

BOSTON COMMON



FEAR & LOVING

Offscreen with *American Horror Story's*
Connie Britton & Dylan McDermott

Ultimate Holiday
Gift Guide



With Gretchen Pace and Lauren Young at the launch of Kilian Hennessy's new fragrance at the Boston Design Center



With Edwina Kluender, Jared Bowen, and Tonya Mezrich at Boston Lyric Opera's Hocus Pocus gala.

Amid the social whirlwind that is the holidays in Boston,

there are those events that mark the arrival of my favorite season—the Boston Lyric Opera's annual gala and the opening night of Boston Ballet's fall production (this year it's *Romeo and Juliet*), as well as *The Nutcracker*, the Teddy Bear Tea at the Four Seasons, Nantucket's Holiday Stroll, and the arrival of truffles in Boston restaurants.

Victoria Abbott Riccardi pens a love letter of sorts to the latter in this issue. One of the most coveted ingredients in the world, truffles are essentially a humble underground mushroom with a strong, heady scent. But that aroma has enchanted millions, and their rarity—like a four-bedroom townhouse in Beacon Hill—makes them a hot commodity. My own epiphanies with this magical mushroom took place in both France and the United States, each time during the holidays. When I was in France for the first time, I had never smelled or tasted a truffle but knew the French

adored them. I was visiting friends there and wanted to bring a gift guaranteed to please. A truffle seemed like the right idea. Off to market I went, where I handed

over the requisite francs (this was a few years ago!) and my knobby treasure was zipped into a plastic bag. I left it in my rental car overnight, worried that otherwise I might leave it behind at my inn. The next day, I opened the car to a powerful, pungent smell, but on my long drive, I grew to love the fragrance. And my friends loved the gift of the fungi.

My other holiday truffle experience happened much closer to home—the chance to hunt for truffles in a Tennessee grove. I had planned to stop only briefly and see in person what the owner, Tom Michaels, was up to. But the drop-in turned into an exploration, complete with truffle dogs. The dogs sniffed out the largest truffle I've ever seen—a one-pounder. I held the thousand-dollar mushroom in my hands, in awe that this was happening here, in America. But the cultivation of these fabulous fungi is on the rise in the US, as Victoria describes in our pages, and we're thrilled to share the story of their journey to the New World, as well as the best places to enjoy them in Boston—just in time for the holidays.

JANICE O'LEARY



ABOVE: With Kelly Doyle and Dr. Joell Bianchi at the Breast Cancer Research Foundation's first lunchtime symposium.



LEFT: With shoe designer Stuart Weitzman during his appearance at Boston's Saks Fifth Avenue

FROM THE PUBLISHER



With Kilian Hennessy at the joint Saks Fifth Avenue and Boston Design Center soirée celebrating the launch of Hennessy's luxurious fragrance line, By Kilian



With Tom Brady at the opening of the Ermenegildo Zegna store in Copley Place



TOP: With Liz Sells at the opening of the Sells & Co. pop-up shop on Newbury Street. BOTTOM: With the Stoli tastemakers Aaron Sells, Seth Greenberg, Linda Henry, and Ed Kane



We're just coming off our celebration of Boston

as a man's at the newest addition to the Back Bay's dining scene, Forum. Joining us at our Distinguished Gentlemen's event were our sponsors Dewar's, Stella Artois, Shreve Crump & Low, Herb Chambers, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Cigar Masters. This fall has been chock-full of events, including the welcoming of Victorinox to Copley Place, our Jenn-Air event, and *The Addams Family* gala dinner on stage at the Wang Theatre. We also celebrated the Night of Stars kick-off to Boston Ballet's season with an exclusive dinner at the Ritz-Carlton, a medley of performances at the Opera House, and a dance-floor afterparty. Let me tell you, it was not your typical ballet dancing at the end of the evening.

Part of our busy fall social calendar included our Stoli Tastemakers event at Woodward at the Ames, featuring stars from the Stoli ad in our September issue. The evening was a huge success. Be sure to check out our fresh group of tastemakers in this issue.

Follow me on Facebook at [facebook.com/boston-common](https://www.facebook.com/boston-common) and on bostoncommon-magazine.com.

With the holidays sneaking up on us, we've put together a truly exclusive gift guide in this issue, where local experts and notables weigh in on the gorgeous goods, and the gifts themselves leap off the pages. With some great events to look forward to, we wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. We're looking forward to an amazing 2012!

