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In This Issue:

▣ **Electric, Hybrid and Diesel - Are They Right for You?**

There are many options available to help reduce your carbon footprint

▣ **Five Great Live Albums**

These classics are worth a listen

▣ **Portland, Maine**

Foodies and art lovers flock to this East Coast city

▣ **Five Easy Green Beauty Swaps**

Quick changes to your beauty cabinet to save time, money and your carbon footprint

▣ **Five FAQs About the Flu Shot**

What you should know about this important vaccine



Lifestyle

Electric, Hybrid and Diesel - Are They Right for You?

There are many options available to help reduce your carbon footprint

Gas prices have been high for quite some time now, so it's no surprise that fuel efficient alternatives have been gaining popularity. Whether it's a hybrid, diesel or even a fully electric model, there's something available that both peaks your interest and can help make visiting your gas station a smaller part of your schedule or not necessary at all.

Diesel gaining popularity

Automobiles that are powered by diesel have been gaining traction as of late and with good reason. Diesel models are primarily more fuel efficient, more reliable and they last longer. But don't think for a minute that they're anything close to the diesel models of long ago. They're also super clean and efficient.

One great example is the 2014 Chevrolet Cruze Diesel that starts at an MSRP of \$25,810. The Cruze Diesel is powered by a 2.0-liter turbocharged engine that produces 151 hp and an impressive 264 lb/ft of torque while achieving up to a class-leading 46 mpg highway.



"It's hard not to take a shine to the 2014 Chevrolet Cruze Diesel," according to Edmunds.com. "Big-torque performance and hybrid-baiting efficiency is an alluring combination, while the Cruze's intrinsic goodness continues to impress three years after its launch."

Hybrid option flourishing

For those interested in a hybrid, that combines both electric and gas engine components, and makes for excellent fuel economy and quiet performance, the Toyota Prius family (MSRP starting at \$19,080) offers four models. The entry Prius c can achieve up to 53 mpg city.

"If you thought a hybrid car was out of your price range, the 2014 Toyota Prius c will surprise you with its affordability and wealth of standard features." The Prius v can comfortably seat five and also swallows up to 34.3 cubic feet of cargo. And with its flexible seating and cargo configurations, it can haul larger items like bicycles and strollers.

The Prius v delivers the best fuel economy for a crossover or wagon that's available today. The standard Prius is the one that started it all, and with 51 mpg city and 48 mpg highway, it's easy to see why it has become a perennial best-seller. In fact, Toyota estimates that if everyone would join the Prius club, the United States would have saved nearly 1.5 billion gallons of gas since 2000. A Prius Plug-in model is also available.

Electric meets luxury

For those who want to steer completely free of the gas station, the Tesla Model S is arguably among the best cars on the road today. The model S is the world's first all-electric premium sedan and has been gaining non-stop praise with the highest rating ever from a leading *Consumer Magazine* and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

"As an all-electric luxury sedan with ample range and performance that rivals or surpass conventionally-powered models, the Model S has no true rivals," added Left Lane News. The performance of the model S is so much more than you would expect from an electric car. Drivers can expect a 4.2-second sprint to 60 mph with up to a 265-mile driving range. The available high-powered charging allows for up to 58 miles of range per hour of charge, which means you'll be back on the road in a flash.

The Model S features available "5+2" seating, which basically means you can carry up to seven people, and a 17-inch color touchscreen display with Internet connectivity keeps you close to what matters most. An all-glass panoramic roof is the largest of any sedan on the market and its active air suspension helps the Model S achieve a ride like no other. This is truly a car you have to see to believe.

Regardless of what you choose, stop by today and let one of our representatives get you approved for an auto loan that works for you.



Lifestyle

Five Great Live Albums

These classics are worth a listen

Sure, even in the digital age people listen to full albums. With the rise of the mp3, however, most listen to individual tunes loaded to an iPod or other mp3 device instead of listening to a full album, start to finish. It is for that reason that the heyday of the live album format really was in decades past, and to find the best live albums of history, we need to look to the past. Here, for your consideration, are five of the best live albums ever made.

“Live!” - Bob Marley and the Wailers

This live recording by the late Bob Marley is a seminal recording of the reggae genre. It features tracks such as “No Woman, No Cry,” “I Shot the Sheriff”, and other popular Marley songs that are perfect for chilling out and listening to through a headset. Marley’s comforting, but strident live vocals set against a reggae beat offer up a tone of independence and mellow joy.



