

INSIDE

A Home to Spend Years In **page 1**

What Every Parent Needs to Know About Family Dinners **page 2**

Kara on Proper Toothbrush Care **page 2**

Are Whiter Teeth Worth the Trouble? **page 3**

Braised Chicken and Spring Vegetables **page 3**

The 3 Best Places to See Beautiful Flowers **page 4**

EARTH'S MOST BEAUTIFUL Flower Displays



Spring is here, which means flora will soon be in full bloom. Flowers can be an easy pick-me-up or a great way to add color to your home, but some people take their flower obsession to the next level by planning botanical-themed vacations. Here are some of the most impressive gardens and flower displays in the world.

NETHERLANDS

Holland, most famous for its tulips, always draws visitors at the first sign of spring. One of its most famous destinations, Keukenhof, located in Lisse, is among the world's largest flower gardens. The park is 79 acres and boasts approximately 7 million flowers each year. This colorful garden is open annually from mid-March to mid-May, but mid-April is the ideal time to see the tulips.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Besides the monuments and historic buildings, one of the biggest attractions in Washington, D.C. is the cherry tree blossoms. Travelers who

visit the Tidal Basin during the spring can witness 3,000 trees, which were a gift from Tokyo in 1912, flaunt their beautiful pink blossoms. The best time to see the spectacle is from the end of March through the end of April.

ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK

Desert lavender, flowering cacti, pygmy poppies, and rock daisies are just a few of the many wildflowers decorating Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The various native species are often seen weaved together to form a colorful carpet over any barren patch in the park, which is located just two hours from San Diego. In addition to flowers, visitors often spot bighorn sheep. Wildflower blossoms vary in intensity each year, but they typically begin to bloom in late February or early March.

Next time you're planning a spring trip, consider visiting one of the world's most beautiful flower displays. No green thumb required.

Building Our Nest in Eagle

My wife, Meredith, and I have been searching for a home in Eagle for the past eight months or so. We've been in love with the town from the moment we came to the Treasure Valley. When I started at Eagle Dental Care a little over a year ago, the desire to make our permanent home here grew even stronger.

It wasn't a quick process, but I'm proud to say we've found our family home. The real estate process went a lot smoother than we could ever have hoped. We were lucky enough to work with a great Realtor who made it painless. Moving, on the other hand, has included more than its fair share of headaches. Never having to pack and unpack everything again is all the more reason to really plant our roots in the new home.

"Spring is a time of new beginnings, so it's exciting to be able to spend this one in a new home. I've moved a lot during my life, but this move feels different. It feels permanent."

As we ate some food from Dickie's Barbeque Pit on our first night in the new home — if you think we were going to do dishes on the first night, think again — Meredith and I took a moment to recognize just how lucky we are to be a part of this community. Avy, our oldest, will be starting first grade in the fall, and we timed the move so she'll be totally settled for the beginning of the school year. She and Jett will finish up the year at their current school, and we're hoping this will be the only school change for many years to come.

The house itself is quickly becoming a playground for the kids. We have a bigger yard and more space than before. Once we get rid of the seemingly infinite number of boxes, they'll have even more room to play. Personally, I'm looking forward to getting the fire pit in the backyard going. It won't be long before it's the perfect weather to roast marshmallows. Compared to last year — and especially compared to the



weather in Eastern Idaho — it's been so warm that I find myself worrying when the snow will arrive. Maybe we just got lucky this year, but I haven't counted out the cold just yet.

Spring is a time of new beginnings, so it's exciting to be able to spend this one in a new home. I've moved a lot during my life, but this move feels different. It feels permanent. You never know what the future will hold, but I get the sense that we'll look back on this transition a decade from now and smile. We couldn't be happier to be here in Eagle, and I don't see that changing any time soon.

I'm excited to turn my attention to sprucing up the office once we get fully settled. There are a few changes I've been hoping to make for a while now, but one decorating project at a time is more than enough for me. Luckily, the Eagle Dental Care team will be able to lend a hand during the process of improving our office. Another bonus is that it won't involve any packing and unpacking. I've done enough of that for one year.

It may not feel like we've had much of a winter, but I still want to wish everyone a happy spring season. If it ends up snowing in mid-March, you can blame me for jinxing us all.

-Dr. Chris Thomason

YOUR DINNER TABLE MIGHT BE THE KEY TO A HAPPIER FAMILY

The family dinner is a staple of years gone by. These days, the only time you see a family sit together and break bread seems to be at Thanksgiving. This is a shame, because regular family dinners are incredibly important! It's a time to bond with your loved ones that can have a positive impact on your kids' lives. A study published in the journal Pediatrics found that kids who regularly partake in family meals are less likely to experience depression or engage in drug use. Furthermore, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University determined that kids who eat family meals five to seven times a week bring home better report cards.

Even when schedules are busy, you can make family dinners fit into your agenda with these tips.

BE FLEXIBLE ABOUT MEALTIMES

Dinner doesn't have to be at 6 p.m. on the dot. If Kamala has a karate tournament in the evening or Peter needs to stay late at school for art club, why not break out the healthy snacks and make dinner happen a little later or earlier? Plus, the meal you share as a family doesn't have to be at dinnertime. If there's time in the mornings, sit down for breakfast. If you have the opportunity on weekends or during a school break, grab lunch together.

