STA TIMES

FALL EDITION

October 2026

In print since 2016

FALL RECIPES
Gianmarco Calabrese
Pg. 2

WHY YOU SHOULD WATCH F1
Matias Grossling
Pg. 5

PUMPKIN SPICE: AN HONEST REVIEW
Charli Alcantra
Pg. 12

STRANGE FOOTSTEPS LEAVE RESIDENTS QUESTIONING A RAINY OCTOBER NIGHT

BY SHIVANI GHANDI

The streets were nearly empty on the evening of October 24, as a steady rain fell over the neighborhood and soggy autumn leaves gathered along the streets.



Porch lights illuminated through the mist, Halloween decorations shifted in the wind, and the last few leaves clung stubbornly to the trees. Then, at approximately 10:30 p.m., a resident reported hearing footsteps outside their home.

Step. Step. Step.

At first, there seemed to be nothing unusual about the sound. Someone walking through the neighborhood on a rainy October night would hardly attract attention. But the footsteps stopped directly outside the house. The resident looked through the window. Nobody was there. The street appeared completely empty.

A few maple leaves scraped across the pavement in the wind, and rainwater streamed down the glass. After several seconds, the footsteps began again. This time, they moved along the side of the house. The resident checked the backyard window, but once again, there was no one to be seen. The footsteps stopped near the garden gate. Then came three sharp knocks at the front door. When the resident opened it, the porch was empty.

Authorities were contacted shortly afterward. By then, the rain had weakened, leaving the ground soft enough to preserve several footprints in the mud beside the house. The footprints stopped at the garden gate. The gate had been left slightly open. The resident claimed it was closed earlier that evening. There were no footprints on the other side. One nearby neighbor reported hearing footsteps around the same time.

But how could one person be in two places at once?

Most of the evidence had disappeared from the rain. Investigators did, however, find one shoeprint on the wooden step outside the bedroom window. It was different. While the other shoeprints led toward the house, this one was pointed away. The investigation was considered inconclusive. The following evening, the same resident heard the familiar three sharp knocks at the door. They waited a moment before opening it, terrified of who or what would be outside. When the resident finally opened the door, there was no one on their porch. Their porch lights reflected on something sitting on their porch. A bright plastic orange bowl, filled with all the popular Halloween candies. Resting on top was a small white note. Three words were written across it in black marker:

"Trick or Treat?"



LOCAL COZY RECIPES PERFECT FOR AUTUMN!

BY GIANMARCO CALABRESE, WITH CONSULTATION FROM ELLA GREEN AND MATEO VOKOUN



Winds hasten, skies turn golden brown, and crunchy leaves litter our streets. Autumn, the beautiful yet busy season, shows its face once again. Schoolwork, raking leaves, and decorating for Halloween all become top priorities the moment the leaves turn orange. It's easy to lose sight of self-care in this tied-up time of year, so let these three unique, artisanally crafted, and cozy recipes help you relax. It doesn't matter if you'd prefer a hearty and savory meal, a sweet treat, or even just a cup of tea to sip by the fireplace.

This menu, cocrafted with the creative and aspiring chefs, Mateo Vokoun and Ella Green, has you covered. Enjoy!

Polenta and Stew - Gianmarco Calabrese

Requiring minimal expertise, yet yielding a delicious and hearty reward, this polenta and stew is sure to keep you warm during the autumn season. It serves four people, and has a diverse and unique flavor profile. While taking around an hour to prepare, the reward is well worth it.

Serves ~5

Stew:

Beef (Any cut will do. Chuck roast recommended)
4 Celery stalks
1 Yellow Onion
2 Carrots
1 Cup Tomato Puree
½ Cup red wine
1 Cup Flour
Dash of Salt
Pinch Pepper
Garlic Powder
2 tbsp Olive Oil
1 Litre of preferred Stock

Polenta:

6 cup water
¼ cup butter
Salt
Pepper
2 ½ Cup cornmeal
¼ Cup grated parmesan cheese (Optional)

Step 1. Preparing the stew:

Cube the steak, dice the carrots, onion, and celery. Set aside.

Add a pinch of salt and pepper to the flour.

Dredge meat into seasoned flour, shaking off excess flour. Set aside dredged meat.

Heat olive oil in a medium cast iron pot (or any pot which is available).

Lightly sear the cubed and dredged meat in the pot on medium high heat.



Set aside meat once seared.

Saute onion in pot, adding carrots and celery as the onion turns translucent.

Re-add meat, continuing to stir.

Add wine, and reduce in the pot.

Add tomato puree to the pot.

Add in stock while stirring.

Reduce heat to medium low.

