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**Thank you,
Costco Connection team**

Dungeness crab ★ Lady Tan's Circle of Women ★ Romantic travel

COSTCO **Connection**®

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS

We do

Costco is here to help members
plan their dream weddings **26**



JUNE 2023



FOR YOUR HEALTH

Ascent Protein

Bone health

Buyers' picks

COSTCO Connection[®] *June*

June 2023 | Volume 38 | Number 6



Costco can save couples on their wedding expenses in so many ways.

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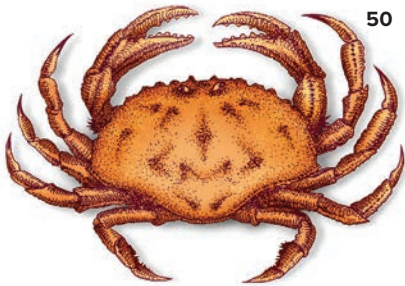
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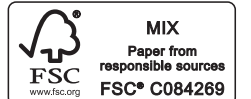
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Love and Costco

Who doesn't enjoy a good love story? A meet-cute, three-hankie, I'm-not-crying-you're-crying tale of blissful romance that culminates with vows at the altar and the promise of happily ever after.

We also love a good deal. And that's the happy place where love and Costco merge.

With the company's growth over the years, it is now possible to use Costco at just about every stage of wedding planning and celebration—from engagement to invitations to the bachelor/bachelorette party to the wedding, the reception and the honeymoon—to help couples on their journey down the aisle.

(Side note: Costco helps with anniversaries, too! My own trip down the aisle took place 25 wonderful years ago. To celebrate the occasion, my husband surprised me with a weekend in Napa Valley, California, booked, of course, through Costco Travel.)

In this month's cover story, you'll read about other Costco members who have added "value" to their "I do" wedding vows by using Costco for rings, flowers, food, party favors, trips and more.

The Buying Smart article on the Costco jewelry buying department details all the work that goes into finding those stunning engagement or wedding rings, and ensuring that they are of the highest quality possible.

And Peter Greenberg's Travel Connection article, "Places of the heart," describes a few favorite romantic destinations (including Napa Valley!) that will provide inspiration for any couple, whether it's for your first trip together as a couple or your 50th.

A toast to love, and Costco! ■



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Sandy Torrey is Senior Vice President, Corporate Membership, Marketing and Publisher, Costco Connection.

Coming next month From planning to games, music, food and more, expert advice on how to put together a great backyard party.

Follow us on





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Sensitive travel

I really enjoyed the May article “Fun for all: Vacationing with an anxious, inflexible or neurodiverse child.”

This was so educational for me. I had no idea so much travel preparation was needed for children with “invisible needs.” Thank you for sharing this and opening our eyes to be more knowledgeable and sympathetic.

Kathleen Voyles, Mason, Ohio

Danielle Steel cover story

I just received the May *Connection*. As soon as I got it out of my mailbox and saw who was on the cover, I sat in my chair on my porch and had to read the article. Danielle Steel is my all-time favorite author. I have read most of her books. There is nothing better than a great beach day with a Danielle Steel book. Your article was so good and a surprise because she kind of stays to herself. Thank you for the *awesome* article. I enjoyed it more than you will ever know.

Melody Boyd

Southampton, Pennsylvania

Aquatic therapy

I'm an aquatics instructor. So glad to find Jackie Duda's article [“Wade a while,” May 2023] on the benefits of water for those in pain or with mobility issues.

There is a well-established Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program in most major cities across the U.S. Wherever patrons live, they can call their local arthritis organization and be directed to classes near them. Many people, including those with arthritis, Parkinson's, etc., benefit from these programs.

Didgie Blain-Rozgay

Pasadena, California

Booking Amsterdam

I loved reading the article “Canals run through it” in your May issue.

There is a wonderful public library in Amsterdam called OBA Oosterdok—the second-largest public library in Europe. It has over 10 levels and a café with incredible views. The children's library is a must-see with circular bookshelves. It was one of the highlights of our visit with our sons.

Pamela Fender

Rohnert Park, California

Stroke awareness

As a stroke victim/survivor, the article on strokes [“When strokes strike,” May 2023] was of great interest to me.

The acronym FAST has been expanded to BE FAST—the B is for Balance [loss of] and E is for Eyes [sudden changes in vision].

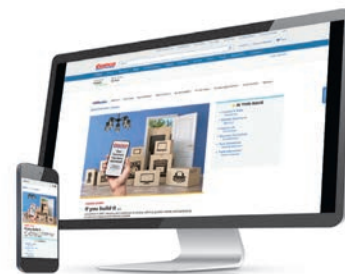
Roy Worthington, Saratoga, California

Quick & Easy
THE COSTCO WAY



Kirkland Signature Gyro Kit

Fresh ingredients, all in one place. All you need to do is assemble and enjoy. View this recipe and others at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com). Search: Quick & Easy and click “Entrees.”



Advertising and products

All advertisements will indicate whether a product is available in a Costco warehouse, at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com) or both. Products are scheduled to be available at the time of publication unless otherwise noted. Items may not be available in all locations and selection can vary. [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com) carries many of the products available at the warehouses and much more. Prices may vary in AK, HI, PR and at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com). Applicable tax laws may require sales tax on pre-discounted prices. These taxes are in addition to product price.

Digital edition

Access the magazine online each month at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com) (search “*Costco Connection*”).

Talk to us

Do you have a comment about something you read in the *Connection*? Please send a note, including your full name, phone number and address, to:

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Tea time

Instant or slow-brewed, sweetened or unsweetened, iced tea hits the spot on a warm day. Now is a good time to kick back, relax and enjoy National Iced Tea Day (June 10) and National Iced Tea Month with a refreshing glass.

© MARCO MAYER / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Raise your glass

AN ALTERNATIVE to carbonated soft drinks and a good source of antioxidants, iced tea is delicious plain or can be customized with a squeeze of lemon; a handful of other fruits, like raspberries, strawberries or blueberries; or the addition of herbs, like mint, thyme or basil.

Brewed, unsweetened black iced tea has just 2 calories and less than a gram of carbohydrates in an 8-ounce serving. Find tea in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

★ **MULTIFACETED FACT**

Costco jewelry buyers sold more than 500,000 carats of diamonds in fiscal year 2022. At 142 carats per ounce, that's 3,521 ounces, or about 220 pounds.



© TINA BITS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

DAY OF THE DAD

Father's Day fun

Show the dads in your life some love on Father's Day (June 18) by making them feel appreciated. Whether you throw a party, arrange a family day or offer a gift, you'll find a variety of dad-approved items in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



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FIND MORE JOY

Make it a #FlowerFriday

Commit to a weekly (or monthly) color infusion and pick up fresh flowers on your regular Costco run. Whatever the reason or occasion, fresh flowers can help perk up your day, desk or dining room table. Look for the flower display in your local Costco warehouse or check out the offerings at Costco.com.



FUN IN THE SUN

Great minds think alike

On a tour of Death Valley National Park, Costco member Reneé Roncone (pictured on the left) found she wasn't the only one wearing a sun shirt from Costco. Martha, Margaret and Gale—three women she'd never met before—had the same idea. "What are the odds?" Roncone asks.



RENEE RONCONE



KELSEY MALONE

Member Kelsey Malone snapped this shot of her 2-year-old daughter, Sienna, relaxing with the Costco Connection.

Did you know Blockbuster, the once-iconic movie-rental chain, turned down an offer to buy Netflix in 2000?

