements are crucial in guiding children with strong values and character qualities that will serve as their compass through life. Fredrick Douglass put it succinctly: "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults."

### 5. Children Who Obey and Honor Their Parents

A common concern among teachers today is the lack of respect shown by students, which can escalate to defiance and even violence. Teaching children the benefits of respecting and honoring authority can transform chaos into peace and harmony.

Just like the boy who reconstructed a world map from a shredded newspaper his father gave him to play with. He had hoped to keep his son occupied while he finished some work. To the father's astonishment, the little boy quickly reconstructed the newspaper featuring the world map. The father asked his son how he had managed to do it so quickly. The little boy explained that on the other side of the map was a picture of a man and that once he got the man right, the world was right. The same principle and lesson is true for the next generation to learn. Once you get the "man" right, getting the "world" right is easy!

This framework can serve as your box top for building and nurturing a strong, healthy family. Remember, like any puzzle, the picture becomes clearer and the process more enjoyable when you know what you're working toward. By instilling these values and working together, families can achieve harmony and fulfillment as they seek to become strong, healthy families.

*Rodney Gage is a family coach, author, speaker and the founding pastor of ReThink Life Church, which meets at Lake Nona High School. His passion is to help families win at home and in life. To learn more about how you can get a copy of his new book called Why Your Kids Do What They Do, go to [www.thewinningfamily.com](http://www.thewinningfamily.com) or [ReThinkLife.com](http://ReThinkLife.com).*



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## BEST FRIENDS IN THE NONAHOOD: HERE COME THE AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERDS!

BY PATTY REBER

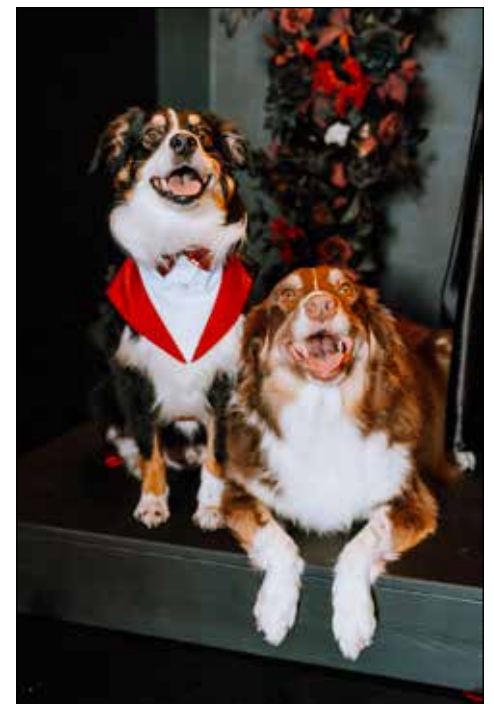
PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMY JO EDWARDS, 'TIL DEATH CHAPEL & THE TATTOOED BRIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

If anyone is a client of Pet Paradise, you probably already know Gregor Acta-Adams. Gregor is the front-of-house supervisor who greets everyone with a warm smile and welcomes each and every animal upon arrival as well.

Gregor most recently married Leslie Massielle Acta-Adams. Gregor, who was born in Scotland, met Leslie during high school together in New York, and they reconnected eight years later online. They like to refer to their meeting as the “invisible string theory,” where two people are attached by an invisible string and destined to be brought together. Two days before they reconnected, Gregor adopted Starfire in 2018. They dated long-distance and stayed together as often as possible on weekends. Starfire wasn’t quite sure of this “other woman” in Gregor’s life and had an “accident” on Leslie. Some could say it was “baptism by Starfire.” Leslie, however, didn’t scare easily and moved in with Gregor later that year and softened the heart, or shall we say bladder, of Starfire until she was accepted into the household. Fast forward, Gregor and Leslie adopted a beautiful white Lynx Point Siamese cat named Luna followed by a rescued brown tabby kitten off the street named Orion. That wasn’t the end. Next came Cosmo the newest Shepherd. They say he is the sweetest boy.

As you can see from the photos, both Cosmo and Starfire were part of the wedding party of Gregor and Leslie’s beautiful wedding in Winter Park. Leslie’s mom wore a black, red-kissed dress for her wedding. Leslie wore an all-black dress and wore a black, red-kissed veil to pay homage to her mom. Everyone had tears in their eyes as she walked down the aisle, including Cosmo, who was the ring bearer. Gregor says Cosmo cried during their vows!! Starfire was happy just to watch the ceremony without any accidents!

