

SAN ANTONIO

# TASTE

*A culinary & design magazine*



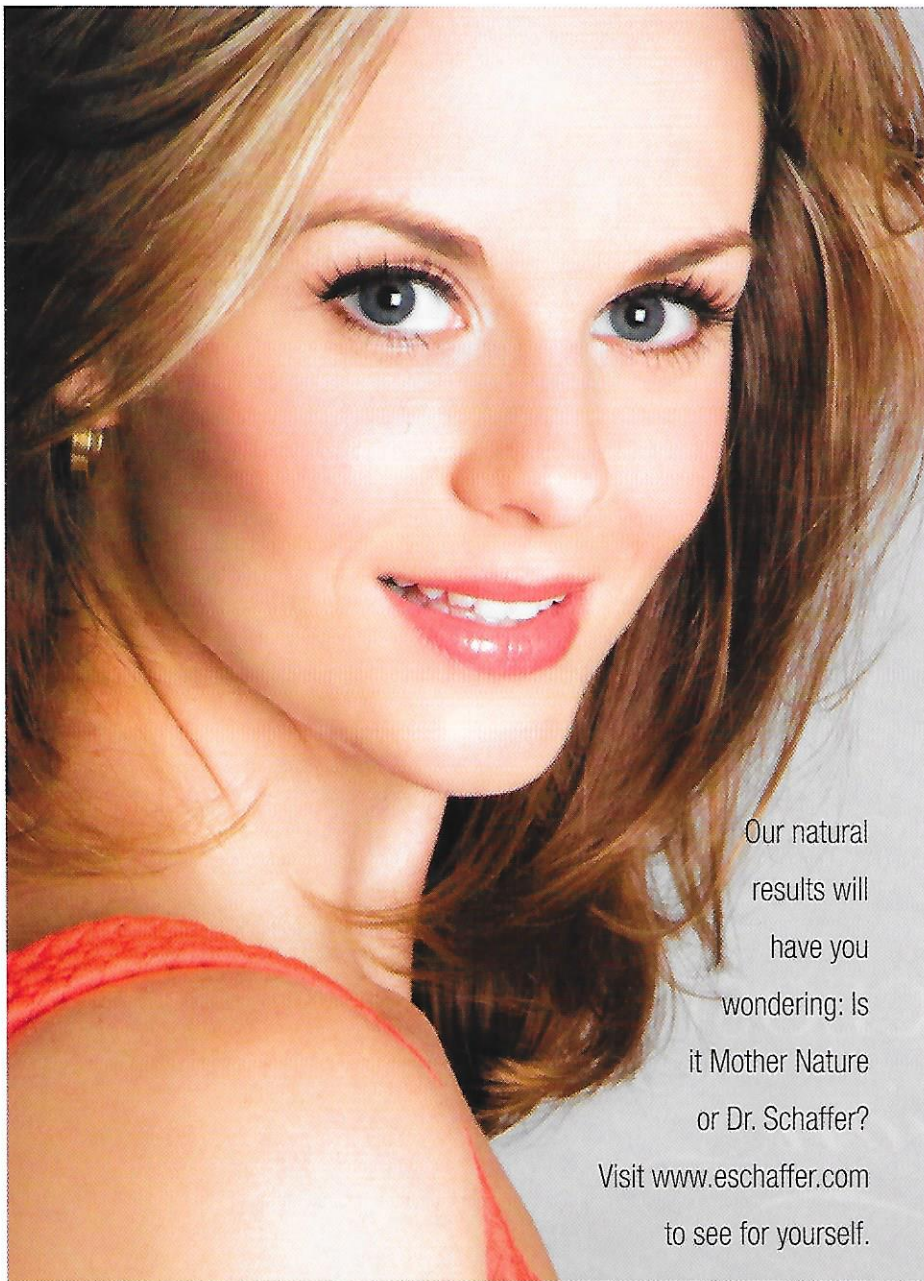
DEN/JAN 2012

\$4.99



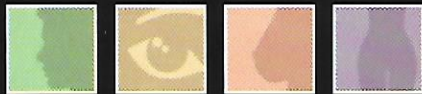
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# SAN ANTONIO TASTE

*A culinary & design magazine*

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DECEMBER/JANUARY 2012

*Vol. 2, No 4*

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# NOTE

*from the editor*



This issue marks the first bi-monthly of *San Antonio TASTE* and an exciting time as we continue delivering the best in local culinary arts, home design and entertaining, now with greater frequency. As the New Year approaches (yes, you are holding the Dec-Jan 2012 issue), we reflect on the magazine's launch less than two years ago and look forward to building on our mission to provide readers with beautiful photos and stories that both inform and inspire. This issue's cover wreath, designed by Courtney Wilson, exemplifies the tasteful blend of food, design and entertainment we've become known for.