TECH CONNECTION

by MARC SALTZMAN

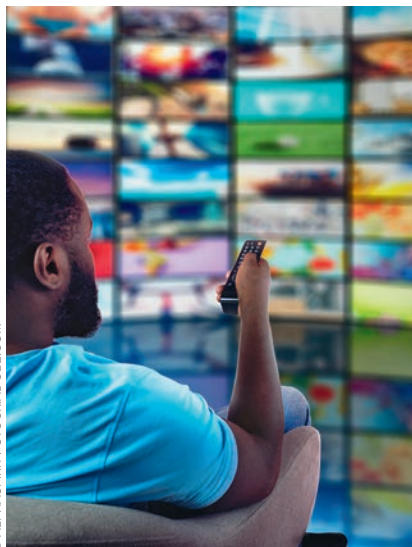
Whether you've traded cable for streaming services entirely or you simply augment your existing TV service with the likes of Netflix, Apple TV+, Disney+ and others, the following tips can help you optimize your viewing experience and help you save money:

Stream smoother. If it's taking too long for videos to load or they look choppy or pixelated, your TV may be too far from your router. If you can, move the router closer to your TV, restart your Wi-Fi connection or consider upgrading your router to a newer model that supports greater bandwidth (and multiple devices).

Find extras. Many services have extra content to unlock, such as deleted scenes, gag reels and behind-the-scenes features. While it varies among the services, the icon to launch extra content is usually underneath the "Play" button. Some services, such as Netflix, have interactive games to play, too.

Travel tip. Are you going to be on a plane for a few hours? Download TV shows and movies to watch offline, so you don't need to pay the airline for internet access. Similarly, downloading content is ideal to avoid cellular data charges during outings like family road trips.

Subtitles and overdubs. Whether you're deaf, hard of hearing or having trouble understanding accents, enable closed captions. In most cases you can even tweak the size and color of the font. If your mother tongue isn't English, you may also choose one of a few available language overdubs.



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Enable parental controls. If you don't want younger viewers in your home to watch shows or movies you feel are inappropriate, you can set up a PIN code on select content. How you do it depends on the service, but it's usually found in the "Settings" area.

Shortcuts. Some streaming services offer shortcuts when their content is being watched on a computer. With Netflix, for example, F is for Full-Screen, M is Mute and tapping the Left/Right arrows lets you skip 10 seconds forward or back.

Spend less. Before committing to a service, take advantage of its free trials to see if you like the content. Or, if there's one TV series you want to binge, do it within the trial period, before canceling. ■

Make it your own

Tips to improve your viewing experience on your favorite video streaming services

SEVAG SAGHERIAN



Marc Saltzman

is a tech journalist and host of the *Tech It Out* podcast. He answers selected questions in this column and regrets that all questions can't be answered individually.

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Please include "Tech Connection" in the subject line.

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a variety of quality TVs, routers, tablets and computers in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

Free to be seen

Don't forget that completely free streaming video services are available. The drawback? You'll get commercials before and during your TV viewing.

Popular examples of these AVOD (ad-supported video on demand) services include Pluto TV, Tubi and the Roku Channel; in addition, all of the major networks offer free apps too, but include ads.

Speaking of saving money, be aware that Netflix will be cracking down on password sharing with family members you don't live with.—MS

Places of the heart

Romantic destinations around the world

by PETER GREENBERG



HANDE BAYAR

Peter Greenberg is the multiple—Emmy Award—winning travel editor for CBS News and host of *The Travel Detective* on public television (petergreenberg.com).



Romance is where you make it, but it never hurts to have a little help with the right ambiance. Here are a few of my favorites.

Fiji

Just the phrase “South Pacific” evokes romance. And Fiji, with 333 islands and coral islets, offers an abundance. In Fiji, it’s not about day-to-day deadlines, but about celebrating time together. Time to discover secluded palm-fringed beaches, intimate thatched-roofed resorts and glittering, clear Pacific waters. Time to share a kiss under one of the many waterfalls. Time to treat yourselves to a Sunday church service, where you’ll be gently serenaded with some of the most beautiful a cappella harmonies you’ll ever hear.

Saint Lucia

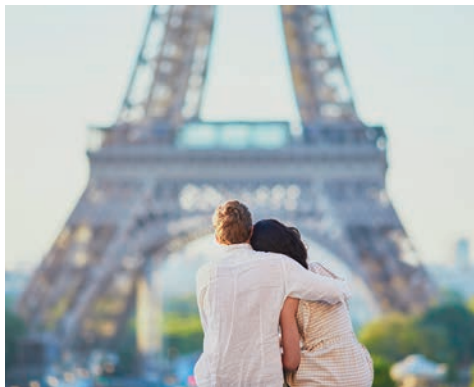
The teardrop-shaped island of Saint Lucia is a picture-perfect blend of coconut-laden palms, secluded sandy coves, waterfalls, romantic sunset cruises

and the pastel gingerbread-style buildings in the island’s capital, Castries. Have a toes-in-the-soft-sand wedding or an intimate mountainside ceremony. For a truly sensuous experience, head for the Caribbean’s only drive-in volcano for a do-it-yourself mud bath at Sulphur Springs Park, then rinse off together under a waterfall.

End your perfect day with a tiki torch-lit romantic dinner on a private deck overlooking the water at Rock Maison, where Champagne is delivered on a zip line from the hotel above.

Paris

Paris is where you fall in love, profess your love and, years later, reclaim and reaffirm your love. You linger in intimate cafés, walk through little alleyways, stroll along the Seine at night, as Paris’ landmarks seem magically lit. Have a drink at Bar Hemingway at the Ritz Paris, hop on a small *bateau mouche* for a sunset cruise on the Seine.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © FOKKE BAARSEN/STOCK.ADOBE.COM; © FOKKE BAARSEN/STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Clockwise from left:
A beach stroll in Saint Lucia; romantic reflection in Paris; Napa is a destination for love, and for wine lovers.

Visit Le mur des je t'aime (The I Love You Wall) in the small Jehan-Rictus Garden in Montmartre, where tiles spell out the phrase of endearment in more than 300 languages.

Napa Valley

Napa Valley, in California, is all about savoring life, which makes it a great place for a wedding or honeymoon. The 30-mile-long valley is a tapestry of vineyards, Michelin-starred restaurants and award-winning wineries, making Napa a feast for the senses. And love is in the air—literally—when you and your partner take in the natural beauty of the region's rolling hills with a hot-air balloon ride.

New York City

There are endless romantic things to do in the city that never sleeps. Rent a boat at the Lake of Central Park. Wander the gardens of the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx and explore the magical glass-domed conservatory built in 1902. In summer, have a romantic picnic-dinner-and-a-movie date in Bryant Park, a green oasis behind the beaux-arts New York Public Library. Inspired to read poetry to your sweetheart? Borrow a book from the library carts scattered around the park. And then, cross the East River to Brooklyn Heights and stroll along the tree-lined riverside promenade with stunning views of Manhattan. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers vacation packages, as well as cruises, cars and hotel-only options for destinations in the United States and around the world. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.com or call 1-877-849-2730.

Love on the water

River cruising is all about intimacy. Small ships allow you to, literally, just go with the flow, drifting by the constantly changing

scenery in hand-holding bliss as you share an intimate perspective of romantic destinations from Italy and France to Germany and the Netherlands. Although river cruising first

gained popularity in Europe, you can book exotic cruises on rivers on several other continents as well, from the Peruvian Amazon to the Nile, the Ganges and the Mekong.—PG

Weddings by Costco

Weddings often cost a fortune, but between Costco warehouses and Costco.com, it's possible to dream bigger and make your budget go further without sacrificing quality. From rings to flowers, cocktails to cake, and photo books to honeymoon travel, Costco is the one-stop source to make planning your special day easy and hassle-free. Here's how.

by **WENDY HELFENBAUM**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



*Just
Married*



D

reaming about your new life together represents an epic adventure, one that starts with the wedding planning journey. Whether you're having a huge family gathering or an intimate affair, Costco can help you keep the excitement going throughout the festivities.

