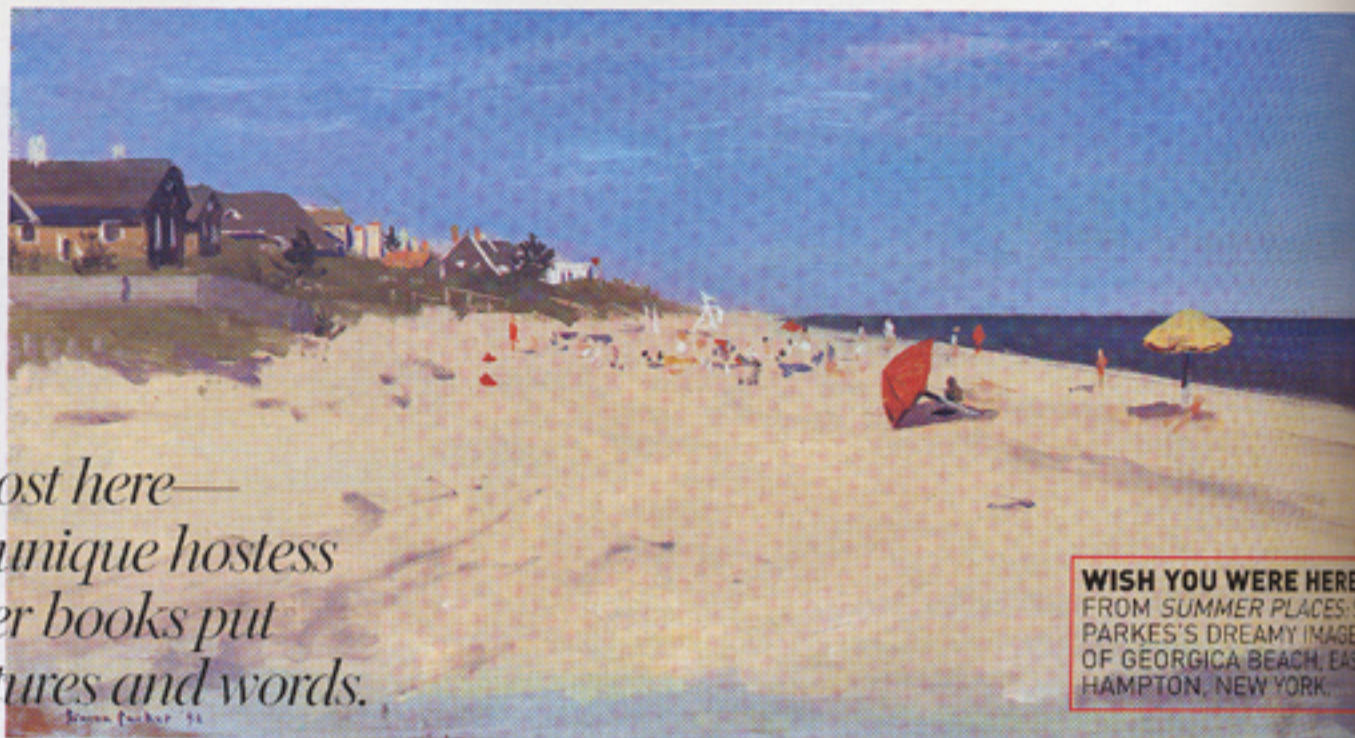


# PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT

## BOOKS

Memorial Day is almost here—and the hunt is on for unique hostess gifts. Gorgeous summer books put your gratitude into pictures and words.



**WISH YOU WERE HERE**  
FROM *SUMMER PLACES: 50 PARKES'S DREAMY IMAGE OF GEORGICA BEACH, EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK.*

# thanks for the memories

(Random House) for completely different reasons when no one else is

How do you thank the friend who has invited you away for the weekend? A well-chosen book is a lot more thoughtful than a bottle of Tokay or a half-wheel of

Stilton—if only because it lasts longer on the coffee table.

**Summer Places: Eastern Long Island and New England** (Vendome) is a compilation of landscapes by a little-sung *plein air* painter named Simon Parkes, who does very location-precise and bucolic scenes akin to those the Tile Club of East Hampton turned out 125 years ago. Anyone who spent childhood afternoons on the peachy sands of Ditch Plains, Montauk, or the baking-powder beaches of Truro, Cape Cod, will gaze into them with piquant pangs of recognition.

André Leon Talley, *Vogue*

editor at large, has a photo book out for those who get stirrings of longing when they flip through snapshots of Galliano crinolines and Chanel bikinis. **A.L.T. 365+** (Powerhouse) is a thousand-and-one nights at La Grenouille and the Ritz with Manolo, Karl, and Naomi—a Warholian memory album with a VIP backstage pass.

**Birds: The Art of Ornithology** (Rizzoli) features another cast of characters in their finest plumage. Anyone with an interest in gardens or walks in the woods will swoon over these lavish colored illustrations, from a gaudy Tasmanian parrot to the *Philomachus pugnax*, wearing a ruff to rival Mary Queen of Scots's.

Rizzoli is issuing a reprint of one of the all-time most entertaining books on the topic of entertaining itself, Elsa Maxwell's 1956 **How to Do It**. Elsa—in her own words “a short, fat, homely piano player from Keokuk, Iowa”—was a titan among gossip columnists,

and the most celebrated hostess of her day. Her book dispenses recipes for things like Clare Boothe Luce's Orange Pancakes, as well as zingy party advice on topics such as How to Spot a Bore.

Speaking of boring. . . . The crickets chirp-chirp and the clock tick-tocks as you lie in the guest bedroom wishing there were something more interesting on the shelf than a 1986 edition of the *Rough Guide to India*. Bedside books for the guest room make very clever hostess gifts, too, don't they?

**The Glass Castle** (Scribner) is the kind of story that keeps you awake long after the rest of the house has fallen asleep. In it, Jeannette Walls, now a successful gossip writer, remembers a vagabond childhood, brought up by parents so nonconformist they couldn't hold down jobs or put presents under the Christmas tree. Her story is equally disturbing and funny, and you can't stop reading till you find out how she made it out alive.

You'll be reading Jane Fonda's memoir, **My Life So Far**

awake: It's such a guilty pleasure you might not want to be seen with it on the beach. Fonda offers up a crazy Hollywood ride, from *Barbarella* through Hanoi, an eating disorder, her aerobics phase, dabblings in Rumi poetry, tabloid divorce from Ted Turner . . . more than enough spicy material for a TV miniseries.

On the other end of the spectrum, there's the newly updated **Miss Manners' Guide to Ex-**



**GOOD MANORS**  
FROM *A.L.T. 365+*: OSCAR DE LA RENTA'S GARDEN IN KENT, CONNECTICUT.

**cruciatingly Correct Behavior** (W. W. Norton), by the lady with the bun, Judith Martin. You'll laugh out loud at Miss Manners's commandments on modern problems like Googling and air kisses. Welcome reading, you bet, for those weekends when the conversation revolves around the rude things other vacationers did on the Jitney.

—BESS RATTRAY *pata* >164



**FLOCKING TOGETHER**  
FROM *BIRDS: THE ART OF ORNITHOLOGY*: JOHN JAMES AUDUBON'S SCARLET IBIS (1837).