

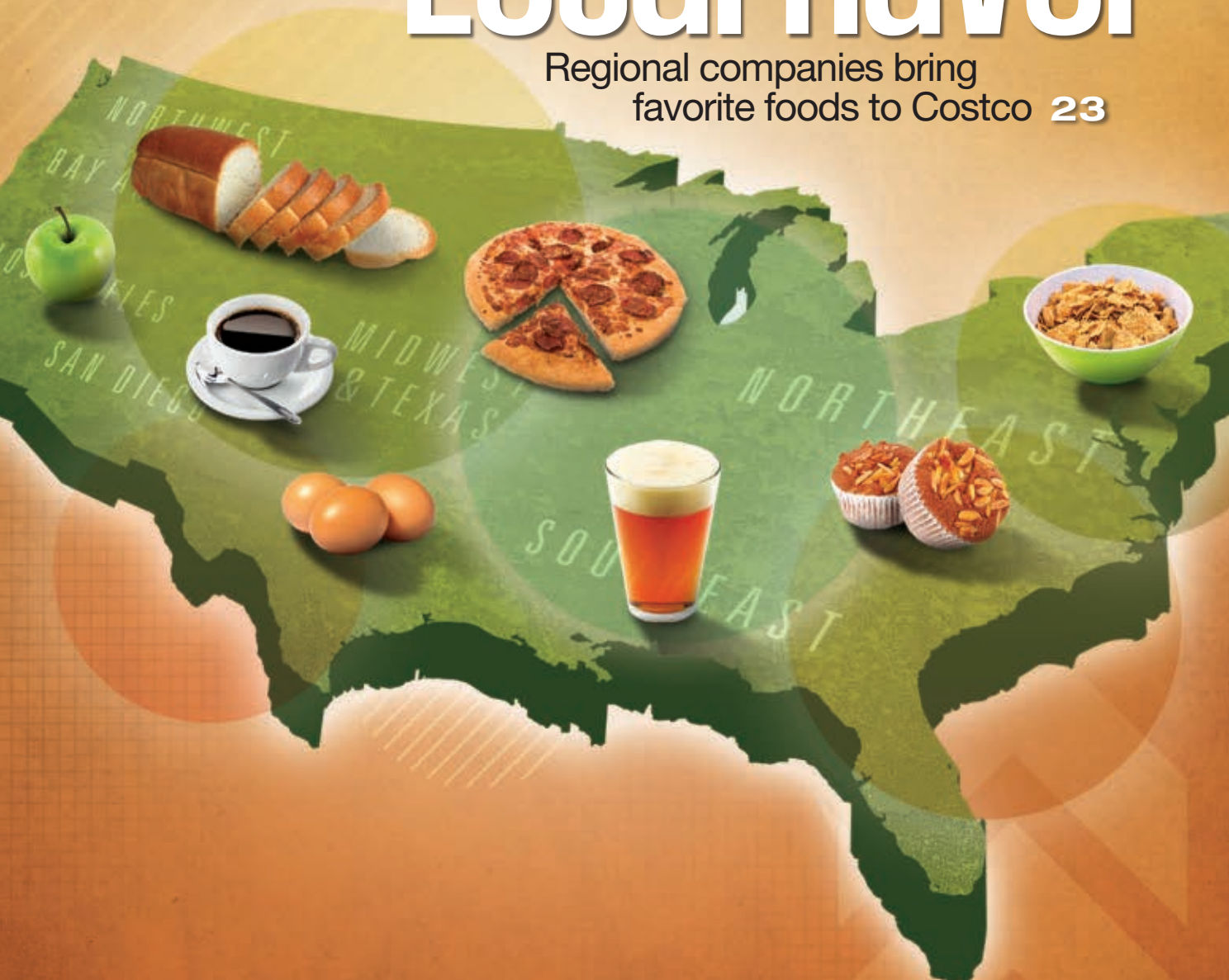
THE COSTCO CONNECTION[®]

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A lifestyle magazine for Costco members

Local flavor

Regional companies bring favorite foods to Costco **23**



Health
CALENDAR

December

December 1 is
World AIDS Day

SINCE 1988, December 1 has been a day for worldwide focus on one major health concern: acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). World AIDS Day is a time to support those living with the disease, commemorate those who have died from it and disseminate facts about the causes and prevention of AIDS.

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) causes AIDS. The virus attacks the immune system and leaves the body vulnerable to a variety of life-threatening infections and cancers. AIDS is the final stage of HIV disease, and is the sixth-leading cause of death among people ages 25 to 44 in the U.S.

People who are infected with HIV may have no symptoms for 10 years or longer, but they can still transmit the infection to others during this symptom-free period. If the infection is not detected and treated, the immune system gradually weakens and AIDS develops.

While HIV has been found in many body fluids, only blood, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk have been shown to transmit infection to others.