Put a ring on it

Costco member Tammy Hicks found the perfect engagement ring while shopping for groceries. "I'd visited five jewelers in Atlanta but couldn't find what I wanted. I walked by Costco's jewelry department and, to my amazement, there it was: my dream ring," recalls Hicks. "The quality was awesome, plus the price was incredible."

Couples will find hundreds of styles of gold and platinum diamond engagement rings in the warehouses and online for every taste and budget—from a timeless princess cut to show-stopping clusters of diamonds. There's also a wide selection of men's and women's wedding or eternity bands, with new styles arriving regularly. (For more on Costco's jewelry program, see "All that glitters" on page 68.)

The warehouse features diamond or gemstone necklaces and earrings for the entire bridal party to wear on the special day, as Katlyn Korte discovered. The Mesa, Arizona, Costco front-end supervisor has always been friendly to all members, but never thought a customer would end up becoming her husband.

"I met Bryce while assisting at the register and 10 months later, we got engaged," says Korte. "Bryce got me a beautiful diamond necklace from Costco as a gift on the day of our wedding. We got married New Year's Eve 2020 in the middle of the desert, and it was the perfect night."

COSTCO CONNECTION

For more information about Costco wedding options, visit: [Costco.com/weddings.html](https://www.costco.com/weddings.html).



Provide delicious refreshments

For wedding-related feasts, including rehearsal dinners, bridal showers, brunches and receptions, why not preorder platters from Costco's Service Deli department? Choose from meat and cheese, shrimp, croissant sandwiches or wraps.

Each platter serves up to 20 people. Head to your local warehouse at least a day in advance and look for the order kiosk, usually located between the Costco Deli and Costco Bakery departments. The warehouse also carries fruit and vegetable trays, plus tableware, utensils, napkins and folding tables. You can stock up on beverages, wine and other drinks, too.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © KENNY JANOSICK PHOTOGRAPHER; © JOSHUA FLETCHER / FLETCH PHOTOGRAPHY; © ANDREA JANE PHOTOGRAPHY

Clockwise from left: Linda Havron ordered an arch from Costco.com for her daughter Caitlin's wedding to Hank West; Laura and Jude Fledderman's ring set; fresh flowers for Stephanie Weyant's wedding to Ryan Rawls.



Ellie Mackintosh's oldest daughter, Megan, wanted to bring her blended family together by getting married at her parents' farm in Berryville, Virginia.

"We purchased cases of wine, Prosecco, sodas, beverages, water, paper products, fruit, veggies and salad greens from our local Costco warehouse," says Ellie. "I also ordered mini flower arrangements from Costco.com, which were stunning in canning jars, and due to the low prices on our bouquets, we were able to double the quantity. We came in below our budget, thanks to Costco."

Create a festive vibe with fresh flowers

Costco's wedding floral packages offer great value at unbeatable prices, says Costco member Kaydee West. She and Mark McClellan eloped in February 2022 in Alabama, then hosted a reception in September.

"I ordered a floral package for less than \$300, and everything was beautiful. Costco helped us stick to our budget," recalls West.

Flowers are available in warehouses and at Costco.com, with delivery across

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30



LEFT: © TRACY PACANA PHOTOGRAPHY; RIGHT: JOSHUA FLETCHER / FLETCH PHOTOGRAPHY

LOVE IN BULK

Tanya Goldenberg and Brian Barton got engaged at the Tempe, Arizona, warehouse last December. The couple had spent many happy Sunday afternoons there, shopping and eating lunch as friends, before falling in love.

"We talked, laughed, ate samples and got to know each other," says Goldenberg. "It seemed natural for us to shop at Costco for a diamond engagement ring. I narrowed it down to three, and said, 'Why don't you surprise me?' ... When we picked it up, he proposed right there."—*WH*

the country. It's best to order for delivery three days before the event so the flowers have time to hydrate and look their best.

Garrett and Hailey Smith scheduled delivery so the flowers were as fresh as possible for their July wedding in Corvallis, Oregon. "We purchased flowers for our centerpieces, live rose petals for the send-off and ingredients plus flowers for the cakes, since our friend did the baking," says Hailey.

In the warehouse, members get expert assistance from flower cooler employees to select flowers that are best suited for their needs. Shaunte' Nelson-Sayles and Tony Sayles preordered bulk flowers and greenery to make their own bouquets and arrangements for their Atlanta wedding last October.

"We bought fresh green garlands and mixed white flowers, and I was absolutely blown away with the quality," says Nelson-Sayles. "The flowers arrived in excellent condition. I gave away the vases of flowers as thank-you gifts."

To create Stephanie Weyant and Ryan Rawls' enchanted forest-themed wedding in Woodinville, Washington, last October, her mother and friends used fresh flowers from Costco.com.

"We needed ample greenery to achieve that woody, whimsical effect, so I purchased the Orange Sorbet package, garlands, roses and baby's breath," says Weyant.

Celebrate with sweet treats

For a special touch, affordable guest favors or after-dinner sweets like truffles are easy to find in the warehouse or online. Costco's Bakery offers desserts, cookie or pastry platters, cupcakes, pies, cheesecakes and more.

While Costco doesn't sell traditional wedding cakes, members can preorder and personalize 12-by-16-inch sheet cakes at least 24 hours in advance from the warehouse bakery kiosk, as Morgan Ames and Jim Thomas did. The Los Angeles couple decorated a white sheet cake with fresh flowers and bought tubs of ice cream from Costco for their guests.

"We got married at a friend's home, and wedding cakes were absurdly expensive, so we ordered from Costco and picked everything up the morning of. Save your money for the honeymoon," suggests Ames.

Pick up other wedding essentials

Couples need plenty of other items for their special day. For example, Noah Patterson found special groomsmen's gifts last fall at Costco.

"A few years ago, I bought a Kirkland [Signature]™ sweater, and many people complimented it," recalls Patterson. "So, when my fiancée, Malia, and I saw Costco logo sweaters at our local warehouse in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, I knew this was the perfect gift for me and my nine groomsmen. I put them each in a bag with a personal letter and handed them out at our rehearsal dinner. They loved them!"



From left:
Garrett and Hailey Smith;
Laura and Jude Fledderman.

For a rehearsal dinner in Tempe, Arizona, the parents of the groom, Robert and Jane Sandoval, needed to warm things up for the December affair celebrating the bridal couple, Manny and Whitney. “We already had four FireSense patio heaters from Costco but didn’t think that was enough heat to keep our guests warm, so we purchased another two heaters from Costco.com and four more from our local warehouse,” says Jane.

To get her Bayport, New York, backyard ready for her daughter Caitlin’s wedding to Hank West, Costco member Linda Havron ordered a wrought-iron arch from Costco.com to create a romantic spot for the couple to exchange vows.

Havron also ordered flowers, appetizers, desserts, wine and other beverages, plus supplies for the next day’s brunch.

Destination weddings and honeymoons

Newlyweds seeking a fabulous holiday will find the ideal itinerary through Costco Travel, which offers ocean and river cruises, guided tours, safaris, all-inclusive resorts, theme park trips, luxury hotels and car rentals.

Before eloping with their four children, Laura and Jude Fledderman turned to Costco Travel to plan their 2014 beach wedding and “familymoon” in Hawaii.

