

the book



Neiman Marcus

intersection

THE PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS YOU **NEED TO KNOW**

Culture Club

FLOWER POWER

"Flowers ... are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world," declared Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undisturbed," wrote Walt Whitman. Even Wordsworth paused upon encountering "a host of golden daffodils."

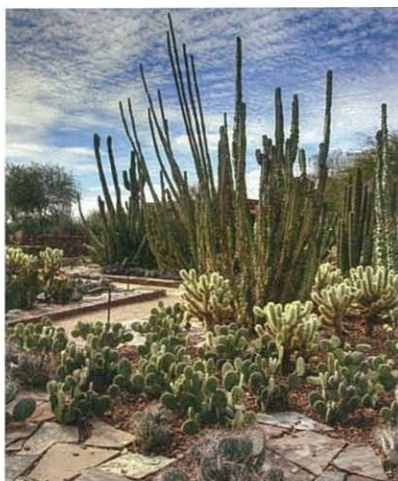
Soon enough, spring blooms will delight the senses at botanical gardens across the U.S. (and beyond our borders, too). The **ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN** houses the largest collection of orchids in the country, from Asian lady slippers to the purple-hued *Pescatorea lehmannii* from Ecuador. The **DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS**, spread across three sites and 24 acres, with a gorgeous glass-and-stainless-steel conservatory and plenty of native Rocky Mountain flora, welcomes Dale Chihuly's glass sculptures in June. **GANNA WALSKA LOTUSLAND**, near Santa Barbara, is a lesser-known treasure. Walska, a Polish opera star and socialite, bought the 37-acre estate in 1941 and tended it until her death in 1984. The fantastical ferns, succulents, and topiaries can be seen only by guided tour.

A National Historic Site of Canada, the century-old, 55-acre **BUTCHART GARDENS** near Victoria on Vancouver Island offers a seasonally rotated floral display that draws almost a million guests each year. (Children and adults alike love the old-fashioned, menagerie-style carousel.) Spring at the **KEW ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS** in London, which dates to 1759, is particularly special, with crocuses, daffodils, and magnolias in



full splendor. Come summer, the UNESCO-recognized site hosts an outdoor concert series.

And, proving beauty blooms in many forms, the **DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN** in Phoenix celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, showcasing an encyclopedic, 50,000-specimen collection of cacti, aloes, agaves, nolinias, and succulents all native to the Sonoran Desert. Strolling the 145-acre grounds, the will and majesty of nature astounds. —*Tanvi Chheda*



BLOOMING BEAUTIFUL

(clockwise from left): A zodiac display in the topiary garden at Ganna Walska Lotusland, a sea of tulips at Canada's famed Butchart Gardens, and native flora at Phoenix's Desert Botanical Garden



COVER STORY

butterfly box story

To call James Verbicky's "media paintings" attention grabbing and magnetic is an understatement. So much so that the Canadian mixed-media artist earned an "Extraordinary Ability" green card—a rare currency bestowed by the United States government in recognition of his representation in U.S. galleries and museums, charity involvement, and heaps of critical praise. Just two of the entries on the artist's impressive CV: selection into Paris' annual Société Nationale des Beaux Arts juried exhibition at the Louvre and a commissioned work created on a Frank Gehry sphere originally housed in the Hollywood Bowl.

Verbicky, now based in Southern California, lent his extraordinary talent to this issue's cover art, *Papillon En Fleur 1*, in mixed media and resin. Unusual symbols, cubes of vivid color, and vintage branding materials—advertising posters, magazine covers, found graphics—align in horizontal planes, forming a dimensional piece that is sculptural in effect. "The radiating composition conjures a vision of a bursting flower," says Verbicky, "a theme that unites perfectly with the butterfly—a herald of spring." Take in more of the artist's evocative storytelling on the book's back cover, where symbols and words such as "chic," "la mode," and "original" punctuate Verbicky's collage. Seems he knows a thing about fashion and what NM stands for, too. —*Stacy Girard*