What better time to celebrate our growth than during the holidays, when summer has lost its grasp and we can again entertain the notion of cooking warm meals and gathering with friends and family. When I was growing up, my mother invited the neighbors over once a month for coffee. There was always a dessert of some sort and the opportunity, for my mother at least, to pull out beautiful tableware. The coffee itself wasn't so important, but it was a symbol of our communal nature and how food brings people together. Think of all the relationships that have been fostered over a cup of coffee. For our feature about the comforting beverage (page 42), we

sought out the most prized bean and the perfect roast, all the while realizing that a cup of joe tastes better with company and when served in the right vessel. Artist Diana Kersey and Buck Pottery owners Dee and Terry Buck assured us that no two cups of coffee are exactly alike (page 48).

We also resurrected fondue, a communal classic of generations past, and discovered that the 17th century Swiss concoction is not so cheesy, but rather still groovy after all these years. So, dust off that avocado-green pot and dip into some old and new recipes (page 22).

One of the great things about living in San Antonio is being a short drive from so many "day-cay" or "stay-cay" destinations. This holiday season, we take you to Boerne, which to me feels more like a getaway than part of our metropolitan statistical area. I am certain my blood pressure drops just about the time I merge onto Main Street; I experienced this calmness during a recent visit to Cindy Atkins' home, a hidden gem of Texas lore I didn't want to leave. Atkins remodeled the Vogt-Clegg House, circa 1860, with both purpose and respect for its place in Texas history (page 76). Boerne's annual Dickens on Main event kicks off Nov. 26 and offers the ideal opportunity to see what's happening along the newly developed Hill Country Mile, a public/private project that is transforming downtown Boerne with parks, trails and bridges. We've included a schedule of holiday events along with where to eat, shop and stay (page 58).

Finally, at the dawning of a new year, we felt it fitting to offer some food for thought. San Antonio's vegetarian community has grown significantly over the past few years. We looked at the health benefits of adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet and have included hearty, flavor-packed recipes – sprouts optional. We also visited with the founders of the Por Vida movement, a restaurant recognition initiative working to make our city healthier, one dish at a time (page 32).

Thanks for joining us at our table and on our journey. Until next year, visit us at [www.sataste.com](http://www.sataste.com) and [www.facebook.com/sataste](http://www.facebook.com/sataste).

*Michele McMurry*

Michele McMurry  
Editor-in-Chief

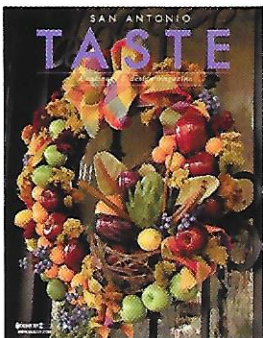


# CONTENTS

FEATURES



32



**On the cover**  
 Culinary wreath  
 by Courtney Wilson  
 Photo by Pauline Stevens



48

**22**

## RENDEZ-DUE

Fondue: the return of a communal classic

**32**

## VEGAN-EASE

Vegetarian options are sprouting in San Antonio

**42**

## A BETTER BREW

The ultimate cup of coffee begins with the bean

**48**

## MUG UP

Artistic mugs by Diana Kersey and Bucks Pottery



# CONTENTS

## DEPARTMENTS

94



64

*GET THIS*

**104**  
HOT ESPRESSO  
MACHINES

*AL FRESCO*

**86**  
ENTERTAINING  
TO A TEE

This chic backyard campout redefines roughing it

*IN EVERY ISSUE*

**20**  
FROM THE EDITOR

**106**  
FOODIE SPOTLIGHT

Author Patricia Hart McMillan's "Delicious Christmas Decorations"

**108**  
FOOD ART

Watercolorist Ric Dentinger's forbidden fruit

**114**  
SWEET ENDINGS

Candied apples, at the core of holiday entertaining

**110**  
RECIPES

*ON THE TABLE*

**64**  
AROMAS OF THE SEASON  
Designer Courtney Wilson showcases holiday wreaths that look good enough to eat

*KITCHEN CULTURE*

**76**  
WHAT'S OLD IS NEW  
Boerne resident Cindy Atkins' timeless kitchen

*EXCURSIONS*

**58**  
DESTINATION: BOERNE  
The Hill Country Mile development, holiday happenings and where to eat, stay and play

*SALUD!*

**94**  
LIGHTS AND FLIGHTS  
Pairings from the humidor and cellar

**100**  
OM ...  
Sommelier-turned-yogi Carlos Gomez talks about balance



**CARLOS GOMEZ** LIVES THE LIFE OF A YOGI, ONE OF PATIENCE, TOLERANCE AND DISCIPLINE.

# The Vine Less Traveled

BY MICHELE MCMURRY  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN GEIL

He also misses the ocean, the nose of a fine wine and his Mexico City grandmother's paella.

