

BEST OF THE WEST

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING THIS MONTH

MAKE OURS RARE

BEST
COMEBACK

After a slow slide into mediocrity, Cassell's Hamburgers—once, as our own Peter Fish will attest, the gold standard of postwar L.A. burgers—closed its Koreatown doors in 2012. But now Cassell's is back, a few blocks away, on the ground floor of the also-reinvented Hotel Normandie. The new owners are channeling the spirit of Al Cassell: grinding the Colorado Angus beef fresh, broiling the patties on the famed “cross-fire broiler,” and making all the sides and condiments in-house, just like Al did. Also like Al, they're refusing to sell french fries. His famous potato salad will just have to do. \$; 3600 W. Sixth St.; cassellshamburgers.com.



Urban cowboys

BEST
NEW-MEETS-
OLD

Edgy and modern on the surface, traditional and even a smidge romantic underneath—this holds true for both the fancy new Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West and the great state of Arizona itself. Within the museum's austere walls, you'll find two floors' worth of art and artifacts from the Old West. Think hand-tooled saddles and silver spurs, nickel-plated bits and ivory-handled six-shooters, plus, of course, the obligatory—and much beloved—Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell bronzes. Yes, there's art from today hanging in the galleries too, but nothing that would scare the horses. \$13; scottsdalemuseumwest.org.

Photograph by LISA CORSON

BEST DAYS TO REMEMBER

1862

MAY 5

A ragtag Mexican army defeats the French in the Battle of Puebla. And that's why we celebrate Cinco de Mayo. ¡Olé!

1847

MAY 8

During the Mormon migration from Missouri to Utah, William Clayton invents the odometer—he calls the wooden device he straps to his wagon a “roadometer.”

2015

MAY 17

The 104th Bay to Breakers costume-party-disguised-as-footrace is run in San Francisco.

2010

MAY 22

Harvey Milk Day is celebrated in California. (The first openly gay officeholder was born on this day in 1930.)

1937

MAY 27

The Golden Gate Bridge opens to the public. The famous “International Orange” paint was originally meant to be just a primer.

1902

MAY 28

Owen Wister publishes his novel *The Virginian*, which is set in Wyoming and considered the first true western.



BEST FUND-RAISER

Bake sale

The Burbank-based company Modern Bite is decorating cookies in honor of the historic Adamson House, in Malibu Lagoon State Beach. Iced with edible inks, the sugar cookies mimic Malibu Potteries tiles; a slice of the proceeds will help preserve the 1929 structure, onetime home of the tile company's founder, May Rindge. It's such a good cause, you probably should order a second box. And maybe a third. \$32/box of 8; modernbite.com.

PAGE TURNERS

BEST SPECIALS OF THE DAY

Last May saw the inaugural California Bookstore Day. This year, on May 2, the celebration of the indie bookstore goes national with Independent Bookstore Day—and such institutions as Book Soup (L.A.) and The King's English Bookshop (Salt Lake City) hosting readings, throwing parties, and selling books and gifts made especially for (and *only* for) that day. Items from West Coast lit stars are front and center: Oregon blogger Allie Brosh signed a poster for her cult hit, *Hyperbole and a Half*; and San Francisco's 3 Fish Studios created a *Literary Map of the Seas* (complete with the Island of the Blue Dolphins). So, next year ... the world? cabookstoreaday.com.

BEST ONE-STOP SHOP



SENSE OF PLACE

Santa Barbara's Funk Zone just got a bit less funky—but we mean that as a compliment. The Santa Barbara Wine Collective tasting room opened this winter, bringing together some of Santa Barbara County's bluest-chip wineries and vintners, including Bryan Babcock, Qupé, Rajat Parr, Fess Parker Winery, and Matt Dees. Now you can taste, in one place, the full range of the region's terroir. Credit restaurateur Doug Washington—you may know him from such San Francisco stalwarts as Town Hall—with the neo-industrial design. \$15/winery flight; santabarbarawinecollective.com.

FROM TOP: JEFFERY CROSS, ERIN FEINBLATT

INTO THE WOODS WE GO

And when we do, we'll be bringing along these fresh takes on the same old camping staples.

BEST FINDS



1

1. It's a sleeping bag! It's a hammock! It's both! Invented by a couple in Boise who make it out of parachute nylon, the Bison Bag is the world's first combination sleeping bag/hammock. \$130; boismade.com.