Gregor and Leslie plan to continue their travels and look forward to introducing Cosmo, Starfire, Luna and Orion to a new little brother or sister one day. I believe they mean the human kind!



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2016  
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2013  
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2011

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2015  
2014  
2013  
2012  
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# ORLANDO'S CULINARY EXCELLENCE SHINES IN THE 2024 MICHELIN GUIDE

BY JENNY LYNN  
IMAGES PROVIDED BY VISIT ORLANDO

Orlando's gastronomic landscape has once again been thrust into the spotlight with the release of the 2024 MICHELIN Guide Miami, Orlando, and Tampa. This year, 48 esteemed restaurants in Orlando have received the coveted recognition, reaffirming the city's status as a culinary powerhouse.

"Orlando continues to drive culinary innovation forward," remarked Casandra Matej, President & CEO of Visit Orlando. "This is a true testament to the growth and vibrancy of Orlando's culinary scene, fueled by the dedication of our talented chefs, restaurateurs, and committed service staff."

Leading the pack are the four newly Michelin-starred restaurants, each adding their unique flair to Orlando's dining scene. Camille in Baldwin Park, Natsu in the North Quarter District, Papa Llama in Curry Ford West, and the iconic Victoria & Albert's at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa have all earned their rightful place among the stars. Additionally, Soseki Modern Omakase in Winter Park, Capa Steakhouse & Bar at Four Seasons Resort Orlando, and Kadence in the Audubon Park Garden District have retained their prestigious one-star recognition.

But the accolades don't stop there. The MICHELIN Guide inspectors have also bestowed the Bib Gourmand designation upon two new Orlando restaurants, bringing the total to an impressive 11. Sushi Saint in the City District and Zaru in the Mills 50 neighborhood join the ranks of esteemed establishments

recognized for offering exceptional food at great value.

The list of Bib Gourmand restaurants is as diverse as it is delightful, featuring culinary gems like Bombay Street Kitchen, Domu, Isan Zaap, Norigami, Otto's High Dive, Taste of Chengdu, The Ravenous Pig, The Strand Food & Drink, and Z Asian.

Furthermore, Orlando boasts an impressive lineup of 30 MICHELIN Recommended restaurants, each celebrated for their outstanding cuisine and exemplary service. From the Mediterranean flavors of AVA MediterrAegean in Winter Park to the innovative dishes at BACÁN in Lake Nona Wave Hotel, and from the vibrant offerings of Black Rooster Taqueria in Mills 50 to the culinary delights of Kai Asian Street Fare in Winter Park, the city's dining scene caters to every palate.

In addition to the restaurant recognitions, several individuals

and establishments in Orlando have been honored with special awards. Justin Levaughn of Otto's High Dive has received the Michelin Exceptional Cocktails Award, while Israel Perez, maître d'hôtel and sommelier of Victoria & Albert's, has been recognized with the Michelin Service Award. Kaya, led by Chef Lordfer Lalicon, has been awarded the prestigious Michelin Green Star for its exceptional sustainable dining practices.

As Orlando continues to evolve into a global culinary destination, these accolades serve as a testament to the city's rich tapestry of flavors, talents, and innovations. Whether you're a local food enthusiast or a visiting gastronome, Orlando's dining scene promises a feast for the senses and an unforgettable culinary journey.



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- Lake Nona Farmers Market at Laureate Park Village Center

## THURSDAY MAY 2

- Star Wars Trivia Night at Boxi Park

## FRIDAY MAY 3

- LNRCC Member Event: Realtor Appreciation Happy Hour

## SATURDAY MAY 4

- May the 4<sup>th</sup> Be With You at Boxi Park
- Kentucky Derby at Boxi Park

## SUNDAY MAY 5

- Cinco De Mayo at Boxi Park

## TUESDAY MAY 7

- LNRCC First Tuesday After Hours | Restore Hyper Wellness

## FRIDAY MAY 10

- The Lupus Awareness Walk at Lake Nona YMCA

## SATURDAY MAY 11

- Lake Nona Day of Wellness at Lake Nona Town Center | Sponsored by Advent Health
- Dog Mom Day at Boxi Park

