

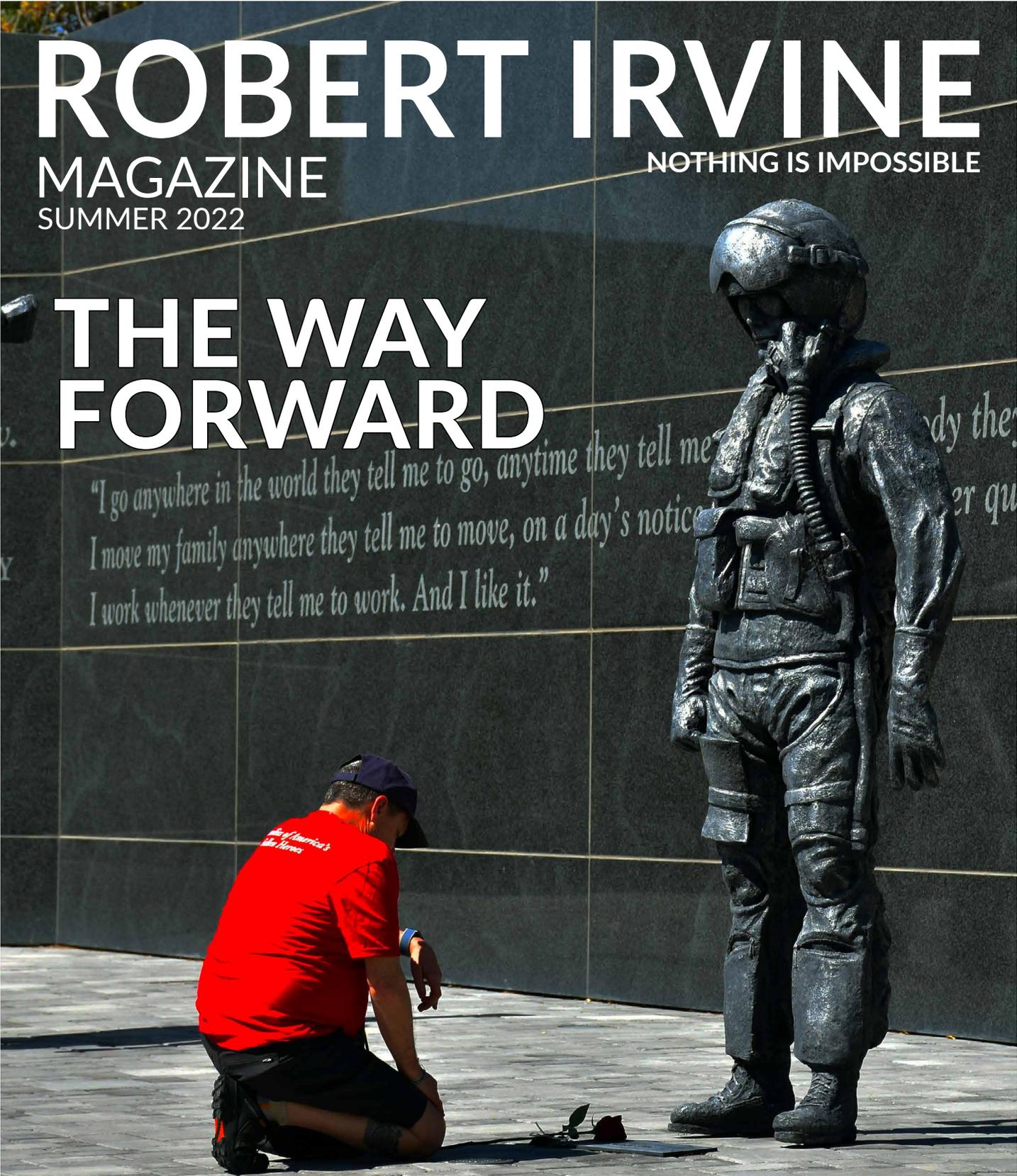
# ROBERT IRVINE

MAGAZINE  
SUMMER 2022

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

## THE WAY FORWARD

*"I go anywhere in the world they tell me to go, anytime they tell me to go. I move my family anywhere they tell me to move, on a day's notice. I work whenever they tell me to work. And I like it."*



**HOW GOLD STAR FAMILIES FIND HEALING THROUGH 'TAPS' – AND HOW ROBERT HELPS /// BY MATT TUTHILL**

# ROBERT IRVINE MAGAZINE

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

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# SHARED VALUES

Our cover story on TAPS is a unique look at a vitally important organization, and will show you exactly why I'm proud to throw my full support behind their mission.

The impetus to make the Robert Irvine family of brands a global force—with everything from foods and liquor to protein bars and television growing and succeeding to its full potential—is the fact that when these companies win, no one wins bigger than the Robert Irvine Foundation. And when that happens, we can serve even more veterans, first responders, and their families.

I repeat this point often, not just because it's true, but because it reminds every employee—and every customer—that we've got a north star that's different from other places. Our mission is to serve those who have served their country, so as you go about your day—as mundane as it might seem—you're reminded the stakes are still incredibly high.

As my companies have grown, the Robert Irvine Foundation has enjoyed the best success of its history in the past two years. We've raised more money and made a bigger impact than we ever have before, with our direct outreach efforts continually expanding, resulting more grants given, mobility devices purchased, veteran shelters renovated, meals and protein bars donated, and much more.



Follow Robert on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

# ROBERT'S LETTER

But our mission doesn't end with direct outreach. We also support a number of other stellar military service organizations such as the Gary Sinise Foundation, the USO, and TAPS, or Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, which you'll read about in our cover story on Pg. 21. The short version for our purposes here: no one does more for the survivors—family, friends, and battle buddies—of fallen military heroes than TAPS.

In our cover story, *RI Magazine's* Matt Tuthill observed a TAPS men's retreat this summer in Las Vegas and interviewed many of the survivors to talk about their experience. The resulting piece is a brilliant summation of the incredible impact TAPS has had since its inception in 1994, and why I have devoted so much of my time and my companies' resources to veteran outreach. Through the survivors' stories—and accounts of what TAPS was able to offer them—our core values are revealed in a compelling way that I don't believe the magazine has ever done before.

I hope you'll read that story and, if it resonates with you, share it with someone you think might appreciate it. You never know who has been touched by the death of a fallen hero—or who might be compelled to step up and volunteer



Survivor James Hill, left, and Drew Sylvester speak about their fallen hero, Sergeant Jason Sylvester on the final night of the TAPS retreat.

or donate. Awareness of the unique challenges facing military families is still one of the biggest obstacles we face in our mission to help ensure better outcomes for those who serve. You never know: the simple act of sharing this issue could have a tremendously positive ripple effect. Won't you do that for me? Besides, you really can't beat the price.

I hope you're having a wonderful

and blessed summer, and I urge you to always remember the words I live by...

Nothing is impossible.

# Limitless Possibilities



For over 100 years, Easterseals has been the indispensable resource for children, adults, families and veterans living and thriving with disabilities and special needs in the region. Help strengthen our community and make a positive difference in people's lives with Limitless Possibilities. Donate today:



[donate.eseal.org](https://donate.eseal.org)



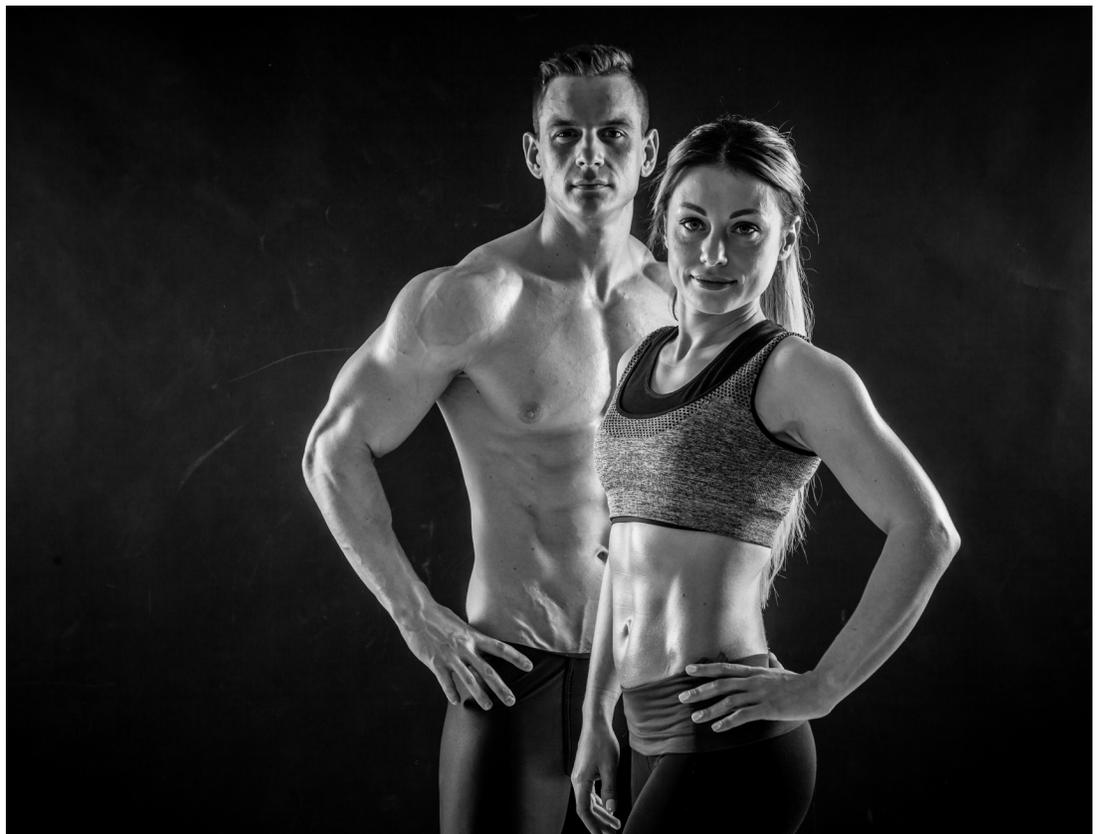
# THE REAL WAY TO LONG-TERM FAT LOSS

Why the old calorie restriction-and-cardio combo is a trap you need to avoid.

BY STEVE WRONA, C.S.C.S., CPT

It's supposed to be simple: burn more calories than you eat on a daily basis to burn that stubborn body fat. But why does something that is so seemingly simple prove to be so difficult? What happens when eating less and moving more stops working, and why do some people work so tirelessly but see little to no success?

The problem with eating less and moving more is that it doesn't seem to be an effective long-term strategy for keeping those pounds off. In fact, if you've tried dieting to lose weight in the past you've probably realized by now just how hard it is to achieve long-term weight loss. Restricting calories and doing cardio is a great way to lose weight in the short term, but the moment we decide to ease up on the structured cardio plan and go "off" our diet and



back to a more normal way of eating we often see all that extra weight come back with a vengeance. Many people rebound from a diet and wind up even heavier than they were before they began.

The problem is that with a lack of good information about how to achieve lasting success and

with so many mixed messages being spread in fitness media and the latest trends on social media, our heads spin and we seek the next quick fix or revert to what worked for us last time – eating less and moving more.

Here's why this is such a terrible cycle and why this approach doesn't work. Our daily calorie

# TRAINING: PRO TIPS

burn is a combination of a few different components. The most impactful of those components on our long-term success is our basal metabolic rate or BMR (the number of calories we burn at rest each day). The biggest factor in determining our BMR is our lean body mass (or lack thereof). A person with more muscle mass and more lean body mass will burn a heck of a lot more calories than somebody with very little muscle mass and less lean mass.

This is where we start to connect the dots and talk about why cardio and restrictive dieting is not helping you stay lean. Our bodies are fascinating machines.

They can adapt to almost any situation and are constantly listening to the signals we are sending them through our behaviors so that they can adapt and become more efficient. Doing lots of cardio sends a signal that the body needs to get better and more efficient at doing lots of cardio.

Since cardio does not require a lot of muscle mass, one way our body adapts in response to cardio is by getting rid of excess muscle in an effort to make cardio less calorically demanding. In regards to diet, eating a tiny amount of calories for a period of time sends a signal that the body needs to adapt to having less available energy. This can

also cause the body to get rid of some lean mass because muscle tissue requires a higher amount of calories to maintain and excess muscle is not vital for our survival. Adaptations to cardio and restrictive dieting usually include a reduction in lean body mass which is sometimes quite significant. With less lean body mass comes a lower BMR and a lower overall daily calorie burn. We are left at the end of our diet with a slower metabolism than when we started.