**H**appiness is about balance, Gomez says, transitioning seamlessly from surf talk to *Asampranjata*, what yoga practice defines as the highest super-conscious state.

The sommelier-turned-yoga instructor, well-versed in oenology and the 26 Hatha postures developed by Bikram Choudhury (which Gomez rolls off in English, French and Spanish), shares with TASTE his path to the 60-day challenge that changed his life.

## RUTA DE VINO

Carlos Gomez de Orozco Garcia Lascurain was born in Mexico City and moved to Acapulco when he was 8. His father pursued a passion for cooking in Acapulco during the '60s before earning a master's degree in engineering from Stanford University. "People just weren't chefs then," Gomez says. His dad, he says, adopted a "flow chart" approach to cuisine, studying the principles of spices and flavor

combinations to come up with his own recipes. Gomez' mother, a student of applied mathematics and systems engineering, shared the enthusiasm for wine and food. "Mealtime was a two- to three-hour event," Gomez says with his contagious smile. "I love food; I definitely got that from him. My mom loves to have a good time, and I got that from her."

Gomez' love of wine came early on as well, during a one-year sojourn in Paris with an aunt who worked at the Mexican embassy. Enjoying wine as the French do at almost every meal introduced him to the concept of marrying wine with cuisine. In the late '90s, he studied oceanography at Universidad Autonoma de Baja California in the town of Ensenada, a then-emerging area for boutique wineries. After his first year of college, he befriended Paula Pijoan, daughter of vintner Pau Pijoan.

"He (Pau) taught me about making wine, harvesting, crushing and barreling," Gomez says. "They became





my adoptive family while in college.”

At that time, Pijoan was at the forefront of the Escuela de Oficios movement that spawned interest in viticulture across Baja’s Valle de Guadalupe. Wines produced at Viñas Pijoan embrace the area’s hot and breezy terroir, and cater mostly to a sophisticated niche in Mexico City. “The vines are old enough now to where they’re making really good wines,” Gomez says. “They are the pride of Mexican wines; not many are exported.”

Challenged post-college with earning a living in oceanic research, Gomez returned to Acapulco, where he applied for a job at the Fairmont Princess Hotel. “I spoke several languages, so they hired me to run their cellar.” It had gone unmanaged for two years, he says.

The ’70s-glam hotel, where Howard Hughes spent his final years, offered a collection of auction-worthy labels.

“They had amazing wines,” Gomez says. “They were just there, and no one knew their worth.” His tastings included a 1980 (his birth year) Château Lafite-Rothschild. “I liked that I had those wines to work with.” He carries the label for luck.

The Fairmont also sent Gomez on winery visits guided by Mexican “rock star” sommelier Pedro Poncelis, who taught him a great deal about grapes and vines, wine making and pairing. A career in wine seemed meant to be.

## RUTA DE KARMA

In 2008, Yoga College of India founder Bikram Choudhury hosted a yoga seminar at the hotel. “He bought a couple of good California cabs,” Gomez recalls. He also suggested that Gomez attend one of his courses.

“I had the idea that yoga was new age and boring,” Gomez says. “But it challenged me. After the first or second week, I could not believe what I noticed in me and people around me.”

Choudhury encouraged Gomez to complete teacher training, introducing him to world-renowned instructor Lisa Ingle, co-director along with Stevan Falk of Bikram Yoga San Antonio. “It’s not that I chose San Antonio,” Gomez says, “but rather Bikram wanted me to have the best teacher, and Lisa took me under her wing and mentored me.” Gomez met Ingle while completing a portion of his certification in Acapulco. He finished his training here and then joined the Bikram Yoga San Antonio staff.

Gomez, who faced possible knee surgery a few years ago due to a surfing injury, says he’s in his best shape now. “After two months of yoga, it was as good as new.” Asthma and intestinal problems? “Gone.”

Plus, things just don’t bother him so much. “It builds a lot of mental discipline and focus, as well as tolerance and patience.”

