

ROBERT JENNIE

MAGAZINE

SPRING 2024

SIBLE



JANN

MARDENBOROUGH

THE RACE CAR DRIVER WHO
INSPIRED 'GRAN TURISMO' ON
OVERCOMING ANY CHALLENGE

ROBERT IRVINE MAGAZINE

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

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It's time to get back outside! If you've been feeling low during the winter months, you're not alone. We don't get very much Vitamin D during the winter, so it's imperative to recharge. Vitamin D is an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory, and also aids in supporting brain, muscle, and immune system function.

ROBERT'S LETTER

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL TORN

The solution to your dilemma might not be easy.
But at least it isn't complicated.

Recently at a wine and food festival, a woman approached me and, after nabbing a quick selfie, started asking for some advice. She had this great idea, you see, to start packaging her irresistible homemade brownies and distributing them to local grocery stores. She thinks that it'll be a lot of work, but the recipe—and the feedback from customers who always buy out the full stock at her area farmer's market—is so good that she thinks the quality will win out.

True, I told her, scale is a matter of logistics and elbow grease, which are available to anyone. The talent and passion to create something unique that other people love—that is rare, but luckily she already had it in her possession.

She concurred, the right elements were there...

But?

"Well, it's hard right now what with two kids and soccer games and band practice and..." she began.



Follow Robert on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

ROBERT'S LETTER

"Yes," I said. "That makes it hard." Then I made a conscious decision to stop right there and offer not one more breath of advice to this conversation. I was confident she could sound this out herself. But she pushed back. She wanted me to tell her what to do.

"Right," she said. "I know it's hard. I was just wondering what you would do."

"If you're a fan, you already know what I would do," I said. "Because you know I was once in your shoes."

There was a long, silent moment.

"You went ahead and did it," she finally said.

"And it was hard," I added. "Always will be."

She took this in. Silent for a moment. Solemn. Processing the difficult yet obvious truth.

After a bit I chimed in again. "There's an alternative," I said.

She looked up, her interest piqued.

"You can wait until your kids are off in college or living elsewhere... I don't know how old you are now, but that would put you at, what, 60?"

She corrected me, 65.

"Right. Well. Those are the choices," I said.

She smiled, thanked me for my time, told me she had a lot to think about, and drifted back into the crowd.

I don't know what she'll do, though I'd love to know. I hope she'll write me an e-mail or Tweet at me at some point in the future to give me an update. Folks usually do that. Whatever she does, I'll rest easy in the knowledge that



I didn't sugarcoat the path before her. I wanted her to know that if she pursues this thing, it'll be really difficult. She's risking money, heartache, and time away from her family. If you can look at all that and say, "OK, but I've still gotta try," then good on you. Go for it. You already knew the answer.

In our guts we usually know the answer to this stuff before we start asking the question out loud. Sometimes it can help to have the choice thrown in stark relief, to have the binary made clear as day, to really take ownership of the situation and make peace with the tradeoffs that the choice demands.

I wrote a whole book about this kind of thing. I called it *Overcoming Impossible* and, according to the five-star rating we have on Amazon, people really seemed to like it.

I'd urge you to remember this as you think about your own big goals and dreams or sit down to take stock of where you are at this point in the new year with your resolutions. The solutions to our

greatest dilemmas are rarely very complicated; they're just hard.

They're simple because they can be answered with a single question, "Do I really want this?" but they're difficult because wanting to achieve something great and wanting to stay comfortable with a great work-life balance are desires that are essentially incompatible.

Nevertheless that's what so many of us want. It's why we say we're torn. My advice as you go forward is this: Stop feeling torn. Pick your lane. Commit. Go all in. Then enjoy every second of whatever the heck that is—pursuing the new thing or standing pat. Then don't look back. And, as always, remember the words I live by,

Nothing is Impossible,

Limitless Possibilities



For over 100 years, Easterseals has been the indispensable resource for children, adults, families and veterans living and thriving with disabilities and special needs in the region. Help strengthen our community and make a positive difference in people's lives with Limitless Possibilities. Donate today:



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WANT ARMS LIKE THE BIG DOG?

Well, this sleeve-busting workout isn't for the faint of heart.

BY STEVE WRONA, C.S.C.S., CPT

If you've ever met Chef Irvine in person, one of the first things you might notice (other than his larger-than-life personality) is his arms. In fact, when he's not concealed by his chef's coat his biceps are the first thing you'll see. So, what does Robert do to earn such mighty arms? Well, I'll tell you what he doesn't do – make excuses! Traveling all over the states and across the world year-round he hardly has any downtime, but a mandatory part of Robert's day, be it early morning or even late night at times, is his daily pump. Robert hits the gym every day. He has been consistently lifting weights 5 to 7 days per week for most of his adult life, and his favorite day of the week is always arm day. Having the honor to be in the gym with him and lead his training programs for the past couple



X-Factor: The extraordinary muscle density, shape, and strength Robert has achieved was hard won over roughly four decades of hard training and can't be achieved in a few weeks or months. That isn't just a disclaimer, but a reminder not to be hard on yourself or expect too much in the short-term. As always, consistency is the great equalizer. Stick with it.

For more tips, follow Steve Wrona on [Instagram](#).

of years has been a privilege. His arms have so much strength and endurance from years of training that I've had to get creative in the

gym at times to keep challenging him when we train arms. If you're wondering exactly what one of those legendary arm workouts

TRAINING: PRO TIPS

would look like, I'm happy to walk you through it start to finish.

To lead things off Robert starts with light cardio to get the blood flowing. He then goes through a dynamic stretching routine that includes band work, mobility, and some foam rolling. Once he's primed, he begins with his biggest lifts of the day. His exercise selection rotates and progresses every few weeks to stop him from hitting a plateau and to maximize results. For today we will focus on his latest arm routine in detail, which starts with a seated alternating dumbbell curl: 3 sets of

15,12, and then 10 reps each arm is his target.

Usually, we will aim to increase the weight each set and hit near failure or failure by the time he reaches his rep target. Robert often strategically pairs exercises together in the gym to save time and be more efficient. For this workout we pair the seated alternating dumbbell curl with an overhead dumbbell tricep extension where he starts a bit lighter and increases weight each set. His goal is 3 sets of 25,20, and 15 reps and to choose weights that will push him close to failure by the end of each

set. Pairing exercises together doesn't mean there's no rest in between; he still prioritizes about 30-90 seconds of rest between exercises to maximize his output and make sure he can use heavy enough weights to get the results he wants. About 60 seconds of rest would be appropriate for this pair. Without taking rest time between sets it would become more of an endurance workout and Robert would not maximize his muscle building potential. For a typical pair of exercises Robert will perform exercise A, rest before performing exercise B, and then

ROBERT'S BIG ARM WORKOUT

(Notes on particular variations that Robert likes to use appear in parentheses)

WARM UP

Foam Roll Back/Lats, Band Passthrough, T-Spine (thoracic or upper spine) Extension and Rotation
Stretch Chest, Lats, Rear Delts

EXERCISE SETS X REPS

Theraband Face Pull 2 x 15
Theraband Pull-Apart 2 x 15
Scapular Push Up 2 x 10
Serratus Wall Slides 2 x 10
(Foam roller against wall, slide forearms up punching hands towards ceiling)

Downward dog (above) to cobra (inset) is a great way to warmup flexion and extension of the spine, simultaneously loosening up the hamstrings and calves.

PAIRING 1

EXERCISE SETS X REPS

Seated Alternating Dumbbell Curl 3 x 15,12,8 each
(Increase weight each set)

PAIR WITH

Overhead Dumbbell Tricep Extension 3 x 25,20,15
Increase weight each set

PAIRING 2

Barbell Curl 4 x 12-15 (Standing with EZ Bar or Straight Bar)

PAIR WITH

Barbell Skull Crusher 4 x 10-20
(On bench with EZ Bar or Straight Bar)

PAIRING 3

EXERCISE SETS X REPS

Concentration Curl 3 x 12-20 each (Seated with arm hanging down between legs)

(Pair) Heavy Straight Bar Tricep Extension 3 x 8-15 (On the lat pulldown with long bar, Arms shoulder width apart)

PAIRING 4

Barbell Reverse Grip Curl 3 x 15-25
(Overhand grip, light weight)
PAIR WITH
Long Rope Triceps Kickback 3 x 15-25
(Bent over position, elbows at sides, extend arms behind hips)

Images by Kelly Nielson

TRAINING: PRO TIPS

rest again before returning to the first exercise. If he is doing 3 sets this will look like -A, rest, B, rest, A, rest, B, etc. until he finishes his sets and moves to the next exercise or pair of exercises.

The next pair of exercises in his current arm routine is a barbell curl and a barbell skull crusher. For these two exercises he is also going to rest about 60 seconds after each set and pick weights that will challenge him close to failure. His target is four sets of 12-15 on the barbell curl and four sets of 10 to 20 on the skull crusher. The rep range varies greatly for the skull crusher here because after a couple sets working close to failure at 20 reps it becomes very hard to do more than 15 reps if he is using the same weight or increasing weight. Robert often gets competitive with himself in the gym and tries to do more weight each set on the exercises that he feels safe with. For arms I've seen him curl

over 100 pounds on a strong day, but usually we play around with 50-to-80-pound barbells which he curls with relative ease. Skull crushers are usually in the same ballpark for weight. Robert has been lifting long enough to know that a good mind-muscle connection is one of the most important things to strive for during a workout and sometimes that is best accomplished by using lighter weights and focusing on form and technique to maximize time under tension and stability during the exercise. We mix it up between lighter weights and heavier lifts as it is important for Robert to maintain his strength and muscle mass with as little damage to the joints as possible.