“Our Costco Travel representative helped us create the trip of a lifetime, including airfare, hotel and rental car,” says Laura, who lives in Arroyo Grande,

California. “We got our dream—two families joined together by love with the perfect Costco.com rings to seal our vows. The multiple diamonds signify the commitment we made not only to each other but to our children.”

Abigail Johnson, a Costco member in Portland, Oregon, also used Costco Travel for her 2017 Hawaiian honeymoon with husband Luke. “We booked early and were able to pay in installments, which was a game saver while paying for an expensive wedding. Costco had great prices, and we loved the added perks, including a Costco Shop Card,” says Johnson.

Raechel and Jon Mitts used Costco for their 2022 honeymoon at a resort in Saint Lucia. “It was amazing. One of the big advantages was using our Citi credit card to purchase the trip,” says Raechel, of Midland, Michigan.

Members also benefit from promotions like cruise ship cabin upgrades, spa treatments and bottles of wine. Executive members earn a 2% cash-back reward (up to \$1,000).

Shop smart and dream big by stocking up on affordable, high-quality wedding items, food and beverages at Costco for an elegant event you and your guests will remember for years to come. ■

Costco member Wendy Helfenbaum is a Montreal-based writer and TV producer.

Spread your news and share memories

Photo-related products are now provided by Shutterfly as a new member service, allowing you to personalize flat or folded save-the-date cards, wedding invitations and thank-you notes using various templates and design layouts. Simply transfer your Costco Photo account to Shutterfly or create a new one. After your wedding, capture memories in a customizable photo book with the click of your mouse. Costco members will receive 51% off regularly priced Shutterfly orders, plus free shipping on orders over \$49. Some exceptions apply.—WH



The power of whey protein

COURTESY OF ASCENT PROTEIN



Buyers' picks

© ALEXANDER RATHS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



Maintaining bone health

© SEVENTYFOUR / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

To your health

When it comes to health, a proactive approach can help prevent or delay a host of issues. Making sure you are getting enough protein to build or maintain muscle and taking in enough calcium and vitamin C to keep your bones as strong as possible may prevent small problems from becoming life-altering.

This month's Special Section on health takes a look at ways to prevent osteoporosis and related bone issues, and what steps to take to treat those ailments if they occur. Also featured is a spotlight on Ascent Protein, a Costco supplier of whey protein.

In addition, our Costco health buying teams present their top picks for items in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

-
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 - 45 Health and Beauty buyers' picks



All the whey

Ascent Protein's native whey offers quality and value to your workout routine

by KATIE COLEMAN



COSTCO CONNECTION

Ascent 100% Native Whey Protein Blend in chocolate (Item 1666598) is available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com. Ascent 100% Native Whey Protein Blend in vanilla (Item 1667705) is available at Costco.com.

Active people of all kinds consider whey protein a crucial element in their workout recovery. Why? “Whey contains all nine essential amino acids,” explains registered dietitian Danette Wickman. “This is important, because amino acids help repair skin and tissue from wounds and surgery. It can also help with weight loss and muscle building.” She also recommends it to clients who don’t get enough protein in their regular diet.

Whey is one of the two main proteins in milk, and a natural byproduct from the production of dairy items such as cheese. Whey, once it’s been pasteurized and dried, has become a popular complete protein supplement known for its multitude of benefits.

A simple process

Costco supplier Ascent Protein has taken what it feels is a better approach to whey production. “Ascent’s native whey is different from traditional whey

because it’s created from a simpler process and comes straight from Grade A milk instead of cheese,” explains B.T. Nauslar, general manager of Ascent Protein, and vice president of nutrition commercial development and new business ventures at Leprino Foods, Ascent’s parent company. “There are no chemicals or bleaching. We basically take milk, filter it, dry it and put it in a bag.”

“Our native whey chocolate flavor is made of only eight ingredients,” says Kirsten Karlsson, Ascent Protein’s associate director of marketing.

Dietitians like Wickman say this is a plus. “Native whey is not as processed, and so it’s quickly absorbed and utilized in the body.”

From mile-high to the masses

Ascent Protein started out as a research and development project at the company’s Denver headquarters in 2011. From there, it quickly evolved into a subsidiary that benefits from Leprino’s decades of protein-making experience.



© NDABCREATIVITY / STOCK.ADOBE.COM



COURTESY OF ASCENT PROTEIN

“One of the reasons we ended up launching our own brand was that we felt native whey was scientifically better for the consumer, and we didn’t see a better brand in the marketplace, so we wanted to give consumers a better solution,” Nauslar explains.

From the milk that’s sourced at local Colorado dairy farms to production in its own Greeley, Colorado, facilities, Karlsson says Ascent Protein is one of a handful of brands that produces native whey protein and controls the process end to end.

Nauslar says native whey also offers 17% higher levels of naturally occurring leucine—the key amino acid responsible for muscle recovery and repair—compared to traditional whey protein isolate. “Leucine is great,” Wickman agrees. “I call it the powerhouse for protein synthesis.”

Whey to go

To ensure the integrity of its product line, Ascent Protein is supported by a board of Ph.D. advisers. Made up of professors and dietitians, this board evaluates the company’s innovations, current trends and the science behind certain active ingredients in their products. In accordance with the company’s mission of “quality, service, competitive price and ethics,” Nauslar says, “we’re not going to launch something unless we know it’s cleaner, better and has an actual efficacy benefit to it.

“Our tagline is that we are the ‘Official Sponsor of Hard Work’ and Ascent Protein is proof that hard work really matters.” ■

GLOBAL GOALS

Ascent Protein follows these five key areas of sustainability:

Products. Products should be responsibly, safely and sustainably produced.

Supply chain. Suppliers should have a strong commitment to responsible and sustainable management practices.

People. The company aims to secure employees’ health, safety and well-being through employee engagement, safety initiatives and a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Environment. Sustainable strategy programs include energy efficiency, on-site solar farm installations, lower-emission systems and water capture and reuse/repurposing.

Communities. The company supports communities where employees live and work through volunteerism, involvement, giving and education.—KC

An informed choice

As part of its quality assurance program, Ascent Protein has become Informed Sport certified. As a global third-party testing and certification

program for supplements, Informed Sport looks for substances banned by collegiate organizations, the World Anti-Doping Agency and professional teams. “We’ve partnered with

Olympic athletes. They can feel confident taking Ascent, knowing there aren’t going to be any surprises at the end of the road,” says Kirsten Karlsson, Ascent’s associate director of marketing.—KC



Buyers' picks

Product selections from
Costco's Pharmacy buying team



Mary Arriola

Melanie Woods

Teresa
Thompson

Trunature Advanced Strength CinSulin

Cinnamon has long been associated with managing blood glucose—my 85-year-old mom swears by it. Advanced Strength CinSulin is cinnamon bark that has been put through a water extraction process that involves heat and pressure, concentrating its active ingredients. In addition, CinSulin is fortified with chromium picolinate and vitamin D₃, both of which have been studied for their use in managing blood sugar. Item 1351728. Warehouses/Costco.com.

—Mary Arriola



Kirkland Signature Magnesium Citrate

Magnesium is an essential mineral for our bodies, connected to muscle, nerve, heart and bone health. Studies suggest that magnesium citrate is more easily absorbed than other forms of magnesium. Kirkland Signature™ Magnesium Citrate provides 250 milligrams of magnesium per serving, and each softgel is gluten-free and contains no artificial flavors or synthetic colorants. Item 1708925.

Warehouses only.

—Melanie Woods



Refresh Plus Eye Drops

Hours of staring at my computer leave me with dry, burning, irritated eyes. Refresh Plus eye drops act like natural tears to provide fast-acting and long-lasting relief. Refresh Plus is specially formulated without preservatives, and comes in convenient, single-use vials. The No.1 doctor-recommended brand of artificial tears, these are safe for contacts and for use after LASIK or other eye surgeries. Item 40310.