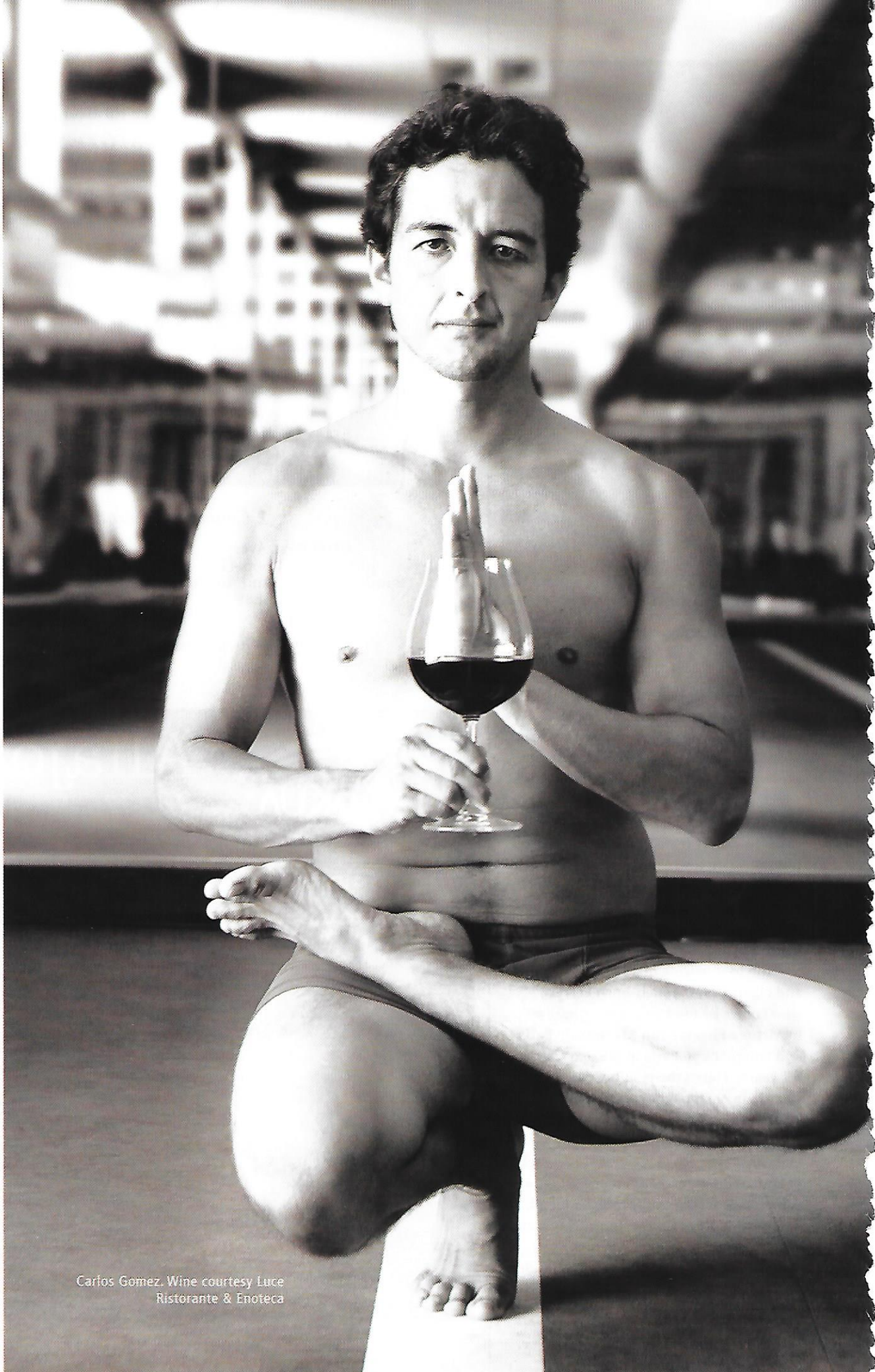
Yoga, he says, continually detoxifies the body, for example *Pavanamuktasana* (Wind-Removing Pose), which massages the ascending and descending colons.

So, that glass of pinot noir fits with the program. “Everything goes as long as you keep it in moderation,” he says. In fact, he claims that wine and beer contain enzymes to help with digestion and that dark chocolate and red wine contain antioxidants that improve circulation.

“I truly believe it’s about balance. If it makes you happy, that’s important. With yoga, you naturally make better choices.”

Not to mention his surfing has improved.





Carlos Gomez. Wine courtesy Luce  
Ristorante & Enoteca