When we go back “off” the diet it’s even easier to regain the lost weight since our metabolism is slower and we are likely eating the same way we did before our



# TRAINING: PRO TIPS



trying to convince people of the many health benefits of strength training: A more aesthetically-pleasing body, an improved mood, a more youthful hormone profile, healthier blood lipids and cholesterol, decreased all-cause mortality, increased bone density, and less joint pain as a few would just be giving you the tip of the iceberg. In fact, there are few things in this world that provide as many benefits as a properly executed strength training program, and the biggest benefit

diet started. Now we're heavier than before we began and we've done damage to our metabolism. Is this starting to make sense? How can we lose weight and keep it off if every time we try we gain it right back and slow our metabolism down even further? The real horror in this lies in its cyclical pattern.

A person who has undergone multiple diets and relied on cardio as their primary catalyst for calorie burn will most likely have done so much metabolic damage that they will be left in one of two places: !) They are heavier than ever before with

less muscle mass, more body fat, and a metabolism that is so slow their old method of dieting and doing cardio seems to do nothing... or 2) They are skinny but not very muscular and the only way they can maintain that is by doing absurd amounts of physical activity and eating like a bird.

I don't know about you, but to me both of those positions sound like a very frustrating prison. Luckily for you, for me, and for anyone in those scenarios, there is a solution: and it begins in the weight room.

I've spent my entire career

when it comes to long-term fat loss is an increase in lean body mass.

When we build muscle by following a structured weight training program, we increase our BMR and boost our metabolism at rest.

Even just adding a few pounds of muscle can have a profound effect on our metabolism. The best part of all is that it doesn't take much to effect positive change.

Most beginner and intermediate trainees can see incredible results with only 1 to 3 days per week of strength training

# TRAINING: PRO TIPS

the whole body in just 30 to 60 minutes per session. As we adapt and advance over time we can add additional workouts or spend a little more time per session, but for most people a minimal investment can provide a tremendous return. Strength training is like investing in your future. Each time you come to the gym and train with weights you are investing in your metabolism. By making small deposits week in and week out your metabolism will grow just like your 401K.

Over a few months or years of making these investments your BMR can increase by hundreds of calories per day and help your body burn more fat around the clock each day.

Someone who raises their BMR by 500 calories per day (ex. From 1500/day to 2000/day) will burn an additional POUND of body fat every single week while at rest.

That's 52 pounds of bodyfat in a year just because we got our metabolism to function better! If you're already at a healthy place and don't want to lose 52 pounds of fat that's fine, just think of how much additional food you can enjoy year-round all while maintaining a lean and healthy physique.

The one hurdle that we must overcome to get these benefits is the desire for instant gratification. Muscle isn't built overnight and a damaged metabolism isn't magically made healthy after a

couple of weightlifting sessions. When you walk a mile into the woods you still have to walk a mile to get back out. This is why initially I would encourage those of you ready to try this path to put away the scale for a few months and focus on getting stronger.

Your body will begin to look and feel better, but as you gain muscle mass and start eating in a less restrictive way to fuel your metabolism you will probably not see many pounds fall off right away. What you will see is a reduction in body fat and an increase in muscle mass. Your belts will fit a little tighter and you'll start to be able to lift heavier weights for more reps. You'll also probably feel yourself getting hungrier each day. These are all positive signs that your metabolism is trending towards health.

Remember, we are looking for long-term fat loss not just a flash-in-the-pan crash diet that leaves you worse off than when you started. Once you've made a significant investment in your metabolism then you can begin with a mild caloric deficit and watch as your body fat melts off much easier than ever before. I've seen people go from overweight to fit and healthy by following this protocol and the best part is that they are eating more calories now than they did when they were overweight.

If you've struggled with unsuccessful diet and exercise

programs in the past and are looking for long term success, don't lose hope. The first step is to take it easy on yourself. You're going to need to be nice to your body for a little while by feeding it well and starting an introductory weight training program. The best steps you can take are to seek help from a professional coach or trainer who can help you create a custom training program and work with you to understand what type of healthy nutrition your body needs to function its best.

I will be working with Robert Irvine and his team to continue to provide you with the best fitness information to help you stay empowered and thrive. In future articles we will explore the best way to begin with a functional strength training program and discuss how small changes can provide BIG results.

I look forward to providing you with guidance and information to help you all live healthier and more vibrant lives. Remember, the first step is always the hardest but if you can learn to enjoy the process you'll be amazed at what you can accomplish when you get the momentum rolling in the right direction. Now go invest in your health and watch your life get better, bit by bit.

*Steve Wrona is a Tampa, FL-based personal trainer whose newest client is our very own Robert Irvine. Follow him on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).*

# SUMMER SHRED

To get really lean, you'll need High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT). Here's how to do it right.

BY JAY JOHNSON

When you think about your body and how it operates, do you give it enough credit? Probably not. Our bodies are well-equipped machines that in most cases simply need a tune-up or an oil change to achieve peak performance. In our case, that means revving up our metabolism, burning fat, and looking and feeling our best.

When the body performs more traditional forms of cardiovascular exercise such as walking, running, or cruising on the elliptical for an hour at a time, this conditions the body to burn fuel (calories) in that moment. During consistently moderate or even low intensity cardio sessions with little variation in heart rate (Low Intensity Steady State or LISS), the body is able to get you through this with a reasonable little increase in caloric burn throughout the event. This is great for a direct calorie burn



that you can see instantly on your equipment or watch screen, but that burn stops abruptly once you finish the workout.

Those who enjoy counting caloric expenditure thrive on the instant gratification that number provides. Can this be a satisfying form of tracking exercise along with the feeling of progress it

provides? Of course. But is it the most efficient to burn calories? Absolutely not.

But to really look and feel your best, you need to train your body to burn calories at a higher rate throughout the day—even, or especially, when you're at rest.

The goal is to tune your body to use its self-equipped “auto-

# TRAINING: PRO TIPS

matic transmission” along with the manual aspects of controlling your workout intensity to accelerate your heart rate during activities. The way we do this is by introducing High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), which means adding in periods of intense sprinting throughout your workouts. Cruising is nice, but sometimes the pedal must hit the metal for a faster road to success.

The heart will always rise and fall to accommodate the amount of intensity our activity level requires, but just as your heart rate jumps up it also must be brought back down to normal upon completion of the workout. This is all controlled by the autonomic nervous system (ANS) which functions just as it sounds, automatically. When your workouts consist of one initial intensity spike, there’s not much requirement on your ANS to tell your heart that the work is over and therefore your body can more easily adapt and get you to the finish line.

When we take that same workout and add in intermittent bouts of high intensity effort—whether this happens via moving at higher speeds or with higher resistance—the heart works harder. Once each short sprint concludes with a sudden drop back down to a reasonable intensity, the heart is signaled to pull your pulse back down to normal as efficiently as possible.

Repeating this process not only pushes your body’s comfort zone by increasing your heart rate beyond what you are used to, but it conditions your ANS to pull your

pulse down more quickly over time.

This form of training creates more head-to-toe blood flow with what is called Pulmonary Heart Activation Training (PHAT) which means there is more of a demand placed on the heart to provide sufficient blood flow to the entire body. The heart would prefer to be primarily responsible for one region of the body at a time, such as the legs with walking or the upper body with rowing.

By requiring more of your heart in this manner during your workouts, you not only raise your overall burn within that session but you also increase the need for recovery after the event. Once the body is in recovery from each workout of this intensity, more oxygen is needed to bring you back stronger in time for your next workout. This increase in oxygenic uptake by the body is known as Excess Post-Exercise Oxygen Consumption (EPOC), and guess what? This process also causes an elevation in caloric burn during this recovery period in-between workouts.

Have you ever had an intense day of running around with the kids, taken a long hike, or spent an entire day swimming at the pool...then finding yourself starving for food even a day after the fact? Congratulations, you were experiencing an increase in EPOC levels and therefore craving excess calories to replace those being burned as a result of activities that took place hours or even days prior. When your

workout regimen is designed to consistently tap into and develop your “automatic transmission” and create this effect, you can pair this with a healthy nutritional format that will in turn cause weight loss. When you are eating the correct amounts of food to fuel your activities allowing that carryover burn to tap into your body’s stored energy (body fat), you have officially tuned yourself to become a fat burning machine.

There are countless ways to burn calories as literally every movement we perform in life does this, but a little direction and appreciation for what the human body can do for you must be present. You would never fill your car up with fuel only to store a surplus of it in your trunk, so why do that with your body?

Eat the macronutrients necessary to get you through your typical day and now your hopefully more atypical workouts, and no more. Hit your conditioning sessions in a way that force your heart and both your manual, and now automatic transmission as well to work harder for you and create a burn-friendly environment for results.

The summer months are hot, but with these simple tweaks to your program, you can have a body to match.

*Jay Johnson is available for questions, guidance and workout/nutrition programming customized to fit your daily life and needs. Contact him at [info@jayjohnson-mlp.com](mailto:info@jayjohnson-mlp.com) or you can see our Team MLP Training Options at [team-mlp.com](http://team-mlp.com).*

# TRAINING: SUMMER WORKOUT



## THE MED BALL WORKOUT

You don't always need a full gym and an hour to train. Sometimes, 20 minutes and a medicine ball will do.

**DIRECTIONS:** Perform the following workout as a circuit; do all the reps listed for each exercise and then move on to the next exercise without resting. Rest 90-120 seconds after each round. Do Circuit I three times before moving on to Circuit II, then do Circuit II three times through, resting 90-120 seconds at the end of each round. In addition to the med ball, you will need an open space and a wall.

### CIRCUIT I

#### EXERCISE

Med Ball Squat  
 Med Ball Slam  
 Wall Ball Shot  
 Overhead Toss  
 Russian Twist  
 (15 each side)  
 Med Ball Lunge-  
 and-Twist  
 (10 each leg)

#### REPS

15  
 15  
 10  
 10  
 30  
 20

### CIRCUIT II

#### EXERCISE

Med Ball Pushup  
 Side Slam  
 (10 each side)  
 Wood Chops  
 (10 each side)  
 Overhead Squat  
 Med Ball Situp  
 Med Ball Plank

#### REPS

12  
 20  
 20  
 15  
 20  
 60

seconds

# TRAINING: SUMMER WORKOUT

## EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS

### **MED BALL PUSHUP (at right):**

Set a medicine ball on the ground and get into a pushup position with both hands on the ball. Squeeze the ball to keep it stable and prevent it from rolling away from you. Lower your chest to the ball and then push back up. Concentrate on keeping your body from shoulders to ankles in a straight line.

### **MED BALL LUNGE-AND-TWIST (below right):**

Hold a medicine ball straight out in front of you and perform walking lunges, keeping your torso upright throughout. As you step forward, twist toward your the side of your forward leg, keeping the ball away from you.

**MED BALL SQUAT:** Holding a med ball at your chest, squat low to the ground; try to get your thighs parallel to the floor on each rep.

**MED BALL SLAM:** Hold the med ball overhead with both hands and your arms fully extended. Explosively slam the ball to the ground, aiming for a spot just in front of your feet. Catch the ball on the rebound and immediately go into the next rep.

**OVERHEAD TOSS:** Hold the medicine ball with both hands at your waist. Go into a half squat, then explosively extend your hips and raise your arms quickly. Release the ball overhead so that it propels behind you. Run to get the ball, then immediately go into your next rep.



# TRAINING: SUMMER WORKOUT



**WALL BALL SHOT (at left):** Stand facing a wall. Holding the medicine ball at your chest with both hands, squat low to the ground. As you explosively stand back up, throw the ball up the wall, shooting it as high as you can. Catch it or let it fall to the ground, then immediately go into your next rep.

**RUSSIAN TWIST:** Sit on the ground holding the medicine ball at your chest with both hands. Extend your arms away from your body, bend your knees and raise your feet off the ground, then twist the ball from side to side, reaching for your hips with each rep.

**SIDE SLAM:** Stand next to a wall holding a medicine ball straight out in front of you. Twist away from the wall, then twist back toward it, releasing the ball into the wall as you do so. Catch the ball on the rebound and then immediately go into your next rep. Perform an equal number of reps on each side.