“Johnny Cash at San Quentin” - Johnny Cash

This classic live album from the 1960s showcases the talents of country music icon, Johnny Cash. Recorded in full at a concert for inmates at San Quentin State Prison, this album features live vocal performance of Cash’s hits, including favorites such as “I Walk the Line” and “A Boy Named Sue,” the humorous song that became one of Cash’s most memorable recordings.

“Live at Leeds” - The Who

Aptly described by Slate.com as a “deeply pleasurable listening experience,” this album by British band The Who is a long-playing musical journey. It includes everything from the classic earworm tune “My Generation” to selections from the band’s psychedelic rock opera, “Tommy,” the story of a “pinball wizard” that was eventually turned into a movie starring Roger Daltrey and featuring Elton John.

“Take No Prisoners” - Lou Reed

In this live album, Lou Reed riffs on all sorts of subjects, creating a live album that meanders through observations, stories, and takes listeners on a true musical journey. It features songs such as the

once-popular and still memorable “Walk on the Wild Side.” Take a listen to see why Reed is considered to be a forefather of the punk and new wave musical genres.

“Wings Over America” - Paul McCartney and Wings

Here, former Beatle Paul McCartney performed with the band that backed him after The Beatles disbanded: Wings. It's a three-record set that mixes McCartney hits with Beatles tunes, including favorites “Blackbird” and “Yesterday.”

These five suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of great live albums for you to consider. Some of the best recordings of live performances are from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and make for some great listening, indeed.

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Lifestyle

Portland, Maine

Foodies and art lovers flock to this East Coast city

Foodies, history buffs and art lovers alike enjoy a trip to this East Coast destination.

Stay at the Westin

Portland Harborview

Located in downtown's Arts District, this 12-story hotel serves as an excellent base for seeing the city's many sights. It underwent a complete renovation just last year and now offers 289 spacious guest rooms and suites. The hotel offers upscale amenities, including a full-service spa, state-of-the-art fitness studio and running concierges who offer fleet-footed tours of the city throughout the week. The two on-site restaurants are Congress Square and Top of the East, with the latter offering stunning views of the city and harbor through floor-to-ceiling windows. Visit



<http://www.starwoodhotels.com> for more information and reservations.

Eat at Street and Co.

Menus featuring locally sourced and sustainable ingredients are a common sight in Portland, with this restaurant offering exactly that. Chef Dana Street and Fore Street restaurant's Chef Sam Hayward come together to create seafood fare with Mediterranean flavors and rustic appeal. Recent menu items include smoked bluefish pate with turnip and capers; fresh Maine crabmeat tossed with avocado, cherry tomatoes, greens and orange citronette; and scallops in Pernod and cream. Only one-third of the restaurant is available for walk-in seating, so make reservations as early as possible. Visit <http://www.streetandcompany.net> for more information and reservations.

Visit the Portland Museum of Art

Within easy walking distance from the Westin, the largest and oldest public art institution in the state has in its extensive collection more than 17,000 works of fine and decorative arts. Among the important artists on display are American realist painter Andrew Wyeth, landscape painter Winslow

Homer; and European masters Edgar Degas, Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso. Contemporary Portland artist Aaron T. Stephan opens his first solo exhibition at the museum on Sept. 6. The museum also shows foreign, classic and art films, and it hosts artist's talks and family events throughout the week. Visit <http://www.portlandmuseum.org> for more information.

Catch a Portland Sea Dogs game

The minor league team for the Boston Red Sox attracts locals and visitors alike, with the latter eager to see an up-and-comer who might make it to their favorite major league team one day. New York Yankee Jacoby Ellsbury and Philadelphia Philly Jonathan Papelbon both played as Seadogs early in their careers, after all. Visit <http://www.milb.com> for more information.

While in Portland, be sure to walk, run or ride the 2.1-mile Eastern Prom and Back Cove trails. They are a great way to see the shoreline and various interesting points — including East End Beach and Fort Allen Park — along the way.

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Lifestyle

Five Easy Green Beauty Swaps

Quick changes to your beauty cabinet to save time, money and your carbon footprint

Eliminate questions about some of your favorite commercial beauty products by switching to natural alternatives for your beauty routine. Consider these five easy green beauty swaps.

Reduce eye puffiness with cucumber slices

Cucumbers have been proven to help with the swelling and puffiness of eyes. Because cucumbers are usually cool, the cold from the cucumbers can help reduce puffiness of the skin. Ingredients within cucumbers may also help reduce skin irritation. Slice two thick pieces of cucumber and place each piece over eyes for at least 10 minutes. Choose cucumbers over your typical eye cream, and you have a natural product that costs only pennies and can be thrown in the compost pile for recycling after your mini spa treatment.