Place the lid on the pot.

Cook for 30-35 minutes on medium low heat, stirring occasionally.

Step 2: Prepare the polenta while the stew is cooking.

Bring 6 cups of water to a boil in a pot.

Season with salt to taste.

Add butter.

Reduce heat to medium low, and slowly add in corn meal while whisking. The cornmeal should take on a thick consistency

Reduce heat to low while continuing to whisk for around five minutes.

Optionally, you could add the grated cheese here

Set polenta aside.

Step 3: Plating

Add polenta to a bowl, spreading evenly with a spoon.

Pour stew on top.

Serve.

Once the stew and polenta are finished cooking, feel free to leave them on the stove without the heat on. The stew and polenta are both dense enough to retain heat and remain at a foodsafe temperature. If you don't want to prepare polenta, but still want some starch in the meal, I'd recommend adding diced cubed potatoes to the stew, or just having some bread with it. If you'd prefer a vegetarian option, substituting meat with mushrooms, zucchini, or other vegetables is a perfectly viable, and still very tasty option.

Pumpkin Pie - Ella Green



Ella Green offers a classic, yet unique recipe this autumn season. This pumpkin pie is a family recipe, and one she is offering to the STA Times! Requiring minimal expertise, yet holding wonderful flavor, this staple of fall delicacies is sure to be delicious!

Makes 2 Pies

Pumpkin Pie

1 Dickinson Pumpkin or 4 cups of pumpkin puree
2 eggs +1 yolk
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup honey
Dash of Salt
1¼ teaspoons cinnamon
⅓ teaspoon ground ginger
Zest of a lemon
354ml (12oz) evaporated milk.

(For use of Dickinson Pumpkin instead of using canned puree)

Step 0: Preparing the pumpkin.

Take half of a dickinson pumpkin, and scoop the seeds out. Put seeds aside.

Cover an adequately sized baking sheet with tinfoil, placing the pumpkin flat side down.

Bake the pumpkin at 350o for 30-60 minutes, or until a fork easily pierces the skin.

Remove the pumpkin from the oven once cooked, letting both the oven, and pumpkin cool down.

Scoop the pulp from the pumpkin, and set aside.

Step 1: Preparing the pie

Mix eggs, extra yolk, salt, sugars, zest, cinnamon, and ginger in a bowl.

Add pumpkin pulp or pumpkin puree. Mix with a hand mixer.

Add evaporated milk. Continue to mix.

Pour the filling into two 10 inch pie shells.

Step 2: Baking the pie

Bake at 425 degrees for 15 minutes.

Turn the oven down to 375o, and continue baking for 35 - 45 minutes.

Take the pie out of the oven and let it cool. This should take about half an hour.

Serve with whipped cream and enjoy!

If a dickinson pumpkin is used, you'll have lots of leftover pumpkin guts, as well as a half dickinson pumpkin which went unused. It's recommended that you keep the seeds for baking. Wash the guts off the pumpkin seeds by soaking, and rinsing them. Then, bake them at 325o for around 45 minutes. Season them with flavors of your choice for a crunchy and healthy snack which reuses leftover ingredients. The other half can be prepared in any way you please, or prepared as the recipe previously states for some more homemade pumpkin puree.

This family recipe is said to be 'measured by heart'. If personal preferences play a role in your baking, feel free to change measurements and ingredients, until the pie is to your liking. Each pie might be unique, but be delectable all the same.



Pumpkin Cookies - Mateo Vokoun



Mateo Vokoun brings a spin to the classic pumpkin dessert. Straying the traditional pie, these pumpkin cookies are sure to wow you.

Makes ~30 Cookies

Pumpkin Cookies
1½ cups of pumpkin puree (the leftover dickinson pumpkin half easily covers this)
3 cups flour
1½ cups baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp ground ginger
1½ tsp ground cinnamon
¾ cup butter
1 cup brown sugar
¾ cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1½ tsp vanilla extract