2. The Bay Area–based Shelter Co. is now selling versions of the canvas tents it uses on its outfitted trips. The Meriwether sleeps four adults and is the only canvas tent on the market that exceeds the National Fire Protection Association Code's flame-resistance standards. Plus, it looks great. \$1,250; shelter-co.com/supply.



2

3. Along with the classic white enamelware we used in Camp Sunset (see page 66), San Francisco's Crow Canyon Home offers a quirkier splatter pattern. From \$8; roveandswig.com.



3

4. Made in Utah, these petite titanium Emberlit FireAnt stoves fold down flat—you can store one in a pouch the size of a passport. They burn solid fuel, spirits, and (handy for the backpacker who's truly traveling light) wood. \$70; emberlit.com.



4

5. Don't mistake this little candle, handmade in Portland, for a real campfire—it's just about 5 inches high. Still, we can't think of a better moodsetter for our campground's picnic table. \$18; revolutiondesignhouse.com.



5

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM RIGHT: JEFFERY CROSS, MEL BARLOW, THOMAS J. STORY, JEFFERY CROSS



SAFE PASSAGES

BEST IDEA TO SPREAD

Road-trip season is here, and when minivans and RVs meet clueless young animals on rural roads, things don't end happily. Over the last decade, Montana's Department of Transportation, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the feds have come up with a solution for reducing the deadly toll. Now, a 56-mile stretch of U.S. 93 has 41 wildlife crossing structures, some tunneling under the tarmac, others flying grassily overhead, all on popular critter-commute routes. And they're being used: Cameras are capturing bears, elk, even mountain lions sauntering through the structures. (See for yourself at goo.gl/UJoXsr.) Seems like this is an idea worth adopting all over the West.

Choose your own adventure

BEST LEAP FORWARD

Looking to help Californians and visitors actually use the state's public lands, the Parks Forward Commission let Stamen, the innovative Bay Area design studio, loose on its data. The result: the new CaliParks browser-based app, which includes every single park in the Golden State, from national forests to your own town square (11,826 parks in all), and sorts the database by activity and facility. Are there grills? Can you ride a mountain bike on the trails? Is there a marina? What about a beach? The app answers all these questions and more. Plus it includes Flickr and Instagram feeds for each park, so you can window-shop, virtually, for your next outing. caliparks.org.

BEST IDEA TO STEAL



INSTA-SECTIONAL

Sprinkled among the cheery images in *Beach House Happy*, the new book from Antonia van der Meer, editor-in-chief of our sister magazine *Coastal Living*, you'll find clever decorating tips. (Usually in the photos of the Western houses, of course. Partisan? Us? Never!) One idea, in fact, appears twice, so it's obviously a thing: pushing two twin beds together to create a DIY sectional. Add big pillows and cushions, as the owners of this getaway in California's Stinson Beach did, and you're set. \$40; oxmoorhouse.com.

BEST NOT-JUST-FOR-TOURISTS

Up, up, and away

How many Angelenos get around to visiting the Getty Villa? How many San Franciscans never make it to Alcatraz? Taken for granted, maybe, or perceived to be a bit too touristy, treasures like these can hide in plain sight. Our recommendation for this month: The Museum of Flight in Seattle. Along with all the hands-on control-tower demos and dogfight simulators that any gadget-happy kid, or adult, would love, the museum's collection of more than 160 planes and spacecraft includes the only Concorde on the West Coast—and yes, you can climb aboard and pretend to be Becks and Posh, or Liz Taylor, or Mick and the lads. \$20; museumofflight.org.



BEST CRAFTS

A STITCH IN TIME

The 10th biannual Albuquerque Fiber Arts Fiesta marks the first stop of the worldwide Modern Quilts tour, which features 20 quilts selected at February's QuiltCon 2015 in Austin. If you're picturing patchwork from *Little House on the Prairie* re-runs, all sprigged muslin and sedate pastels... well, let this vibrant beauty (*For Tanya* by Emily and Miriam Coffey) banish that image. Like what you see? Mark your calendar for next year's QuiltCon, which will be held in Pasadena. \$5; May 21–23; fiberartsfiesta.org.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: AUDREY HALL, LAUREN HUNT, BARBARA KRAFT