**WOOD CHOPS:** Stand holding a medicine ball overhead, extending your arms over your right shoulder. Make a chopping motion across your body, bringing the ball down to your left foot. Do 10 reps from your right shoulder to your left foot, then 10 reps from your left shoulder to your right foot.

**OVERHEAD SQUAT:** Stand holding a medicine ball with both hands over your head. Keeping your arms fully extended, squat low to the ground. Try to get your thighs parallel to the ground on each rep.

**MED BALL SITUP: (See Pg. TK)** Hold a medicine ball away from your chest and lie on the ground. Sit up, keeping the ball away from your body. Don't round your back.

**MED BALL PLANK:** Get into a plank position with both elbows on the ball and your entire body in a straight line. Flex your abs and breathe behind this brace.

IN THE KITCHEN: CLASSIC RECIPE

# BETTER BURGERS

Robert reimagines the great American classic.



With apologies to Jimmy Buffet, a burger can be so much more than just “a big warm bun and a huge hunk of meat.” This summer, fire up the grill and get ready to enjoy the American classic, guilt-free.

## IN THE KITCHEN: CLASSIC RECIPE

# GYRO BURGER

**SERVES 8**

### YOU'LL NEED

2 lbs lean ground lamb  
1½ lbs lean ground grass-fed beef  
1 tbsp garlic powder  
1 dash cayenne pepper  
1 tsp cumin powder  
1 tsp dried oregano  
½ cup crumbled feta cheese (or low-fat shredded mozzarella)  
Salt  
Pepper  
1 cup thin julienned red onion  
1 cup thin sliced cucumbers  
¼ cup low-fat ranch dressing

1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped  
½ head shredded iceberg lettuce  
Nonfat, nonstick cooking spray  
8 slices tomato  
8 small pocket pitas (3 inches)

### MAKE IT

1) Mix the ground lamb, beef, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, cumin, dried oregano, feta cheese, salt and pepper together. Form 8 patties (they should be about 7 ounces each). Set in the fridge while you prepare the rest of your ingredients.  
2) Make a marinated cucumber salad by combining red onion, cu-

cumber, low-fat ranch dressing and chopped dill together in a bowl.  
3) Preheat the grill and spray the patties on each side with cooking spray. Grill the burgers on each side to desired temperature. When they're almost ready, toast the pitas.  
4) Fill the bottom half of each pita pocket with lettuce, sliced tomato and top with gyro burger. Top the burgers with marinated cucumbers.

### THE MACROS

**CALORIES:** 498  
**PROTEIN:** 46 g  
**FAT:** 27 g  
**CARBS:** 24 g



# IN THE KITCHEN: CLASSIC RECIPE



## CHICKEN CAPRESE BURGER

**SERVES 8**

### YOU'LL NEED

3½ lbs lean ground chicken  
1 tbsp garlic powder  
2 dashes onion powder  
1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped  
1 tsp dried Italian seasoning  
Salt  
Pepper  
8 slice low-fat mozzarella cheese  
8 slices red onion  
¼ cup pesto sauce  
2 cups baby spinach  
1 cup sliced beefsteak tomato  
8 multigrain hamburger rolls  
Nonfat, nonstick cooking spray

### MAKE IT

1) Mix the ground chicken, garlic powder, onion powder, parsley, dried Italian seasoning together. Add salt and pepper. Form 8 patties (they should be about 7 ounces each) and place in the fridge while prepping your burger toppings.  
2) Preheat the grill and spray the patties with cooking spray on each side. Place the burgers on the grill and cook all the way through; test one or more of the burgers by cutting into the center to ensure none of the meat is pink. Top the cooked burgers with mozzarella cheese. Toast the rolls on the grill if desired.

3) Spread pesto on the bottom of each roll and place spinach, tomato, red onion on top of that. Top with patties and serve.

### THE MACROS

CALORIES 507  
PROTEIN: 46 g  
FAT: 27 g  
CARBS: 23 g

## IN THE KITCHEN: CLASSIC RECIPE

# SALMON BURGER

SERVES 4

### YOU'LL NEED

1 ½ pounds fresh salmon filet  
1 tsp sriracha sauce  
1 tsp seafood seasoning  
2 eggs, whisked  
½ cup Asian-style breadcrumbs  
1 tbsp grapeseed oil  
1 lemon  
1 cup shredded romaine lettuce  
¼ cup remoulade sauce  
4 hamburger rolls  
4 slices beefsteak tomato

### MAKE IT

1) Finely dice salmon, then place in a mixing bowl. Add sriracha, seasoning, and eggs. Mix together, adding roughly a third of the breadcrumbs. Form into four patties.  
2) Preheat a griddle to 300 degrees, add oil, then dust the patties in remaining breadcrumbs. Cook patties evenly, 2-3 minutes per side. Drizzle with lemon.  
3) Blend shredded lettuce and remoulade sauce on the side. Assemble burgers with sauce, tomato and patties.

### THE MACROS

CALORIES: 546  
PROTEIN: 45 g  
FAT: 34 g  
CARBS: 35 g

### ROBERT SAYS:

“Whenever possible, try to buy wild salmon instead of farmed. The farmed variety has a less favorable Omega-3 fat profile than wild.”



# LET'S HELP OUR HEROES

Text GIVE to 813-536-5006



The Robert Irvine Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of our military personnel, first responders, and their families. 100% of all funds raised go directly to those who need it most. To learn more about Robert's commitment to our military and first responders, please visit [RobertIrvineFoundation.org](http://RobertIrvineFoundation.org)



# COVER STORY

# A WAY FORWARD



Robert shares a laugh with survivors during the TAPS men's retreat at Robert Irvine's Public House in Las Vegas. TAPS currently serves over 100,000 grieving family and friends of fallen servicemen and women.

For the surviving families of fallen servicemen and women, TAPS—the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors—is there to help. This summer in Las Vegas, Robert hosted a TAPS men's retreat that made fast friends out of strangers, and created a positive outlet for unimaginable grief.

BY MATT TUTHILL

# TAPS

Legendary Divas is a regular show at the Tropicana in Vegas. Six nights a week, and for a tiny fraction of the cost of seeing the real deal, you can enjoy a concert put on by the world's best look-a-likes—and sound-a-likes—for Celine Dion, Lady Gaga, Cher, and more, all brought together by emcee “Joan Rivers,” an affable male comedian in drag who tends to work rather blue.

Every crowd features a mix of tourists who happened to be staying at the Trop, saw the dozens of posters and the giant advert on the marquee outside, and felt compelled to see what all the fuss was about.

But mostly this tends to be bachelorette party stop number one.

So when Robert Irvine led 30 men down to the front row for a Friday night show in early June, it made for a curious scene. As his



Robert Irvine Foundation VP and Army veteran David Reid, right, shares a word with survivor James Hill, a Vietnam veteran. One of the great strengths of The Robert Irvine Foundation and TAPS is a staff who are intimately familiar with the unique challenges faced by veterans and their families.

# TAPS

group filed in, some exchanged nervous glances and a few chuckles. The Hoover Dam expedition earlier in the day—packed with its history lessons and marvels of engineering—well, that had seemed like a perfect male bonding experience. This... was more of a head scratcher.

Robert sensed it, then stood in front of the group and made a guarantee, “You’re going to love it.”

“You’ve seen it before?” one of the men asked.

Robert smiled wide. “Only a hundred times.”

Then the lights went down, the curtain went up, and the ensemble belted out the opening number, “Lady Marmalade” before giving

way to the solo performances: “Poker Face,” “My Heart Will Go On,” “I Will Always Love You,” and dozens more.

If there had been any ironic intent in sending this pack of red-blooded American dudes to see the divas, it was lost one minute into the show, perhaps at least in part because their host Robert so earnestly clapped along. Even the most skeptical men in the group cheered and laughed through to the end, everyone a little bit closer to each other than they had been two hours prior.

This unlikely scene of men being truly vulnerable with one another was perfectly emblematic of the weekend, a TAPS (Tragedy As-

sistance Program for Survivors) retreat for men—all fathers, sons, brothers, and battle buddies of fallen veterans. TAPS has been creating new bonds of friendship out of tragedy for almost 30 years. Created in 1994, TAPS is a national nonprofit veterans service organization that provides a wide array of assistance to the families of fallen service members including grief counseling, survivor seminars, and retreats like this one. TAPS founder Bonnie Carroll created the organization following the death of her husband, Brigadier General Tom Carrol, in a C-12 crash in 1992. TAPS has gone on to become the leading Military Service Organi-



Survivors filed in early to see *Legendary Divas in Concert* at the Tropicana. Though most were initially skeptical, it turned into one of the more memorable bonding experiences of the weekend.



On the final night of the retreat, a table was set with photos of the fallen heroes. After dinner, survivors held these portraits and spoke about what that person—and the weekend—had meant to them. In addition to name tags, survivors wore a button with their fallen hero's picture throughout the weekend.

zation providing year-round care to survivors. Carroll, the author of *Healing Your Grieving Heart After a Military Death: 100 Practical Ideas for Family and Friends*, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015 for her work on behalf of military survivors.

While TAPS hosts various retreats throughout the year, the men's weekend was designed specifically around the fact that men tend to grieve differently. From

the foundation's literature: "TAPS understands that most men need other men to pave the way for them to grieve as men grieve, not as women would want them to."

Thinking back on the Divas concert, Vern Losh said, "I think Robert gave everyone permission to have fun." Vern attended the retreat in honor of his son, US Army Corporal Allen Losh, who died in 2014 after a 14-month battle with stomach cancer contracted after

prolonged exposure to burn pits in Iraq. "All weekend I had a lot of thoughts running through my head about my kid: what could have been, what he could be doing now... To have Robert get up there and pump everybody up and say 'Listen, this Divas show is gonna be great...' it broke up the seriousness of some of the other stuff. And he was right," Vern laughs. "It did end up being a lot of fun."

After the show, every man in the

# TAPS

group eagerly—some even giddily—joined the queue to meet the divas, with one man remarking, “Whitney was incredible. When you heard that drum drop and then the super high note, ‘Aaaaaand I....!’ you knew she had the place.”

Robert, who was hosting his second such retreat in Vegas—alongside staff led by Jessica Harper, the TAPS director of operations in sports and entertainment—took great pride in helping bring the men together, but in truth, he wasn’t the main catalyst. The attendees’ disparate backgrounds, ethnicities, upbringings, and political affiliations were all rendered meaningless the moment they arrived; the terrible shared bond of a loved one lost too soon in service to their country allowed them to cut through the noise, to be vulnerable and honest with each other immediately. In short, these were men who were completely allergic to bullshit.

“You have this bond, so the other stuff doesn’t really matter,” says Ken Naglak, who attended the retreat in honor of his son Joseph Naglak, a US Naval Aviation Boatswain Mate

(a traffic director on the deck of an aircraft carrier) who was killed during a training exercise aboard the USS HW Bush in September of 2018. “You know how you felt when you got the knock on the door... You know how you were affected, how it’s affecting you today, so you can have a certain amount of empathy. You have that connection and that’s what it’s really all

about.”

In addition to the Hoover Dam and Legendary Divas expeditions, the attendees of the Vegas retreat also visited the Nevada State Veterans Memorial, a two-acre park featuring 18 immaculately detailed statues of soldiers and civilians who served the country from the Revolutionary War to the Global War on Terror; enjoyed



Ken Naglak, right, speaks about his son Joseph Naglak at the Nevada State Veterans Memorial. “One of the great things about TAPS is they do not differentiate between manners of death in service. The loss is the loss no matter how it happened.”

# TAPS

hours of food and fun at Top Golf; as well as a friendly salsa-making competition with instruction and guidance from Robert. The culminating event was a three-course ribeye dinner at Robert Irvine's Public House within the Tropicana, at the end of which survivors held a portrait of their fallen hero and spoke about what that person, and the weekend, had meant to them. Afterward, there was unanimous agreement that the program had been nothing short of a godsend.

"What you get out of TAPS is that you're not crazy," Ken says. "Because after a loss like that, there are times when you think you're just crazy. To be able to sit and hear people talk—and they're all having the same experience and the same emotions, it's very helpful. The message to me was that I'm not crazy and I'm not alone."