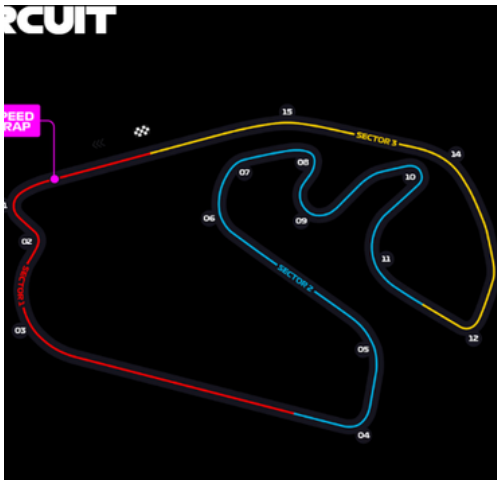
Step 1: Prepare the cookies
Leave the butter on the counter to soften.
Blot the pumpkin puree via a cheesecloth.
Whisk the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon, and ginger together in a large bowl. Set aside.
Preheat the oven to 350 degrees, and prepare a baking sheet by covering it with parchment paper.
Using a hand mixer, cream the butter and the sugars. Once creamed, add the egg, and mix until combined. After, add the maple syrup, pumpkin, and vanilla extract.
Mix the wet and dry ingredients. This will make the dough.
Roll the dough into balls consisting of about 1½ tbsp of dough. Place these dough balls on the baking sheet.
Bake for around 15 minutes.
This simple recipe yields around 30 cookies, and is a unique use of a pumpkin, which is generally limited to pies or soups. Mateo, a future culinary school student, offers this recipe as an easy starting point for all who want a delicious recipe, yet don't quite have the skills to make something complex. In his own words, this pumpkin treat "tastes like heaven".

WHY YOU SHOULD WATCH FORMULA 1

BY MATIAS GROSSLING

Formula 1. The sport of money, drama, cheating, strategy, high speed crashes, and corruption. Wow, seems cool! Yep, it is. A whole lot of people will say it's just watching cars drive around in a circle. Something basic that everyone does, every day. This is wrong on so many levels.

First off, just looking at F1 for more than 5 minutes will tell you that none of the tracks on the F1 calendar are anywhere near circular or ovular in shape. The MOST circular in shape is probably the world-famous Interlagos Circuit in Brazil.



Yeah, NOT circular. Also, racing in an F1 car is pretty brutal. NOTHING like driving a normal car. F1 cars can reach 300-400kph, where the G-force would cause a normal person to pass out very quickly.

Also, racing in an F1 car is pretty brutal. NOTHING like driving a normal car. F1 cars can reach 300-400kph, where the G-force would cause a normal person to pass out very quickly. Also, it gets VERY HOT. Like 50-60 degrees celsius. Even hotter in warm countries like Spain, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia. This causes drivers to lose 4-6 liters of water from their bodies (so about 5 kilos in body weight) in a single race due to sweat. Not to mention that using the brake requires 100 lbs of force. So, driving an F1 car is hard, and making mistakes can lose you track position, or worse, crash. Don't believe me? Watch a SINGLE interview with an F1 driver talking about their experiences in the car.

On top of that, there is strategy. The FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile. Yes, they're French) purposefully asked Pirelli (F1 tire manufacturer) to make the tires purposefully worse, so they would wear and would need to be changed. This allows for the crazy strategy calls we see today (some good, some bad). You need to strategically choose when to use which type of tire (hard = longer lifespan, slower, soft = shorter lifespan, speedier, medium = inbetween).



This leads to some crazy strategy calls.

But arguably the most fun parts about F1 are cheering for teams and drivers. Watching some short Youtube videos or Drive To Survive on Netflix will undeniably give you some opinions on drivers and teams. It is really fun to cheer for losing teams, in my opinion. Why? Well, I do cheer for front-fighting teams too, (like Ferrari) but as a Williams fan (currently 9th out of 11 teams), you don't exactly cheer for the race win. You cheer for points. To climb the F1 ranks. It's like cheering for a little baby slowly learning how to walk.

So now you see the pros of F1. If you can't afford to pay for the subscription to F1TV (at least $30-40 per year) the highlights of each and every race are on youtube. Hope you get to enjoy it as much as I do!



ICONIC HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

BY CHARLI ALCANTARA

Halloween: It's the scariest, eerie and spine-chilling event all around! As Jack-O'-Lanterns fill porches here and there and the day of terrifying reckoning nears, it begs the question:

What are some costumes you could possibly wear?

Now, in honour of a classic horror movie, Friday the 13th, the first character I'll be talking about is… Jason Voorhees himself! To replicate the icon's outfit, you're going to need a pair of jeans, a black undershirt, a tattered jacket to go over it, a hockey mask and a machete– preferably plastic.

If you want to go in a more whimsical direction– and honestly, I wouldn't blame you, you could always go for the usual fairy! For the most basic fairy costume, you could always grab a dress (preferably with sparkles?), a pair of wings, and just slap those two together! But if you want a costume that ISN'T a fairy, you could do a character from Disney! Although, when I say Disney, I DO mean the older movies– the new ones are just…. Eh.

Onto the world of Disney costumes!