See Verbicky meticulously construct his winged tribute on **the blog** at NeimanMarcus.com or YouTube.com/NeimanMarcus.

nantucket

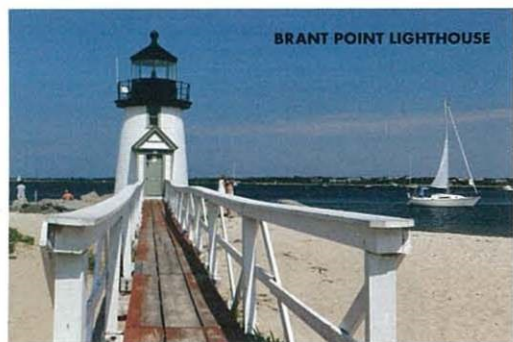
The soundtrack accompanying Neiman Marcus Direct Creative Director **TIM FLANNERY**'s life story would definitely include the constant click of a camera lens. His home has been showcased, his wardrobe documented (hello there, Bill Cunningham!), and his workday largely spent orchestrating visual images for NM's celebrated catalogs and NeimanMarcus.com. Forthwith, Flannery turns his impeccable eye east, giving his favorite escape the once-over.

backstory

My family started going to Nantucket 30 years ago, back when my sister and I were kids. My parents still spend every summer there, and I go for a long visit every August.

fashion barometer

The island is really casual, so shorts, polos, and tees are a must. It can get deliciously cool at night, so a sweater or jacket comes in handy. There are wonderful restaurants, so I recommend bringing something smart to wear to dinner. Nantucket's overall preppiness will make you regret not packing a navy blazer. You'll see lots of Lilly Pulitzer and easy basics from Vince and Ralph Lauren. Tod's and Tory Burch are also big. My personal favorite is Michael Bastian.



BRANT POINT LIGHTHOUSE

get around, get around

Exploring Nantucket is easy since it's only 17 miles across. The best way to do it is on a bicycle, since the island is blessed with plenty of paths and beautiful weather. Rent one at **YOUNG'S BICYCLE SHOP** (youngsbicycleshop.com). You may be tempted to opt for a scooter, but don't—it will turn out to be a big hassle. And if all the biking and swimming aren't enough of a workout, you can also rent paddleboards, plus get lessons, from **NANTUCKET SURFARI** (nantucketsurfari.com).

must eats

Upon arrival, I always head to **SOMETHING NATURAL** (somethingnatural.com) for fantastic made-to-order sandwiches. All the bread is baked on the premises—try the Portuguese if you've never had it. **BLACK-EYED SUSAN'S** (black-eyedsusans.com) is a really popular place for breakfast. The Pennsylvania Dutch Cakes—pancakes made with Järlsberg—or sourdough French toast are indulgent. I suggest a bike ride soon after!

The lobster roll at **CRU** (crunantucket.com) is insane. And it comes with French fries. And it's right on the wharf, so you can see all the boats!

If you're celebrating a special occasion, make reservations at **LE LANGUEDOC BISTRO** (lelanguedoc.com), my always-go place. Perfect fish, as you'd expect, but also stunning steak frites. You'll definitely meet someone interesting when you sit at the bar, and the manager, Jimmy, makes it a party. He runs the place like it's his house and he knows everyone.

THE PROPRIETORS BAR & TABLE (proprietorsnantucket.com) is all about fresh, seasonal, and local and puts a twist on things with surprising influences from Asia. It has some of the best food you'll eat on Nantucket—or anywhere, really.

a shore thing

SURFSIDE is a popular beach, with more services (bathrooms, parking) than some of the others, plus the burger at **SURFSIDE BEACH SHACK** is a real treat. As the name suggests, **CHILDREN'S BEACH**, located right on the harbor, is great for families—very calm, shallow water. For a classic Nantucket experience, hit a beach that requires an Oversand Vehicle Permit (and four-wheel drive). Permits are a badge of honor on the island and allow access to beaches that are out of the way and never crowded. Just be sure to bring a picnic and a cooler with drinks, and empty some air from your tires so you don't get stuck in the sand. I like **GREAT POINT** and **SMITH'S POINT**.

