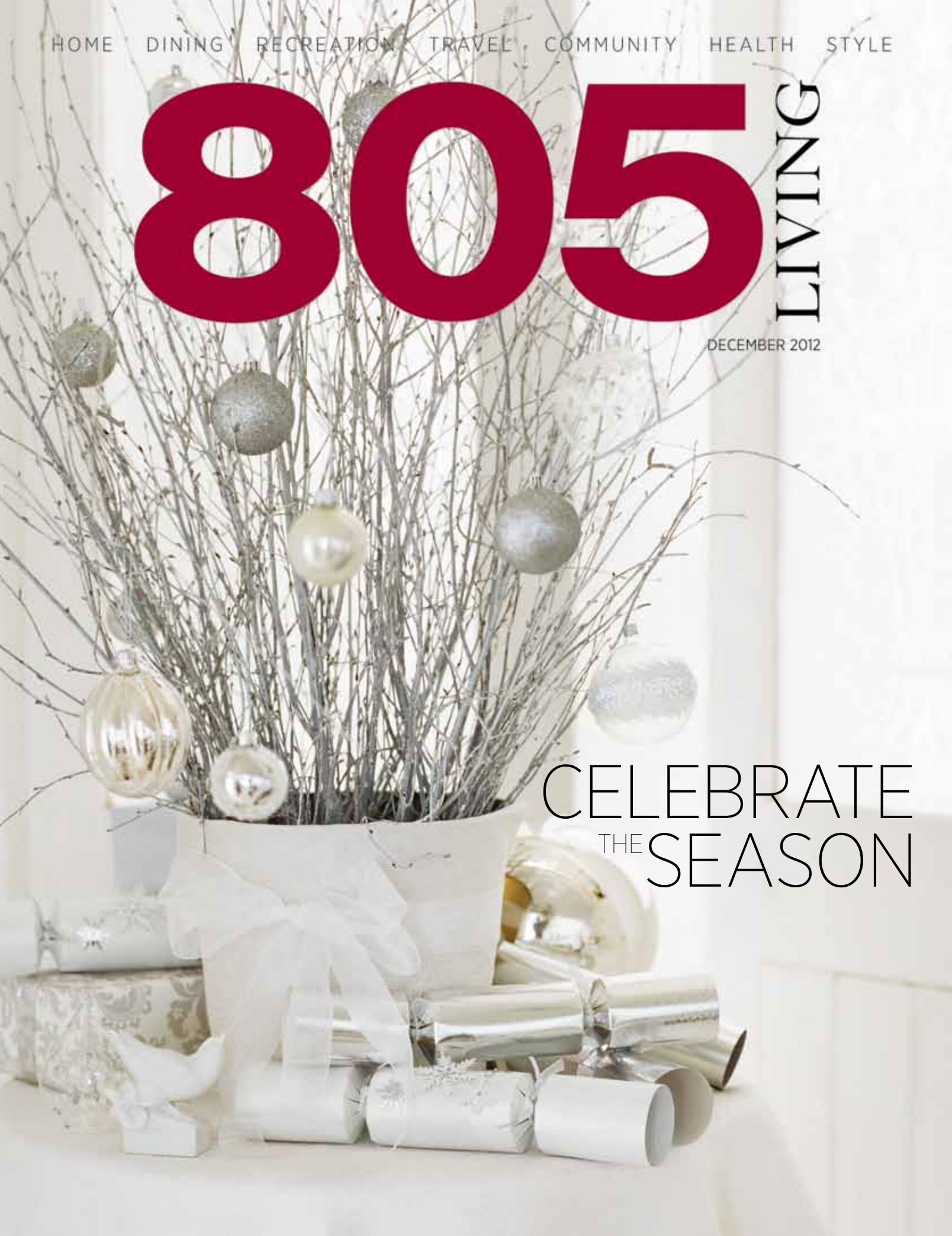


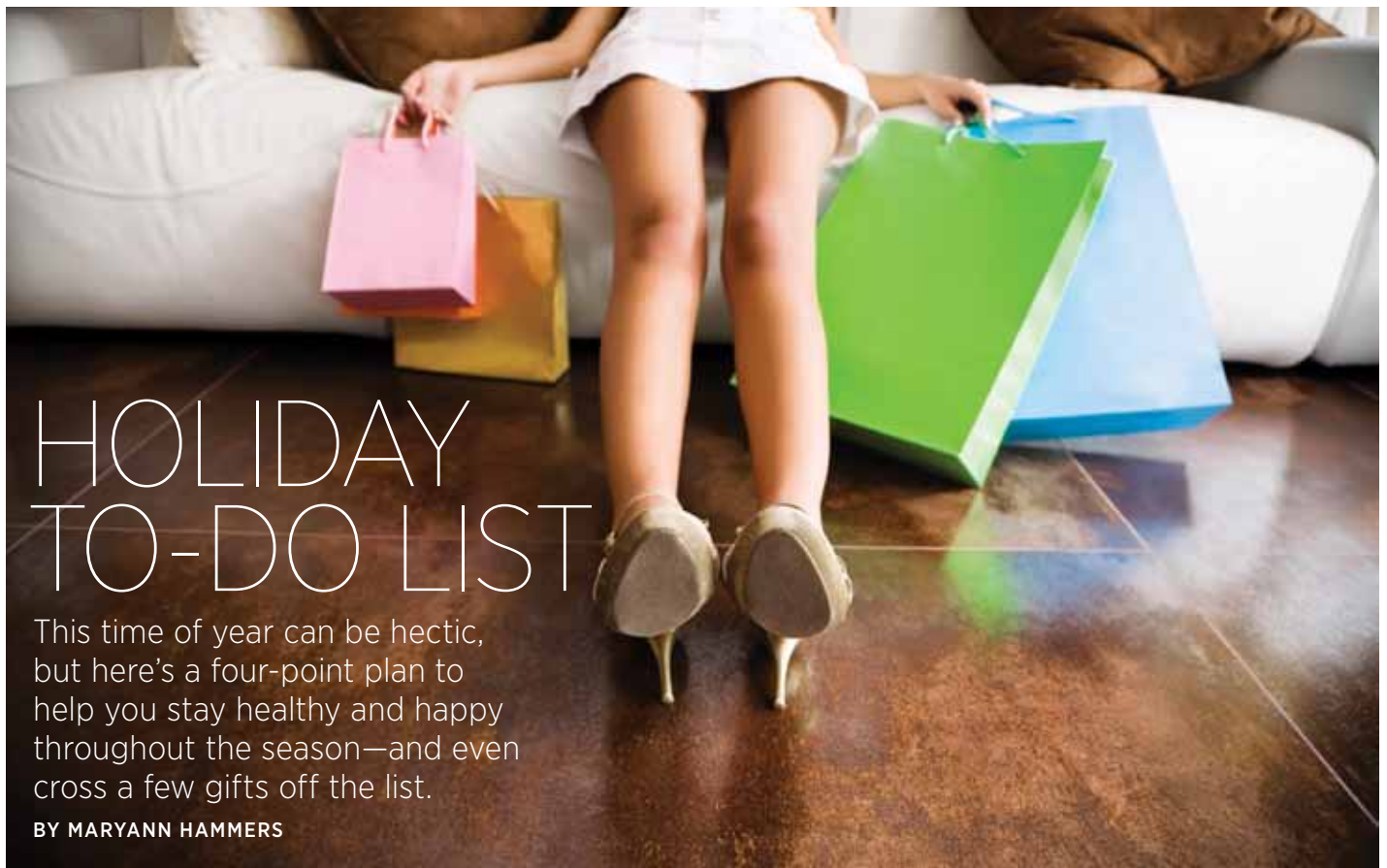
# 805

LIVING

DECEMBER 2012

CELEBRATE  
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# HOLIDAY TO-DO LIST

This time of year can be hectic, but here's a four-point plan to help you stay healthy and happy throughout the season—and even cross a few gifts off the list.