Some days after the retreat, Ken fondly remembered Joseph, who was born in Seoul, South Korea and adopted by Ken and his wife at 20 months old. A lover of American muscle cars, Joseph never felt a calling to academics, but as he grew older, the idea of service spoke to him. A deep desire to give back to the country that had given him so much led him to dedicate himself to training so he could pass the physical and join the Navy, where he became a "blue shirt" overseeing the difficult and dangerous task of towing aircraft and parking them into incredibly tight quarters on the flight deck.

At the time of his death, he had just settled on a wedding venue with his fiancé, Nicole Weber. Ken was in bed when the phone rang; a military chaplain had visited an old address on file and was desperate to find out where he was now and see him immediately.

"They wouldn't tell me then on the phone, but you know," Ken says, noting that he had fleeting thoughts that maybe Joseph had been injured, but quickly dis-

*"Live a life  
worthy  
of the  
person  
you lost."*

missed them. "They don't come to your house for that."

The devastation of the chaplain's arrival "felt like a kick in the balls," Ken says. "You know that scene in *Saving Private Ryan*? Where the mother is looking out the window and she sees the Army guard coming up the road and she just falls to her knees? That's what it feels like. You know exactly what it is."

Joseph Naglak was described by all his peers and superiors as a model sailor with exceptional work ethic and outstanding qualifications. His fatal accident un-

derscored just how dangerous it is to work on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier; while securing an E-2 Hawkeye, he followed protocol and approached the wheels at a 90-degree angle to avoid the turning propeller blades, but the incident report noted that a momentary lapse saw him glance over his shoulder while walking away, resulting in a loss of awareness and fatal contact with a propeller.

Ken takes some solace in the knowledge that Joseph did not suffer, and is further comforted by the fact that TAPS does not differentiate between manners of death; the men's retreat in Vegas featured survivors whose fallen heroes had died from cancer due to toxic exposure while deployed, as well as a number of suicides.

"TAPS is really good about not making that distinction, because it absolutely doesn't matter," Ken says. "If somebody dies from cancer, but it was because they were ex-

posed to all these chemicals on the flight deck or burn the pits in Afghanistan or something like that, does that really matter? The other thing is they're very inclusive; they have programs for parents, for significant others, and you don't necessarily need to be married."

The never-ending nature of the Global War on Terror has made the existence of organizations like TAPS essential for grieving families. Attend a TAPS event and the old adage that the family serves becomes abundantly clear; the loss of every veteran



Drew Sylvester preps salsa for the competition. After learning of Drew’s interest in the culinary arts, Robert invited him to help him cook at an upcoming event in the fall.

leaves a trail of devastation in its wake, with spouses, siblings, sons, daughters, friends, and battle buddies affected each time. In 2021, TAPS connected 9,241 newly-bereaved loved ones—an average of 25 new survivors every day—to each other, continually adding to the over 100,000 survivors currently receiving TAPS assistance. For his support of TAPS, Robert was named to its Honorary Board, which counts Gary Sinise, Jimmy Carter, and Jeremy Renner in its ranks.

Each survivor’s experience, however, is very different. John Gorniewicz says the Hollywood depiction of the chaplain’s visit didn’t immediately land on him in the way it

did for Ken Naglak; for a fleeting moment, the denial instinct was so strong he thought his visitors might be imposters and demanded to see ID.

“It’s weird how the mind can work,” said John, whose son Brett Gorniewicz died in an IED attack in 2012. Since Brett’s death, TAPS programs have been hugely beneficial to John and his family. Early in the process, a grief counselor from the Army had advised John to “concentrate on the living” and he says TAPS has allowed him to do that while honoring his son.

“After the opening dinner where we all got up and spoke about our hero, I said if it ends now, I’m good,” John says. “It’s been very

therapeutic for me.”

Another attendee, Dennis Roy, lost his daughter, Airman First Class Patricia Roy at the age of 22 after a deadly car crash in Benecia, CA, while she was still on active duty. Just days prior, Patricia had been deployed and taken part in a mission that would posthumously earn her the Air Force Achievement Medal; during that time, a Naval missile cruiser was stranded in undisclosed waters and needed a new propulsion shaft. Transporting the shaft—an enormous piece of equipment—to the cruiser’s location was a unique challenge, but Patricia found an unorthodox way of fitting the shaft into an aircraft that would deliver it and save the

vessel.

“She was gifted with unique spatial intelligence, and that provided the solution,” Dennis says proudly, noting that the longer the cruiser was stranded, the higher the probability of a dangerous escalation. “She potentially saved a lot of lives.”

Dennis turned his grief into action; determined to have a more direct and positive impact on others’ lives the way his daughter had, he left a stable career in IT to go back to school and pursue nursing, which his daughter had aspired to.

“I am now living my daughter’s dream,” Dennis told the group during dinner one evening, “I say this for all of us: Live a life worthy of the person you lost.”

The excursion to the Nevada State Veterans Memorial made for a somber opening on Day Three of the retreat. TAPS organizers gave each survivor a small notecard, on which they could write a note to their fallen hero. The notes were then affixed to a rose, and the survivors could then lay the rose at the foot any of the 18 statues at the memorial, which represent every branch of the military and every major conflict the U.S. has ever been involved in.

A moment after laying his rose, survivor Peter Finken reflected on the life of his fallen hero, his twin brother, Army Lt. Colonel Paul Finken, who was killed by an IED explosion in Baghdad in 2006.

“It was the last mission for that unit,” Peter says. “Before that, they had no injuries, incidents, acci-

dents... I spoke to him three days before he died. I told him to get home safe for his three girls, who were 6, 4, and 2 at the time.”

Peter, who is also an Army veteran, said his brother died doing what he loved. “He loved being an officer and leading other men.” One of Paul’s proudest accomplishments had been establishing a CrossFit program in the base where he was deployed. “We were fraternal twins, so he was a half foot shorter than me and 140 pounds soaking wet, but he had just set a personal best in the bench of 265 pounds.”

While the wound of losing a brother never fully heals, Peter said with 16 years to process it and observe Paul’s daughters flourishing in college and beyond had given him a uniquely positive perspective on grief and he wanted to attend the TAPS men’s retreat to help the other survivors. There is life, and a precious lot of it, on the other side of tragedy, but you can only get there and appreciate it with help from others who have been through the same experience.

“If we don’t all help each other, we’re not going to get any better,” Peter says.

From the memorial, the group headed to Top Golf Las Vegas for lunch and a few rounds of friendly competition. Then it was back to the Tropicana for the salsa-making competition, which turned out to be of a favorite of Drew Sylvester, the son of fallen Sergeant Jason Sylvester. Drew recently earned his associates degree and has a

strong interest in the culinary arts. Robert recognized the young man beaming throughout the process, and invited him to assist in prep at an upcoming event.

“Drew bragged a lot about that,” James Hill said afterward; Hill, a Vietnam veteran and longtime family friend of the Sylvesters, had accompanied Drew on the retreat. “TAPS did wonders for him.”

The programming provided the perfect mix of activities that honored the fallen and provided fun bonding exercises, which clearly produced the intended effect; many survivors say they have plans to stay in contact with each other, meet up, or attend future TAPS events. All the survivors praised the TAPS organizers, as well as their hosts Robert Irvine and Robert Irvine Foundation VP and Director of Outreach David Reid—a former Army Ranger who lost a leg during a mission in Afghanistan.

“TAPS does so much for Gold Star families, and the retreats in particular are incredible experiences,” Dave Reid said. “To be able to help give them a bonding experience in association with TAPS, to help facilitate a good time that heals? It means the world to me.”

The closing speeches left only a few dry eyes in the house, and Robert’s were not among them. “All of you inspire me,” a clearly emotional Robert said. “And being here this weekend with all of you is the honor of my life. I truly mean that. Anything you need—well, you all have my number now—so



Not content with the normal place Robert had taken for this group photo, the survivors egged him on to take center stage. He obliged.

just let me know. I mean it.”

Those who weren’t previously familiar with Robert were taken aback by the display of vulnerability. In the process, he gained at least one new fan.

“When I got up and spoke on the last night and said that I hadn’t heard of Robert before this weekend, I was being honest,” Vern admits. “I don’t watch a lot of cooking shows. You see some of these people on TV and you wonder what they’re really like. But I mean... what a guy. You can see his sincerity. He’s real. He lives for this. Now I watch him every Thursday night.”

For Robert, the choice to spend

much of his rare free time serving veterans through his own foundation and through organizations like TAPS and the USO is one made without hesitation. Dating back to his time served in the British Royal Navy, he’s possessed by a keen awareness of the toll military service takes on everyone in that person’s orbit.

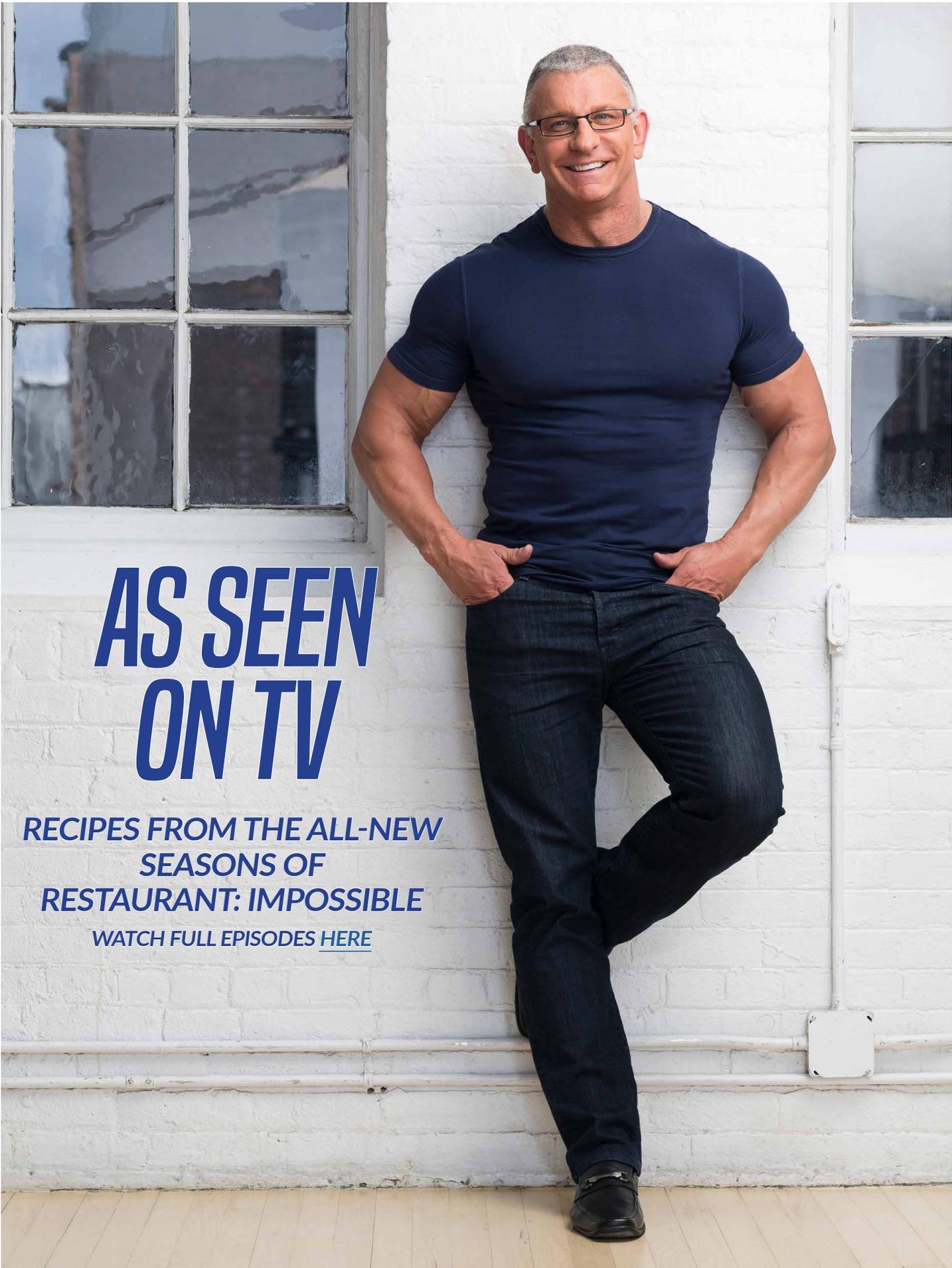
“Easing the burdens on veterans as well as their families and friends—it’s the top priority of my life, right after taking care of my own family,” Robert says. “When you lose a loved one too early, it changes your life forever. It leaves a void. I know we can’t heal that void completely, but we can fill

it with new experiences and new friends, and lessen some of that pain. Their families will never be whole, but through experiences like this, we become a new family.”