GLEN KELLEY

PHOTOGRAPH BY GAIL OSKIN

INVITED



Julie Rogowski and Kilian Hennessy



Mariella Fodera and Kristen Sovelia



Sam Mendoza and Joshua Janson



Robin Mays, Jane Hudson, and Rebecca Scott



Paula and Kate McCusker

good scents

On October 6, **Saks Fifth Avenue** and **Boston Design Center** held a party featuring famed French perfumer **Kilian Hennessy**. More than 300 guests, including **Sam Mendoza** and **Joshua Janson**, enjoyed cocktails, prosecco and hors d'oeuvres as they sampled perfume from the By Kilian scent bars set up throughout the party.



Jeremiah McGuffey and Orianne Xanthopoulos



Mauren Ursprung and Samantha Ramage



Hand-painted luggage raffled for Artists for Humanity.

swiss army invasion

Boston Common and friends welcomed **Victorinox** to Boston by throwing a party for the brand's new store in Copley Place on September 27. Guests, including **West Cerrudo** and **Rene Stutz** of Victorinox, as well as **Susan Rogerson**, celebrated the store's arrival with **Double Cross Vodka** cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and the music of DJ Grooves. Twenty percent of purchases from the event went to support **Artists for Humanity**, which donated hand-painted luggage for an exciting auction. Copley Place is now home to one of only five United States Victorinox locations.



Zach Harvey and Dave Hall

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BLANCHARD

all through the house

ARCHITECT AND DECORATOR JOIN FORCES TO DECK THE HALLS WITH STYLE IN THIS WEST-OF-BOSTON HOME. BY CAROLINE CUNNINGHAM

Every Christmas, family and friends gather together in this gorgeous home in the western suburbs of Boston. The house always seems to sparkle with happiness and love, but perhaps never more so than during the holiday season. White lights twinkle gaily from trees and shrubs, beribboned wreaths hang in the windows while garlands wind up the stairway; evergreens decorate the family and living rooms; and a charming Santa Claus figurine keeps watch by the stone fireplace, where the stockings are hung with great care. The staff at Bow Street Flowers decks the home's halls each season with fresh pine boughs and Frasier Fir trees that they deliver the second week of December. They hang the trees with the family's heirloom ornaments and new Christmas balls and bells they source yearly. The company artfully adorns the mantle with deep green and glossy magnolia leaves that harmonize with the color scheme of the home. The generous spirit of the owners can be seen in every detail—it's elegant exuberance at its very best.

But the vibrant spirit isn't reserved just for Christmas. The home, an unassuming builder's Colonial on a quiet residential street, was completely renovated in 2002 by architect John MacDonald, of Morehouse MacDonald & Associates. MacDonald opened up the back of the house to the lovely gardens beyond and created dynamic new areas for the couple and their four children, including a breakfast room, conservatory, and family room. Light pours through an oculus at each end of the house, and the pattern in the trussed ceiling, rendered in rift

The generous spirit of the owners can be seen in every detail.

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Designing woman, Mollie Johnson

The house combines subtle luxury and comfort throughout.

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white oak, echoes the shape of these dramatic windows, connecting the rooms from above in a continuous, cylindrical plane.

The task of finishing all the interior spaces was given to designer Mollie Johnson. She and the owners have worked together for a long time; in fact, Johnson's first project, when she launched her own company almost 20 years ago, was for their original home. They've become good friends since, and the owners' trust in Johnson's confident style is reflected in every corner of the house.

The tone is set from the moment one enters the front foyer and sees a beautiful silver bowl, planted with a white amaryllis, on a Directoire table from Andrew Spindler Antiques. Damask wallpaper in pale gray and white from Brunschwig & Fils and a floral patterned carpet on the stairs give warmth to the double-height space; an antique gilded chandelier hangs above.

A rich palette of caramels, burnt orange, and soft browns fill the family room just beyond. Magnificent Hudson River School landscape paintings adorn the walls, and in a clever mix of form and function, an antique chest from M-Geough is used as a side table.

The light-filled conservatory and breakfast room share the same serene color scheme and gracious furnishings, including an exquisite chandelier and bookcase from Niermann Weeks of M-Geough. The house combines subtle luxury and comfort throughout. It's the perfect place to celebrate family and friendship—at Christmas, and all year round. **BC**

INSIGHT

Mollie Johnson Interiors: 1 Hollis St., No. 102, Wellesley, 781-431-2289; molliejohnsoninteriors.com

Morehouse MacDonald & Associates: 3 Bow St., Lexington, 781-861-9500; morehousemacdonald.com

Bow Street Flowers: 108 Beacon St., Somerville, 617-492-0080; bowstreetflowers.com



Crisp whites complement the natural light in the conservatory.



A rich palette of soft browns in the family room

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL J. LEE (INTERIORS); ERIC LEVIN (PORTRAIT)