The next pair of exercises in this arm workout is a dumbbell concentration curl and a heavy straight bar tricep pressdown with about 60 seconds of rest in between. The classic concentration

curl which isolates one arm at a time is a great way for Robert to pump some extra blood into the biceps and work on that bicep peak. He aims for three sets of 12 to 20 reps on the concentration curl. The rep range is broad because after failing close to 20 reps on the first two sets it becomes hard to get even 15 for a third set. The heavy straight bar triceps pressdown is a great way to load the triceps with a lot of weight in a position where you will have good leverage. Robert does these on a classic lat pulldown stack and will use the wide straight bar as it allows him to get a powerful shoulder-width grip on the bar. Being able to lean over the bar a bit and put some weight into the pressdown is a nice way to push the triceps to the max. The target for the straight bar pressdown is 8 to 15 reps. This is also assuming we won't be decreasing the weight much and that if Robert goes



The triceps kickback is one of the best ways to isolate the triceps and ensure balanced arm development. Don't just work the "show me" (biceps) portion of the arm.

TRAINING: PRO TIPS



The barbell curl is a classic bodybuilding staple for a reason. It's simple, direct, and effective.

close to failure at 15 for two sets, the third set he may find himself closer to 8-12 reps as we are really pushing his limits. Robert's results are 100% intensity driven and to get arms like Robert you'll have to push yourself hard. You'll certainly learn what muscular failure feels like if you train with Robert, especially on arm day.

Finally, Robert's arm workout finishes with some high rep reverse grip curls which burn out the biceps but also target the forearms and improve grip strength. Robert does three sets of 15-25 reps of reverse grip curls

before resting 30-45 seconds and pairing them with a long rope tricep kickback. The kickback uses the longest rope cable attachment which allows Robert to stand back in a bent over position with his shoulders pulled back and elbows tight to his sides. From here he is able to extend both of his arms fully and flex the triceps with his hands finishing out at the sides of his hips. This final exercise is sure to squeeze whatever juice is left out of the triceps since it is also done at a 15-25 rep range for three sets.

By this point in the workout

if you've been pushing hard on all your previous exercises and staying focused it's time to wrap things up and get out of the gym. You should have a massive arm pump that would fill the sleeves of any chef's coat. Remember when it comes to arm training, as with all training, it is important to build a strong and stable base before lifting heavy. Always prioritize good form and never let your ego put you at risk for an injury. If you like this workout and are motivated by Robert's routine, let us know; I may share other workouts like this in the future.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

GRÜNS

These tasty, snackable, all-in-one supervitamins will have you green goblin’.



Multivitamins were originally created on the premise that no one can eat a perfectly balanced diet every single day of their lives. Then modern supervitamins emerged when we figured out that multivitamins are actually pretty basic stuff, only covering the bare minimum of our health needs and not necessarily optimized for performance, and it would be nice to combine vitamins with minerals, prebiotics, probiotics, antioxidants, super-

foods, and nutrients to enhance focus and improve mood. The most popular one of these supervitamins you have probably heard advertised on your favorite podcast, and it is a fine product called Athletic Greens. The BEST one of these supervitamins, however, is called GRÜNS, and it emerged on the wild, crazy idea that it might be nice to get all of the above benefits in a package that actually tastes good and is fun, maybe even exciting to eat,

depending on how much you liked fruit snacks as a kid. A one-month supply of GRÜNS—which packs super mushrooms as well as herbs and adaptogens that can help speed your metabolism—comes with 28 packets of green gummy bears, which make for a terrific way to end a meal with sweet, low-sugar treat. We tried them, loved them, felt the difference, and we bet that you would, too.

Shop at gruns.co



SPRING PEAS & RADISH SALAD

SERVES 8

YOU'LL NEED

1 lb fresh wax green beans, ends cut
1 lb sugar snap peas, string removed
6 breakfast radishes, thinly sliced
1 bunch cilantro
2 tbsp honey
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 ½ tbsp soy sauce
½ cup grapeseed oil
1 tbsp black sesame seeds

MAKE IT

1) Bring water in a medium sauce pot to a boil. Add beans and cook for 5 minutes
2) Add Snap Peas and cook for another 4 minutes.
3) Place beans and peas in a bowl of ice water to immediately stop the cooking process.
4) Make the dressing. In a mixing bowl add honey, soy sauce, and slowly incorporate grapeseed oil and sesame oil and finish with sesame seeds.

5) In a mixing bowl add beans, peas, and radishes and dress with sesame dressing. Season with salt and pepper.
6) Finish with picked cilantro.

THE MACROS

CALORIES: 180
PROTEIN: 2 g
FAT: 16 g
CARBS: 10 g

IN THE KITCHEN

SALMON & ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

2 tbsp grapeseed oil
2 bunches asparagus
2 lbs fingerling potatoes, roasted and halved
2 spring onions, sliced
8 oz Castelvetrano olives, pitted and chopped
2 cups spring peas, shelled
1 bunch kale, chopped
2 lbs salmon, cut into 4 oz portions
Juice of 1 lemon
1 cup white wine
2 tbsp butter

MAKE IT

1) In a large sauté pan over medium heat, add oil, spring onions, asparagus, fingerling potatoes, and kale.
2) Season salmon with salt and pepper.
3) Place salmon in the sauté pan with lemon juice, and white wine.
4) Cover the pan and place in a 325-degree oven for 14 minutes.
5) Remove from heat, add butter, and serve.

THE MACROS

CALORIES: 406
PROTEIN: 27 g
FAT: 14 g
CARBS: 37 g



LET'S HELP OUR HEROES

Text GIVE to 813-536-5006



The Robert Irvine Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of our military personnel, first responders, and their families. 100% of all funds raised go directly to those who need it most. To learn more about Robert's commitment to our military and first responders, please visit RobertIrvineFoundation.org



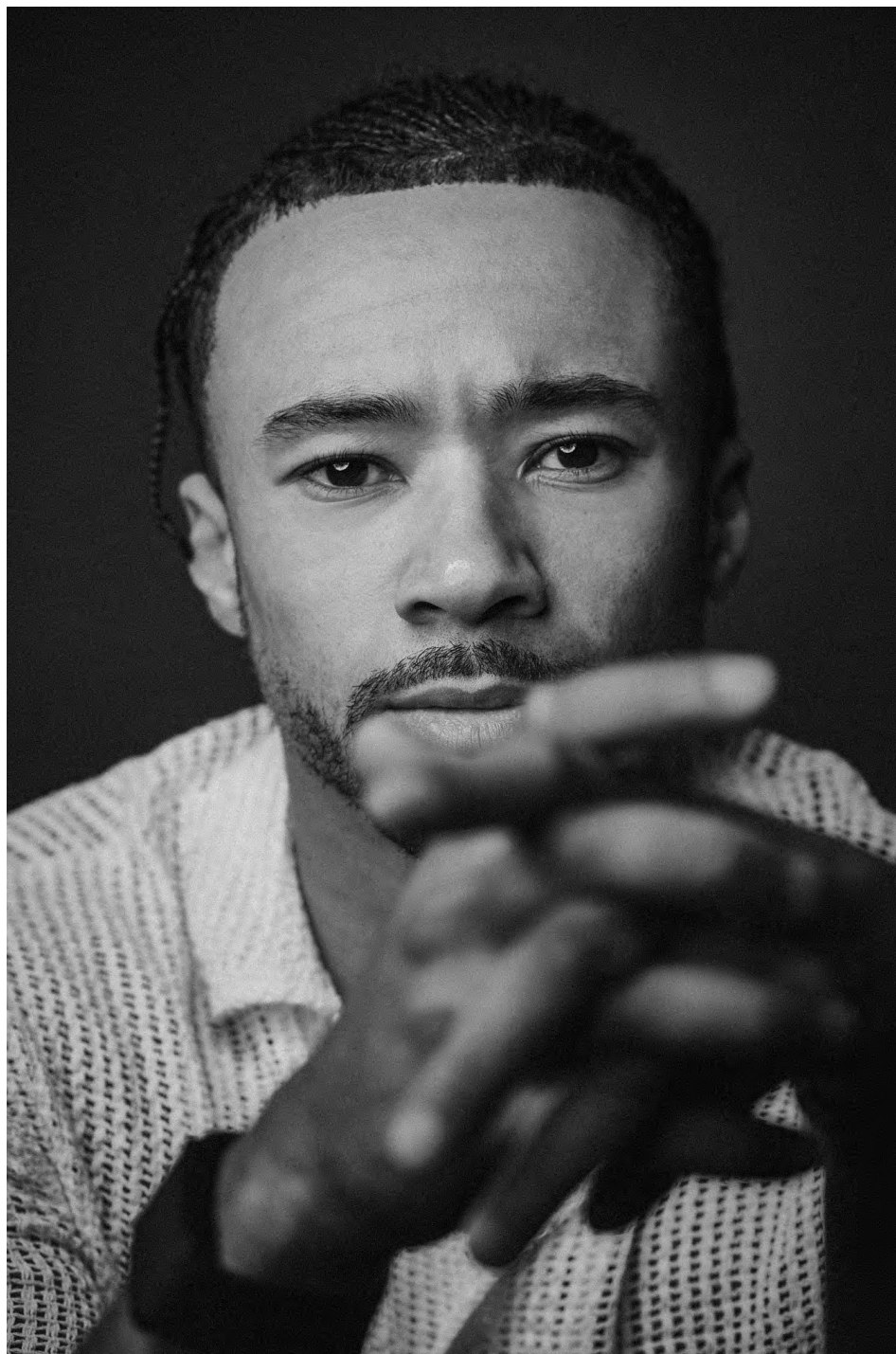
ON THE COVER:

JANN MARDENBOROUGH

In a success story so improbable Hollywood had to come knocking, the hero at the center of *Gran Turismo* went from racing in video games to the podium at Le Mans. If there's one thing he knows for certain, it's that improbable doesn't mean impossible.