HIV is spread

- Through sexual contact
- Through blood, by needle sharing among drug users. Also via blood transfusion—extremely rare in the U.S.
- From mother to child, by breastfeeding or through shared blood circulation between mother and fetus during pregnancy

■ Via other rare occurrences such as accidental needle injury, organ transplant with infected organs or artificial insemination with infected semen

HIV is not spread by:

- Hugging or casual contact
- Mosquitoes
- Participation in sports
- Touching items that were touched by a person with HIV

To date there is no cure for AIDS and no vaccine to prevent HIV infection. Educating yourself about HIV and avoiding behavior that exposes you to HIV-infected body fluids is the best protection.

For more information, go to www.worldaidsday.org.—David Wight

12 gifts of good health

By Linda Melone

INSTEAD OF GIVING your loved one a partridge in a pear tree and lords a-leaping this year, why not give a healthful gift that keeps on giving? The following presents are as good to give as they are to receive.

1. On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 1 molasses cookie.

Molasses may be helpful in weight loss, according to research presented at the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior. Scientists found lower body weight and reduced body fat in mice fed molasses extract for 12 weeks.

2. On the second day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 2 ounces of almonds.

Research from St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto showed that eating nuts every day could help control Type 2 diabetes and prevent its complications. Mixed, salted, raw or dry-roasted, all showed benefits—and without weight gain.

3. On the third day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 3 ounces of salmon.

The omega-3 fatty acids found in salmon act as natural anti-inflammatory agents and may help reduce signs and symptoms of osteoarthritis, according to a 2011 study from the University of Bristol, published in *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*.

4. On the fourth day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 4 ounces of red wine.

One 4-ounce glass of red wine a day for women (two glasses for men) may help raise one's high-density lipoprotein, or HDL, the "good" cholesterol in the body, and help prevent heart disease. Antioxidants in the grape skin contribute to the benefits.

5. On the fifth day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 5 yoga poses.

Yoga and stretching relieve back pain and help improve back-related functioning, according to a study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* (2011). The participants in the study practiced a style of yoga called viniyoga, which modifies yoga principles for people with health conditions.

6. On the sixth day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 6 ounces of Greek yogurt.

Greek yogurt is thicker than traditional yogurt, with twice the protein and approximately half the sugar.

A 6-ounce container of Greek yogurt contains roughly 15 to 20 grams of protein or more (regular yogurt contains 9 grams), equiva-

lent to 2 to 3 ounces of lean meat.

7. On the seventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 7 servings of veggies.

A 2012 study from the University of Warwick, published in the journal *Social Indicators Research*, found that people who eat seven portions of fruit and vegetables a day have the highest mental well-being and are the happiest.

8. On the eighth day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 8 hours of sleep.

Busy schedules often cut into sleep needs. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that adults get seven to nine hours of sleep per night. Lack of sleep is linked to many health issues, such as obesity, heart disease and even cancer.

9. On the ninth day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 9 minutes of meditation.

Making time to meditate may seem impossible on busy days, but training yourself to meditate can improve memory and make you more efficient, according to new research from the University of Washington. Meditation helped participants multitask more effectively, improved their memory and reduced stress while working.

10. On the 10th day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 10 minutes of activity.

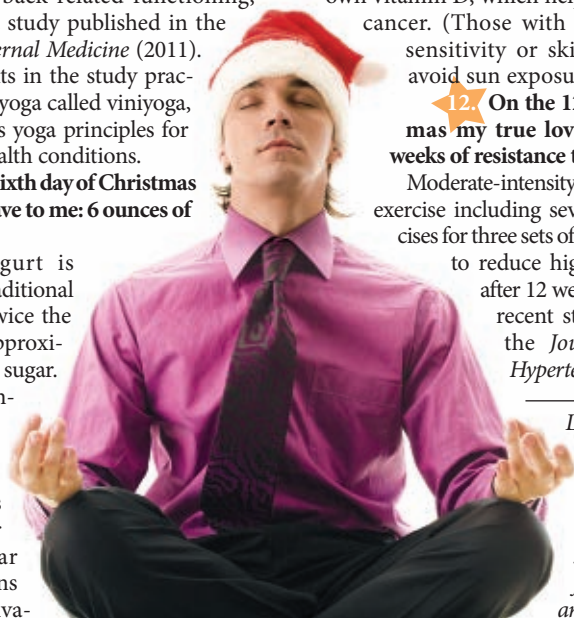
The American College of Sports Medicine recommends that adults get 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week. Studies show that three 10-minute mini bouts of activity throughout the day produce the same benefits, so "take 10" whenever you can work it in.

11. On the 11th day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 11 minutes of sunlight.

Very brief sun exposure without sun protection enables the body to produce its own vitamin D, which helps protect against cancer. (Those with a history of sun sensitivity or skin cancer should avoid sun exposure.)

12. On the 12th day of Christmas my true love gave to me: 12 weeks of resistance training.

Moderate-intensity resistance training exercise including seven different exercises for three sets of 12 reps was shown to reduce high blood pressure after 12 weeks, according to a recent study published in the *Journal of Human Hypertension* (2012). [E]



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