BY MARYANN HAMMERS

## CHILL OUT

*Take a deep breath, and take a little time for yourself this holiday season.*

The 60-minute Cranberry Enzyme Facial at **Cielo** ([cielospasb.com](http://cielospasb.com)) in Santa Barbara isn't just festively named; it's also chock-full of antioxidants to benefit problem skin. The treatment includes a shoulder, arm, and hand massage.

With its emphasis on deep breathing and awareness of the moment, Tai Chi is often called “moving meditation.” “It's about being centered and balanced, so you'll feel grounded, refreshed, and in control,” says Tai Chi master Doria Cook-Nelson, who leads classes and private sessions at **Veronica Skin & Body Care Center** ([veronicaskincare.com](http://veronicaskincare.com)) in Malibu.

Energy healing sweeps away stress, drama, and anxiety, says Barbara Savin, certified hypnotherapist, meditation instructor, and energy healing specialist at the **California Health & Longevity Institute** ([chli.com](http://chli.com)) in Westlake Village. While you comfortably recline, listen to soft music, and relax, Savin uses touch to clear chakra blockages. Afterward, “you feel clear and relaxed, with a renewed sense of purpose and focus,” Savin says.

## GET GLAM

*It's party time! Local pros can help you primp and prep.*

With sequined pillows adorning quilted pedi recliners, butterfly-shaped pink-and-lavender pedi chairs for girls, beaded chandeliers, shimmering drapes, vintage décor, and

Dean Martin crooning in the background, **High Maintenance** ([highmaintenance.co](http://highmaintenance.co)) is Thousand Oaks' swankiest nail salon. Dior, OPI, Butter London, and Essie polishes are available in every imaginable shade, including holiday faves like deep reds, silver, and glitter.

“December is a great month to search for that perfect red lip,” says Oak Park-based makeup artist **Jennifer Weisman** ([jennweisman.com](http://jennweisman.com)). But not grandma's red: Instead, drool over hues of cherry, currant, merlot, aubergine, burgundy, cinnamon, claret, crimson, and maroon. Combine that with some 1950s Marilyn Monroe-esque cat-eye liner, Weisman says, and you're sitting pretty for whatever festivities come your way. Need help pulling it off? Weisman offers group, private, and one-on-one makeup lessons (perfect idea for a girls' night-in holiday party)—and she makes house calls, too.

One hairstyle fits all? No way. From trendy braids to classic updos, **Just Blown Away** ([justblownaway.com](http://justblownaway.com)), a Westlake Village blow-dry bar, customizes styles to each client. “We do sleek blow outs and big volume, we do soft waves or loads of curls, we have hair chalk for festive streaks, and we can add sparkles,” says co-owner Tonya Hansen.

Does your 'do need a little oomph? “Clip-in bangs transform your look in minutes,” says Niki Motz, owner of **Pelo Hair** ([pelo-hair.com](http://pelo-hair.com)), a new hair-extension boutique in Thousand Oaks. And “zebra hair—bright accents that look like zebra stripes—gives pizzazz to casual styles or adds elegance to an updo.” Pelo carries only human hair, from bone-straight to



tightly curled, in colors from platinum to jet-black. Throughout December, Motz offers a free clip-on accent with each \$150 purchase. (Bring an unwrapped toy to be donated to a local charity, and you'll get 10 percent off.)

Hair? Check. Nails? Check. Don't let crow's feet ruin your look. "Botox can soften lines and wrinkles around the eyes and forehead," says Dr. Talia Emery, medical director of **Remedy Skin + Body** (remedyskinandbody.com), a cosmetic dermatology center in Westlake Village. Remedy sweetens the pot with a complimentary gardenia-scented Kai candle with any \$200 Botox purchase.