BY MATT TUTHILL

It was a scene extremely familiar to most parents today: A talented, bright young man, of age but not yet out on his own, cooped up in his room, fixated on a video game to a degree they couldn't possibly comprehend. In this case, the game was *Gran Turismo*, and the young man was Jann Mardenborough. After briefly attending university and dropping out, Jann wasn't sure what his next move would be. He just knew what he loved: cars and racing. But without the means to seriously pursue it, he did what he could: went online every day and dominated



Photos by Eric Micotto

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

the competition in *Gran Turismo*, the PlayStation racing series long known for its realism and attention to detail.

One day, the racing gods—or, perhaps more accurately, marketing gods—smiled upon him. He randomly turned on his PlayStation to find a new menu item: a competition that would bring the best *Gran Turismo*

drivers together in a real-world car racing academy with the single best driver among them winning sponsorship and a chance to earn their professional license. These events, depicted in Neill Blomkamp's *Gran Turismo*—now streaming on Netflix (and trending for several weeks in the Top 10—culminated in Jann not only winning the competition, earning his license, and taking a podium spot at 24 Hours of Le Mans, but continuing a successful racing career for what is now over a decade, with no end date in sight.

Jann could go on for days about the adjustments he needed to make when going from a sim car to the real deal, but we left it to the many fine motorsport publications to get into the weeds with him on those details. Because Jann has just as much to teach the average person about never

giving up on your dreams and the power of belief.

In the candid conversation that follows, Jann talks about his future, how he healed from the mental trauma of the deadly crash depicted in the movie, and how the lessons he learned along the way can be applied to any situation.

*“I had no Plan B
in my racing...
I was completely all in.
I just knew I had to
make it work.”*

RI: As you look at the final product, how do you feel about the film *Gran Turismo* as it relates to the true story? Is there anything you wish were more accurate? Any changes you were glad they made?

JM: I love the final product, but to see it on screen after being on set as well and being a part of the production for months, I was still apprehensive because the edit is a massive area of filmmaking. But

I love it. Neill [Blomkamp], the director, he's a genius.

All the producers were very accommodating, including Neill. They asked me very early on set, “Do you want to see any of the dailies?” That's a rough edit of what they filmed each day. I said, “No, I don't want to see it.” Because I'm not a cinematographer. I'm not a film buff. That's not my world.

RI: Do you believe in manifestation or the law of attraction or books like *The Secret*? Do you feel that your desire for achieving this goal was so intense that you literally pulled it towards you through the universe? Because there are self-help authors out there who would contend that's exactly what you did.

JM: I'm aware of *The Secret* because my mother has read it... As I get older, I am more aware and I have even strong conviction that what you think is how you create your reality.

RI: What you think about comes about.

JM: Yes.. My father would always tell me and my younger brother, “Do something in life which is dyour purpose and that you're passionate about.” When

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

you're six years old, you don't really understand that. I just liked cars. I liked watching cars and playing with my cars. But once I was probably around age nine, that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a racing driver, and I never let that light go out.

When you go to school and when you're around people and teachers and you say to them, "I want to be a racing driver," it's very easy to have those visions

affected. I believe I was very lucky that my dad was such a strong-willed person himself to say, "No, you can do this. You can do anything you want in life." I kept that. My ultimate dream was to be a racing driver, and even though I had no clear direction of how that was going to happen, I was very sure of myself. If there was any opportunity that came up where I could exploit that and live that, I'm all in.

I believe in faith, and I was in a very stuck point in my life when I was 19 years old. I was just going to university, I dropped that after three weeks. I was living at home.

My favorite part of the movie is the first 45 minutes, because it really shows what it was like before entering the Academy. Then I found this competition. I just happened to be at the right place at the right time, and I entered it just to see how far I could go. I was all in. Nothing else had my attention but this.

RI: Talk to me about the power of dreams. Because a common thing we say to young people is like what your dad said: follow your dreams. But if everyone followed their dreams, there's that counterpoint: Who would do all the unpleasant but necessary things that need to get done in society? Who would take out the trash and who would unclog the toilets? As someone who has achieved something great and you're giving advice to a young person, are you aware of survivorship bias? Because yes, you followed your dreams, but it worked out. Many people follow their dreams and it doesn't work out.

JM: Well, I don't like giving unsolicited advice, only when I'm asked, because of that. For a dream to become reality, it has to be fueled by something really deep. Because say you get there. How do you sustain that? That's where you need another fuel source. You need something really



Since his professional debut in 2013, Mardenborough has not only placed at Le Mans, but was a race winner in GP3 and earned a second overall finish in the Toyota Racing Series. Shortly after our interview, Jann took first place the Gulf Historic in Dubai.

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

deep inside you to drive you.

I think I'd be doing people who ask me for advice a disservice if I say, "Yeah, keep pushing." So I say, "You have to sacrifice everything. Family, friends, relationships, and you need something really deep driving you to really push yourself." It's a tricky subject. Because my path isn't necessarily going to be replicable. You need to find what you love to do, what your passion is. And I believe you need to find a fuel source to really drive you, whether it's toxic or not, it's what drives people in that initial stage to really get their foot in the door and achieve greatness or some success.

RI: Well, there's risk involved. I remember a great piece of advice I got when I was in college. It was a professor talking to us about entering any competitive field and he said, "If you have a plan B, you are going to use it." That's not saying don't have a plan B, but it is saying, "Listen, if you want this thing, you've got to be all in."

JM: I believe that. I didn't have a plan B in my racing. Once the opportunity came around, I was completely all in. I didn't know what was going to happen. I just knew I have to make it work. People perform best when they're pushed to their limits, when there isn't another option. It's how weapons are created in war. The best innovation comes in wartimes, sadly, but it's just how humans are wired. I believe it's the same in professional sports or when you have to make it work,

you will make it work and you will do things which you didn't think were possible.

RI: There's this Ayrton Senna quote, "The more I drive, the more I realize that over driving

is the enemy of speed." When I hear that quote, I think about people with analysis paralysis, trying to get all their ducks in a row, trying to get everything just right before they start a project. Does that resonate with you?



Click the movie poster above to watch Gran Turismo on Netflix.

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

JM: I feel that I have a much better understanding now. I do analyze data, but it's not my go-to thing to do. Because I had the mistake when I first got into racing in the first two years, I'm eager to please, I'm 21 years old, and I'm aware that I have a manufacturer bankrolling my racing. If they would've said jump, I would've asked them how high.

I always felt I couldn't leave until the engineer wanted to because maybe it shows that I'm not committed. We would spend hours, three hours, looking at data and micro-analyzing corner by corner. It was a joke. It's not how the brain works. Racing is like dancing. It's the feel you have to have. Now, I won't look at any data until I analyze in my head where I'm losing and then I go and look at a computer screen to confirm what I've felt. That only comes with experience.

There's some politics as well, which is unfortunate, but you can't avoid it in motorsports. The stopwatch isn't necessarily the defining factor on where your career goes. But it's a lesson I'm grateful to learn recently. In terms of racing myself, nothing I've just developed, I have a better understanding, a self-confidence, which is the highest it's ever been.

RI: You touched on something and it sounds like there's a lot more there. Can you elaborate on the politics of motorsport?

JM: Not yet, but in the future I'll elaborate on it. Motorsport is a very small world, and the people you meet along the way will be possibly people you meet in the future. It's like any industry, it's a small group of people. But I believe in karma and I have good karma. I don't wear my heart on my sleeve so much, but I do the

best I can. I try to position myself well. Every day is a lesson, so I don't look at it negatively, it's only positive. It's okay, I'm glad I know this now so I can use it in the future. People involved in any industry, they know. We all know. It's politics. You have to play that game as well, unfortunately. It would've been nice to know this earlier, but anyway, I'm glad I know now.

RI: I'd like to talk about the crash. [Jann's car flipped over a barrier at Nurburgring, killing a spectator.] In the movie, you are portrayed as being very grief stricken and wondering what your future was going to be like and if you really belong there. That all seemed perfectly natural. But because it's a movie and it's got to move swiftly and we have to get on with it, we see you processing it by walking the cor-



Archie Madekwe perfectly plays Jann Mardenborough with heart and vulnerability. And we only seem to be at the beginning of Madekwe's moment: he also turned in a scene-stealing performance in *Saltburn*.

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

ner where you crashed and then you've determined it's time to carry on. I'm curious about what we don't see and how else you processed that, and what that grief was like for you. Because I imagine that's got to feel like an incredible weight on your shoulders.

JM: Yeah, it's the darkest moment in my career and in my personal life. But it had to be in the movie because it's part of my life. It would be doing the viewer a disservice if it wasn't in there.

RI: You pushed for it to be included, correct?

JM: Yeah. But I also pushed for it to be exact, both emotionally and technically how the crash happened because of the circumstances. That part, Sony were great on that, because it's exactly how it happened. Being in the hospital and how I was told. Then in reality, Nissan and people around me, they were fantastic. I had great people around me, too. People that reached out, professional racing drivers. I could only really relate to people or drivers that had done something or experienced something similar in their careers as well.

