

INTERESTING WEB SITES

MAKING LIFE BETTER

One Site at a Time

By Charlotte Tallman

The internet is full of information – some of it true, some wacky and some obviously fabricated. Having trusted sites bookmarked can keep you informed and entertained. Below are a few of my favorites – read daily to help me do what I can to make life better. Happy clicking!



Making Life Better

Feel good, look good and get more out of life
www.makinglifebetter.com

With a site full of valuable information covering food & recipes, beauty & style, home & family and vitality & wellness how could you go wrong? MakingLifeBetter.com covers a variety of issues you may not know you need help with, but probably do. From un-cluttering the closet to teaching your daughter about self-esteem, this site offers well-rounded advice and tips. Click in each day to read one of 1001 tips to make your life better (today's tip: To boost your circulation, stand up and take a deep breath every hour) and sign up to receive an e-newsletter full of recipes, organization tips and new ideas.



Real Simple

Life made easier, every day
www.realsimple.com

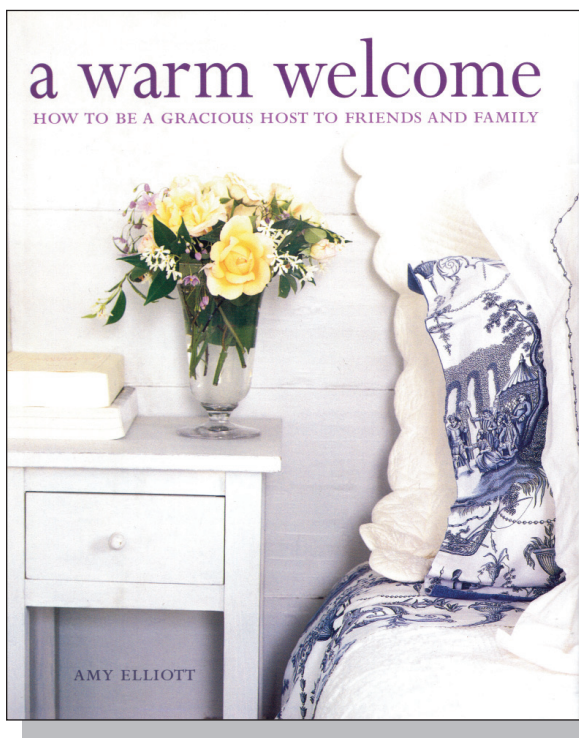
I love the magazine, and love the site even more! Updated content covers food & recipes, home & organizing, beauty & fashion, holidays & entertaining, health and work & life. Simply Stated, a Real Simple blog, offers real editorial from Real Simple contributors who are ready to help change almost any aspect of your life. But, perhaps my favorite part of RealSimple.com is the photo gallery highlighting a collection of the best Real Simple magazine photos and tips. You can learn a lot by just looking at the pictures!



Perk At Work

One café, multiple personalities
www.perkatworkcomic.com

Local graphic design and illustrator Jason Salas is behind Perk at Work, a comic strip about café worker Perk and his interactions with his boss, cook and his regular customers. Perk at Work online is a must visit for a laugh. Also included on the site are humor columns (Jason has a way with words), a sketchbook (some might call it stalking, but he's actually drawing you) and One Lump or Two (another of Jason's creations covering . . . well everything.) The result of comics from past Perk at Work additions has been published, the book debuting at a bookstore/coffee shop near you. Want another site highlighting Jason's talent? Visit www.attackmimes.com, an online graphic novel written by talented comic, actor and writer Trevor Hodgkins and illustrated by Jason. For a real lift in your life, visit these sites immediately.



BOOK REVIEW

A Warm Welcome:

HOW TO BE A GRACIOUS HOST TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY

By Amy Elliott • Reviewed by Charlotte Tallman

If you want your home to be a gift to others, *A Warm Welcome* is a must-have. Amy Elliott captures the very best a host can offer a guest in their home, from how to prepare the home for guests, helpful welcome menus with tips on meals and drink pairings, activities to entertain and ideas for thoughtful gifts.

Each chapter highlights stunning photography and practical tips with lists of essentials. Preparing the guest room describes the importance of focusing on the details, removing first the items a guest has no use for (like that stack of financial records or your extra winter clothes). Preparing the bed plays an important role, and Amy covers everything from laundering the linens to the correct ways to fluff a pillow. Preparing for the actual arrival covers the way to make guests always feel welcome and not intrusive.

Throughout the book, detailed and delicious recipes cover items like drinks by the pool, cooking for a crowd and perfect tea and coffee. Hosts having guests with special dietary concerns won't be lost in this book, as Amy offers advice on feeding vegetarians (the quickest way to offend a vegetarian is to prepare a meat entrée and expect them to fill up on side dishes). She also helps you plan easy, yet elegant snack menus; lunchtime strategies that will ease the feeding of hungry adults and children alike and the very best way to create things to do for the little ones (lemonade stand, anyone?). To keep the visitors from becoming restless, Amy offers tips on outdoor fun, classic card games and parlor games.

Each chapter ends with information focused on "If you are the guest," and etiquette questions and answers so both the host and guests are on top of their game.

Finally, *A Warm Welcome* offers exit strategies that will leave guests with fond goodbyes and the host with one last chance to show incredible graciousness by packing a lunch or sending a movie with a great 'good-bye.'

Available at booksellers everywhere.
ISBN# 978-1-84597-851-8