Warehouses/Costco.com.

—Teresa Thompson

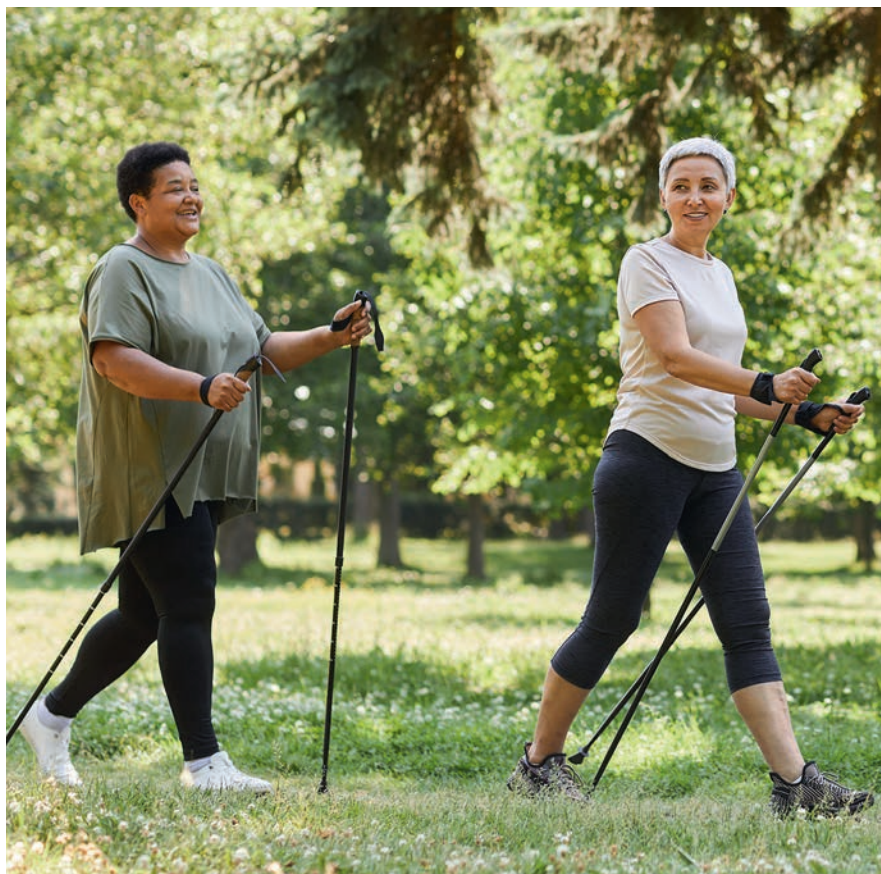




Bad breaks

Prevention and treatment of osteoporosis and bone loss

by JACKIE DUDA



COSTCO CONNECTION

Calcium- and protein-rich foods, supplements, vitamins, exercise equipment and more are available in Costco warehouses and at [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com).

Bones are amazing—light-weight, yet strong enough to hold us upright, with the body absorbing and replacing bone tissue throughout most of our lives.

However, with osteoporosis, new bone creation may not keep up with old bone loss, putting us at risk for fractures and breaks.

“Osteoporosis is a progressive thinning and even loss of bone that can accumulate over time and cause fractures,” says Dr. Kendall F. Moseley, medical director of the Johns Hopkins Metabolic Bone & Osteoporosis Center in Baltimore.

Breaking down bones

The Bone Health & Osteoporosis Foundation (bonehealthandosteoporosis.org), the largest U.S. organization dedicated solely to osteoporosis and bone health, reports that approximately 10 million Americans have osteoporosis

and 44 million others have osteopenia (low bone density), placing them at increased risk for fracture. That’s about half of all adults age 50 and older.

“One in two women and one in five men will experience an osteoporotic fracture in their lifetime,” says Jane Cauley, distinguished professor in the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health in Pittsburgh.

For people who are older, these fractures can lead to chronic pain, loss of mobility and independence, and even death. “That’s mainly because, as you get older, you don’t recover as well,” explains Dr. Kathryn Diemer, senior clinical director of the Bone Health Program at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Building up bones

Some bone loss is natural with age. But it can be slowed. And osteoporosis, where bones become weak and brittle, does not have to be inevitable.



“We really shouldn’t think about osteoporosis or fracture as being a normal part of aging,” Moseley says. “We have to consider the early stages of life as a way that we are set up for bone health much later on in life.”

Moseley says it’s helpful to think about bone along the course of one’s lifetime. “We gain bone until we’re about 30, both men and women,” Moseley explains, adding that there is a maintenance phase until women go through menopause, typically in their 50s, and for men, around age 70, after which bones break down faster than new bone is built. This causes overall bone loss, osteoporosis and increased risk for fracture.

Exercising and eating right help build your bone bank. “Maximize your peak skeletal mass when you’re younger, so that when you’re older and start to lose bone, you have more to start with,” says Cauley.

Diemer says it’s important to eat a well-balanced diet; put a lot of color on your plate. Vitamin D, calcium and protein are essential. “Low protein intake is associated with an increased risk of hip fracture,” Cauley explains. In addition to milk, Diemer notes, there are many foods rich in vitamin D, such as fatty fish, egg yolks and fortified orange juice, and calcium, such as yogurt, nuts, broccoli and kale.

Ask your physician if you need a supplement. “Calcium carbonate or calcium citrate can help, and are easily absorbed,” says Diemer.

Moseley recommends engaging in physical activities at least three to five days a week, for roughly 30 minutes per session. “It doesn’t have to be pumping iron,” she explains. “Remember that even walking counts. Get outside for a brisk walk, get off the couch, lift light weights, dance if you enjoy it—anything that keeps you moving. Do your best, and remember that if you don’t move it, you lose it.” ■

Jackie Duda is a Maryland-based writer.



SCREEN TEST

Bones can also deteriorate prematurely due to genetics, chronic illnesses, certain medications, or smoking and alcohol consumption.

If you’ve suffered a fracture or have a family history of osteoporosis; are taking medications like high-dose, long-term steroids; or have chronic conditions, you should consult your doctor about getting a DEXA screening. DEXA (dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry), a quick, noninvasive imaging test, measures bone density (strength).

If you’re concerned about your risk, ask about taking a fracture risk assessment.

Primary care physicians are often the point people for screenings, as are rheumatologists. You also might need to see an endocrinologist, a hormone specialist, for a more detailed work-up and treatment options.—JD

LEFT: © SEVENTYFOUR; ABOVE: ARTINSPIRING / STOCKADOB.COM

Never too late

If you’ve already been diagnosed with osteoporosis, it’s not too late. Continue to stay active, and ask your doctor

about adding an oral or intravenous bone-building medication to your treatment plan. Consider working with a trainer to find an exercise program that is safe and suits your abilities. Physical

therapy can also be great for learning fall prevention, plus core exercises to promote healthy posture and lower-body exercises to help with general body strengthening.—JD



Buyers' picks

Product selections from Costco's Health and Beauty buying team



Anna Forbush Jessica Rodgers Lindsay Bubitz

Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Hand Soap Variety Pack

This hand soap set from Mrs. Meyer's includes four scents: rain water, compassion flower, lemon verbena and clementine. I love the story behind the compassion flower hand soap. From how they select flowers symbolizing compassion—such as viola and yellow pansy—to how they partnered with children to plant flower seeds to spread kindness and understanding all over the world, it's an uplifting and sweet reminder every time I wash my hands. This scent is floral, fresh and inviting, and the essential oils and thoughtfully chosen ingredients leave my hands smelling great! Item 1721762. Warehouses only.—*Lindsay Bubitz*



Always Pure Cotton with FlexFoam Pads

Crafted with a 100% premium cotton top layer, Always Pure Cotton with FlexFoam is period protection I feel confident wearing. Along with being free of dyes, fragrances and chlorine bleaching, these pads feature super-absorbent holes that quickly pull liquid into the core, so I feel dry all day long. They are also thin and flexible, so the pad moves with me; in fact, I can't even feel I'm wearing it. Item 1613068. Warehouses/Costco.com.—*Jessica Rodgers*

Vital Proteins Collagen Peptides with Vitamin C, Lemon Flavor, 26.5 oz.