I was in a race car within a week. I'm a very logical person and it's just the way that I'm wired. I understood what happened, but this wasn't like any other accident or any other crash you have because of the situation and the circumstances. It's tough. It's tough... It's certainly made me more aware... Well, it's positively affected my relationships with my family and

people that I care about. Whenever I leave for an event or leave the house or leave my family for any reason, or even on a phone call, we always end the phone call with, "I love you," because life can be snuffed out very quickly. I was just very fortunate, personally, to have no injuries. I really thanked God for that.

RI: Did you have any contact with the family of the deceased?

JM: Yes, I did.

RI: Do you want to keep that private or is there anything you can share about what that experience was like?

JM: I prefer to keep that private, just between me and the family.

RI: Absolutely. Thank you for walking down that path with me. I really appreciate it... I'm very curious if you would entertain this hypothetical: if Gran Turismo had not run this contest, where do you think you would be? Do you think you would have found an alternate route into motorsport? Or do you think you might be doing something else entirely?

JM: I can't say with a hundred percent conviction that I would've found another way into motorsport. But I can say with a hundred percent conviction that I wouldn't have achieved what I've achieved and there wouldn't be a movie about what I did without Gran Turismo. That I know with 100% certainty, I believe there's many parallel universes going on. But I am 100% convinced that

this universe is the best universe that I'm living in.

What I would've been doing, it's a tough question, but I guess I would've been doing maybe designing furniture for houses, because I was pretty good at that in school.

RI: Professional athletes, race car drivers included, face an earlier retirement than any other job in the world. You're still racing, but have you begun to look to the horizon and think about life after the track? And if so, what do you see there?

JM: Family. It's something I've been thinking about for a couple of years. I want to have a large family, soon, ideally while I'm still racing. What I'll do after the racing, I haven't really thought about it. If it has to do with racing, I would have to be heavily involved if I had a race team. It wouldn't be something like managing drivers or anything like that. I'd be still plugged in. Because I love the game.

I love motorsports. I love racing. And if I'm not racing myself, to be at a racetrack and you're not racing it, is torture to me. So at the moment, I'm still plugged in and I want to be doing this till I'm into my late forties.

I have a deal with myself: the moment I feel that I've lost a bit of an edge on the track, I'll throw in the towel. Until that happens, I'm completely all in and I love it. There's only two things that interest me in life and it's racing cars and women. Those are the only two things. But yeah, to have

ON THE COVER: JANN MARDENBOROUGH

a family and to have them come to a track, to be married, it's an important goal for me to have as well, to have a legacy that can be continued on in the future. Because it'll be pointless doing all this and to not have an heir of some kind. That's on my mind.

RI: So many readers write in for advice. They feel stuck, either in a dead-end job or a dead-end relationship or they're stuck in their health and fitness goals. What do you do when you feel stuck and what is your advice to someone who feels that way?

JM: You have to get started and you've got to be dedicated at what

you do. Pick something, whether that be gym or if you are in a relationship and it's on eggshells, you sit down and have a conversation with partner and you saying, "Okay, we're not leaving this conversation until we figure out what the deal is." Being logical and finding out the hard answers, usually the answer you don't want to hear, is worthwhile. But just get started. Just pick one thing which you are struggling with, and tick that first and then move on to the next. Because trying to do everything at the same time is what's very difficult to do, but you've got to start somewhere.

I read a lot of and listen to a lot of Jordan Peterson, and it's something which a lot of these guys talk about a

lot. If you're stuck, you can start the smallest, tidying your room.

RI: Yes. He says to make your bed. His 12 Rules for Life, is that one of your favorites?

JM: It is. Yeah, it really is. He's a very, very knowledgeable person. I'd like to meet him one day.

RI: What's next for you?

JM: Racing in 2024. I'm working on that currently, I love the Indy-car racing in America, the IMSA Championship in the LMP2 or GT3 class. Same for Europe as well, to do Le Mans again. I was just in the car last weekend doing a historic race, which was great. So I'll be on track, God willing.



David Harbour (right) of *Stranger Things*, plays Jack Salter, a composite character who mentors a young Mardenborough.

INTERVIEW:

CHRIS ROBERT RIEGEL

The executive-turned-director dishes on his leadership style, how he overcomes any obstacle, and his upcoming film *Expectations*.

INTERVIEW BY
MATT TUTHILL

If you don't know the man, you know his work. As a film executive who had a hand in indie darlings like Dallas Buyers Club, To Catch A Killer, and Stowaway, Chris Robert Riegel is not just a producer of great taste, but also a creative powerhouse, writing and directing 2024's Expectations, which is not a direct adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic Great Expectations, but rather a continuation of the story in a modern setting.

As a successful man who grew up in less-than-ideal circumstances to make a great career and name for himself—he was orphan who bounced around from Australia to New Zealand to the United States and England—Chris sat down with Robert Irvine Magazine to talk about leading with compassion, overcoming any obstacle, and why he felt compelled to add his touch to a literary touchstone.

RI: Let's start with the title itself, *Expectations*, because



Learn more about Chris Robert Riegel's Rainmaker Films [HERE](#) and follow him on [INSTAGRAM](#).

knowing that it is an adaptation of *Great Expectations*, the title simply being *Expectations* would seem to be a tongue in cheek

joke, a little wink to the audience. You know, “Maybe it’s not that great,” but I’d love for you to explain the title and then what

INTERVIEW: CHRIS ROBERT RIEGEL

separates it from the other adaptations because there have been quite a few through Hollywood history.

CR: Right. It is a bit tongue in cheek. We were talking a lot about what they call a quarter life crisis and it takes place anywhere between 25 and 30. One of the things that was really interesting was this idea of: Does life turn out the way we think it's going to be after you go through high school or college and you begin to get into the workforce and what does that do to people?

When you're a teenager, you expect life to be great, and you get there and you're like, "Is this what great is?" Maybe I've followed every step of my plan, I've gotten my degree, I've met a partner, or I'm focusing on my work and is this really what I wanted 10 years earlier? And so it's not a coincidence that these characters here in *Expectations* are in that age bracket. Now they're a little bit older than they would've been in the source material, and we find them in a place where they're really experiencing their lives and they're beginning to question everything.

And so it's a total tongue in cheek nod to that aspect of things. And you would see that very

much in this wild weekend that we have together within the film, of course.

To answer your other part of your question, there have been some absolutely quintessential and just really inspirational adaptations to this Charles Dickens novel over the years. And I almost feel like we get one maybe every seven or eight years, whether it's

“When I’ve hit that roadblock, the most important thing to remember is why I started this in the first place.”

from the BBC or Netflix or the theatrical films that we've seen, the great ones with Ethan Hawke and Gwyneth Paltrow.

But one of the things that I can say I'm really excited about with the film is the fact that to my knowledge, we're actually the very first, I would use the term companion piece to the source material. We take the characters and some of the situations that we might've been familiar with from the original text as we continue it

rather than directly adapting it. And so you get to see these characters later in life, in their mid to late 20s or early 30s. And not only see them continue where they might've been, but we have them in a contemporary setting.

It's a very modern tale, which has a lot of things that harken back to the Victorian era where the original source material was

set. But we have televisions, we have phones, and it's not so much about the IP of these characters interacting and meeting new characters that are not from the source material, but it's about this idea of what would these characters be doing in today's society? How much fun or lack thereof would they be having? And no, you don't really require knowledge of the source material to go along for the

ride.

RI: They are orphans—is that something that made this story personal to you?

CR: Part of that is because I'm actually an orphan myself. I don't have any biological relatives. And as a result, I don't know so much that I found myself in the narrative of the novel when I was reading it. Most of the time, a lot of people look at Pip in particular, as a character from the

INTERVIEW: CHRIS ROBERT RIEGEL



literature with his stories told from his perspective. There's a lot of things I think going through a teenager's mind when they read it. But what I will say about classic literature is it's classic for a reason. It sticks with you. And this would be a story for me that really stuck with me.

RI: Your company, Rainmaker Productions, has had a great track record. So while I'm interested in what you look for as a producer, finding stories that resonate, I'm actually more interested in the things that got away from you. Have you ever read a script and said, "I'm never touching that piece of crap?" And then it's either a huge financial success somewhere else or it's winning all kinds of awards? Because I think this is the kind of thing that is really useful to readers to have someone of your

success remind them that nobody, no matter how good you are, has all the answers.

CR: If someone hasn't had one that has gotten away, they're going to eventually. So I always look at it as a sports analogy in this case and that very few teams in any sport or individuals have never had a loss. I went to Villanova, and even our great teams of this past decade that went on to win the NCAA championship have had setbacks. And it's the response to those losses that either unify the team or help someone find what their passions are and reorient their direction.

In the film business, it's not much different. And maybe this is part of me being a sensitive artist myself, because even long before I became a writer, when I was just focused on being an executive, I've always been really sympathetic, so I've actually never read a

script where I'm like, "This is just a piece of garbage." I've never been in that situation. But what I will say is, especially with Rainmakers, every company or studio—they all have their own models. And those models are important to understand, follow and of course accept.

There are always interesting stories about people making exceptions for their models or changing someone's model. And I do believe that that happens, and for the right project, at the right time and at the right place, you can totally do that. So because something comes in and it gets rejected, it doesn't mean that it's not strong or it shouldn't be told. It just means, from a non-personal standpoint that it's not the right fit.

RI: Movie sets are notoriously stressful places, but your reputation is that you rule with kindness. People can count on you not just as a creative leader, but someone who can put others at ease so that they can do their best work. Is your leadership style natural to you or is it learned? At what point did you realize you wanted to be that type of leader versus the demanding tyrant? Because in defense of demanding tyrants, it sounds bad to say that you're one, but they get a lot of stuff done.

CR: I'll answer that in the sense of saying that, for me, everything I've learned, I've achieved some kind of understanding of balance. Nothing's perfect, right? There's going to be good days and bad days for anyone and everyone. Sometimes the clock is really the main enemy.

