

In Touch with meltco

September 2018

Think big and don't listen to people who tell you it can't be done. Life's too short to think small. – Tim Ferris

It's That Time Again – Back to School

Parents across the country are scrambling to get everything ready in time for back to school. Getting organized after 2 months of summer holidays is no easy task, but **meltco's** here to help!

Back to school shopping can get expensive if you're responsible for one of 80 million American students returning to school. Since 2010, the average household spends approximately \$650 per year on back to school shopping. If you can wait, September is when all the necessities go on sale! It's also a great time to stock up for next year.

Stress Free Mornings:

- ✚ Efficient Lunches – Almost a cliché these days, meal prep is the key to staying organized. Next time you're in the kitchen, cut up some fruit and veggies for a few days' worth of snacks or make a few sandwiches to store in the fridge. Asking your kids to make their own lunches when they're at the appropriate age is a big help for parents and starts good habits for the them!
- ✚ Easy Dressing – try to get everyone to choose their outfits the night before – including you! Having a set work “capsule” will cut down on time wasted staring at your closet with indecision. *Pinterest* has given our team lots of inspiration.
- ✚ “Put shoes and jackets on exactly 8 minutes before you have to leave.” – Laura Vanderkam, author of *I Know How She Does It: How Successful Women Make the Most of Their Time*, swears by this tip to avoid being late in the mornings. It gives enough time to tackle any last minute or forgotten tasks and gives kids a pause before they rush out the door.
- ✚ Check Your Calendar – Vanderkam recommends looking over your calendar at the end of each week to get a handle on what's coming up and divvy up responsibilities. Things go a lot smoother when everyone's contributing!
- ✚ Enjoy Mornings – They get a bad rap for being chaotic, but it can be very valuable family time. If someone works shifts, or kids are involved in lots of extracurriculars, family dinners can be hard to put together. Having breakfast together is bonus bonding time for the whole family.

“Coolest Teacher in America”

Barry White Jr. is definitely a morning person! To get his students excited for the day, the elementary teacher from Charlotte, NC starts by doing something a little unconventional – a completely unique handshake with each student!

Check out the “Coolest Teacher in America” [HERE](#)

After school can be more than just time to do homework. It’s about students discovering what they’re passionate about, outside the classroom. Here are a few new things for kids to try by themselves, or as fun for the entire family.

Extra-Curricular Activity Ideas

Activities:

- Skateboarding
- Rollerblading
- Jump-Rope
- Painting
- Sports
- Playing TAG
- Bird watching/animal tracking
- Running a business – like a lemonade stand

Hobbies:

- Reading
- Cartooning
- Science experiments
- Playing an instrument
- Art Projects (try making different “stamps” out of household items like cutting an apple in half)
- Start a collection – rocks, stickers, stamps, hockey cards etc.
- Writing a play – kids write a story and act it out for the family
- Customized car racing – tape down a “track” with “lanes” on your carpet for removable fun
- Clay sculpting projects/pottery
- Volunteering – a great way for kids to learn about different ways of life and compassion for the less fortunate. Try incorporating something they’re already passionate about like rescuing animals or environmental conservation.



Feature Fall Cocktail of the month: POP! Cider



Ingredients

- 2-ounce Bénédictine liqueur
- 1-ounce apple cider, chilled
- Prosecco, chilled
- Fresh rosemary or thyme sprigs (optional)

Directions

Combine Benedictine and cider in a Champagne saucer or coupe. Top with Prosecco. Garnish with rosemary or thyme, as desired.

Feature Restaurant of the month: Jefferson Hotel of Richmond

Lemaire – Inside the historical Jefferson Hotel of Richmond, Virginia, is a dining room fit for a president...which may be why thirteen past presidents have been guests at the Jefferson! Other notable visitors include Frank Sinatra, who also performed songs after dinner, and even Elvis once made an appearance.

Back when the Jefferson first opened in 1895, until as late as the 1940s, alligators roamed the grounds freely.



Gifted by eccentric guests, they mainly lived in the outdoor fountain, but rumor has it they managed to make their way inside the hotel too!

Interesting Fact: The grand staircase from *Gone with the Wind* was originally inspired by the Jefferson Hotel.

September Events

Looking for colours in the night sky – it's the ideal time of year to see the Northern Lights! Geomagnetic activities which cause the Aurora Borealis are two times as likely to occur in the spring and fall than other seasons, claims NASA.

While you're looking up, keep an eye out for the full moon on September 24th. Also known as the Harvest Moon, characterized by its orange colour, it often appears as the biggest full moon of the year.

The Autumn equinox is a time to celebrate the harvest season for many cultures around the world. In North America we see fall fairs, craft markets and even harvest-theme games, like corn mazes and pumpkin picking. In Vietnam, Taiwan and Hong Kong, there's the stunning Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival famously known as the Moon Festival where families gather together to offer sacrifice to the moon, appreciate the bright colors and express strong yearnings to friends and family members who live afar.



Did you know? Pigs are Heroes too!

Heroes come in all shapes and sizes – the most unlikely of them is Dumplin – a miniature pig that was rescued by an Indianapolis family earlier this year. Eager to return the favor, when there were multiple home robberies in their neighborhood on July 31st, Dumplin finally got his chance!

When the intruders made their way into the house, police believe they were frightened off after seeing the unorthodox pet. Recently moving to the area just a few weeks prior, the single mother of four children had just bought her first home. Not being familiar with the area, she was very surprised to learn about the break-ins. The unidentified homeowner says nothing was stolen, “(police) were guessing whenever the person broke in, they were probably surprised I had a pig and were like, ‘We don’t want to deal with this.’” Dumplin successfully defended the house and came out of the face-off completely unscathed.

And Dumplin isn't the only fearless pig out there – PETA claims many pigs have become rescuers: “A pig named Pru pulled her human mother out of a muddy bog, and another, named Priscilla, saved a young boy from drowning. Spammy led firefighters to a burning shed to save her calf friend, Spot, and Lulu found help for her human companion, who collapsed from a heart attack. A pig named Tunia chased away an intruder, and another, named Mona, held a fleeing suspect's leg until police arrived.” Might be worth considering a guard pig after all!