With 20 grams of grass-fed and pasture-raised collagen peptides and zero grams of sugar per serving, this new flavor offered by Vital Proteins can be prepared either hot or cold and provides skin, hair, nail and joint support. I enjoy the refreshing lemon flavor cold in the spring and summer, using my frother to really mix it up. I'm also happy that Vital Proteins is looking out for our planet's sustainability by removing the disposable plastic scoops. Item 1714941. Warehouses/Costco.com.

—*Anna Forbush*





Garlic Butter Crab Legs

© PAM NELSON (FORTHETOLOVEFOODCOOKING.NET)

Dungeness crabs

A sweet and easy seafood treat that can be enjoyed on its own or in a variety of dishes

by MILLY DAWSON

We use the word “crabby” to describe someone mean and cranky, but Dungeness crabs’ appeal lies in their sweet and tender meat. Harvested in chilly Pacific waters between California and Alaska, they delight the eyes, with pure white body meat and white leg meat that shows a rosy tinge.

Named for Dungeness, Washington, where they were first harvested commercially, these crabs are flexible about where they live, inhabiting both the shallows and the depths of the ocean. They’re flexible in recipes too, starring in crab Louie salad and cioppino, a seafood stew.

Dungeness crabs are available cooked as whole crabs, legs only or in sections called clusters, which comprise several legs attached to a portion of the body.

They taste amazing simply boiled and eaten straight from the shell with lemon and melted butter. Cook extra for later use, and toss the meat into a soup or pasta sauce just before serving.

Refrigerated in an airtight container, whole steamed crabs are best eaten before day three. Cooked crab that has been sitting out should be eaten within two hours.

Low in fat, Dungeness crab abounds in heart-healthy omega-3 fats. According to the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, a 3-ounce cooked serving delivers 19 grams of protein, 94 calories and minerals including calcium, magnesium and zinc.

Typically, 2 pounds of whole crab yields about 8 ounces of meat, which should be enough for two people. If you serve many sides with them, smaller amounts of crab will suffice. Clusters range from 8 to 12 ounces, and an average serving is two to three clusters.

Dungeness crab keeps in the freezer for nine to 12 months. Thaw it slowly, covered, in the refrigerator for 12 to 24 hours and consume it within three days.

Whatever recipes you choose, remember how sweet and delicate Dungeness crab is and avoid overwhelming its delicious flavor with too many strong spices. ■

Milly Dawson is a Florida-based writer who covers food and health.



© CHRIS A RUSNAK

Garlic Butter Crab Legs

½ cup butter

3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced

1 Tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped

Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes

Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper, to taste

2 large Dungeness crabs, cooked, cleaned and legs separated into clusters

Lemon wedges, for serving

Heat the butter in a large skillet over medium heat; add the garlic, parsley, crushed red pepper flakes, sea salt and freshly cracked pepper.

Add the crab leg clusters and turn over to coat evenly. Cover tightly with a lid; steam the crab legs for 3 to 5 minutes. Remove the lid; toss to thoroughly coat the crab leg clusters with the butter sauce. Place the clusters on a platter. Serve with the remaining garlic butter on the side and lemon wedges. Makes 2 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Pam Nelson (fortheloveofcooking.net)

Dungeness Crab Cakes

1 whole egg

⅓ cup mayonnaise

2 Tbsp chives or scallions, finely chopped

2 Tbsp red bell

pepper, finely diced

2 Tbsp celery,

finely diced

1 Tbsp fresh dill, finely chopped

1 tsp Old Bay seasoning

Juice of ½ lemon

1½ cups panko

breadcrumbs, divided

1 lb fresh Dungeness crabmeat, picked over

1 Tbsp olive oil

Preheat oven to 375 F. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

Whisk the egg in a medium bowl. Blend the mayonnaise, chives, bell pepper, celery, dill, seasoning and lemon juice. Stir in ½ cup of breadcrumbs. Gently fold in the crabmeat. Divide the mixture into 6 equal portions. Shape each into a small patty about 3 inches in diameter and ¾ inch thick. Place crab cakes on a plate; refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, put the remaining breadcrumbs in a bowl and toss with the olive oil. Spread out the crumbs on the lined baking sheet. Oven-toast them just until golden, about 3 to 4 minutes.

Transfer the breadcrumbs to a shallow plate. Place the crab cakes in the breadcrumbs and press down gently to coat each side.

Transfer the crab cakes to the lined baking sheet. Bake on the middle oven rack for 20 minutes, until golden and heated through. Transfer to a serving plate. Makes 6 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Pat Nyswonger (savorthebest.com)



COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find Dungeness crab clusters in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.com.



Noosa's plant and office (right) are located next to Morning Fresh Dairy Farm in Bellvue, Colorado.

COURTESY OF NOOSA YOGHURT

Hometown flavor

Costco yogurt supplier Noosa focuses on quality, unique flavor and sustainable practices

by DAN JONES

One taste was all it took to change Koel Thomae's life. The supply chain manager and operations consultant—an Aussie who'd been living in Colorado—was delighted by the velvety texture and fresh fruit flavor of a yogurt she discovered while visiting her hometown of Noosa, Australia, in 2007.

The yogurt so impressed her that two years later she worked out an agreement for the licensing of the recipe with the family that made it.

With the recipe in hand, Thomae sought a business partner to form the brand Noosa. She found Rob Graves, a fifth-generation farmer at Morning Fresh Dairy in Bellvue, Colorado. After sampling the yogurt, Graves says he was immediately sold as well. By 2009, the two were selling Noosa, using whole milk from Graves' family's cows.

Morning Fresh Dairy plays a key role in Noosa's success. The yogurt begins with milk straight from the dairy. To ensure that it's as wholesome as it can be, the farm grows alfalfa and grain to feed to its cows. The animals are housed in sand-

bedded free-stall barns and corrals where they have space to roam freely while staying clean and dry. The barns feature dropping side panels that are used on cold, windy days to keep the cows warm, and on the hot days, fans are turned on and the panels are rolled up to make it cooler.

Every batch of yogurt is infused with a touch of wildflower honey for a unique, lightly sweetened taste, and Noosa works with partners around the country to secure the fruits that go into the yogurt.

After 36 quality assurance tests—including for consistency, texture and the amount of fruit purée and cultures—each batch is ready to be shipped.

It all adds up to make a yogurt worth trying.

"When your cows are happy and content, they produce a richer, creamier milk," Graves explains. "We just take extra care—and I enjoy the heck out of making yogurt." ■

SUSTAINABILITY

Morning Fresh Dairy's farm uses more than half of the water reclaimed by Noosa's state-of-the-art water treatment plant. Noosa has also recycled or repurposed over 1.2 million pounds of cardboard and, in 2021, replaced its smaller-tub plastic lids with easy-peel-off tops, saving 170 tons of plastic to date from going into landfills.