INTERVIEW: CHRIS ROBERT RIEGEL



You're losing your daylight hours if you're on location or you're going to lose a crew member to another project that they have to go do. Or you only have a piece of equipment like a crane or a specific drone on certain days. And you've got to find a way to make all that work. For me, responding to some of these challenges, I think comes from having a sports background especially playing baseball where you learn to operate as a member of the team. And filmmaking to me is the ultimate team sport.

My grandfather who raised me, he fought in the Korean War, and he talked a lot when I was younger about those experiences and about the importance of bonding and

being together. People aren't always going to like what you say or what you do, but as long as people can tell each other the truth, you can come together and accomplish something.

And it's a lesson that I carried with me into my athletic career. And then of course now as a filmmaker, it's how I approach things.

RI: Final question: How do you get unstuck?

CR: Sometimes when finding that I've hit that roadblock, the most important thing is to remember why I've committed to this in the first place. If you're stuck in the life or the job or some of the things that you're talking about that a lot of folks feel sometimes, why did you take the job

in the first place? For me, why did I write these characters? What's the purpose of the story that I want to tell?

Applying that question to *Expectations*, did I just want to tell the same story that has been here for roughly 160 years since its Charles Dickens wrote *Great Expectations* in the Victorian era, or did I have something else that I want to say? What was it in my unique taste, finding that backtrack, the main form that I felt like a scene might not be working on the page or it might not be working.

But I think that works for anything. Go back to the beginning. What was the purpose? Be honest about the answer and you can probably find a way forward.



THE VERY BEST OF
**RESTAURANT:
IMPOSSIBLE**
THE ALL-TIME BEST RECIPES
FROM THE HIT SHOW

AS SEEN ON TV



BACON BLUE BURGER

From the episode, “Out with the Old, In with the New”

SERVES 5
YOU’LL NEED

FOR THE RED ONION JAM

2 red onions (small diced)
1 tsp grape seed oil
1 cup red wine
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
½ cup granulated sugar
5 strips bacon, cooked and chopped

FOR THE APPLE AIOLI

1 cup mayonnaise
¼ whole grain mustard
¼ cup chopped chives
½ apple, peeled and diced small
1 tbsp lemon juice

FOR THE FONDUE

3 cups heavy cream

16 oz gorgonzola cheese

FOR THE BURGERS & FRIES

5 beef patties (8 oz each, 80/20)
5 pretzel buns
½ cup frisee lettuce
20 oz French fries

MAKE IT

RED ONION JAM

- 1) In a small sauce pot over medium heat, add oil and diced onions.
- 2) Allow onions to cook for about 7 minutes.
- 3) Add sugar, red wine, vinegar, salt.
- 4) Bring to a boil and allow to cook for about 45 minutes.
- 5) Add 5 strips of cooked, chopped bacon

APPLE AIOLI

- 1) In a large mixing bowl add mayonnaise, whole grain mustard, peeled

and diced apples, and lemon juice.
2) Finish with salt and pepper.

GORGONZOLA FONDUE

- 1) In a large sauce pot, add heavy cream and bring to a boil.
- 2) Drop heat to a low simmer.
- 3) Using a whisk, slowly incorporate crumbled blue cheese.
- 4) Season with salt and pepper.

BURGER & FRIES

- 1) In a large sauté pan over high heat, add seasoned burger patties and cook for 6 minutes on each side.
- 2) Fry French fries until crispy.
- 3) In a separate pan toast the pretzel bun. Coat both sides of the bun with apple aioli and red onion jam.
- 4) Place lettuce on top of bun; place burger on top of lettuce.
- 7) Finish with 1 oz. of hot fondue.

AS SEEN ON TV

CONFIT CHICKEN PARM

From the episode, “Old Habits Die Hard”

SERVES 5

YOU’LL NEED

FOR THE TOMATO SAUCE

- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- ½ white onion, diced
- 16 oz San Marzano tomatoes
- 1 tsp. tomato paste
- ½ cup red wine
- 1 tbsp grapeseed oil

FOR THE POLENTA

- 1 cup polenta (dry)
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 3 tbsp grated Parmesan

FOR THE CHICKEN

- 1 tbsp salt
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 10 eggs, cracked and whipped
- 1 cup Panko bread crumbs

- 1 lb shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 bunches broccolini
- 5 chicken thighs
- 3 qts blended oil (or favorite fat)
- 10 oz tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp grapeseed oil

MAKE IT SAUCE

- 1) In a small sauce pot over medium heat, add onions. Allow to cook for 3 minutes. Then add garlic and allow to cook for 2 more minutes.



AS SEEN ON TV



2) Next add tomato paste and red wine and allow to cook for another 4 minutes.

3) Last add crushed canned tomatoes and allow to cook for 1.5 hours. Season with salt and pepper.

CHICKEN

1) In a mixing bowl add salt, sugar, and chili flakes and mix.

2) Coat 1 tbs of cure on each chicken thigh 24 hours prior to cooking chicken.

3) Place chicken in a roasting pan or a deep pot and cover with oil. Place in a 250° oven for 1.5 hours.

4) Pull chicken from fat and allow

to chill.

5) Blanch broccolini in a pot of boiling water. Finish in a sauté pan over high heat.

BREADING AND FRYING

1) In 3 separate mixing bowls, add flour in one, eggs in another, and Panko bread crumbs in the third.

2) Place already cooked chicken in flour, then eggs, and last in Panko bread crumbs.

3) Place chicken in a 350° fryer and cook until chicken is golden brown.

POLENTA

1) In a small sauce pot add heavy

cream and milk. Bring to a boil.

3) Using a whisk slowly incorporate polenta. Allow to cook for 10 minutes.

4) Incorporate cheese, butter, salt, and pepper.

PLATING

1) Pull chicken and place on a cookie tray. Top chicken with 1 oz of tomato sauce, and top with shredded mozzarella cheese.

2) Place in a 350° oven and cook until cheese is melted.

3) Plate chicken on top of polenta and broccolini.



Crispy Chickpeas & Peanuts

From the episode, "Back on Track in Glendora"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

Oil, enough for deep frying
1 cup chickpeas, cooked through
1 cup peanuts
1 cup hominy, cooked through
1 tbsp tajin spice
1 tbsp BBQ seasoning
1 tbsp cilantro, chopped

MAKE IT

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- 2) Bring oil in deep fryer up to 350 degrees, then add chickpeas and hominy. (A large pan or pot deep enough to submerge these ingredients can also be used.)
- 3) Cook for 4 minutes until chickpeas and hominy are crispy.
- 4) In a mixing bowl add tajin, BBQ seasoning, and chopped cilantro.
- 5) Place chickpeas, hominy and peanuts in a mixing bowl. Season with tajin and BBQ spice.
- 6) Place in preheated oven for 4 minutes and serve.

AS SEEN ON TV

Chicken-Stuffed Potato Skins

From the episode, "Back on Track in Glendora"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

FOR THE RANCH DRESSING

- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp dill chopped
- 1 tbsp chives chopped
- 1 tsp black pepper

FOR THE POTATO SKINS

- 3 strips bacon, diced and crisped
- 3 chicken thighs, diced
- 1 onion, diced

- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 russet potatoes, baked, cut in half, and hollowed out

MAKE IT

RANCH DRESSING

- 1) In a large mixing bowl, add sour cream, heavy cream, mayonnaise, and red wine vinegar. Mix well.
- 2) Add dill, chives, salt, and black pepper and mix again.

POTATO SKINS

- 1) In a medium sauté pan over medium-high heat, add bacon and allow to cook for 3 minutes until bacon is crispy and light brown in color.

- 2) Next add chicken thighs and onions and allow to cook for another 5 minutes.
- 3) Next add smoked paprika and continue to cook for another 4 minutes until chicken thighs are cooked through.
- 4) Evenly fill each potato skin with chicken and bacon mixture.
- 5) Top with cheese and place in a 350° oven for about 8 minutes until cheese is melted and potato is hot all the way through.



AS SEEN ON TV



Ginger Gochujang Wings

From the episode, “Ginger Monkey is Going Under”

SERVES 4

YOU’LL NEED

24 chicken wings
Salt and pepper
Oil, enough for deep frying
1 cup gochujang
½ cup sambal chili sauce
1 cup soy sauce
3 tbsp ginger, minced
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 bunches scallions, sliced

MAKE IT

- 1) Season chicken wings with salt and pepper 24 hours prior to cooking.
- 2) Place chicken wings in a 200-degree fryer for 1 hour remove wings and allow to chill.
- 3) In a large mixing bowl, add gochujang, sambal, soy sauce, ginger, and garlic.
- 4) Place chicken wings in a 350 degree fryer and allow to cook for 4 minutes, until chicken wings are golden brown.
- 5) Place chicken wings and sambal and gochujang sauce in large bowl until all wings are fully coated.
- 6) Top with sliced scallions and serve.

AS SEEN ON TV

Cookies & Cream Tart

From the episode, "Helping Our Own"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

2½ cups milk
4 large eggs
½ cup sugar
¼ cup corn starch
8 oz Oreos, crushed (reserve 2 oz for garnish)
1 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp salt
8 Luxardo cherries for garnish
3 tbsp Luxardo cherry sauce
4 individual three ounce tart shells
2 tbsp confectioners sugar

MAKE IT

1) In a medium saucepan, heat milk, egg yolks, sugar, and corn-starch over medium heat.
2) Mixture will thicken and come to a boil. Allow to cook for 8 minutes.

