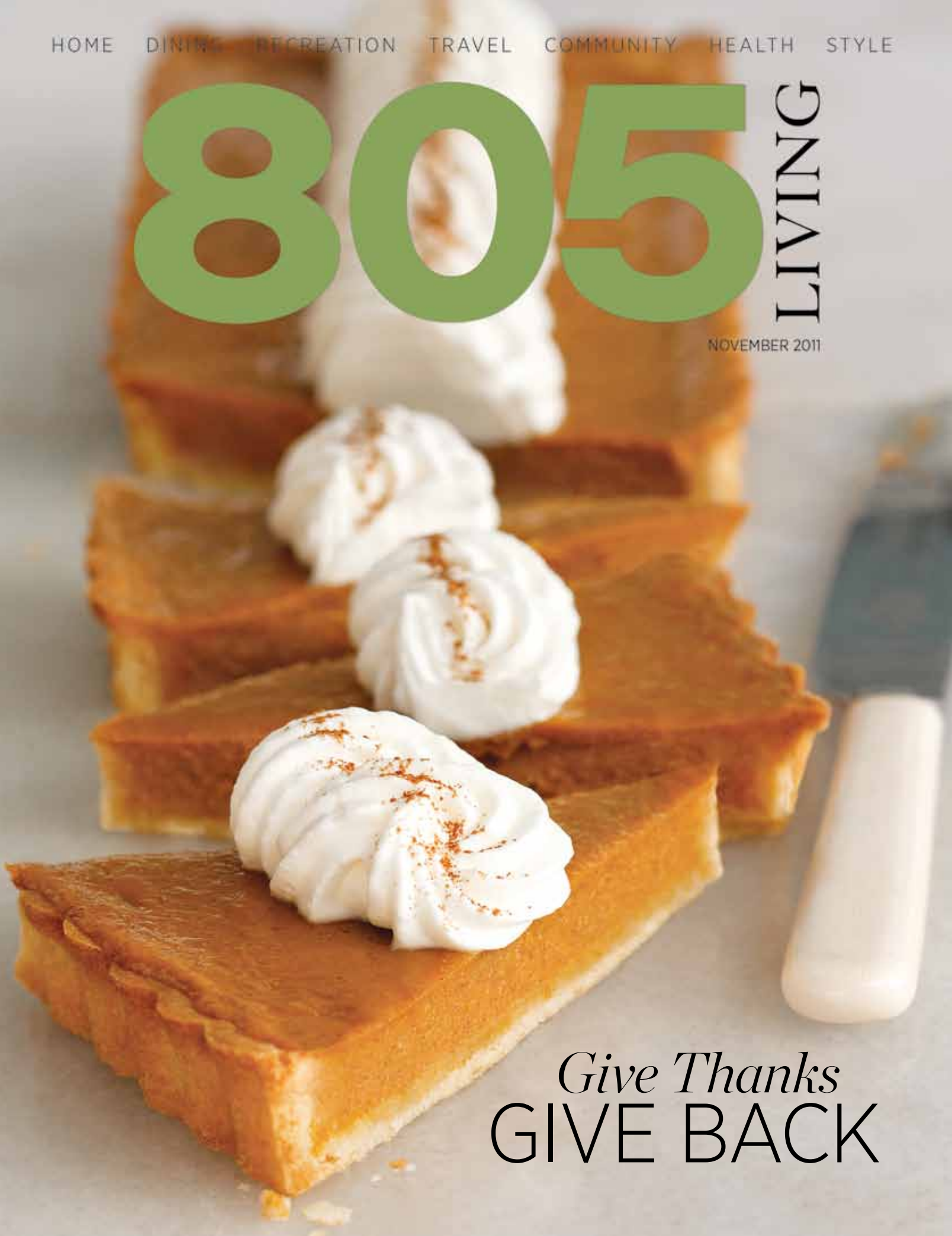


805 LIVING

NOVEMBER 2011



Give Thanks
GIVE BACK



The Ventura Beach Bike Trail has undergone a multimillion-dollar face-lift and now features a smoother, wider path and a cobble garden where passersby are invited to create their own rock sculptures.

NOVEMBER'S NEW BEGINNINGS

Fresh starts and kind hearts.

BY MARYANN HAMMERS

THE CALENDAR SAYS THE YEAR IS WINDING DOWN, but this season of brisk weather and blue skies is still a great time for fresh starts. Here are some ideas for trying something new—for yourself and for others.

SAMPLE A STYLISH NEW SEASIDE SPA. Though cozy and compact, the newly reopened spa at Hyatt Santa Barbara (formerly Hotel Mar Monte; santabarbara.hyatt.com) compensates for its size with an abundance of style. Terracotta tiles, wrought-iron accents, richly carved wood, arched windows, rustic clay pots, Mission-style iron lanterns, and high ceilings mirror Santa Barbara's Spanish Colonial vibe.