Additionally, Noosa donated 3,000 peach trees to a local farm that was affected by an abnormally late frost season in 2020.—DJ

COSTCO CONNECTION

You can find Noosa 12-packs with blueberry, strawberry-rhubarb and lemon flavors (Item 1043301) in most Costco warehouses.



© COSTCO PHOTO STUDIO

Alex Kanenwisher
Buyer, Books



Until science gives us a time machine, books are the next best option to step into the past. Lisa See's *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* does just that, transporting readers to 15th century China.

Tan Yunxian, who is born into an elite family, learns about women's illnesses under the tutelage of her grandmother. But when she is sent into an arranged marriage, she must play the part of a good wife and leave her medical pursuits behind.

Lady Tan's Circle of Women (Item 1742626; 6/6) is available in most Costco warehouses.



Lisa See

© PATRICIA WILLIAMS

Women's work

A 15th century Chinese physician breaks boundaries, builds relationships

by HOPE KATZ GIBBS

According to Confucius, "An educated woman is a worthless woman," explains bestselling author Lisa See in her newest historical novel, *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*.

"Let's just say Confucius didn't have a lot of love or respect for women, and also famously said a woman should never go more than three steps outside her front door," See tells the *Connection* from her home in Los Angeles. "And yet, many women in China broke through those ideas and carved out exceptional lives for themselves."

The protagonist of See's latest book, Tan Yunxian, a woman physician in 15th century China who was born into an elite family, is a case in point. See discovered her in 2020 when she was in lockdown and couldn't travel to do research. "I was moping around at home like many of us were during lockdown, feeling totally at loose ends because I couldn't do what I love to do. I was walking by the bookshelves in my office when the spine of one of the books jumped out at me."

The book was about pregnancy and childbirth in the Ming dynasty. On page 19, See found a mention of Tan Yunxian, who had written her own book, *Miscellaneous Records of a Female Doctor*. See ordered it immediately, and soon after, her imagination went to work, conjuring up a historical novel based on Yunxian's life, which includes the fact that Yunxian is sent to live with her grandmother, one of only a handful of female doctors in China. There, she learns the pillars of Chinese medicine, including the Four Examinations: looking, listening, touching and asking.

"This is something a male doctor could never do with a female patient," says See, who unfurls a thrilling adventure about what women can accomplish when they work together. "Yunxian breaks free of many traditions, including coping with an arranged marriage at 15 and going on to lead a life of importance. Many of her medical remedies are still used five centuries later."

Born in Paris, See grew up in Los Angeles with her mother, Carolyn See, who was also a writer, and spent a lot of time with her father's family in Chinatown.

"My great-great-grandfather came here to work on the building of the railroad, and my great-grandfather came and stayed and became the godfather patriarch of Los Angeles Chinatown," says See, noting he had four wives, one of whom was white. "When I was a girl, I had about 400 relatives. Maybe a dozen looked like me. When I looked around, I saw Chinese faces, and what I experienced was Chinese culture, Chinese tradition, Chinese language and Chinese food. And that's why I write the kinds of books that I do."

Lady Tan's Circle of Women is See's 12th book. Other titles, some award-winning, include *The Island of Sea Women*, *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* and *Dreams of Joy*.

Those bestsellers have garnered honors for See, who was named National Woman of the Year by the Organization of Chinese American Women in 2001. Among many other accolades, in 2017, she received a Golden Spike Award from the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.

Like See herself, Yunxian has formed a broad circle of women she cares for, and who care for her. See says, "I think it's a universal truth that women rely on other women for emotional support when things are difficult. We also want female friends whom we can laugh with and just have fun. That was true in 15th century China, as it is today in America. We simply find ways to help each other persist and endure. It's the power of being a woman." ■

Hope Katz Gibbs is a journalist and author living in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.



Stacy Wells
Assistant Buyer, Books

"The idea is to invite one best friend from each phase of your life."

—ELIN HILDERBRAND

Trip down memory lane



The Five-Star Weekend (Item 1742625; 6/13) will be available in most Costco warehouses.

In Elin Hilderbrand's *The Five-Star Weekend*, when food blogger Hollis Shaw's seemingly perfect life starts to fall apart, she throws herself a weekend gathering featuring people from her past.

Costco Connection What inspired this particular storyline?

Elin Hilderbrand I heard about the "five-star weekend" concept from a friend who was attending a version of this weekend on Nantucket. The idea is to invite one best friend from each phase of your life. As soon as she told me about it, I thought, well, that's a novel. My version ended up being vastly different (and I'm sure more dramatic) than the real-life weekend.

CC What is it about Nantucket that appeals to you as a setting?

EH Even though I've lived on Nantucket for 30 years, it still feels like a fairy tale to me: the historically preserved whaling captains' homes downtown, the cobblestone streets and brick sidewalks. Then there's the natural beauty—ponds, moors, 50 miles of pristine golden beach. It's always ready for its close-up.

CC What else would you like readers to know about this book?

EH This is a novel about female friendship, mothers and daughters, and healing—but mostly, it's about forgiveness. In this case, five-star forgiveness.

Also at Costco.com

Get children engaged in the great outdoors with the *DK Eyewitness Nature Explorer* box set. Packed with information and activities, this set is a great

way to get kids away from screens. It's also an ideal resource for home activities and school projects. Recommended for children ages 8 to 12, this collection includes six books and six posters.

Topics covered include bugs, weather, birds, rocks and fossils, and more.

The DK Eyewitness Nature Explorer box set (Item 1742627) is available now at Costco.com.—AK





All that glitters

Costco jewelry offers quality and savings that sparkle

by KATIE COLEMAN



COSTCO PHOTO STUDIO

Katie Coleman fills this month's consumer reporter slot with this behind-the-scenes look at a Costco program. Email questions about this article to connection@costco.com.

When my now-husband and I got engaged 10 years ago, I was shocked to find out my engagement ring, with its gorgeous platinum band and near-flawless shimmering cushion-cut diamond center stone, was from Costco—the same place we get our rotisserie chickens and athleisure wear. However, I was even more taken aback when it was appraised for a third more than its initial cost. My experience isn't out of the norm. In fact, it's just one of the reasons why Costco's jewelry department continues to—pardon the pun—shine.

Golden opportunity

From one-of-a-kind rings, earrings and necklaces to an array of gemstone jewelry, Costco leverages its buying power while working with fine-jewelry vendors specializing in gold, diamonds and gemstones. Rachel Reid, a Costco jewelry buyer, explains, "For us on the diamond side, we are able to leverage pricing through our

vendor relationships, along with the volume we buy, in order to provide the best value and the best-quality diamonds."

Kris Cramer, also a Costco jewelry buyer, has a similar approach on the gold side: "We find vendors that can support Costco's quality, pricing, volume and production timelines. We want to offer better quality at a better price, which is really the crux of everything we do."

Not so hidden treasure

Costco goes to great lengths to ensure the quality of all diamonds, pearls and gemstones it sells. Reid says the company employs almost two dozen Gemological Institute of America (GIA) graduate gemologists as part of its quality control measures.

"We have to pass a rigorous course on diamond grading, as well as identifying color stones, to receive a graduate gemologist diploma from GIA," says Lisa Switzer, quality control manager and graduate gemologist at Costco. "This gives us the

“You’re not going to find a lot of pieces that we carry anywhere else.”

— KRIS CRAMER
Costco jewelry buyer ★



tools to be able to verify that our jewelry meets Costco’s high quality standards.” Many of Costco’s gemologists worked in the jewelry industry prior to joining the company, and Cramer and Reid stress that these individuals have brought valuable knowledge and experience to Costco’s quality control team.