## STAY FIT

*Regular workouts help combat holiday calories and colds.*

Santa Barbara-based **Digifit** (digifit.com) offers fitness-tracking iPhone/Android apps for runners, stationary cyclists, and bicyclists to measure progress and track distance, speed, pace, calories burned, and heart rate. A built-in GPS maps your route.

With the annual onslaught of cookies, candy, and gingerbread men, it's easy to undo a year's worth of workouts. Pilates studio **Joe & Clara** (joeandclara.com) offers "December Dash," a complimentary 30-minute, circuit-style Pilates/fitness class, suitable for all fitness levels, throughout December (a \$5 donation is requested that goes toward local elementary schools). According to owner-instructor Stacey Phillipson, the goal is to "Maintain, don't gain."

Your schedule is crazy this time of year, right? Certified yoga instructor Francine Hernandez, owner of **Your Daily Practice** (yourdailypractice.com), gets it. Those who have no time for a gym or studio can stay home and get fit and toned with her virtual training via Skype and webcam. Hernandez also makes house calls throughout the Camarillo area.

Too much eggnog? Uh-oh. Get back on track: A day package at **The Oaks** (oaksspa.com) packs in everything offered at the Ojai destination spa, and you needn't commit to an overnight stay. Arrive as early as 6 a.m. to fill your schedule with as many classes as you like, including Hula-Hooping, belly dancing, Zumba, stability balls and bands, water aerobics, stretching, strength-training, and tons more—even art powerwalks around town. You'll have full access to the pool, sauna, steam room, and hot tubs. Kayaking on Lake Casitas, rock climbing, bike rides to the beach, fitness consultations, private Pilates sessions, and group or private hikes (from beginning to advanced) can be added. Portion- and calorie-controlled meals, smoothies, and healthy snacks are included; then stay after dinner for health lectures, workshops, and movies (with popcorn).

## GIVE & GET

*Tackle your gift list—or pamper yourself—with lovely local products.*

Santa Barbara-based **The Grapeseed Company** (grapeseedcompany.com), which recently opened its second store in Carpinteria, has launched several new gift packages for women, men, travelers, babies,



and even pets (check out the Dirty Dog Organics line). The Shower Set features the heady combination of pink grapefruit and ginger; the Eco Sampler includes massage oil, grape-seed scrub, body butter, and lip balm all nestled in a pretty basket; and the Whipped Body Butter Trio has a decadently rich citrusy-wine scent.

Good for your skin, good for your heart, chock-full of nutrients, and delicious in dips—avocados are the perfect superfood. Moorpark-based **Avocado Diva** (avocadodiva.com) works with local farmers and ranchers who grow many varieties of heritage avocados. The Gourmet Guacamole Kit includes spices, peppers, and lemons; another gift basket features dark, rich avocado honey.

Makeup junkie on your list? The four-sided, spinning **Polaris Pyramid** (polariscosmetics.com) is the ultimate present. It features palettes of highly pigmented and custom-blended eye shadows, highlighters, contours, face powders, blushes, and eyebrow colors in classic, dramatic, or playful shades. Handcrafted from maple, it stands on a vanity and spins with the touch of a finger.

Pomegranate-cocoa—the seasonal private-label scent at **Ojai Valley Inn & Spa** (ojairesort.com)—smells yummy in oils, salts, and candles (all sold at the Spa Ojai Boutique). But for a truly one-of-a-kind fragrance, head to the on-site apothecary to create your own sweet, spicy, or sensual custom blend. Working with Ojai aromatherapist Sherrie Bitts Dawkins, you'll sniff and mix essential oils, drop by drop. When the fragrance is perfect, your recipe can be handcrafted into lotions, soaps, bath salts, perfume, spritzes, massage oils, or crèmes, all beautifully packaged, labeled, and ready to give (or keep). ♦



A fragrance just for you: At the on-site apothecary at the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, visitors mix, match, sniff, and sample their way to a perfectly calibrated, custom-blended scent.