The spa opens out to an appealing pool scene with an outdoor fire pit, a bubbling Jacuzzi, cabanas, and sleek chaise longues. The treatment menu includes facials, massages, reflexology, and a wrap-massage combo; the new boutique carries products by Kai, Archipelago Botanicals, and Boticario de Havana (think

lemongrass candles, pomegranate sugar scrubs, and chemical-free sunscreen), as well as cute sandals, towels, and beachwear.

What hasn't changed: Angels, the spa's most-requested masseuse for the past 25 years (famous for her strong arms and hands as well as her name), is still on staff—and now her clients can enjoy an ocean-view treatment room with private changing area.

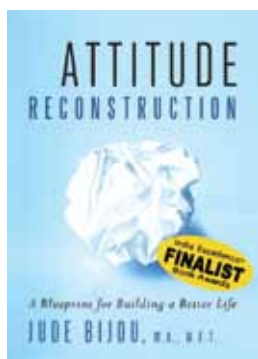
FIND A NEW PATH (LITERALLY). Anyone who's bicycled along the Ventura Beach Bike Trail is acquainted with the crumbling asphalt that forced riders into concrete barriers and a parking lot. That eroded stretch is no more: A new multimillion-dollar, 16-foot-wide bikeway (spacious enough to be peacefully shared by bikers, walkers, and joggers), wider sandy beach, and rock garden have replaced that old biker's blight.

"The previous bike path collapsed after being eroded from ocean surf in the early 1990s," says Kelly Flanders, civic engagement specialist for the city of Ventura. "This new path was

designed with longevity and sustainability in mind, protected from erosion by an additional 60 feet of beachfront. And lights are embedded in the sand barrier wall for additional safety at night.”

Bicyclists can dismount and stack their own rock sculptures at a new cobble garden. “This serves as a gathering place where the community can sit on benches to park their bicycles and enjoy the view,” Flanders says.

The trail begins where Pierpont Boulevard dead-ends. Pedal past the park, picnic benches, and sand dunes; continue along San Buenaventura State Beach under the pier and along the Ventura Promenade (boardwalk), past Surfers Point and continuing to the bird estuary. After crossing the railroad tracks, riders can either turn left to continue along Old Rincon Highway by the ocean (easy and flat), or head inland to Ojai via the Ventura River Trail (slightly longer and more difficult). Rent a bike, get more info and maps, and park free at Ventura Bike Depot (venturabikedepot.com).



COP A NEW ATTITUDE. Jude Bijou, M.F.T., a Santa Barbara marriage and family therapist, has just published her new book, *Attitude Reconstruction: A Blueprint for Building a Better Life* (attitudereconstruction.com), which she describes as “a spiritual and practical handbook demystifying why we think, feel, speak, and act the way we do.” Using her “blueprint,” readers can figure out which destructive emotions dominate their thoughts, then take concrete steps to replace sadness, anger, or fear with joy, love, and peace. The book was a finalist in the 2011 National Indie Excellence Book Awards.

STRIKE A POSE, FEED A FAMILY. Certified yoga instructor Zach Wagner (zachwagneryoga.com) hosts a free introductory yoga class on Saturday, November 19, at 4 p.m. at Agoura Power of Yoga in Agoura Hills. The class combines hatha yoga in a vinyasa flow to build strength and flexibility, says Wagner. To participate, bring a nonperishable food item (canned vegetables, canned fruits, peanut butter), to be donated to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

SAVE YOUR SKIN. Summer is a distant memory, but it’s still not smart to skimp on sunscreen. Morro Bay massage therapist and outdoor enthusiast Caroline Duell, owner of Elemental Herbs (elementalherbs.com), recently introduced Zinc Sunstick, an organic, herbal sunscreen for chemical-free, non-messy UVA and UVB protection. For weekend warriors, there’s also an Herbal Healing Kit, which includes creamy herb-infused lip balms, All Good Goop to heal chapped skin and lips, and Herbal Cool for relief of sore, stiff muscles. Elemental Herbs donates one percent of sales to environmental causes and runs a sponsorship program for athletes.

SWITCH TO SUSTAINABLE. Loving the natural, organic, cruelty-free (and still yummy) lotions and potions but feeling guilty about all those bottles destined for the landfill? Then BYOB.

Eco-conscious product junkies are invited to bring their own bottles to The Refill Shoppe (therefillshoppe.com) in Ventura and fill them with custom-scented shampoos, conditioners, shower gels, bubble baths, body sprays, lotions, massage oils, bath salts, and more—starting at 10 cents an ounce. Owner Michelle Stevens donates one percent of all sales to environmental causes. ♦



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