3) Next incorporate crushed Oreos, vanilla extract, and salt. Allow to cook for 3 minutes.
4) Allow filling to cool, then fill tart shells with mixture.
5) Top with crushed Oreos, Luxardo cherries, Luxardo cherry sauce, and dust with confectioners sugar.



AS SEEN ON TV



Miso-Crusted Filet

From the episode, "Helping Our Own"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

FOR THE FILET

1 stick butter, room temperature
4 oz miso paste
4 oz panko bread crumbs
4 center cut filet mignon (6 oz each)
16 fingerling potatoes, roasted, halved
16 baby radishes, roasted, halved
8 red beets, roasted and quartered
12 oz saki demi glace

FOR THE CAULIFLOWER AND CARROT PUREE

4 tbsp butter
1 medium white onion, diced
2 tbsp ginger, peeled and minced
2 cups cauliflower, cut into florets
4 carrots, peeled and diced
1 cup heavy cream
½ cup milk

FOR THE SAKI DEMI GLACE

2 tbsp grapeseed oil

3 shallots, chopped
1 medium white onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, sliced
2 cups sweet saki
1 bunch thyme
2 bay leaves
2 qts beef stock
4 tbsp butter
1 tbsp heavy cream

MAKE IT

FILET

1) Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2) In a large mixing bowl using a rubber spatula, or stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment, add room temperature butter and miso. Mix together until smooth.
3) Add panko bread crumbs and incorporate. Mixture should be soft but able to be handled.
4) Season filets with salt and pepper and place in a large sauté pan over high heat. Sear on all sides.
5) Form miso mixture into a small 2 oz. balls and place on top of seared steak.

6) Place steak in preheated oven until it reaches an internal temp of 135°.

CAULIFLOWER & CARROT PUREE

1) In a medium sauce pot over medium-high heat, add butter and onion and allow to sweat, making sure not to get any color on them.
2) The onion should be cooked through after about 8 minutes. Next, add ginger and allow to sweat for another 3 minutes.
3) Add cauliflower and carrots and allow to cook for another 12 minutes.
4) Add heavy cream and milk. Bring to a boil. Add salt and pepper.
5) Using a blender, puree until mixture is smooth.

SAKI DEMI GLACE

1) In a medium sauce pot over medium-high heat add grapeseed oil, shallots, and onions. Allow to cook over medium heat for 5 minutes. Onions should be light brown in color.
2) Add garlic and cook for another 2 minutes. 3) Deglaze pan with saki. Stir and lightly scrape any fond from the bottom of the pan. Allow saki to reduce by half.
4) Add thyme and bay leaves. Add beef stock and bring to a boil. Allow to boil for 3 minutes, then drop mixture to a low simmer and allow to reduce by half. Strain sauce. Discard onion mixture.
6) Using a whisk, add butter and heavy cream to strained demi mix.

PLATING

1) On a plate place cauliflower and carrot puree, then top with roasted potatoes, radish, and beets.
2) Place steak on top of puree. Finish with saki demi glace.

AS SEEN ON TV

Classic French Onion Soup

From the episode, "Out Of Date"

SERVES 5

YOU'LL NEED

4 white onions, sliced
2 shallots, sliced
3 tbsp butter
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ cup butter
1 cup dry sherry
4 qts beef stock
2 bay leaves
5 slices rye toast
8 oz Gruyere cheese, shredded

MAKE IT

1) In a large sauce pot, add grape-seed oil, onions, and shallots.
2) Cook over medium heat for about 12 minutes, stirring frequently. Onions should be brown in color.
3) Season with salt and pepper. Add butter.
4) Using a wooden spoon, incorporate flour.
5) Add sherry and bay leaves and cook for 3 minutes. Use caution as sherry is flammable! If sherry does ignite, simply step back from pan and turn the heat to low. Once the

alcohol has cooked off, the flame will go out.

6) Add beef stock and bring soup to a boil for 3 minutes. Then drop soup to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper.

7) Lightly toast rye bread in the oven for about 1 minute on each side.

8) Top toasted bread with Gruyere cheese and melt.

9) Serve soup in a bowl. Place toast with melted cheese on top.



AS SEEN ON TV

Pulled Pork Mac & Cheese

SERVES 8

YOU'LL NEED

FOR THE SWEET MUSTARD BBQ SAUCE

2 cups sweet BBQ sauce
1 cup mustard BBQ sauce
2 tbsp cider vinegar
Salt and pepper, to taste

FOR THE SWEET TEA BRAISED PORK SHOULDER

2 lbs pork butt, bone in
1 cup yellow mustard
4 oz BBQ spice
1 gallon sweet tea
1 gallon chicken stock
Salt and pepper, to taste

FOR THE MAC & CHEESE

2 cups Brussels sprouts quartered
1 medium sweet potato, diced
2 medium turnips, peeled and diced
3 tbsp maple syrup

16 oz elbow macaroni, cooked according to instructions
3 cups milk
3 cups heavy cream
4 cups white cheddar, shredded

MAKE IT

SWEET MUSTARD BBQ SAUCE

1) In a mixing bowl add all ingredients and incorporate. Season with salt and pepper.

PULLED PORK

1) Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees.
2) Rub pork with mustard generously, then rub with BBQ spice and season with salt and pepper.
3) Place pork butt in a roasting pan, add sweet tea and chicken stock. Cover with tin foil and place in the oven for about 3 hours.
4) Using your hands or a fork, shred the cooked pork.
5) Dress pork with BBQ sauce and set aside.

ROOT VEGGIE MAC & CHEESE

1) Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.
2) Place Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, and turnips on separate baking sheets. Season with salt and pepper.
3) Place in oven for 8 minutes.
4) Place the vegetables in a mixing bowl and dress with maple syrup.
5) In a sauce pot, add heavy cream and milk. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Using a whisk, incorporate cheese. Cover and set aside.

PLATING

1) Place cooked macaroni in sauté pan over medium heat and toss with cheese sauce.
2) Add Brussels sprouts, turnips, and sweet potatoes. Toss through.
3) Place mixture in a serving bowl. Top mac and cheese with BBQ pulled pork.



AS SEEN ON TV

Vegan Chili Cheese Fries

From the Restaurant: Impossible episode, "House of Cards"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

FOR THE CHILI

2 tbsp grapeseed oil
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 carrots, peeled and diced
4 ribs celery, diced
3 cups canned black beans, drained
4 cups canned diced tomatoes
3 cups vegetable stock
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste

FOR THE CHEESE SAUCE

4 cups soy milk
2 cups shredded vegan cheese
1 tbsp smoked paprika
½ tsp cayenne pepper (add a little more if desired)
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste

FOR THE FRIES

Fryer with frying oil, as needed
16 oz French fries
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste
1 bunch scallions, chopped

MAKE IT

CHILI

1) In a large sauce pot over medium heat, add grapeseed oil. Once hot, add the onions, garlic, carrots, and celery. Stir and allow to cook for 3 minutes until onions are translucent, making sure not to get any color on the vegetables. Add the black beans, diced tomatoes, and vegetable stock and bring to a simmer and allow to cook for 25 to 30 minutes. Season chili with kosher salt and pepper to taste.

CHEESE SAUCE

1) In a medium sauce pot over medium-high heat, add the soy milk

and bring to a simmer.

2) Using either a hand blender or whisk, add in the vegan cheese and mix well and turn the heat down to low. Add the smoked paprika and cayenne pepper. Stir well and season with kosher salt and pepper to taste.

FRIES & PLATING

1) Preheat fryer with oil to 350 degrees.
2) Place French fries in the pre-heated fryer and allow to cook for 4 to 5 minutes until fries are golden brown in color. Remove and season with kosher salt and pepper to taste.
3) Place seasoned French fries in bowl and top fries with the hot vegan chili, vegan cheese sauce, and finish with chopped scallions and serve.





Thai Peanut Cauliflower

From the Restaurant: Impossible episode, "House of Cards"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

FOR CAULIFLOWER PREP

1 cup hot sauce
¼ cup rice wine vinegar
1 head cauliflower, cut from stem and cut into florets
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tbsp Cajun seasoning
1 tbsp smoked paprika
1 tsp onion powder

FOR THE THAI PEANUT SAUCE

2 cups sweet chili sauce
1 cup peanut butter
¼ cup soy sauce
Juice of 1 lime
1 cup coconut milk

FOR FRYING & FINISHING

Fryer with frying oil, as needed
2 tbsp roasted peanuts, chopped
1 bunch scallions, chopped
1 tsp sesame seeds
12 sprigs fresh cilantro
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste

MAKE IT

CAULIFLOWER PREP

- 1) In a large mixing bowl add hot sauce and rice wine vinegar and whisk together.
- 2) Place cut cauliflower florets in the hot sauce and rice wine vinegar mixture and allow to marinate for 3 hours prior to cooking.
- 3) In a mixing bowl, combine flour, Cajun seasoning, smoked Paprika and onion powder and set aside.

THAI PEANUT SAUCE

- 1) In a small sauce pot over medium, add the sweet chili sauce,

peanut butter, soy sauce and lime juice. Stir the sauce mixture with a whisk and continue to heat the sauce mixture for 4 minutes until hot. Add the coconut milk. Whisk and allow the sauce to come to a simmer while stirring.

FRY AND FINISH

- 1) Bring fryer to 350 degrees.
- 2) Remove the cauliflower from marinade and dredge in the seasoned flour.
- 3) Fry the dredged cauliflower florets Cook for about 8 minutes, or until golden brown.
- 4) Place the fried cauliflower in mixing bowl. Season with salt and pepper and dress with the Thai peanut sauce.
- 5) Place dressed cauliflower in bowl and top with the chopped peanuts, sesame seeds, chopped scallions, and cilantro sprigs.