There are a multitude of people you could dress as: Cinderella, Belle, Mulan, Tiana- the list goes on! However, I acknowledge that some of these readers COULD be guys, sooooooooo THIS ONE'S FOR YOU GENTLEMEN!!! Instead of doing any prince from a storybook, you could do: Captain Hook, Hercules… That's only the TIP of the iceberg!! For the captain, you're going to need a dramatic red coat, lace cravat, feathered hat, and a hook hand (to do that, you must get your hand bitten off first, so..)! To be the brave Greek hero from the film, all you have to get is a short blue and orange Greek-style tunic, molded chest armor and accessories (you can grab a pre-made kit, of course), a cape, belt, sandals and a sword to complete the look!

Just remember, whatever costume you choose for the witching hour, just be sure to put enough love and care into it- a costume is not a costume without passion behind it! Take my ideas in stride, but I hope to see at least a few fairies or Disney characters on the day of.

Happy Halloween!



TREE

BY GRETA HERNANDEZ

Every fall trees get ready for winter
braving the wind in fall so that
when winter comes it'll be ready
winter isn't as hard anymore since it
knows to survive it
in spring it blossoms
becoming beautiful, unique and
better than how it was that past
spring
that beauty was always there,
hiding underneath the surface
truly showing what it's like when
you pay attention and care for it
its beauty can't only be shown with
how it looks but how it lives
still having faith that there's
goodness out there
being resilient even after all the cold
and wintery storms that its been
through
always knowing that no matter
what it'll be ok
it survived winter
always does
help of others or on its own
it'll help it to become a great
tree
one who can look back and
think about how much its
gone through
one who knows that it's done a
good job and it's been strong
for so long
its done good and all the trees
around it are happy for it
some quietly congratulating it
knowing what's it like to have
been in its place
for being able to keep making
it through through winter
no matter what the snow tries
to tell it
remembering that it's brighter
in spring



IT'S HALLOWEEN, DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR TURNIPS ARE? JACK-O-LANTERNS THEN & NOW

BY LUKE CHEON

Pumpkin Jack-O'-lanterns are fun and all, but have you ever tried to carve turnips, large beets, or potatoes? We are used to carving pumpkins, but this tradition comes from a myth about Stingy Jack.

Stingy Jack had tricked the Devil into turning into a coin in order to pay for a drink.

Once the Devil had turned into a coin, Jack kept him in his pocket next to a silver coin to keep the Devil from turning back to his original form. Jack would eventually free the Devil on the condition that he would not bother him for a year and when Jack would die, the Devil could not claim his soul. When Jack died, God didn't allow Jack to enter Heaven because of his sinful life and since the Devil couldn't allow Jack to enter Hell, Jack was sent to stay and wander earth for eternity.

So, in the British Isles people started to carve turnips with demonic faces to scare away Jack.

This moved to North America with Scottish & Irish immigrants when they carved Jack-O'-Lanterns from pumpkins because the pumpkins were native.

Pumpkins are fun & easy to carve for a variety of ages, but turnips, large beets, and potatoes weren't as easy to carve. These plants didn't give you the ease of cutting off the top and emptying the core, you had to make an opening and carve out the center. Turnips were the hardest to carve because they didn't have a soft center like the others.

Jack-O'-lanterns have evolved from demonic faces to witches, bats, ghosts, cats, and "scary" faces. Now pumpkins are widely seen as being the Jack-O'-lantern vegetable. Pumpkin Jack-O'-lanterns are a staple and an inspiration for the classic Beistle Halloween art style.

This year when Halloween rolls around, take a moment to appreciate the Jack-O'-Lanterns, because those lanterns connect you to others in a centuries old tradition. If you're up for a challenge or want to keep Stingy Jack, skip the pumpkins and go straight to the vegetable aisle.

Happy Halloween!!!!!



ULTIMATE FALL MUST-DO'S

BY RIENAA GANESAN

Fall is a shift from fast-paced activities to cozy routines. It's the season when we snuggle up by the fireplace with a blanket wrapped around our shoulders. Whether you try them this year or save them for next fall, here are two activities worth adding to your bucket list:

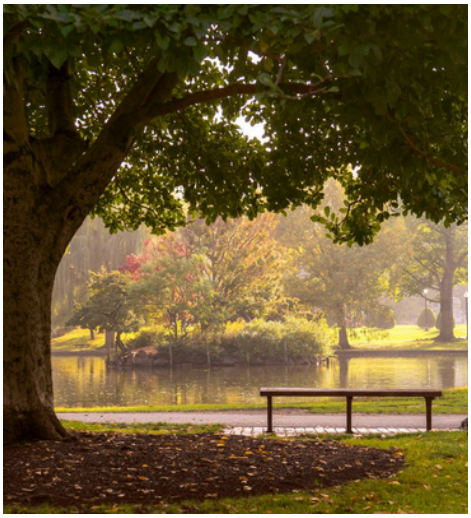
1. Gardens

The most recognisable feature of fall is the transformation of plants, particularly trees. Here are two gardens where you can admire:

Park & Tilford Gardens - This small, free botanical garden is located next to the Park & Tilford shopping centre in North Vancouver, British Columbia. In fall, the garden is filled with colourful Japanese maple foliage and special fall

plants like Dead Man's Fingers.