Or, as Ken Naglak puts it, “There’s an analogy about a tree that’s been struck by lightning: The tree is split down the middle. It a wreck, but it doesn’t mean that the tree’s not going to grow. It will grow. It’s not dead. It will recover.

“It’s never going to be the same tree. The scars will there. The cracks will be there. But it will grow... That’s exactly how I feel.”

*Click the links here to learn more about [TAPS](#) and [The Robert Irvine Foundation](#).*



# ***AS SEEN ON TV***

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AS SEEN ON TV

# Crawfish Alfredo



**SERVES 4**

## YOU'LL NEED

1 lb penne pasta (cooked according to package)  
½ lb unsalted butter  
1 red pepper, diced  
1 white onion, diced  
3 ribs celery, diced  
1 cup frozen corn, off the cob  
5 garlic cloves, minced  
2 tbsp all-purpose flour  
1 cup heavy cream

2 lbs crawfish tails  
2 tbsp Cajun spice  
3 tbsp flat leaf parsley, chopped  
3 tbsp breadcrumbs  
1 bunch scallions, sliced  
2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated

## MAKE IT

1) In a large skillet over medium heat melt butter.  
2) Add red peppers, onions, celery, corn and garlic. Allow to cook for about 4 minutes.

3) Whisk in flour, creating a roux. Cook for another 4 minutes.  
4) Add heavy cream and allow to cook until the flour is cooked out of the roux, about 5 minutes.  
5) Add crawfish, Cajun spice, and flat leaf parsley.  
6) Add cooked pasta and toss through.  
7) Place pasta in a large bowl.  
8) Finish with grated Parmesan cheese and scallions.

**AS SEEN ON TV**

# Southern-Style Cheesesteak

**SERVES 4**

**YOU'LL NEED**

**FOR THE COLLARD GREENS**

1 tbsp grapeseed oil  
½ cup diced raw bacon  
1 lb fresh collard greens, chopped into large ribbon cuts  
2 cups chicken stock  
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar  
2 tbsp sugar  
Kosher salt and black pepper

**PIMENTO CHEESE**

1½ cups cheddar cheese, shredded

8 oz cream cheese, room temp  
½ cup mayonnaise  
1 clove garlic minced  
1 tsp ground cayenne pepper  
4 oz diced pimento  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 cup heavy cream

**CAJUN SPICED AIOLI**

1 cup mayonnaise  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tbsp Cajun spice  
Juice and zest of 1 lemon

**FOR THE SANDWICH**

4 hoagie style rolls

2 tbsp grapeseed oil  
1 tbsp butter  
24 oz shaved beef (skirt steak)  
2 red bell peppers, sliced  
2 white onions, sliced  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 oz dry white wine  
16 oz store bought breaded okra or straight cut French fries

**MAKE IT**

(See next page)



# AS SEEN ON TV



## **COLLARD GREENS**

1) In a large sauce pot over medium heat, add grapeseed oil and bacon. Render until crispy.

2) Add collard greens and stir, cooking for about 5 minutes.

3) Add chicken stock, vinegar, sugar and bring to a simmer. Turn down the heat to low and cover. Continue to cook collard greens for 25 to 30 minutes until tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

## **PIMENTO CHEESE**

1) In a bowl place cheddar cheese, cream cheese, mayonnaise, garlic, cayenne pepper, pimentos, salt and pepper.

2) Using a hand blender, slowly incorporate heavy cream. The sauce should be thin in consistency and able to be poured.

## **CAJUN SPICED AIOLI**

1) In a bowl add mayonnaise, minced garlic, cajun spice, zest and juice from a lemon – stir to combine.

## **SANDWICH**

1) In a skillet over medium heat add grapeseed oil, butter, and hoagie roll, facedown. Toast the hoagie roll for about 2 minutes or until golden brown in color.

2) Add the shaved beef to the pan

and sauté. Cook for about 4 minutes or until it's golden brown.

3) Add peppers and onions. Cook for another 4 minutes.

4) Spread pimento cheese on the bottom of the toasted hoagie roll.

5) Top the hoagie roll with the shredded beef, peppers, and onions.

6) Then top the entire sandwich with the collard greens.

7) Finish the sandwich with the Cajun Spiced aioli.

8) Serve with French fries or fried okra (like we did on the show).

AS SEEN ON TV

# Coffee-Rubbed Baseball Steak



**SERVES 4**

## **YOU'LL NEED**

### **FOR SWEET POTATO PUREE**

1 stick butter  
1 white onion, sliced  
3 cloves garlic, sliced  
3 sweet potatoes, peeled and diced  
1 qt heavy cream  
1 qt chicken stock

### **FOR CREAMED COLLARD GREENS**

1 tbsp grapeseed oil  
3 slices bacon, diced

1 large onion, diced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 lb collard greens, cut into 2-inch pieces  
¼ cup white wine  
1 cup chicken broth  
2 cups heavy cream

### **FOR THE STEAK & RUB**

4 portions top sirloin (10 oz each)  
2 tbsp kosher salt  
1 tbsp light brown sugar  
2 tbsp instant coffee  
1 tsp cumin

### **FOR THE SWEET TEA SAUCE**

2 tbsp grapeseed oil  
1 large white onion, diced  
4 cloves garlic, sliced  
2 cups iced tea  
1 qt beef stock  
2 sticks butter

### **FOR THE CRISPY ONIONS**

1 red onion, thinly sliced  
1 cup buttermilk  
1 tsp Cajun seasoning  
1 cup all-purpose flour

# AS SEEN ON TV



## MAKE IT

### SWEET POTATO PUREE

- 1) In a large sauce pot add butter, onions, and garlic, and allow to sweat.
- 2) Add sweet potatoes and allow to cook for about 4 minutes. Stir continuously.
- 3) Add heavy cream and chicken stock and bring mixture to a boil.
- 4) Drop mixture to a simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, or until sweet potatoes are tender.
- 5) Using a blender, puree mixture until smooth.
- 6) Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

### CREAMED COLLARD GREENS

- 1) In a large skillet add grapeseed oil, bacon, onion, and garlic.
- 2) Allow bacon and onions to render over medium-low heat, about 6 minutes.
- 3) Add chopped collard greens and cook for about 3 minutes.
- 4) Deglaze the pan with white wine.

- 5) Add chicken stock, heavy cream.
- 6) Cook for another 5 minutes.
- 7) Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

### STEAK RUB

- 1) In a mixing bowl add all rub ingredients and incorporate.
- 2) Liberally season each steak with rub and set aside.

### SWEET TEA BEEF SAUCE

- 1) In large sauce pot add grapeseed oil, onion, and garlic, and sweat.
- 2) Cook onions and garlic for about 4 minutes.
- 3) Deglaze the pan with iced tea.
- 4) Allow to reduce by half.
- 5) Add beef stock. Bring to a boil.
- 6) Simmer for about 20 minutes.
- 7) Remove sauce from the heat and, using a whisk, incorporate butter.

### CRISPY ONIONS

- 1) Pre-heat a fryer to 350 degrees.
- 2) Add buttermilk and thinly sliced onions to a mixing bowl.
- 3) In a separate bowl add all-pur-

- pose flour and Cajun spice.
- 4) Remove onions from the mixing bowl and dredge in the flour.
- 5) Remove onions from the flour and shake off any excess flour.
- 6) Place in the fryer and allow to cook for about 2 minutes.
- 7) Remove onions from the fryer and season with salt and pepper.

### PLATING

- 1) Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees.
- 2) In skillet over high heat add baseball steak.
- 3) Sear steak on all sides. Remove the steak from the pan and place on a baking sheet.
- 4) Finish steak in oven to desired temperature, medium is recommended. (Internal temp of 145.)
- 5) In the center of a plate, place sweet potato puree.
- 6) Top the sweet potato puree with the creamed collard greens.
- 7) Place the steak on top of the creamed collard greens. Dress the steak with the sweet tea beef sauce.
- 8) Finish with crispy onions.

AS SEEN ON TV

# Tortellini Caruso

SERVES 4

## YOU'LL NEED FOR GARLIC CREAM SAUCE

2 qts heavy cream  
1 qt milk  
1 stick butter  
¼ cup all-purpose flour  
2 oz garlic (about 10 cloves, peeled)  
1 tsp cayenne pepper  
½ cup Parmesan cheese  
1 tsp nutmeg

## FOR THE MAIN DISH

16 oz tortellini  
1 cup butternut squash, diced  
2 tbsp grape seed oil  
8 oz broccoli rabe  
6 oz cremini mushrooms, diced  
6 oz oyster mushrooms, diced  
3 oz portabella mushrooms,  
cleaned and diced  
2 shallots, diced  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1 stick unsalted butter  
2 tbsp grated Parmesan  
4 oz Panko breadcrumbs

## MAKE IT

### GARLIC CREAM SAUCE

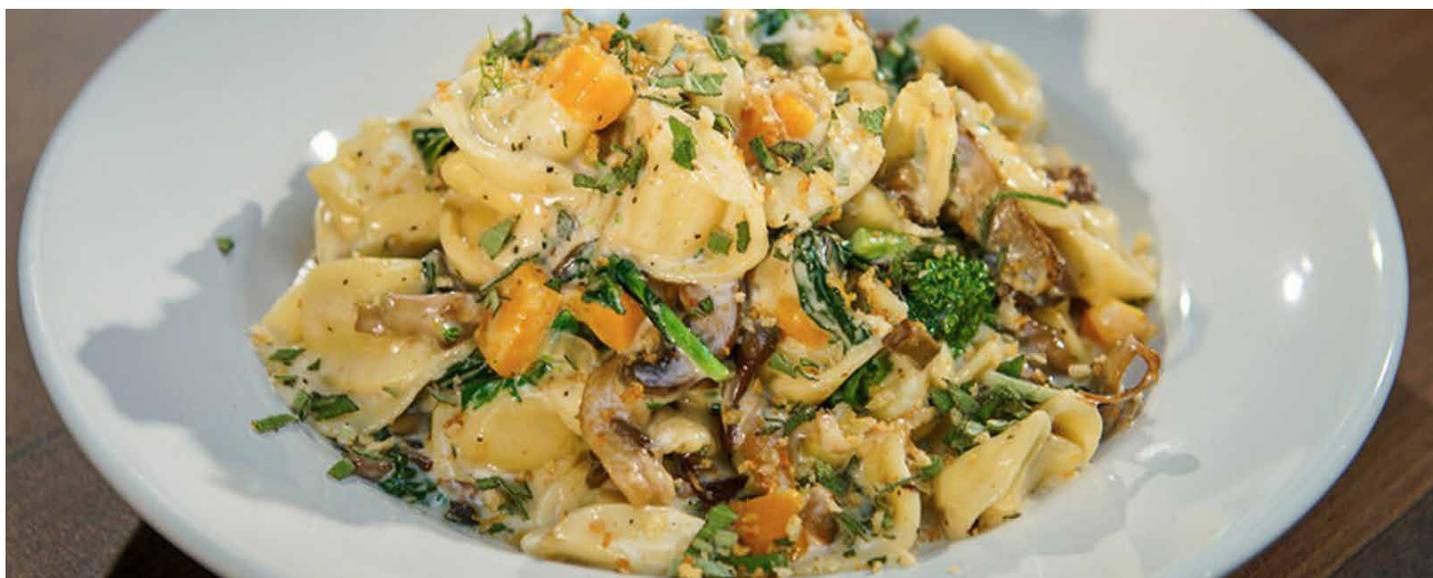
- 1) In a pot over medium heat, add garlic cloves and grape seed oil.
- 2) Lightly simmer for about 12 minutes. Garlic should be light brown and begin to break down.
- 3) Place heavy cream and milk in a pot and bring to light simmer.
- 4) In a separate pot using a whisk add butter, and whisk until butter is melted. Next add all-purpose flour and make a roux. Cook for about 4 minutes or until golden brown.
- 5) Add heavy cream and milk mixture to the roux. Simmer for 20 minutes.
- 6) Finish with cayenne pepper, Parmesan, salt, pepper, and nutmeg.

### MAIN DISH

- 1) Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees.
- 2) Season butternut squash with salt, pepper, and grapeseed oil.
- 3) Place butternut squash on a baking sheet. Put in the oven and cook for about 15 minutes or until

butternut squash is cooked through and light brown in color.