## SUNDAY MAY 12

- Mother's Day at Boxi Park

## TUESDAY MAY 14

- LNRCC Education Committee Meeting
- Taste of Nona: Artistry in Every Bite | Tickets Required

## THURSDAY MAY 16

- LNRCC Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for My Psychiatrist

## SATURDAY MAY 18

- Run Nona 5k & Nemours Children's Kids' Run at Lake Nona Town Center

## SUNDAY MAY 19

- Family Fun Day at Boxi Park

## MONDAY MAY 20

- LNRCC Nona Professional Ladies | Mastering Successful Sales Without the Ick
- LNRCC Economic Development and Innovation Meeting

## TUESDAY MAY 21

- LNRCC Marketing Committee Meeting
- LNRCC Young Professionals Group Meeting

## WEDNESDAY MAY 22

- Lake Nona High School Graduation Ceremony! Congrats Grads!
- LNRCC Chamber Connections

## FRIDAY MAY 24

- LNRCC Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for VisionWorks

## SUNDAY MAY 26

- Family Fun Day at Boxi Park

## MONDAY MAY 27

- Memorial Day at Boxi Park

# SAVOR TOOTH TIGER: LAVENDER LEMON CHAMPAGNE COCKTAIL

BY ALLYSON VAN LENTEN  
PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLYSON VAN LENTEN

This floral cocktail has all the best bits of spring in a glass. Not only is it bright and refreshing, it's bubbly and festive. Somewhere between a French 75 and a Champagne cocktail, this special cocktail is absolutely perfect for a Mother's Day brunch. Some mothers want cake or roses, but I decided what I really want for Mother's Day is a treat of a different sort. To come up with this cocktail, I considered all my favorite flavor combinations, but lavender and lemon made the top of my list. I had some culinary grade lavender buds in my spice cabinet just waiting to be used in some magical manner. So like the good little witch that I am, I concocted a simple syrup with the lavender buds. To say I was impressed with the result would be an understatement. When it comes to floral flavor, I'm no stranger. I often use rosewater and orange blossom water for baking. They make excellent and surprising additions to buttercream frostings. But in a cocktail? Pure magic!

Champagne cocktails were extremely popular in the 1940s. Typically, they include bitters, a sugar cube and, obviously, Champagne. A French 75 on the other hand, has a gin base, lemon, sugar or simple syrup, and topped with Champagne. The cocktail's name actually comes from the French 75, a field gun from the French army in World War I. The name is a nod to its potency, and I can confirm that it does pack a punch! I love the idea of a French 75 but have never been a gin fan, so I swapped it for vodka. Considering that this is a cocktail with so many flavors going on, I don't feel the need to use a nice bottle of Champagne, or any Champagne for that matter. What you need is a dry sparkling wine in your price range. I really like Trader Joe's Blanc de Blanc. The simple syrup will add plenty of sweetness, so a dry Prosecco or Cava will balance it nicely. To make the syrup, you simply mix equal parts of water and sugar and the lavender buds. This mixture steeps for about 5 minutes before draining out the buds. Once the syrup has completely cooled, it is ready for shaking. Champagne and sparkling wine obviously have bubbles, so you don't want to add that to your cocktail shaker! Simply mix some lemon juice, vodka, simple syrup and plenty of ice for about 30 seconds and strain into a glass. I like a coupe glass for this occasion. Then top with sparkling wine and garnish with a lemon slice or wedge. To really put it over the top, a lavender sprig or flower really adds to the beauty of this cocktail. To serve this as a mocktail, simply omit the vodka, increase the simple syrup, and replace the sparkling wine with sparkling water.

## LAVENDER LEMON CHAMPAGNE COCKTAIL (SERVES 2)

### Ingredients:

- 2 ounces vodka or gin
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 ounces of lavender lemon simple syrup (recipe below)
- Ice

### Lavender Simple Syrup

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons culinary grade lavender buds

### Instructions

1. Bring water and sugar to a boil until sugar dissolves. Add lavender buds and steep for 5 minutes. Drain the buds out. Allow syrup to cool completely at room temperature, then chill in the fridge until ready to make the cocktail.
2. In a cocktail shaker, add plenty of ice, the vodka, lemon juice and syrup. Shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Strain into a coupe champagne glass (or a Champagne flute). Top with Champagne or sparkling wine.
3. Garnish with a slice or wedge of lemon and lavender buds or flowers.





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