Treat acne with strawberries

Struggling with skin breakouts? Clear your skin with strawberries. Mix a half cup of diced strawberries with a spoonful of sour cream. Rub gently onto your face and leave as a mask for at least 10 minutes. The strawberries will help remove dead skin cells, tighten pores and give your skin a healthy glow.

Use teabags to highlight hair

Before picking up a box of hair brightener at the drug store, consider soaking your hair in black tea. The tannic acid in black tea can highlight your hair if you soak your hair regularly over time. Start by making several servings of very strong black tea. Pour the tea carefully over your hair and allow it to sit for 30 minutes before rinsing.

Combine corn meal and banana for a foot cream

Soften your feet naturally with items from your pantry. Begin by mashing a ripe banana in a bowl. Add

several tablespoons of corn meal, until the banana has a gritty consistency. Spread liberally on feet and allow to sit for 30 to 45 minutes. Wipe off the mixture and rinse well with water.

Reduce frizz with banana and avocado

Does humidity make your hair a frizzy mess? Before buying a bottle of anti-frizz hair product, make your own in just a few minutes by mixing banana and avocado. Begin by mashing one ripe banana with a fork. Cut an avocado in half, remove the seed, and scoop out the green fruit. Mash the avocado with the banana. Apply to hair and allow to sit for at least 15 minutes, and then rinse hair thoroughly.

Some beauty items are a little more difficult to swap with natural items (like makeup or hairspray). Check the eco-rating of your beauty products at GoodGuide.com found here:
<http://www.goodguide.com/categories/184398-makeup>.

With just a few easy changes, you can reduce the cost of your beauty routine while making choices that are better for your skin and hair, as well as the environment.

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Lifestyle

Five FAQs About the Flu Shot

What you should know about this important vaccine

Cooler weather brings the promise of many pleasant things: football, cardigan wearing and pumpkin spice lattes. But it also ushers in flu season, which is no one's definition of fun. The best way to avoid or minimize the effects of the flu is to be vaccinated against influenza each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Many people have questions and concerns about the flu shot. Here are some answers.

How does the flu shot work?

The flu vaccine is available in two forms: a shot and a nasal spray. The shot (usually given in the arm) contains an inactivated vaccine made of the killed virus. When the inactivated virus enters your body, it begins to develop antibodies against the activated virus. The nasal spray has a low dose of live but weakened flu viruses. It won't give you the flu, but it will cause an immune response in your body.



The CDC recommends that you receive the flu vaccine as soon as it's available in your area. It's important to receive the vaccine each year: Not only do your antibody levels decline over time, but also each year's vaccine protects against newly evolved versions of influenza.

What will this year's vaccine protect me against?

The CDC reports that in years when the vaccine and strains of the flu are well matched, the flu shot is 60 to 70 percent effective at preventing influenza in all age groups. Each year, the shot is designed to protect against three or four expected influenza viruses.

In 2014–2015, a trivalent virus will protect you from:

- An A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;

- An A/Texas/50/2012 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- A B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus.

A quadrivalent vaccine will protect you against these three viruses, plus a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

Who should — and shouldn't — get a flu shot?

Everyone six months or older should be vaccinated against the flu, according to the CDC. It's especially important for pregnant women, older adults and young children to be vaccinated, as well as individuals with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, asthma and cancer.

However, if you meet the following conditions, you should not get vaccinated or should consult your physician before doing so:

- If you're allergic to eggs. Some flu vaccines contain small amounts of egg proteins.
- If you've had a serious reaction to a previous vaccination.
- If you have a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a serious paralytic illness.
- If you are currently moderately to severely ill, even if you don't have a fever. (In this case, you need to wait until you are well to be vaccinated.)

Will the flu shot make me sick?

No. However, you might still develop flu-like symptoms related to your body's production of antibodies. You might also have been exposed to the virus in the two weeks before the vaccine fully takes effect.

You can expect to have a low-grade fever, aches and soreness where the shot was administered.

How much does the flu shot cost?

Most insurers fully cover the flu shot as a preventive measure under the Affordable Care Act. Check with your insurance company before getting a shot.

You can learn more about the flu shot and find out where to be vaccinated at <http://www.flu.gov/prevention-vaccination/vaccination> — and whether you choose to be vaccinated or not, practice good hygiene to protect yourself against influenza.