VanDusen Botanical Garden - If you're up for the journey, bring your friends and family to VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver. It is a beautiful place for garden lovers and fall photography. You should definitely visit the maze, as well as the Japanese maple trees, golden ginkgo trees and the beautiful reflections at Livingstone Lake. Entry to the garden costs a small fee, but the beautiful scenery makes it worth visiting!



2. Apple & Pumpkin Picking

Wondering what other 'fall-coded' activities there are? Obviously, picking apples and pumpkins! Grab your friends and family and enjoy a classic fall experience while picking fresh apples and finding the perfect pumpkin.

Richmond Country Farms - Located in Richmond, British Columbia, this farm is a wonderful place to enjoy fun, like visiting the pumpkin patch and choosing your own pumpkin, for a small fee. You can also enjoy wagon rides, food vendors, and farm animals! The weekends are the busiest, so try to arrive earlier on the day, to have a more relaxing visit.

Taves Family Farms - Located in Abbotsford, British Columbia, this farm is a lovely place to experience apple picking! You can enjoy apple picking (when available), explore the corn maze, visit farm animals, enjoy delicious treats, and try the 150-foot slide at Mystical Meadow. Some activities cost extra, so check their website before visiting!

To sum it up, fall comes once a year, so make the most of it!





STAYING COZY DURING THE FALL SEASON

BY OLIVIA PATERSON

When the leaves start to change and the air turns crisp and cool, it's time to put on your comfiest sweater and cozy up by the fire. There's something about Fall that seems so cozy. Maybe it's the long evenings after the sun goes down, or hearing the rain on the roof or maybe the toasty fire. Here are a few easy ways to stay warm and cozy during Fall. A good way to stay cozy is to curl up with a blanket and a warm drink. Pick your favourite hot drink, like tea, hot chocolate or coffee. When you have your drink, put on a comfy sweater and find the biggest, fluffiest blanket you have, then curl up on your couch or chair with your drink. Turn on your fireplace if you have one,

but if you don't and still want the cozy look and sound of one, there are many fireplace videos online that you can play to get the feel of sitting by the fire. If you're lucky enough to have a cat or dog, try to convince them to curl up at your feet and if it's an especially cold night, an electric blanket or hot water bottle should keep you nice and toasty.

If you love reading, a crisp Fall evening is the perfect time to pick up a new book. There are many great genres out there, like mystery, romance or thriller. You can find many good book suggestions online or by asking your librarian. Visiting your local library is an inexpensive way to try out new books and genres, without spending money on books you may not end up enjoying. Another alternative is using an e-reader, which is good if you want a book, but don't want to leave the comfort of your couch to get one.

Another cozy activity you can do is watch a movie or a show. It's the perfect time to start a new series or find a movie you've been meaning to watch. There are many fun movies and shows to choose from that have an autumn vibe, like 'Gilmore Girls', 'Anne with an E' and 'Coraline'.

There are many places where you can watch these shows, like CBC Gem, Tubi and Plex which all have free subscriptions.

If you love being creative, there are lots of good autumnal crafts and projects you can make. You can find lots of good inspiration online for Fall and Halloween themed crafts made from yarn, paper, felt and many other materials. You can make things like pumpkins, ghosts, leaves and just about anything you can think of!

It's also a good time to pick up a new hobby. You can learn how to knit, or maybe crochet. There are so many new things you'll be able to make! You could learn how to sew, felt or perhaps paint. There are so many possibilities!

A great way to really appreciate how cozy it is indoors is to step outside. Put on a warm coat and a toque and take a walk in the leaves on the way to your local coffee shop. On your walk, stop and feel the cool autumn breeze on your face. Buy yourself a hot drink when you arrive and when you get back, you'll really appreciate how cozy it is inside.

So what are you waiting for? Go get a book, blanket and some tea, and get cozy!



COZY AUTUMN READS

BY PIPER FOGG

Calling all readers! This one's for you, no matter how old you are or how much time you've got to dedicate to a good book. As someone whose bookshelves are practically overflowing, I'd say I am a credible source. Ever since high school started, homework, sports, and hobbies have been taking away a fraction of my reading time, but true readers will find a way. If not, you've always got English class.