AS SEEN ON TV

“Mother Clucker”

From “Food Truck Showdown”

SERVES 4

YOU’LL NEED

FOR THE MARINADE

- ¼ cup beer
- 2 cups buttermilk
- ¼ cup pickle juice
- 3 tbsp sriracha
- 4 large raw boneless skinless chicken thighs (or 8 small portions)

FOR THE SEASONED FLOUR

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper

FOR THE SPICY MAYO

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp ketchup
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp sriracha
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Kosher salt and black pepper,

OTHER INGREDIENTS

- Oil, enough for deep frying
- 8 Hawaiian sweet rolls, cut in half
- 1 tbsp grapeseed oil or butter
- 1 cup iceberg lettuce, fine shredded
- 8 thin slices ripe tomato
- 8 pickle slices



MAKE IT

MARINADE

1) In a mixing bowl, mix the beer, buttermilk, pickle juice, and sriracha together. Add the raw chicken and toss well and allow to marinate for at least 2 hours.

SEASONED FLOUR

1) In a mixing bowl, mix the flour and all the spices together. Set aside.

SPICY MAYO

1) In a mixing bowl, whisk the mayonnaise, ketchup, Dijon mustard, sriracha, and lemon juice together. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

FRYING AND PLATING

1) Preheat fryer to 350 degrees.
2) Remove the chicken from the marinade and dredge in the seasoned flour.

3) Fry the chicken for 10 minutes and check internal temperature, which needs to reach 165 degrees to be fully cooked. If chicken needs more time in the fryer, continue to fry the chicken and check the internal temperature every minute until it reaches 165 degrees in the center.
4) Toast the rolls golden brown in a sauté pan with a touch of oil or butter over medium heat.
5) To build the sandwiches, place a tbsp of the spicy mayo on all the bottom portions of the toasted rolls.
6) Place a portion of shredded lettuce on top of the spicy mayo coated rolls, followed by a slice of tomato.
7) Cut all 4 fried chicken portions in half and place a half portion on top of each dressing bottom roll.
8) Top each piece of fried chicken with 2 pickle slices, more spicy mayo, and the top portions of toasted rolls. Serve.

AS SEEN ON TV

Rice Bowl with Seared Pork

From “Food Truck Showdown”

SERVES 4

YOU’LL NEED

FOR THE MARINATED BBQ PORK TENDERLOIN

1 ½ lbs raw pork tenderloin, fat trimmed
2 tbsp brown sugar
2 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp Cajun seasoning
1 cup beer
2 tbsp grapeseed oil

¾ cup BBQ sauce (store bought)
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp hot sauce
½ tsp ground cumin

FOR THE RICE

1 cup cooked basmati rice (follow package directions)
2 tbsp Rice wine vinegar
2 tsp sugar

FOR THE SPICY SAUCE

½ cup mayonnaise
2 tsp sriracha
1 tsp ground smoked paprika
1 tsp grapeseed oil

FOR THE GUACAMOLE

2 ripe avocados, peeled and pitted
Juice of 1 lime
1 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
1 tsp hot sauce
2 tbsp small diced red onion
Kosher salt and ground black pepper, to taste

OTHER INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp grapeseed oil
2 cups ¼” sliced green cabbage
1 cup corn
1 cup fresh salsa or pico de gallo (store bought)
½ cup chopped fresh scallions



AS SEEN ON TV

MAKE IT

MARINATED BBQ PORK

1) Mix the brown sugar, salt, and Cajun seasoning together and rub onto the raw pork. Then marinate the rubbed pork in the beer for 30 minutes.

2) In a large sauté pan over medium heat, add the grapeseed oil and sear the pork on all sides and continue to cook for 2 to 3 minutes on all sides. Set aside to rest.

3) Using the same pan used to sear the pork, add the BBQ sauce, Dijon mustard, hot sauce, and cumin. Stir well and turn heat to low.

4) Dice the rested-seared pork into 1" pieces and place the cut pork into the warm BBQ sauce mixture in the pan. Stir well to coat the pork in the sauce and continue to cook for 5 to 7 minutes until the diced pork is cooked through. Set the pork aside while finishing the other recipe steps.

RICE

1) Place the cooked rice into a mixing bowl. Add the rice wine vinegar and sugar and gently toss and cover and keep warm.

SPICY SAUCE

1) In a mixing bowl, mix the mayo, sriracha, smoked paprika, and grapeseed oil together.

GUACAMOLE

1) In a mixing bowl, mix the avocado, lime, cilantro, hot sauce, and red onion together and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

FINISH & PLATING

1) In a large sauté pan over medium high heat, add the 2 tbsp grapeseed oil and add the cut cabbage. Stir and wilt the cabbage for 1 minute and turn the heat off.

2) To plate the dish, divide the seasoned rice into 4 large entrée bowls. Top the rice with the wilted cabbage, followed by the pork, then garnish the pork with the spicy sauce, corn, salsa, guacamole, and chopped scallions. Serve.



AS SEEN ON TV

Beer Float



From “Food Truck Showdown”

SERVES 2

YOU’LL NEED

3 cups vanilla ice cream
½ cup milk
3 oz beer
1 Twinkie
1 cup fresh peaches, sliced

2 tbsp butter
3 tbsp caramel sauce
½ cup whipped cream
6 dessert candied cherries

MAKE IT

1) In a sauté pan over medium high heat, add butter and sauté sliced peaches for 1 to 2 minutes until slightly caramelized. Remove peaches from heat; allow to cool.

2) In a blender, add the ice cream, milk, beer, Twinkie and half of the caramelized peaches. Blend together on high speed until smooth.
3) Pour into 2 glasses and garnish with the reserved ½ cup of caramelized peaches, caramel sauce, whipped cream and cherries.

AS SEEN ON TV

Aebleskiver with Lingonberry Jam

From "A Viking Feast"

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED

1 cup all-purpose flour
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp kosher salt
2 tsp sugar
2 eggs, separate the yolks & whites
1 cup whole milk
2 tbsp butter, melted
2 tbsp grapeseed oil
Aebleskiver Pan

FOR GARNISH

1 cup lingonberry jam (from store)
Powdered sugar, as needed

MAKE IT

1) In a mixing bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder and salt together.
2) In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, milk, and 2 tbsp of the melted butter. Next, stir the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients.
3) In another bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer for 2-3 minutes until stiff peaks form. Fold the stiff peaked egg whites into the batter.
4) Heat an aebleskiver pan over medium high heat. Add a little of the grapeseed oil to each well of the molds. Next, add 2 tbsp of batter.

5) Allow the aebleskivers to cook until bottoms are golden brown, about 4 minutes, then rotate and continue to cook until the tops are also golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes more.
6) Place the cooked aebleskiver on a sheet pan and repeat with the rest of the batter.
7) Place the cooked aebleskiver on a platter and top with the lingonberry jam and powdered sugar and serve.



THE GREATER MISSION

A star-studded celebration of veterans and military life, the Robert Irvine Foundation's Red, Wine & Blues gala puts our nation's heroes front and center. The event's title sponsors—Ciena, Comcast Business, and Increditek—understand that imperative better than anyone.

The mission is always bigger than the man.

That's a mantra that Robert Irvine has operated by, and it is the guiding principle that gathered over 200 military veterans, supporters, and donors to the Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City in September for the second annual Red Wine and Blues gala—a three-course gourmet meal and wine pairing presented by Robert Irvine, and prepared with assistance from a team of military chefs, with proceeds benefitting the Robert Irvine Foundation.

Fox News' John Roberts and ABC's Kyra Phillips hosted a night that featured a number of emotionally



Robert addresses a room full of top brass in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes during the Enlisted Aide of the Year Award ceremony before the Red Wine and Blues fundraiser for the Robert Irvine Foundation.

moving testimonials from veterans, active duty, and military supporters, as well as the presentation of the Enlisted Aide of the Year Award, won by Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Cameron Harrell, who was honored in a

RED, WINE, AND BLUES

formal ceremony earlier in the day at the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes.

It was an event that was truly more than the sum of its considerable parts: an earnest celebration of veterans and military life, executed with the level of quality and class befitting the brave men and women it honored.

"The love in that room is palpable," Robert said afterward. "Each of us, when acting alone, our voices and our efforts can only do so much.

That's why I love events like this. The communal experience magnifies our efforts and voices. It gives greater meaning and shape to the philanthropy we're engaged in because everyone in that room leaves with a better understanding of the big picture and exactly what we're fighting for."

Perhaps no one understands that sentiment better than the Red Wine and Blues title sponsors.

Like Robert and his mantra that the mission is always bigger than the man, the title sponsors—companies who contributed uncommonly generous sums to the Robert Irvine Foundation—comprise people who understand missions greater than their own organizations' bottom lines.

This year, three technology companies—Ciena, Comcast Business, and Increditek—filled the role of title sponsors for Red Wine and

Blues. Representatives from each company were on hand at the event and spoke to their institution's decision to back the Robert Irvine Foundation in such a major way. A dedication to military causes is, naturally, a unifying factor for these companies, but each representative said that Robert and his foundation's passion and personal touch was the lynchpin to their commitment.

"When you hire veterans, you get great people who show up for work and are passionate about their job."

- Terry Connell, Senior VP, Sales and Operations, Comcast Business

"From the day we were introduced to Robert and his team—and got a better understanding of the mission and how passionate they are about supporting military families and veterans from a food insecurity perspective—we were on board," said George Holland, Vice President and General Manager of Ciena, a firm lauded as a global leader in optical and router systems, services, and automation

software. "For us it's not just about supporting the military and the missions of our military customers from a technology perspective, it's also about serving the broader community."