Part of this quality is explained in detail in Costco’s online “Jewelry Buying Guide.” Cramer and Reid urge members to read the guide ([costco.com/jewelry-buying-guide-diamonds.html](https://www.costco.com/jewelry-buying-guide-diamonds.html)) for an in-depth look at Costco’s strict standards for its jewelry.

A special investment

Quality and value are very important aspects of any purchase, but when you buy fine jewelry, you want something that’s exceptional and special. “Costco’s co-founder, Jim Sinegal, would always say jewelry is one of those departments that sets the tone to the member, because it’s so

unique in what we offer,” Cramer explains. “You’re not going to find a lot of pieces that we carry anywhere else.”

According to Reid, Costco sells one-of-a-kind necklaces, earrings and rings that feature gold, platinum, diamonds, gemstones and pearls. “Our unique jewelry offerings truly create a treasure hunt for our members,” she says. “And the elevated quality we carry rivals even the most high-end retailers, really showcasing the value Costco provides to our members.”

Thanks to Costco’s substantial buying power and efforts to provide the best possible items at the lowest possible price, Costco jewelry continues to lend a unique (and literal) treasure-hunt feel to members’ shopping experience. Cramer adds with a smile, “Seeing jewelry I helped pick out on our members is the best feeling.” ■

ONLINE OFFERINGS

Costco warehouses typically showcase about 200 jewelry items, whereas Costco.com is able to offer nearly five times the selection. “Along with a bigger assortment, you can order men’s and women’s rings in a variety of sizes and settings such as platinum or yellow, rose and white gold,” says Rachel Reid, a Costco jewelry buyer. “In the warehouse, settings and sizes are limited.”

The team also says that 60% of their sales are through Costco.com. This means that more than half the items—which are sold for hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars—are purchased sight unseen. This is significant, because it shows the trust members place in Costco. While it might be a small department, Reid explains, “we provide a tremendous value to members.”—KC

Costco’s diamond color and clarity guarantee

Internally Flawless	Very Very Slightly Included	Very Slightly Included	Slightly Included	Included
IF	VVS1 VVS2	VS1 VS2	S1 S2	I1 I2 I3
Colorless	Near Colorless	Slightly Tinted	Very Light Yellow	Light Yellow to Fancy Yellow
DEF	GH IJ	KLM	NOPQR	STUVWXYZ

All diamonds offered by Costco are **VS2** clarity or better and **I** color or better, based on the Gemological Institute of America grading scale.



Hyatt Ziva Cancun

Located within the lively Cancun hotel zone, this all-inclusive resort welcomes guests of all ages. The resort features a variety of dining options, including a microbrewery and a sweet shop, a kids' club with a water park, a teen's lounge and the relaxing Zen Spa. For an elevated experience, stay in the Club section or the adults-only Turquoise section and receive additional amenities. Costco Travel's package includes a Digital Costco Shop Card. To learn more, visit [CostcoTravel.com](https://www.costcotravel.com).



Liquid I.V. Hydration Multiplier Tropical Punch Enjoy 30 on-the-go packets for delicious hydration. Item 1721497. **Costco.com only.** Available in warehouse mid-June.

The latest Costco finds



SanDisk Extreme Go 1TB Portable SSD

This high-capacity drive features up to 1,050 megabits-per-second (MBps) read speed and 1,000 MBps write speed. Item 1733090. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



GoPro Hero 11 Black Action Camera Bundle

Get incredible highlight videos. The larger image sensor delivers an extra-large field of view, letting you instantly share vertical shots to social media. It also features HyperSmooth 5.0 Stabilization with Horizon Lock. Includes two Enduro batteries, 64GB microSD card, case and mini extension pole. Item 6094011. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



English Laundry Men's Chino Pant

Soft, light, cool and comfortable, these chinos provide all-day ease and feature a flexible waistband and an everyday straight leg fit. Sizes: 30–42. Colors: blue, tan, green. Selection varies by location. Item 1671229. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



Glacier Men's Performance Joggers

Perfect for working out or lounging, these joggers feature four-way stretch with wicking, a comfort waistband and a drawcord. Available in several colors. Sizes: S–XXL. Item 1617869. **Warehouses only.**



Three Dots Ladies' Pull-On Short

For a relaxed but polished warm-weather look, these airy, textured gauze shorts feature a smocked waistband and delicate trim along the side pockets. Sizes: XS–XXL. Available in several colors/designs. Sizes and colors may vary by location. Item 1670889. **Warehouses only.**



Weatherproof Men's Golf Jacket This classically styled microfibre golf jacket is a lightweight staple not only for the links, but for all seasons. Features include welt pockets with hidden snaps and an inside left chest pocket with zipper. Available in multiple sizes and colors. **CostcoNext.com only.**



Los Cabos: Zadún, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve Step into a modern oasis where the desert meets the sea at the only Ritz-Carlton Reserve in Mexico. Enjoy dedicated butler service throughout your stay, choose from four on-site restaurants, and unwind in the Spa Alkemia. Costco Travel's package includes daily breakfast for two and a \$100 resort credit. To learn more, visit **CostcoTravel.com.**

FOR SCHEDULES & DESCRIPTIONS

Go to Costco.com or download the Costco mobile app from the App Store or Google Play. Click “Shop” and find “Special Events” to view the online items and events schedules.



Infinity Massage Chairs

Infinity massage chairs are the result of relentless engineering and innovation. Prized for their quality, durability and sophisticated design, Infinity massage chairs have become a welcome source for massage relief.



Lovesac Sactionals

Not only can Lovesac Sactionals be easily rearranged to perfectly accommodate every occasion, but you can also transform their color and style to always match your tastes. Washable, rearrangeable, changeable and moveable, they provide peace of mind by adapting to your evolving needs.

A limited-time showcase of exciting products



Customizable Bullfrog Spas

Relieve your pain, soak away stress and reconnect with loved ones. Thanks to the patented JetPak Therapy System™ you can personalize Bullfrog Spas® to fit your specific needs. Enjoy relaxing while saving energy and money with this state-of-the-art hot tub.

WAREHOUSE HOURS

Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–8:30 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Pharmacy closed Sunday
Costco.com 24 hours a day,
7 days a week



Traeger Pellet Grills

Fueled by all-natural hardwood pellets, Traeger pellet grills offer epic wood-fired flavor, endless cooking possibilities and the next-level convenience of WiFIRE® Wi-Fi control in select models.



MEMBER INFO

Who

Brandon Silenzi

Hometown

Hamilton, Ontario

Occupation

Founder of 905 Gloves

Instagram

@905gloves

Best part of the job

"I like hearing the background story of the glove, especially if it's an older one. It's a great feeling when I give back the restored glove and the owner says, 'Wow.' "

—Brandon Silenzi



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: © HOLLY SILENZI; BRANDON SILENZI

Fits like a glove

Brandon Silenzi understands that a baseball glove is a prized possession. In 2020, he started a side business called 905 Gloves to repair baseball and softball gloves. When he's not at his full-time job as a mechanical pipe insulator, Silenzi enjoys mending and upgrading gloves in his home workshop. Often, he takes the glove apart completely, then restores

the leather, rebuilds the inner padding and meticulously weaves in new laces.

"I use special lacing tools such as needles and awls, as well as leather sewing accessories," Silenzi explains. "Breaking in or reshaping a glove requires a mallet, a pounding pad and a bit of elbow grease."

Clients have asked Silenzi to create brand-new custom gloves, swiftly replace broken laces in midseason and revive beloved vintage gloves. He can also repair other sports equipment, like a hockey goalie's trapper. —Kristi York

Counterclockwise from bottom:

Wilson A2000 Series catcher's mitt, before and after restoration; a Wilson A2000 Series M1 catcher's mitt, before and after restoration; Brandon Silenzi in his workshop.