see worthy

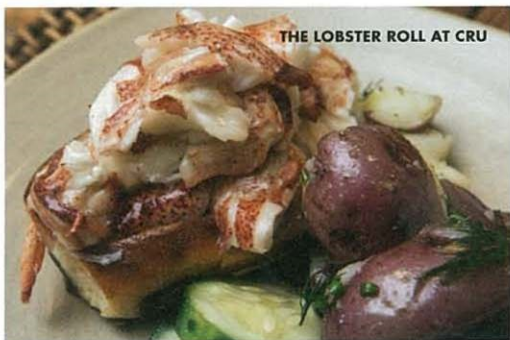
THE WHALING MUSEUM (nha.org) is surprisingly good! There are a few home tours over the summer that are wonderfully fun—and will definitely make you want to rent a house the next time you're on island. In August, I enjoy **THE NANTUCKET GARDEN CLUB'S ANNUAL HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR** (nantucketgardenclub.org). Keep your eyes peeled for auctions, too. **RAFAEL OSONA AUCTIONS** (rafaelosonauction.com) is a great place to pick up vintage lightship baskets.



THE WAUWINET

sweet talking

When in need of a sugar fix, head to the deceptively named **THE JUICE BAR** (12 Broad Street, 508.228.5799) for ice cream. The waffle cones are made right there, all day and night, always fresh and still warm. The ice cream is completely homemade in classic flavors such as mint chocolate chip and cookie dough, as well as watermelon cream, cake batter, and blackberry. But consider yourself warned: It's cash only.



THE LOBSTER ROLL AT CRU

retail therapy

The epicenter of preppy is **MURRAY'S TOGGERY SHOP** (nantucketrede.com). It's the best place to get Nantucket Reds and other "fancy pants"—think seersucker, patchwork corduroy, lobster embroidery, etc. I also love a little place in town called **CURRENT VINTAGE** (currentvintage.com). They sell wine, plus vintage clothing, accessories, and home furnishings from the 1940s to today. It's completely charming.

sunrise, sunset

I love watching the sunrise on **SCONSET** (that's how you say Siasconset like a local) **BEACH** on Codfish Park Road. Pick up some homemade granola from **SCONSET CAFÉ** (sconsetcafe.com) and keep your eyes out for seals. If you're not an early riser, **MILLIE'S** (millienantucket.com) has a fantastic deck and great food—and is the perfect place to see the most beautiful sunsets.

wet your whistle

Head to **THE SUMMER HOUSE** (thesummerhouse.com) in Siasconset for a cocktail. It's a great place to sip something classic like a Gibson or Rob Roy.

good nights

For accommodations, **THE WAUWINET** (wauwinet.com) is a classic choice. Its restaurant Topper's is a must for lunch or dinner, even if you aren't staying there. **WHITE ELEPHANT** (whiteelephanthotel.com) is right in town and very convenient. Or go online, rent a house for a week, and pretend you live on island.

eat in

EAST COAST SEAFOOD—aka 167 for its Hummock Pond Road address—is my favorite fishmonger. Plus, it's near **BARTLETT'S FARM** (bartlettsfarm.com), which has the freshest produce. I can't imagine making dinner without those two places! Another tip: Call ahead to **SAYLE'S SEAFOOD** (saylesseafood.com), and they can put together a classic lobster bake with cooked lobsters, steamers (clams), corn, potatoes, drawn butter—the works.

rainy days don't get me down

Nantucket has two fantastic independent bookstores: **MITCHELL'S BOOK CORNER** (mitchellsbookcorner.com) and **NANTUCKET BOOKWORKS** (nantucketbookpartners.com). And while you're in town, hit the real soda fountain at **NANTUCKET PHARMACY** (nantucketrx.com) for a grilled cheese sandwich and an ice cream soda. That said, I always think the best way to spend a rainy day is with a jigsaw puzzle!

—As told to Amy Adams