- 4) Place a pot with seasoned water on the stove and bring to a boil. In a mixing bowl add ice and water and set aside.
- 5) Place broccoli rabe in the boiling water and cook for 2 minutes. Remove and place in the ice bath.
- 6) In a sauté pan over medium high heat add shallots and garlic. Sauté and cook for 3 minutes.
- 7) Add cremini, oyster, and portabella mushrooms. Cook for about 5 minutes until cooked through and light brown in color.
- 8) Add garlic sauce and broccoli rabe to the mushroom ragu.
- 9) In the same pot that you cooked the broccoli rabe, add tortellini and cook according to the package.
- 10) Remove the tortellini and add to the roasted garlic cream sauce.
- 11) Add mixture to large serving bowl.
- 12) Finish with Parmesan cheese and panko breadcrumbs.





## Pulled Pork Mac & Cheese

**SERVES 8**

### **YOU'LL NEED FOR THE SWEET MUSTARD BBQ SAUCE**

2 cups sweet BBQ sauce  
1 cup mustard BBQ sauce  
2 tbsp cider vinegar  
Salt and pepper, to taste

### **FOR THE SWEET TEA BRAISED PORK SHOULDER**

2 lbs pork butt, bone in  
1 cup yellow mustard  
4 oz BBQ spice  
1 gallon sweet tea  
1 gallon chicken stock  
Salt and pepper, to taste

### **FOR THE MAC & CHEESE**

2 cups Brussels sprouts quartered  
1 medium sweet potato, diced  
2 medium turnips, peeled and diced  
3 tbsp maple syrup

16 oz elbow macaroni, cooked according to instructions

3 cups milk  
3 cups heavy cream  
4 cups white cheddar, shredded

**MAKE IT**  
**SWEET MUSTARD BBQ SAUCE**  
1) In a mixing bowl add all ingredients and incorporate. Season with salt and pepper.

**PULLED PORK**  
1) Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees.  
2) Rub pork with mustard generously, then rub with BBQ spice and season with salt and pepper.  
3) Place pork butt in a roasting pan, add sweet tea and chicken stock. Cover with tin foil and place in the oven for about 3 hours.  
4) Using your hands or a fork, shred the cooked pork.  
5) Dress pork with BBQ sauce and set aside.

### **ROOT VEGGIE MAC & CHEESE**

1) Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.  
2) Place Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, and turnips on separate baking sheets. Season with salt and pepper.  
3) Place in oven for 8 minutes.  
4) Place the vegetables in a mixing bowl and dress with maple syrup.  
5) In a sauce pot, add heavy cream and milk. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Using a whisk, incorporate cheese. Cover and set aside.

### **PLATING**

1) Place cooked macaroni in sauté pan over medium heat and toss with cheese sauce.  
2) Add Brussels sprouts, turnips, and sweet potatoes. Toss through.  
3) Place mixture in a serving bowl. Top mac and cheese with BBQ pulled pork.



# Waffle Croque Madame

SERVES 4

## YOU'LL NEED FOR THE WAFFLE

2 large eggs  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vegetable oil  
1 tbsp granulated sugar  
4 tsp baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE CHEESE SAUCE

1 stick butter  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1 qt whole milk  
2 cups shredded white cheddar  
1 cup Parmesan cheese  
1 tsp nutmeg  
1 tsp cayenne pepper  
Salt and pepper, to taste

## FOR THE MAIN

1 lb thinly sliced ham  
4 tbsp whole grain mustard  
3 tbsp grapeseed oil  
4 eggs

## MAKE IT WAFFLE

- 1) Pre-heat a waffle iron.
- 2) In a mixing bowl and using a hand mixer, beat eggs for about 2 minutes until fluffy.
- 3) Beat in flour, milk, vegetable oil, sugar, baking powder, salt, and vanilla extract. Just beat until all ingredients are incorporated and mixture is smooth.
- 4) Spray preheated waffle iron with nonstick spray.
- 5) Pour mixture onto the waffle iron and cook until golden brown.

## CHEESE SAUCE

- 1) Melt butter in a large saucepan.
- 2) Using a whisk, add flour to

melted butter. Whisk until smooth. Allow to cook for about 9 minutes. The roux should be light brown. Using a whisk, incorporate milk.

- 3) Increase the heat. Lightly simmer for about 5 minutes.
- 4) Drop the heat to medium-low and incorporate cheddar, Parmesan, nutmeg, and cayenne pepper.
- 5) Season with salt and pepper.

## PLATING

- 1) In a large skillet over medium heat add sliced ham. Allow to warm through about 2 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside.
- 2) Add grapeseed oil. Crack egg into pan. Cook for about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.
- 3) Plate the waffle. Top with ham.
- 4) Pour the cheese sauce over the ham. Top with cooked egg.
- 5) Finish with whole grain mustard.

# INTERVIEW:

# TIM WILKINS

The multi-hyphenate comedian-emcee-bodybuilder credits the foundations of his success with joining the Marines. The discipline acquired in the most notoriously tough branch of the military transferred over to every other facet of life, allowing him to tackle increasingly difficult goals. Here, he shares his best advice for building the life you want.

INTERVIEW BY  
MATT TUTHILL

**Robert Irvine Magazine: People who find you online see that you're a comedian but the next thing they see is that you are a Marine. What made you want to serve?**

Tim Wilkins: I always wanted to serve, growing up, playing soldiers. But I was afraid of my own shadow as a kid. I was small. I was picked on. So when it came time to pick a service, I wanted to do the hardest one. Go into the Marine recruiting office, and everybody else was throwing signing bonuses at you, and the Marines are throwing



Follow Tim Wilkins on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and check out [TimWilkins.com](#). His new comedy special, "Pa\*\*word Protected" is available now at [DryBarComedy.com](#)

courage, discipline and esprit de corps. That's how they sell Marines. So I said, "Yeah, I want to do that. I want to be part of a brotherhood." So instead of \$25,000, I picked brotherhood.

**RI: What did you get out of being a Marine?**

TW: It changed my life path, changed who I was inside and out. There's a discipline that I've

transferred through to everything I've done, a kind of a force-to-be-reckoned with attitude that I know I wasn't necessarily born with or definitely didn't have before the Marines. I can remember driving 15 hours through the driving snow to go sleep on somebody's hotel floor to meet one person who could help me in my career. And the whole time I'm driving, I'm saying to myself, "Bootcamp is

# INTERVIEW: TIM WILKINS

harder than this. Come on now.”

**RI: I guess you'll always be able to say you've been through worse.**

TW: That's really what the basis has been. It reshaped me, as they say in the recruiting posters, into someone who can withstand anything. And I'm honored to have been part of that group, to still be part, because you're always a Marine. I wouldn't be the same without it.

**RI: You go to the Marines straight out of high school, then get out in 1990. You say you always wanted to be a comedian, too. Did you go right into it?**

TW: No. I kind of floundered, tried college again, did a bunch of odd jobs. And then one day I was driving around, delivering water with my manager in the truck. He was 37. He'd been with the company 18 years and had no other goals, no dreams. But he was living what most people would think was the perfect American life, two kids, literally a white picket fence. And he said, "I've got everything I want." Then he looked at me sarcastically and said, "What are your big dreams and goals?" And I said, "I've always wanted to be a comedian." And he just went blank and said, "That's the coolest

thing I've ever heard. Why don't you do it?" And within two days I was at an open mic night at a club down the street and never looked back.

**RI: You walk a fine line in your routine; you want it to be clean but still have an edge. Did you always want to be a clean comedi-**

*“I think one of the biggest problems with this generation is the way they were over parented and the parents didn't allow them to fail.”*

**an or did you start out a different way?**

TW: I started in a different way, like a lot of people do, but I went clean for a couple reasons. I wanted my family to be able to see my show. My grandmother was a huge influence on me and I wanted her to see it. In '96 or '97 I started to really clean up my act because there was so much more opportu-

nity opening for bands like Earth, Wind & Fire, and people like Lionel Richie. When you work clean you can also do corporate shows and cruise ships. So I branched out of clubs and that really things changed a lot.

**RI: Every standup has to bomb—at least once, but usually more. Talk to me about that. Have you done it? What went wrong and what did it teach you?**

TW: I've bombed really, really hard, maybe four or five times in 30 years. And a couple of those were on shows where I knew I would have a similar audience the next night. And I would go back and lay all my notebooks out on the bed. I wanted redemption, it's like a comeback fight for me. I want to come

back stronger, better, crush the next night and say that it's going to be okay. But the worst part of bombing sometimes isn't even that you're bombing, it's that the stuff worked 99 times before and is dying that one time.

**RI: It's audience-dependent.**

TW: It could be something that happened. I've had natural disas-

# INTERVIEW: TIM WILKINS

ters and human disasters happen right before a show. And the guy at the theater's about to page the curtain open so you can walk out and they go, "Hey, just so you know, a lot of people in the town over next to us died, and everybody here knows somebody, so they really need to laugh tonight." And you just suck in deep and say, "This is not going to go well." And you can't help that, but I still took

it personally.

I always know there's something in my notebooks that's going to connect with somebody better than it did tonight and tomorrow night is going to be better. But it would 3, 4, 5 o'clock in the morning, and I'm ripping pages. And a lot of comedians are on computers. I just can't do it. I'm tactile. I've got to have my little comedy notes and I've probably got 50 notebooks in a bin.

**RI: Talk about failure in a general sense, because you're someone who seems drawn to these difficult things where it's not going to go well for you off the bat—be it trying comedy or joining the Marines. Those first couple weeks are going to be so brutal. Do you worry at all about the current generation? Do you think they're failure averse?**

TW: I think one of the biggest



A bodybuilder who's been fighting his way up since he was a kid, Wilkins now runs The David Scholarship with his wife at Foundation Academy in Winderemere, FL. Created in honor of Tim's wife's son Noah, who died of pediatric brain cancer, the David Scholarship is a reference to David and Goliath. "We didn't want it to be academics-based. We wanted it to be somebody that has overcome obstacles in their life... 'They're the hardest worker in the room,' to quote The Rock."

# INTERVIEW: TIM WILKINS

problems with this generation is the way they were over parented and the parents didn't allow them to fail. And didn't give them the coping mechanisms to figure out how to rectify their failure or to learn from the failure and to revel in the failure. Kids—and adults—need to go out there, put themselves in a progressively harder situation to grow and get knocked down and pick themselves back up. Because the next time you pick yourself up, you're stable at a higher level.

Right now, I'm in prep for a bodybuilding show, Master's Nationals. At 53, I'm taking another shot at my Pro Card and it circles back to the beginning of your first question because I was a little guy and I've always been skinny and I've been fighting my way up. My first time on the bodybuilding stage, I took sixth—and the top five got medals. After that, I looked at my wife and I said, "I'm coming back next year and I'm going to beat one guy. That's all I want to do. I just want to beat one guy." And that was seven years ago. And then I progressively got better, and then took a third and then a couple of firsts. And then I looked at her and I looked at my trainer and I said, "I want to go to Nation-

als and see if I can compete with the big boys." That's been another thing. I just continue to put myself in these awful situations and smile and swing and do my best.

**RI: As a parent then, how did you give your kids that leash? It's hard to see your kids in pain, to see them frustrated by something**

*"Kids—and adults—need to go out there and put themselves in a progressively harder situation to grow and get knocked down... you're stable at a higher level"*

**and the temptation to step in and do it can be almost overwhelming.**

TW: My second child, my daughter, just graduated college, and she thought she could never survive junior college or community college. And in the middle of college she decided she wanted to join the Army. And rather than talk her out of anything, I just give her the pros and cons and said, "These

are going to be the hard parts, and this is going to be the benefit. And if you want to do it, OK." Then when I get the calls, all I can say is, "I understand what you're going through, and here's some ways to fix it." I can't pick up the phone and call her commanding general.

And she's learned to fix things herself, but she's also learned to use

people as resources. And she's learned that with pain at each level, she's gotten stronger. She actually competed last year in the Armed Forces National Championship – a bikini competition. It was her first competition, but she did it as a comeback from a car accident. She wanted to prove to herself that she could get fit again because exercise is such a huge part of her life. So she has picked that up—I don't know if it's a gene or some

parenting—but she now enjoys hard things. She'll call me and say, "I'm about to do something really hard. And you got me in that head space. You put me in the mindset of challenge myself."