I'll start with some simple, feel-good reads that you don't have to pay a whole lot of attention to. (That sounds bad, but sometimes we can't stay *totally* engrossed in a book.) My first choice is *Canterwood Crest* by Jessica Burkhart. Okay, you're probably thinking, *that's a book for ten-year-olds*, but as a horse girl, quite

frankly, I don't care. I love the ridiculous drama between irresponsible teenagers and that, despite the series having about twenty books and counting, nothing ever really happens. I like the setting - a boarding school for elitist riders - and that it's set in the flip-phone era. It's a mindless read with some cringe-worthy humour, but hey, what else are cozy books for?

A book with similar vibes is Pumpkin Spice & Everything Nice by Kate Cicatelli-Kuc. Well, isn't that a cliche title? At least it tells you it's set in autumn. I have to admit that as I read the first chapter, I had to assume the narrator was in her early tweens. She's actually sixteen. So I would say this book is good for all ages. It's sweet and romantic and endlessly cliche with remarkable likeness to Hallmark movies, but not spicy at all. The book is set in a small town called Briar Glen, with exaggeratedly beautiful scenery, and two coffee shops competing to call their pumpkin spice lattes the best in town. Gosh, the things people can get worked up about! Main character Lucy runs a coffee shop with her mum, but when a new, modernized coffee shop opens up in town, things get messy. Especially when the owner of the new cafe is Lucy's crush. Uh-oh.

Since we're still on terms of romance books, I have to make an honourable mention to Better Than The Movies by Lynn Painter. I couldn't put this book down! It was such a sweet, witty, and cozy read for just about any time of the year. Really, though, all Lynn Painter books are well-written and easy to read. Recently, in a bookstore, I saw her newest, Trust Fall. While I haven't read it, I've heard positive things, so if you want a more autumnal book than Better Than The Movies, I recommend Trust Fall. And, hey, let me know how it is.



If that's too much rom-com sappiness for you, I've got some more mystery-focused books that have been some of my favourite reads in the past as I geared up for the start of winter. When the rain is coming down, the best place to be is inside with a cup of tea and a novel! My top choice is The Swifts by Beth Lincoln. It's true that I have some childish book taste, but seriously, this book is great for all ages. There's a bit of gore, I'll admit, and I didn't love that part - but it is a murder mystery, so there's not much else to expect. I had to skip over one scene - mind you, that was a few years ago, and if you've read Hunger Games or anything similar, you'll be ready to take on The Swifts. The setting is creative, with a big family of quirky characters named after their traits, and Shenanagin Swift is on a mission to uncover the secrets of Swift Manor next to an unidentified murderer. The best part is there are clues hidden all over the pages, for both you and the narrator to try to decode.

Another less-romance-y book is The Raconteur's Commonplace Book by Kate Milford. The title is a mouthful, but it's part of the charm, and you'll sound pretty sophisticated when you tell people, "I'm reading The Raconteur's Commonplace Book!" Of course, the title isn't the only draw. It's about a group of mysterious characters stranded in the midst of a merciless storm.

They tell one another stories to pass the time, which ends up making the book something like a collection of short stories. The beauty of the writing, though, is that all the stories are connected. Each leaves you with more and more questions, and the plot ties together perfectly at the end to give readers an air of satisfaction. If you get as engrossed as I did, there are plenty more books in the selection - Milford has other books set in the same world, such as the Greenglass House duology, set over the Christmas holidays.

And of course, what kind of autumnal book-ranking would this be without some scarier reads? I'm not a big fan of horror myself, but if they're written well, hand it over. I love books by author Kenneth Oppel, and a few autumns ago I finished Ghostlight. It's for younger readers, but based off of popular Toronto folklore, and has a positive message and a contemporary feel while rooted in supernatural aspects. Despite being about ghosts, it's heartwarming and a feel-good read while still carrying spooky themes.

For a more mature read, I recommend Best of All Worlds by Kenneth Oppel. This is a sci-fi and psychological thriller with an engrossing writing style and interesting plot. Really, it hooks you right from the start: a teen boy wakes up in his family's vacation cabin. Only, it's not where it used to be, there seems to be no signs of civilization anywhere, and worst of all, there's no way out.



That's all I've got this autumn. If that was too many options, I'll narrow it down to my top three picks: for a cozy read, you can never go wrong with Lynn Painter's books. If you want a cute, laid-back mystery, try The Swifts. And if you're a mature student or staff member looking for something vaguely fall-themed but engrossing nonetheless, choose Best of All Worlds. Happy reading!

