

Two Weeks to Done!

We are slowly inching close to the end of the summer vacation, and as much as being a desert country means we don't particularly look forward to enjoying it the way the colder countries do, it is still a time of fun and frolic, owing to it being the vacation season. There are two weeks to go for the end of the vacation, and here are a few things to do to make the most of the laziest time of the year.



Watch a sunrise - It surely is a cliché, but it is a cliché for a reason. In Bahrain, we can see both the sunrise and sunset on the same day, as it is an island country. The magnificent art show curated by nature can never get old, and it'll make you believe that there is a little bit of magic in everything. Also, sunrises in Bahrain are particularly gorgeous, and it is a must-see. Make a trip out of it, as much as early mornings on a holiday might leave us all grumpy, it'll all be washed away the moment the sky is lit by the sunrise palette.

Take photos - Selfie craze is a thing, both good and bad. We spend most of our time on our phones, and transcribing our lives on social media is a common habit. In the midst of this, how much do we remember to capture moments that we'll forever cherish? As much as it is important to live in the moment, we'd also be surprised by the joy and everything else being reminded of these moments ten years later will bring us. It is also always amazing to see ourselves through the ages.



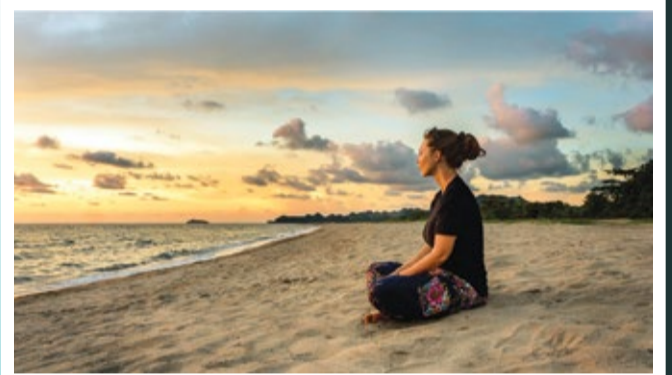
Tour around Bahrain - Yes, it is a fairly small country, but every day there is a new exhibition or installation or something of the sort, lending us a better grasp of the history of this land, or the intricacies of the ecosystem, handicrafts, and even promoting upcoming artists and entrepreneurs. Farms, museums, forts, and the like, that were previously inaccessible are now accessible to the public. Pack a picnic and spend the day discovering or rediscovering the island and its beaches, museums, exhibitions, farms, and so much more!

Plant a garden - Most non-local bio life cannot withstand the summer, especially the saplings. The end of the summer is the best time to re-nourish the soil and get it ready for the planting season. The joy of dirtying your hands, and seeing the literal fruit of your toil is unmatched. Visit local nurseries or flower shops, ask them about ideal seedlings for the season, and get dirty with the whole family.



Spend time with family and friends - Always a staple of any holiday, take the time to spend quality time and fun time with your family and reconnect with your friends. Busy schedules are the norm, and we are often unable to take the time to show up for plans to chill. Summer holidays are the best time to amend that. Consider it a well-deserved break from the race to the finish line.

Collect yourself - Spend some time by yourself, doing things you love, recognizing or making new goals, reevaluating your course, simply reacquainting yourself with old hobbies or likes or habits. Meditate, swim, run, dance, anything that helps you rejuvenate and reenergize for the rest of the year. Make time to do things for yourself that you couldn't because of the hectic schedule.



Weekly wellness with Sonia and Mo

Weekender teams up with Coaches Sonia and Mo who are here to help our readers on their journey to good health, but in a fun and more realistic way!

Find out more about them at www.thehealthyconscience.com



For decades, the body mass index (BMI) has been the gold standard for gauging obesity-related heart disease risk. But this handy tool doesn't always tell the whole story. It extrapolates your body fat percentage based on your height and weight. But the formula can't assess how or where your body stores its excess fat — a distinction that is crucial for cardiovascular health. By some estimates, the BMI misclassifies nearly 50% of people who are at higher disease risk from excess fat, meaning that you can be overfat even when you're not overweight.