CALL ALL HANDS ON DECK

Mom or Dad shouldn't be expected to cook by themselves for every meal. This is family time, after all, so call in the kids! Make sure their tasks are age-appropriate — leave sautéing vegetables to the high schooler and let your first-grader set out the cups instead. This is the perfect opportunity to teach kids valuable kitchen skills and to take some of the burden off your plate. Plus, if your kids are picky eaters, inviting them to be part of the cooking process can make them more inclined to try the finished product.

DON'T STRESS YOURSELF OUT

It's okay if you're too busy on a Monday to cook dinner. There's always Tuesday. Or you can take a trip to your favorite family restaurant. Family meals should be fun, and that can't happen if you're stressed. Don't feel pressured to make each meal perfect or to prepare a three-course dinner every night. Chicken and rice can get the job done as long as you're all sitting around the table as a family.

No matter how hectic your schedule may be, making family meals a priority is always worth the investment. Who's in the mood for meatloaf?

KARA'S CORNER TOOTHBRUSH HYGIENE



bristles and a head size that will fit your mouth comfortably. Even better, ask your dentist or hygienist to recommend a brand or model.

When it comes to storing your toothbrush, limiting possible exposure to bacteria should be your primary concern. After brushing, thoroughly rinse your entire toothbrush (not just the head) under warm water to wash away any lingering plaque. Store your toothbrush upright so the bristles don't come into contact with any surfaces. If you have multiple brushes in one location, make sure the heads do not touch. If you're traveling, avoid airtight covers, as they tend to trap germs. It's much better to buy a cheap toothbrush for your trip and throw it out when you head back home.

Toothbrushes should be replaced as soon as the bristles begin to fray, which should be about once every three months. If you find that they are fraying much earlier than that, it probably means you are brushing too vigorously.

Taking the time to maintain and replace your toothbrush can provide significant benefits for your oral care. After all, the best brushes create the best smiles, and that's what we all want.

Regular brushing with proper technique is the foundation of great oral health, but you shouldn't discount the importance of toothbrush care. A musician would never take the stage with an out-of-tune trumpet, but many people try to clean their teeth with a toothbrush that's in rough shape. Don't let a broken instrument hamper your oral care. Here are a few tips for toothbrush maintenance.

Buy a good toothbrush. There are dozens of toothbrushes on the shelf of your local pharmacy, but they're not all created equal. Look for soft

WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT WHITE TEETH?



It happens to everyone. One day, you're standing in front of the mirror getting ready for work, and you notice your teeth have begun to take on an unsightly shade of yellow. Even the most diligent brushers and flossers will eventually notice their teeth aren't as bright as they would like.

Unless you only drink water and eat colorless gelatin, your teeth are going to become stained over time. If yellowing teeth are a natural part of the human experience, why does it bother us so much? Well, our aversion to unsightly, stained teeth may have something to do with psychology.

White, shiny teeth are perceived as healthier than teeth that are yellow or stained. When we see someone with stained teeth, we often form certain opinions about them. Whether these opinions are justified or not is another matter, but that prejudice can affect how we treat each other and how we view ourselves. Since whiter teeth encourage more positive thinking, people who whiten their teeth often report feeling higher self-esteem and confidence, and this can translate into amazing results in other areas of life.

IMPROVED SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Who would you rather spend time with: someone who smiles and laughs freely or someone who never cracks a smile and rarely speaks up because

they are embarrassed by their teeth? When we feel confident about our teeth, the way we carry ourselves and interact with others changes. This confidence carries over into job interviews and even first dates!

ENHANCED MOOD

In addition to improved confidence, having whiter teeth can increase feelings of happiness. When we don't feel self-conscious about our smiles, we smile more. Smiling releases endorphins, so this act can create a feedback loop of even more happiness!

LOWER RISK OF ORAL PROBLEMS

Individuals who whiten their teeth are more likely to maintain that bright shine for as long as possible through proper dental hygiene. Regular oral care is vital for preventing serious health risks like tooth decay and gum disease.

During your next visit, don't forget to ask about which whitening treatments we recommend. We can help you enjoy bright, beautiful teeth every day!

BRAISED CHICKEN AND SPRING VEGETABLES

This simple and delicious one-pot recipe is perfect for a weeknight. It only requires about 15 minutes of hands-on work, but it will taste like you spent all day building flavors. It's a hearty comfort food that's sure to delight eaters of all ages.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 small bone-in chicken thighs
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 12 radishes, halved
- 4 large carrots, cut into sticks
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped
- Salt and pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.
2. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Brown in pan for 6 to 7 minutes per side.
3. Remove chicken from pan and scrape off excess fat. Add broth and stir in radishes, carrots, and sugar.
4. Return chicken to pan, placing on top of vegetables. Gently simmer with lid on pan for 15 to 20 minutes. Finish with chives.

[Recipe inspired by Real Simple]

LAUGHING GAS