PUMPKIN SPICE: AN HONEST REVIEW

BY CHARLI ALCANTARA

As we begin to settle into the oh-so familiar season of fall with its cinnamon rolls, hot chocolate and sweater weather, there's one fall staple you can never pass up: its seasonal drinks! Of course, I'm talking about the one and only Pumpkin Spice Latte! But, lucky for you, I've tried two variations of the drink: an Iced Pumpkin Cream Chai and an Iced Pumpkin Cream Matcha.

With the help of my two volunteers, Kiara and Svetlana (thank you!!), I shall give you a completely honest review of all three Starbucks drinks! Now, we got the drinks on a cold Saturday morning, which was the perfect time for taste-testing!

Starting with the Pumpkin Spice Latte itself, the taste is...



questionable to say the least; in a good way, of course! The reactions from me and my two specialists were…. Mixed. My first consultant rated the drink 7.5/10, but said it wasn't to her taste. The second gave it a rating of 6.5/10 and said it would have been better if it were cooler (for context we ordered it piping hot) and if it didn't burn her tongue when she was trying to drink it! For me, however? It was a 5/10 because it tasted too much like coffee to me. Granted, it IS coffee, so I don't know what I was talking about, but the way the pumpkin mixed with the bitterness of the coffee didn't sit well in my mouth.

Next up is the Pumpkin Cream Matcha! My first consultant thought that this was possibly her favorite drink out of the trio and rated it a whopping 9.5/10! (But she did mention that matcha is her favorite, so it could just be biased.) The second authority rated it a 9.9/10 and said that it's "really good, you know?" But honestly, my reaction was the same. I've rated it a heavy 9.9/10 and again said that it was "really good!" You can barely taste the pumpkin within the matcha and yet can still note the flavour in the drink! (Sorry, pumpkin lovers!)



Last but not least, the Pumpkin Cream Chai! To my first expert, she thought of it as her second favorite, and rated it a 9.5 AGAIN! Additional note from her: it does taste similar to eggnog- so if you harbor a deep resentment for the drink, maybe avoid this one. My second connoisseur told me that the Chai "really, really, really, really, really, really tastes like gingerbread" and a 9.5 for her too! I rated it a good 9.5 as well, noting that it WASN'T matcha, and by extension, (matcha bias right here!) didn't match up to my most favorite drink of the trio– but the Chai was good, for sure. The gingerbread-eggnog taste works with the flavor of Chai, in my opinion. After reviewing the contenders, I can confidently say the winner of this competition is… the Pumpkin Cream Matcha!!!

Overall, this drink hauled in ratings of 9.9– the highest number so far– and was the most delicious to me and my two consultants. The drink's great for when you want just a small amount of pumpkin in your life and like the subtle taste of sweet matcha too– not the grass version, of course.

Second place goes to the most honorable Pumpkin Cream Chai with its ratings of 9.5 all across the board. It's a great choice to go with if you want an eggnog/gingerbread flavor for cold mornings that's subtle and not too bold.

Unfortunately, last place has to go to the Pumpkin Spice Latte. It was too bitter for us three, and the pumpkin-coffee combination just wasn't right on our tongues. But if you're a coffee lover and want a dark pumpkin-y taste to your daily dose of caffeine, try the Pumpkin Spice Latte!



No matter what drink you choose to accompany you in this wonderful season of fall, there will always be a choice for you; be it in a chai, matcha, latte, or just a simple hot chocolate to fill your days. Go make this season one to remember!



WHAT SETS NOAH KAHAN APART

BY ANNA HERNANDEZ

"Unmasculine" is not a word I would use to describe Noah Kahan, but it is how a friend of mine would. Recently, when she asked who I was listening to, I replied, Noah Kahan. She was incredulous, and informed me that she in fact utterly dislikes him. Intrigued, as that was a new perspective for me, I asked her why. Among her reasons, she mentioned that one of the things she disliked about him was his "unmasculinity".

I am restraining myself, because I could go on a whole other tangent about women commenting on men's masculinity, but that's for another day.

I believe what my friend actually disliked about Noah Kahan's music was Noah's vulnerability. I find that mildly amusing, as what I love the most about his music is not only his rich, acoustic, melodic guitar, but his nuanced, incredibly human lyrics.

Noah manages to capture the messy, uncomfortable, yet ultimately real and honest bits of humanity that resonate quite deeply with some of us. He sings of love, happy irrational love that makes you want to run around and scream out of pure joy. Sad, lost love that you know is and will always be unrequited love.