The secret life of belly fat

Some people are genetically programmed to have a lot of fat tissue under the skin, which is deployed to store extra food energy during times of scarcity. But other people have very few of these designated fat cells.

In individuals who lack an adequate quota of available fat storage cells (or people whose fat tissue is already filled to capacity), fat particles travel in the bloodstream and congregate in the liver, muscles, and other organs, which normally have no fat. This also leads to the accumulation of visceral or "belly" fat — a pattern of fat distribution that is particularly hazardous to your health. Visceral fat is associated with insulin resistance and other metabolic irregularities. It also triggers the release of inflammatory substances that damage the arteries and help set the stage for cardiovascular disease.

Who is prone to visceral fat?

The tendency to accumulate visceral fat is governed by genetic, ethnic, and gender differences. Natives of India and South Asia have a higher-than-average

propensity for abdominal obesity. White men and black women tend to accumulate more visceral fat than black men and white women.

Fat and aging

With age, people tend to lose muscle tissue, especially the type of specialized muscle fibers that produce quick bursts of speed and power. Fat frequently accumulates within the remaining muscle tissue, causing your body fat percentage to increase even when your weight remains constant. This scenario is closely linked to bodywide inflammation and diabetes risk. It may also explain why your BMI measurement doesn't provide a true reflection of your health risks.

Evidence suggests that waist circumference and waist-to-hip ratio is better indicators of metabolic health than BMI. Even among people with the same BMI, those who have a large waist (defined as more than 40 inches for men and 35 inches for women) have a significantly higher risk. In addition, people who tend to carry their weight in their hips and thighs (a "pear" shape) have lower waist-to-hip ratios and are less prone to heart disease than people with abdominal obesity (an "apple" shape).

Measuring your midsection

To measure your waist accurately, exhale and wrap a measuring tape around your bare abdomen just above your navel (belly button). Don't suck in your gut or pull the tape tight enough to squeeze the area. To compute your waist-to-hip ratio, first measure your hips by putting the tape measure around the widest part of your buttocks. Keep the tape measure level. Then, divide your waist size by your hip size.

Measurements that signal high risk	Waist (inches)	Waist-to-hip ratio
Women	35 or more	0.9 or more
Men	40 or more	1.0 or more

What should you do about visceral fat?

People with abdominal obesity — even if they're not overweight — can lessen their heart disease risk with regular exercise and healthy eating habits. Reducing the total amount of fat in your body frees up storage space for fat particles in places that are associated with less metabolic risk. That's why losing as little as 7% of your total weight helps lower heart disease risk: the most dangerous visceral fat disappears first.



Gourmet Mushroom Risotto



Showing off your cooking chops can be a time consuming and laborious deal, especially if you don't particularly have cooking chops! As always, work smarter, not harder, and find the easiest recipes to leave your guests in awe. Risottos are not easy to perfect, sure, but they are not difficult to get right and are guaranteed to impress. Here's a delicious risotto recipe to delight your family or guests with, and the delectable mushrooms will guarantee the picky ones will be helping themselves to more than one serving.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups chicken broth, divided
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 pound portobello mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 pound white mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 2 shallots, diced
- 1 1/2 cups Arborio rice
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- Sea salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped chives
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS

- In a saucepan, warm the broth over low heat.
- Warm 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir in the mushrooms, and cook until soft, about 3 minutes. Remove mushrooms and their liquid, and set aside.
- Add 1 tablespoon olive oil to skillet, and stir in the shallots. Cook 1 minute. Add rice, stirring to coat with oil, about 2 minutes. When the rice has taken on a pale, golden color, pour in the wine, stirring constantly until the wine is fully absorbed. Add 1/2 cup broth to the rice, and stir until the broth is absorbed. Continue adding broth 1/2 cup at a time, stirring continuously, until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is al dente, about 15 to 20 minutes.
- Remove from heat, and stir in mushrooms with their liquid, butter, chives, and parmesan. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