**RI: You compete but you're also a fan of bodybuilding and you've emcee'd some of the Olympia shows. Are you happy with the direction the sport is going?**

# INTERVIEW: TIM WILKINS

TW: For me, it's bigger and better than ever because of all the different divisions. With Men's Physique that I compete in, it gives people with horrible leg development somewhere to be. If they come out with a division for pants, I'm totally going to win. And then you've got 212 and Classic that brings back the lines of all my heroes, like Lee Labrada, Rich Gaspari, and all those guys from back in the '80s and '90s. And then you've got the mass monsters. Then for the women, there's like six divisions now. So it was dying off because it was getting so niche. And I think now it's growing again because they've expanded to highlight the more attainable physiques.

**RI: People write in to Robert all the time for fitness advice. What is your best piece of fitness advice who's starting out?**

TW: My basic advice for everybody is always write down three days of what you eat. If you see what you eat on paper, you'll go, "All right. Here's two changes I can make without doing anything else in my life to lose 10 pounds in three months," if it's cut out sodas or sweet teas or nighttime ice cream. And cook at home as much as possible. And research. Look at Robert's recipes. He's got healthy foods in stores and exchanges around the world; you can use some of those pieces as your main dish, cook at home healthy, and you'll save a ton of money and you will change the way you feel. And from there, go into the gym, hire a trainer once every few months to

put you on a program. That won't break your bank, but you can get started with someone that can watch your form and write down four days' worth of workouts. The diet, though, is 80% of it.

**RI: What do you say to the person who feels stuck in their job? They report to an office and they are not happy about it. They'd like to do something else, but the stability of the thing they've got**



Want to see some clean comedy that still has an edge? Check out Tim's special, ["Don't Teach Your Grandma How To Text"](#) on YouTube.

# INTERVIEW: TIM WILKINS

is important. Once you've collected dogs and kids and spouses and you're rooted to a place, it has a way of rooting everything else in your life to the same place.

TW: I first met Robert when I was hosting a morning talk show in Tampa on the CBS station. That job was a huge pay cut from comedy. So I had to do a lot of stuff at night and make it work until it took off. So sometimes you're going to have to do a few extra things to make your dream a reality. Whatever your dream is, we are at an unprecedented age to research that dream. Back then when I was starting out, we didn't know how to move careers or connect with people in that field and reach out. But you have to put yourself out there, find out the reality of whatever your dream is.

I have friends that came to me and they said, "I want to write a book, but I don't know anything about it." I sat down at the desk and I Googled "how to write a book" and magic happened after that. You can Google anything and learn how to make your dream a reality. So pick the dream, research it, and understand it may take some pain. I was driving all over the country doing comedy at night, getting back on the talk show in the morning on two, three hours of sleep, but it paid off 20 years later like I can't imagine. So be prepared to put in little extra work to fill in those financial needs. And then when it takes off, you can leave all that other stuff behind and just do your dream.



## THE PERFECT (HEALTHY) STEAK

A perpetually clean eater, Wilkins shared his easy and healthy Steak and Cauliflower Mashed Potatoes recipe.

"I do it almost restaurant style, except without the restaurant butter," Wilkins says.

### TO DO IT:

- 1) Using a filet mignon (or NY strip), let the steak come up to room temperature. Season liberally with salt and pepper.
- 2) Oil an oven-safe pan, get it very hot, and sear it for a

minute and a half on each side.

3) Put the whole pan in the oven at 425. Depending on thickness, the steak probably needs 6 to 8 minutes to get to a perfect medium rare. "It doesn't need butter, gravy, or sauce," Wilkins says. "It's perfection."

4) Serve with cauliflower mashed potatoes: mash together cooked cauliflower and boiled potatoes with margarine and almond milk. Season with salt, pepper, and minced garlic.

# Our Favorite Kitchen Design Trends



When style, technology, and functionality are fused in perfect balance, you get a kitchen that's more than the sum of its parts. Here's how to turn your home kitchen into an oasis.

By KitchenAid Contributor

# KITCHEN DESIGN

## HOME / HOME & DESIGN

2021 was a year of alternative aesthetics. If it's "traditional," it's not happening. These kitchen design trends are all about breaking outside the norm of how a conventional kitchen looks, feels, and functions, and instead treats the kitchen like any other rooms in the house. It's about being playful and adding interest to a space that might not always get the attention it deserves.

If there's one thing last year taught us, it's the importance of enjoying our homes as we want them to look, especially our kitchens. Toss out rules about what's supposed to go in a kitchen or what a kitchen is supposed to look like and 2022 will see a continuation in this direction. These trends blur the lines between kitchen and other areas of the home in a way that elevates the possibilities of kitchen design in an exciting way. These design ideas also unify the kitchen with the rest of the home.

Many current kitchen design trends take a spin on new uses for traditional materials, play around with whimsical window treatments, lay out some funky floor décor, and unabashedly mix décor



The KitchenAid 24 Undercounter Wine Cellar with Glass Door and Wood-Front Racks adds elegance and unique functionality. Check it out [HERE](#).

and patterns from different eras and themes. It's all about having fun.

These are some of our favorite kitchen design trends because the

kitchen isn't just another room of the house, and it's so much more than a place to prepare food. These kitchen design trends highlight what we love about our

# KITCHEN DESIGN

kitchens: the endless possibilities to create, gather, and enjoy.

“It’s about being playful and adding interest to a space that might not always get the attention it deserves.”

## THE CONCEALED KITCHEN

This fascinating design trend transforms your kitchen into a more versatile space by concealing common features of a kitchen like major appliances, fixtures, and even the kitchen sink. Panel ready appliances and discreet use of cabinetry turns the kitchen into a space that feels as cozy as a

living room but with the utility of a full kitchen.

Also referred to as the “invisible kitchen,” this design trend blurs the lines from one room to the next as the kitchen looks more like other rooms in the house.

Concealing parts of your kitchen that “make it a kitchen” can create a sense of unity throughout a home and open the possibilities for more décor options since it doesn’t feel solely like a kitchen. You aren’t pinned to only what’s considered kitchen décor, and that feels really liberating from a design perspective.

However, discretion is not at the cost of functionality. In fact, the opposite is true. Concealed or invisible kitchens add functionality to the space by adding more cabinetry, counter space, or storage.

There are several ways to try out the concealed kitchen trend. One way is to conceal your refrigerator. It’s one of the largest appliances of the kitchen and you’ll instantly know you’re in a kitchen when you see a refrigerator. Opt for a built-in, panel ready model and match existing cabinetry or explore new options to revamp your kitchen.



Left, a concealed refrigerator seamlessly becomes part of the kitchen landscape and saves precious space. Right, marble splashback adds elegance and a soothing visual tone.

# KITCHEN DESIGN

## RETRO REVIVAL

Welcome back wallpaper, sink skirts, and linoleum flooring. These decorative throwbacks inspire our next favorite kitchen design trend: retro revival.

Let's talk wallpaper. This is a kitchen design trend that's been growing in popularity for years and it's really come front and center as a way to add a lot of color and design to kitchens without having to do major renovations or more permanent changes like paint. It's relatively easy to hang wallpaper and it's easy to match patterns to your kitchen décor. Wallpaper is an on trend change that perks up a kitchen by adding interest and depth in a room you might not expect to see wallpaper. This wall treatment also softens the room while adding texture.

The skirted sink is a throwback to the 1940s when pieces of fabric would be hung to conceal bulky plumbing under a sink, or to hide storage. Today, we're seeing sink skirts reemerge as a way to add softness to kitchens, playfulness, and yes, even added options for storage. The good thing about this trend is that it can be used in almost any style of kitchen. Farmhouse? Try a material like jute or burlap. Midcentury Modern? Try a soft cotton skirt in softer hues of ivory or beige.

Is there anything more classic

than checkered flooring? We're seeing more checkered patterns popping up in kitchens, especially the vintage iconic black and white checkered flooring. Black and white is such a classic color combo that lends itself to a lot of possibilities. It's a non-traditional spin on a traditionally classic design trend that we can really get behind. Even linoleum is making a comeback, which is a material known for its durability

*These kitchen design trends highlight what we love about our kitchens: the endless possibilities to create, gather, and enjoy.*

and ease to clean. Maybe it's time to rethink your kitchen floors and throw it back for some vintage vibes.

## MARBLE, MESH & MIXED MATERIALS

Expect to see a lot of playfulness around the use of alternative and mixed materials in the kitchen. It's an excellent way to add in some contrasting elements for interest and intrigue. The kitchen

doesn't have to be just a place for appliances and dishes; it can also be a space for the unexpected.

Mesh wire cabinets are a spin on traditional glass front cabinetry. Adding a decorative mesh insert to existing cabinets gives your kitchen instant appeal without a lot of work. If you want to have an exposed look without too much clutter, this trend is for you.

These decorative accents come in a lot of different patterns and materials. One of our favorite materials to use in this mesh design is copper since it adds texture and a sophisticated touch to almost any cabinet style or décor. And you can also strategically install wire mesh over just some of your cabinets to break up an area of paneled cabinetry.

"The kitchen doesn't have to be just a place for appliances and dishes; it can also be a space for the unexpected."

Marble is a naturally dramatic element that adds instant wow factor. Marble countertops have been popular for a few years, but now single slab marble backsplashes are making a major statement, replacing other traditional backsplash materials like tile. Marble slab backsplashes add accent to your kitchen's overall design and can brighten up an area that may be a bit dim. Marble is also incredibly durable and easy to clean. Want to take it up a notch?

# KITCHEN DESIGN

Try colored marble.

We hope the trend of mixed metallics is here to stay. The contrast of metal and other materials like vinyl or wood creates such unique texture. It really stands out. A great example of juxtaposing unexpected materials pulls on another current kitchen design trend: vinyl countertops. Pair vinyl countertops with a metallic tin tiles backsplash for a little retro rustic revival experience.

## CEILING AS THE FIFTH WALL

The kitchen ceiling is truly an undiscovered blank canvas of the kitchen. It's time to rethink your kitchen ceiling and give it some extra attention with paint, stencils, molding, tiles, and dramatic lighting.

This trend elevates the ceiling as more than simply a place to hang lighting, with interesting ways to bring attention up. Incorporating the ceiling into your overall kitchen design has a way of tying a room together. One of our favorite ways to do this is with ceiling tiles. You can find ceiling tiles in different materials, patterns, colors, and sizes making it a versatile way to achieve a dramatic yet highly personalized look. If you have a coffered ceiling, paint or stenciling can add depth. Stenciling around the trim can add color and design to the kitchen ceiling in another unexpected way.

And don't neglect the opportunity to use lighting as a focal



A place for everything, and everything in its place. A well-organized kitchen isn't just visually appealing; it makes it easier to cook and entertain.

point. Oversized lighting is the perfect accompaniment to an interesting ceiling design. Oversized light fixtures like blown glass bulbs can also add a lot of light to your space. Treat these large fixtures as works of art on a wall when choosing placement and style.

Adding decorative elements to your kitchen ceiling can make the room more inviting. It instantly transforms the kitchen into so much more than just a place to prepare food. We're all for any

opportunity to add some love to our most beloved space.

## FLOORING THAT BREAKS TRADITION

Your kitchen floors take up a lot of space in your kitchen and can make a big statement. View your flooring as an opportunity to add hints of novelty to your space. From the type of material to the pattern and color, when it comes to flooring, we're leaning towards these flooring trends that add personality, pop, and pizzazz.

# KITCHEN DESIGN

Unusual flooring patterns add instant visual interest. When laying hardwood floors, instead of traditional straight, side by side patterns, play around with diagonal boards or variations of the popular Herringbone pattern. To add some hints of elegance to your kitchen, try parquet style flooring. Parquet wood flooring is made up of individual wood blocks or tiles that are arranged into a recurring pattern. Originating in the 1960s, this type of bold flooring is ideal for mid century modern kitchens since it has a sort of vintage feel to it.

Fumed wood is another flooring trend we're embracing. Fumed wood has a level of personality and artistry that's hard to achieve with other types of flooring. When wood is exposed to ammonia gas, the natural tannins in the wood bring out a dark, grayish-brown color. Like the natural grain of marble, fumed wood has natural variations. The flooring becomes an artistic work of art, no two boards of wood are the same. The color variations will also look different based on the type of wood.