Dependent love where whether they call you or not decides if it's a good day or bad. He sings of the love we all feel but are too proud to admit.

Noah also sings about hurting- sadness, anxiety, family issues, depression. Deep, dark, heavy, unmovable depression. Like a cold empty void within you nothing can fill. He writes of therapy and taking medication and forgetting to take medication. Noah sings about struggles with substance abuse- drinking, drugs, the works. He sings of not only suffering, but living with suffering. He sings of accepting all the feelings and just letting them be. Sitting with them and acknowledging them as they are. Some of his songs are at times mildly nonsensical- random bits and pieces of unexplainable thoughts and feelings. But through it all, Noah is so authentically human- even if you put the lyrics aside and strip down the songs, you're left with very simple instruments.

A guitar, piano for depth, occasionally mandolin for the bluegrass texture, and his voice. I find something so beautiful about the human voice; to sing is the act of air hitting one's vocal cords, small bands of muscle and tissue

A guitar, piano for depth, occasionally mandolin for the bluegrass texture, and his voice. I find something so beautiful about the human voice; to sing is the act of air hitting one's vocal cords, small bands of muscle and tissue within one's larynx. As air pushes past the vocal cords, it forces them to open and snap shut hundreds of times per second, creating a fast buzzing sound wave.

That, the human voice (harmonizing, no less) combined with a soft acoustic guitar, plus lyrics that resonate and make sense when nothing else does, make Noah's albums feel like a warm bed. A bed one can crawl into, pull the soft duvet covers over one's head and just pause the world. Psychologically, it makes a lot of sense.

The point I am trying to make is that Katy Perry could never do what Noah does.

If I were you, on one of those days, give Noah's music a listen. You'll find yourself feeling a lot less lonely than before.

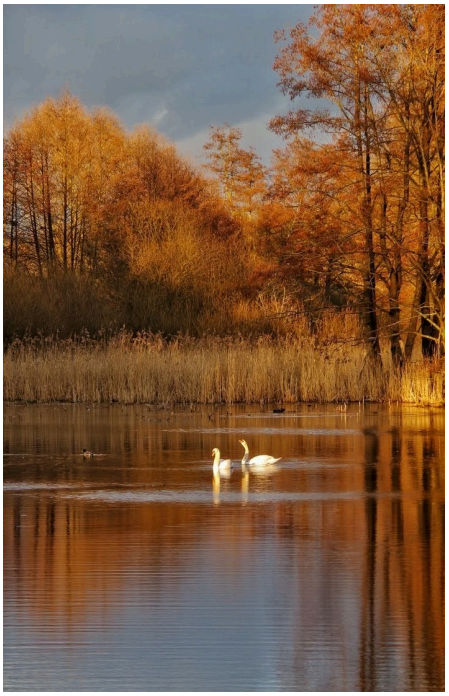
GOD'S FAVOURITE SEASON MUST BE FALL

BY ANNA HERNANDEZ

God's favourite season must be fall
Why else would such ornate leaves adorn the ground we step on
Why else would rich hues of amber and gold embellish the branches of reaching trees
Why else would giant gourds of green and yellow and orange spring forth from flowers on vines

God's most powerful season must be fall
With howling, screaming winds that bend the great oak's limbs to attack windowpanes
With downpours of unending rain and pounding hail and cold that seeps into your bones
With mighty cracks of lightning like whips on flesh, blinding light burned into one's retinas
With rumbling thunder that travels through the sky, the walls, the very soil and brings one to their knees





God's most satisfying season must be fall
Mere mortals gather over a meal and thank the Lord for his divine providence
Mere mortals carve mahogany into acoustic instruments; strum dots, lines on a page into song
Mere mortals bake pies and roast avians in ovens and reminisce those who came before them
Mere mortals light wax candles in His name and question the beginnings of existence for hours
Mere mortals weep in agony at the irony of life; knowing they cannot change even a bit of it.

God's favourite season must be fall; why else would it be the way it is and not any other way?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE STA TIMES CELEBRATES ITS 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY AND THANKS EVERYBODY WHO HAS EVER TAKEN PART IN THE PAPER.

Teacher Sponsor
Mr. Felipe Grossling

Coodinator
Mr. Felipe Grossling

Editor in Chief
Anna Hernandez

Executive Team
Anna Hernandez
Rienaa Ganesan
Daryna Dyablo

Article Writers
Shivani Ghandi
Gianmarco Calabrese
Matias Grossling
Greta Hernandez
Charli Alcantara
Piper Fogg
Luke Cheon
Olivia Paterson
Rienaa Ganesan
Anna Hernandez

Graphic Designer
Daryna Dyablo
Anna Hernandez

