

GREAT IDEAS

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Dog-e-Minder can track pets

Your dog can't tell you the last time it was fed, but Dog-e-Minder can.

With the press of a button, the device records the time and date when the pet is walked, fed or medicated. It also stores your dog's name and your phone number, so it doubles as an ID tag.

The device can be attached to a key chain or collar and has a waterproof casing that the manufacturer says will stand up to swimming and play.

Dog-e-Minder is available in four colors (black, blue, pink and red) and can be ordered for \$19.95 plus shipping at www.dogeminder.com.

Book offers guide from seed to table

Some books will teach you how to grow a vegetable garden. Some books will tell you how to cook the fruit of the harvest. But it's a rare book that guides you through the entire process, from seed packet to serving dish.

"Grocery Gardening: Planting, Preparing and Preserving Fresh Food" does.

The book represents the work of four people who share a love of gardening and food: lead author Jean Ann Van Krevelen and collaborators Amanda Thomssen, Robm Ripley and Teresa O'Connor. Interestingly, even though they'd never met in person, they managed to share and or-

ganize their collective wisdom in just 60 days.

The book covers the basics of gardening, offers recipes for the fruits, vegetables and herbs that might be grown in backyard gardens and teaches how to preserve that yield to extend the enjoyment of the harvest. Having all that information can help gardeners choose crops that are more likely to grow well in their gardens and more likely to be eaten.

"Grocery Gardening" is published by Cool Springs Press and is priced at \$19.95 in softcover.

Body soaking a la Japanese

It's always interesting to see the way other cultures model their products, specifically ones for the home. The Sorrento sit bath tub, by Victoria & Albert, pictured below, is inspired by traditional Japanese tubs, which allow full-body immersion. And because it's not as big as standard tubs, it fits in small spaces and can be installed in a corner, as a centerpiece or anywhere. It also comes in a floral pattern. Cost is \$5,000 for the free-standing tub (with the base) and \$3,300 for the built-in version. Details: vandabaths.com.

Top 5 most popular bathroom ideas

Let me preface this next section by saying that I'm jealous of people whose bathrooms look like a spa (sigh). In any event, if you're considering turning your bath into one of these luxurious havens, here's a list of the top five most pop-

ular products, according to abathroomguide.com:

Heated floors (you know stepping on cold tile is not fun!); rainfall showerheads (I hate wimpy shower streams; I'd rather feel like I'm getting bombarded by water from all sides); steam showers (steam helps relieve muscle tension and joint fatigue. And it works wonders for your skin.); LED lighting (hey, a little ambience goes a long way); and mirror defoggers (no one wants to wait to see their newly refreshed skin.).

The pleasures of a daily bath

Neither my bathroom nor my bathtub is very fancy. Still, I don't let that keep me from indulging in a daily bath. Yes, you read that correctly — daily. And I love it. Regardless of how tired I am, soaking my whole body in water always makes me feel better. On many nights, I swear it's what helps me sleep. One night, I went to bed without it and ended up waking up in the middle of the night to run my bath. Only then was I able to sleep. I'm not saying I sit there for hours on end — although I would, if I had the time. After a long day at work or a good workout, I run a hot bath and sit in it for about 10 minutes. There, no one bothers me and I'm away from all the noise (not you, my dear husband; I mean the TV or phone). It has become such a part of my routine, this taking-a-bath business, that I don't feel at home until I do it. And you? What makes you feel at home?