2022 is the year to rethink your space and make your kitchen truly your own. Add pops of color, explore new patterns and textures. Have fun designing a space that's inviting and inspiring; for the heart of your home and a place of endless possibilities.

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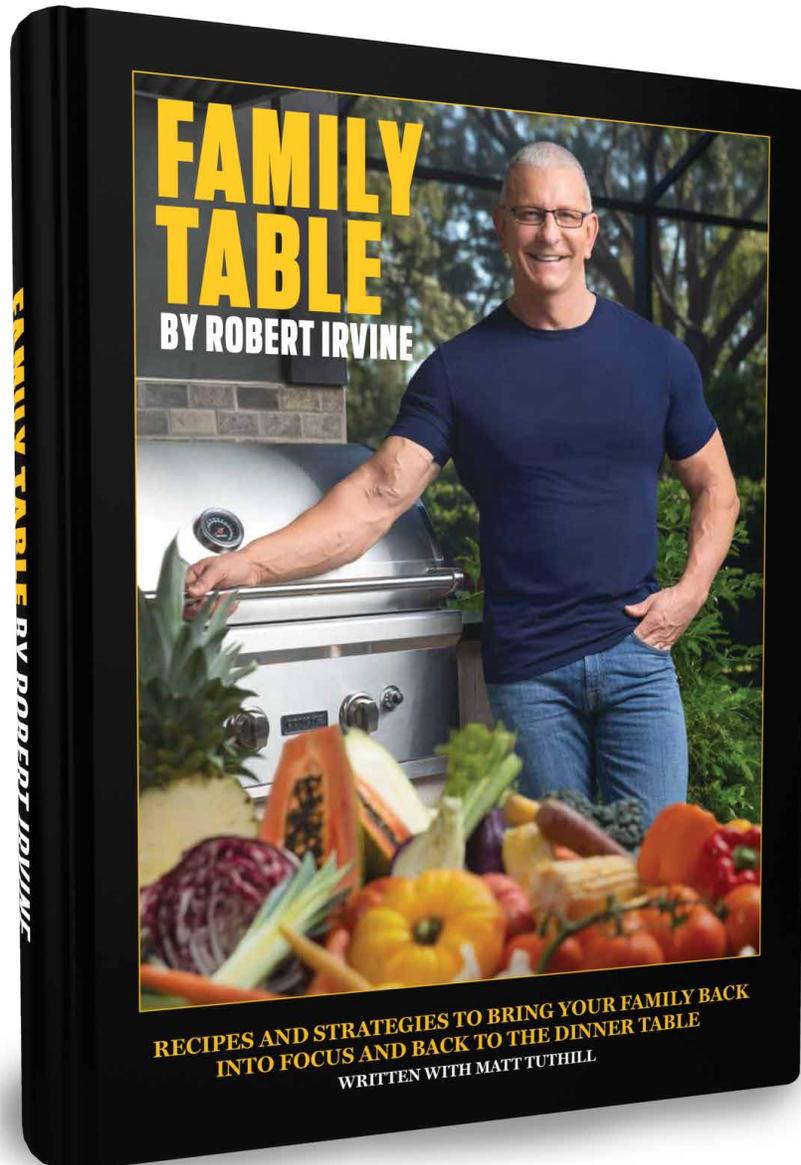


Above, these low, comfy seats add a playful retro touch. Below, a small space made functional with additional shelving and utensil racks.



# FAMILY TABLE

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## HOW TO: BEAT THE BLOAT

A comprehensive guide of what to eat and what to avoid before hitting the beach.

### QUESTION:

*I love spending my summers at the beach but dread the feeling of walking around feeling bloated all day in a bathing suit. I eat clean regularly, but I can't seem to avoid getting bloated. What foods should I stay away from to help prevent bloating? And what should I eat instead?*

- Alyssa in CT

### ANSWER BY SJ

**McSHANE, CN, CPT:** A case of the bloats can be annoying. Not only is it uncomfortable, but it conceals the hard work you've put in the gym and kitchen. The good news is, steering clear of a few food and drink choices—and making a few simple swaps—will help keep unwanted bloating at bay so you can make the best of your beach days.

#### High-Sodium Snacks

Although sodium-rich snacks like salsa, chips, and hotdogs might not make you gassy, they do cause water retention which can leave you looking and feeling bloated – especially if you go overboard on



the serving sizes.

**Swap it:** opt for low-sodium varieties of your favorite beach snacks and/or pair them with potassium-rich foods like avocado, mango, and banana. Potassium helps help flush excess sodium out of the body making them perfect beach day bites.

#### Cruciferous Veggies

They're packed with vitamins and fantastic for long-term healthy eating, but they will not work in

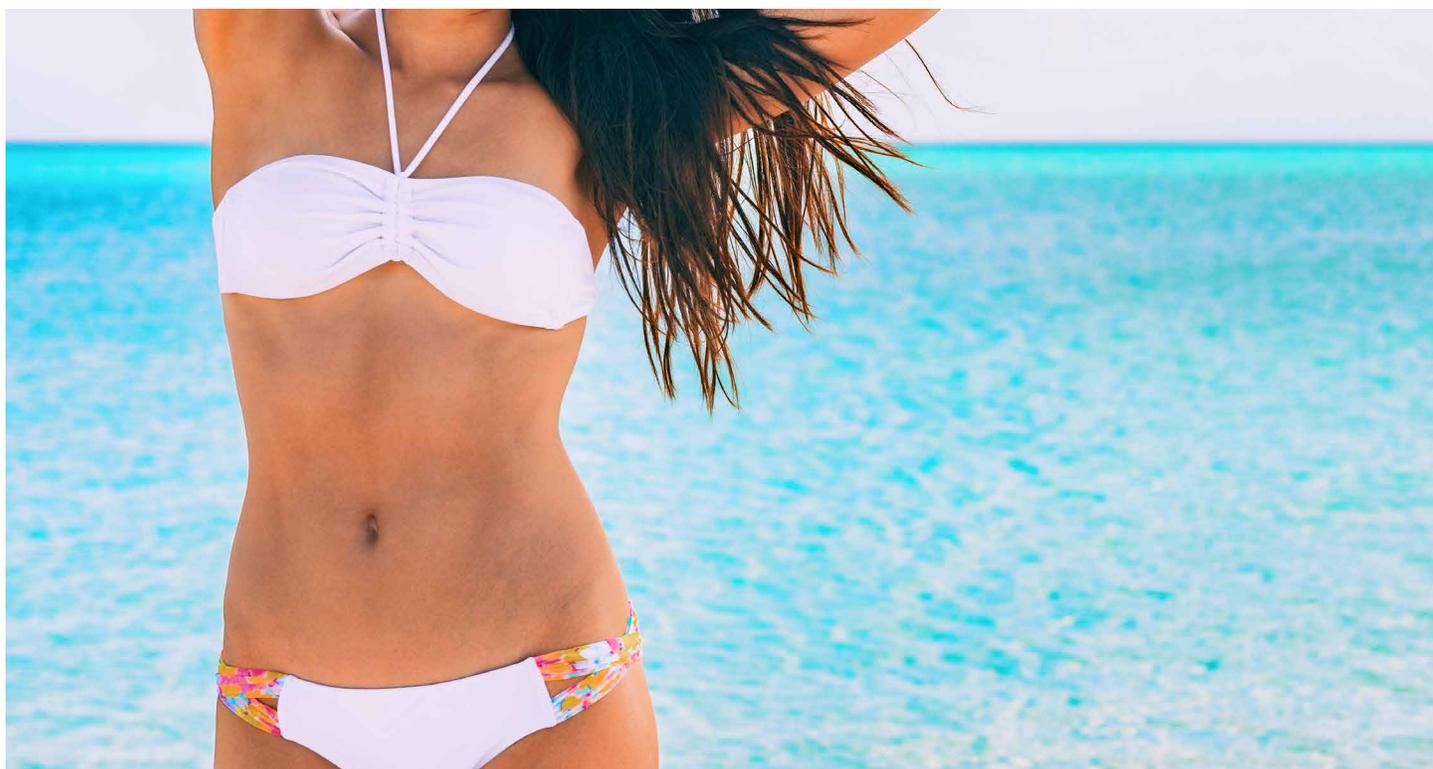
your favor on beach days. Foods like cauliflower, brussels sprouts, broccoli, and cabbage contain a complex sugar called raffinose which is known for causing unwanted bloating.

**Swap it:** Crunching on sliced vegetables such as cucumbers, carrots, and celery will give you your fill of nutrients while helping flush excess water out of the body.

#### Carbonated drinks

Bubbly beverages and belly bloat

# ASK US ANYTHING



go hand-in-hand due to the high amounts of carbon dioxide (a gas) causing belly budging, belching, and trapped gas.

**Swap it:** If you find yourself craving the bubbles, sparkling water is a decent substitute when sticking to one serving. Add lemon (or your choice of fruit) to plain, cold water which will help your body naturally detox while keeping you hydrated under the summer sun. Coconut water is another great alternative helping to replenish lost electrolytes.

## **Sugar Alcohols**

Xylitol, sorbitol, and mannitol are popular for causing bloating since they reach the large intestines unchanged where the gut bacteria feed on them. Gum, certain processed foods, and sweet drinks can contain these sweeteners so keep an eye out before you pack your beach bag.

**Swap it:** Stevia or organic sugar will provide sweetness to your drink of choice without the tummy rumbles and bathing suit bulge.

## **Other belly-bloating foods to avoid on beach day:**

**Onions** – This popular veggie contains soluble fiber, (fructans), which can cause bloating.

**Alcohol** – Can cause dehydration which leads to water retention, while the carbonation can give you an instant beer belly.

**Wheat and Dairy** – If your body doesn't respond well to gluten or dairy, it's best to omit them completely on beach days.

**Beans** – Contain high fiber which is healthy for the body, but can leave you feeling distended.

**Junk food** – Processed foods high in fat, carbohydrates, sugars and salts can lead to instant bloating and inflammation.

## **Float Without the Bloat: Anti-bloating Foods & Drinks**

**Organic, low-sodium lean meats**  
**Fruits:** watermelon, papaya, berries, grapefruit, oranges, antelope, avocado, banana, grapes, pears, pineapple.

**Veggies:** cucumbers, celery, carrots, spinach, zucchini, asparagus, spaghetti squash.

**Fermented foods (if tolerated well)**

Oatmeal with cinnamon

Quinoa

Yogurt

Almonds

**Water add-ins:** Ginger, mint, lime, lemon, chia seeds,

Green tea, chamomile tea, peppermint tea

Kombucha

*SJ McShane is a trainer, nutritionist, and Senior Writer for Robert Irvine Magazine. Follow her on [Twitter](#) and visit her [website](#).*

## PEAK CLASSICS

A pair of time-honored Paramount films get the UHD remaster treatment—with glorious results.



### THE UNTOUCHABLES 4K

The 1987 crime drama is remastered on 4K Blu-ray and now presented in beautiful Steelbook collectible packaging from Paramount. The all-star cast—Sean Connery, Andy Garcia, Kevin Costner, and Robert DeNiro—look better (and younger) than ever, and every aspect still holds up, from Brian DePalma's directing, to David Mamet's script, to Ennio Morricone's always pitch-perfect scoring. You'll still have to suspend your disbelief in a few of the fictionalized elements as well as the fact that Al Capone—as terrible as he was—was in fact doing the Lord's work when supplying booze to the hard-working, thirsty citizens of Chicago. But the movie is still pretty much perfect, and this is the best version of it you'll ever see.

\$25, [amazon](#)

### EVENT HORIZON 4K

The groundbreaking original 1997 sci-fi horror film has now entered the realm of the bona fide classics (feel old?) and to celebrate its 25th anniversary, Paramount is re-releasing it on 4K Blu-ray and digital. The collectible Steelbook and slipcase make for a gorgeous pairing; the transparent overlay features undead hands and the names of headliners Sam Neill and Laurence Fishburne, crowding in on the blue lights of the Event Horizon's experimental engine, reflected in Neill's eye. An appropriately cool treatment for a movie that oozes cool out of every frame.

\$28, [amazon](#)



# WORDS TO LIVE BY

*“Summers had a logic all their own and they always brought something out in me. Summer was supposed to be about freedom and youth and no school and possibilities and adventure and exploration. Summer was a book of hope. That’s why I loved and hated summers. Because they made me want to believe.”*

*— Benjamin Alire Sáenz*