For Adam Patisall, President, CEO, and founder of Increditek—builders of network infrastructure and cloud computing servers—the connection is more personal. A third-generation veteran who

served in the Army before embarking on his entrepreneurial path, he possesses a unique understanding of the challenges of military life and the transition to the civilian world.

"It was an easy decision; it just made so much sense to support the Robert Irvine Foundation," said Patisall, who was also one of the earliest employees of Ciena. "But the biggest thing for me with this specific foundation is the fact that they're

giving their time and energy back to veterans and first responders. First responders and veterans are a big deal... I don't know why, but it seems like more and more there's unfortunately less energy and less excitement put towards the military. But with this foundation that passion and excitement is alive and well."

Robert's relationship with Comcast Business—purveyors of tech

RED, WINE, AND BLUES

solutions for business big and small—is a close one, nurtured through more than a decade in which Robert helped, in the words of Terry Connell, the company’s Senior Vice President of Sales and Sales Operations, “coordinate and drive small business initiatives for entrepreneurs.”

“Even after ten years, we’re still excited about everything we do with him,” said Connell, noting that the veteran focus of the Robert Irvine Foundation is a perfect match for Comcast Business’ values and pre-existing company initiatives. “Comcast has always been big on the military. We had an initiative to hire military veterans out of our military affairs group and we’ve hired 20,000 veterans, Coast Guard, reservists, and spouses of veterans since 2015, and we’re continuing to do that today.”

The benefit of that initiative is not merely philanthropic, he added. Hiring veterans offers huge upside to the companies that focus on it.

“We’re getting an incredibly disciplined workforce,” Connell said. “That’s one thing we want other companies to understand: When you hire veterans, you get great people who show up for work and are passionate about their job.”

The transition from active duty to the civilian world is often a shaky one, a fact of life that Comcast Business has factored into its initiative.

“That’s one of the hardest things, and one of the things Robert talked to me about personally, is that veterans are challenged with how to adjust into the corporate world or into everyday life. So Comcast

has built programs around that to help them make that adjustment. We’re really excited about the work we’ve done there, and many of our military veterans have been there for five and ten years, and that’s impressive.”

Shortly before the event, the title sponsors gathered in a meeting room above the gala at the Ritz-Carlton to cut promotional

videos for the Foundation and talk about their personal motivations for supporting veterans and first responders. When they were finished, they moved downstairs to the cocktail hour where donors and guests mingled with veterans and top military brass. Taking a moment to observe the scene from the corner of the room, Pattisall smiled and remarked about how natural it



Terry Connell, Senior VP of Sales and Operations for Comcast Business, speaks about his company’s commitment to supporting veterans at the Red, Wine, and Blues fundraiser. Comcast Business, Ciena, and Increditek were the title sponsors for the event.

RED, WINE, AND BLUES

all felt.

“This doesn’t feel like a corporate fundraiser,” Pattisall said. “It feels like a family reunion. It’s really special.”

Robert—who has a habit of bringing his own family to all Foundation events and was accompanied by his wife Gail—said while it was always his hope to create events that resonated with people in the way Pattisall described, that particular result comes less from the Foundation’s usual extensive and meticulous planning, and more from the fact that the Foundation has been blessed to gather so many passionate individuals, from small donors to the title sponsors of Red, Wine & Blues, and everyone in between.

“Those title sponsors—Ciena, Increditek, and Comcast Business—what they’re doing isn’t just checking a box that says corporate responsibility,” Robert said. “I’ve made my career by being able to identify people with real passion and belief and sort them out from those who just say the right thing. I probably said something to that effect on every episode of *Restaurant: Impossible*, you know, ‘Don’t tell me you know how to do it; show me.’ Well, these companies don’t just donate big, as important as that is. They back that money with action. They care about veterans and first responders and they have long track records to prove it. I’m proud to be associated with them, and proud of all the love they helped bring to that room.

“In doing so, they helped accomplish a great collective mission.”

A mission bigger than any one man.

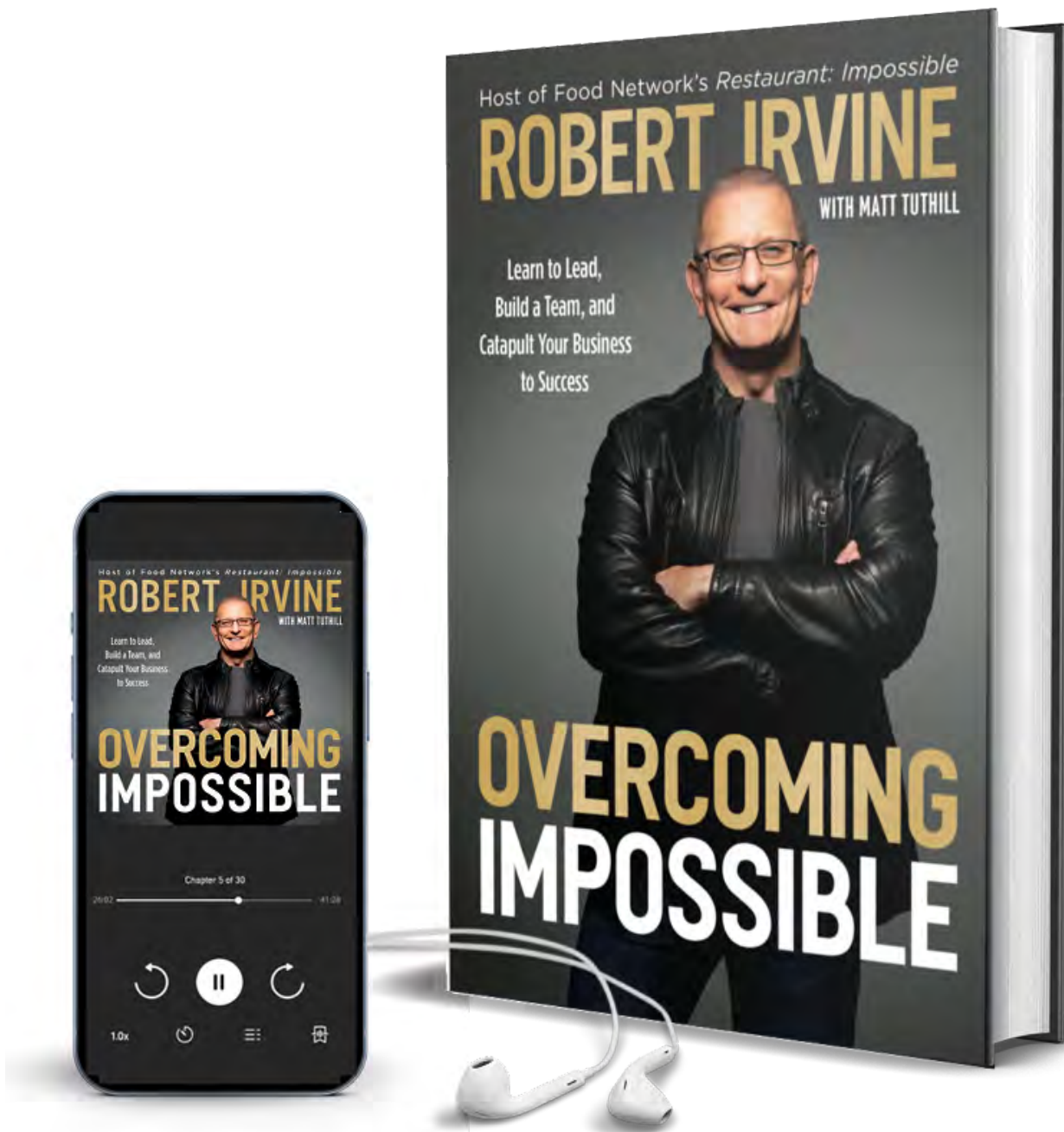


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Top: Kyra Phillips and John Roberts host Red, Wine, and Blues. Below: Learn more about each of these veteran-supporting businesses by clicking the corporate logos.



Wipe impossible from your vocabulary

Make achieving your goals and finding success possible with this one-of-a-kind guide by Robert Irvine, popular host of Food Network's *Restaurant: Impossible*.

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SPECIAL BREW

At the Ilani Brewfest, tasting is believing.

The Ilani hotel and casino in Ridgefield, WA, played host to the Ilani Brewfest in February—a three-day food and beer extravaganza that brought together some of the best culinary minds in America—with Robert as the headliner. Thousands of fans watched cooking demos and sampled dishes from Robert as well as celebrity chefs Beau MacMillan, Brian Duffy, Alex Belew, Tracey Bloom, and many more.

“This is one of my favorite events on the calendar,” said Robert, who has headlined the festival the last two years. “The hotel is brand new, and the rooms are state-of-the-art. And while the festival obviously has great food, the casino has a couple of my favorite restaurants,” he added, noting that he ate dinner at the Michael Jordan Steakhouse and the Vietnamese restaurant Bamboo 8 during his most recent stay. \

Nestled in the scenic, wooded Cowlitz Reservation in Ridgefield, WA, the Ilani Casino boasts over 100,000 square feet of gaming space, including 3,000 slots, 75 gaming tables, 18 bars and restaurants, plus retail outlets and entertainment. To learn more and keep an eye on tickets to 2025 Brewfest, visit their website:

Ilaniresort.com



Robert signed copies of *Overcoming Impossible* and posed for countless photos throughout the weekend of the Brewfest, where fans could also sample his brisket tacos and watch several cooking demos.

ROBERT'S WORLD

BROWNIE POINTS

The best protein bars in the world just got even better.



The best protein bars in the world just added a new flavor to its lineup, and it's one that chocolate lovers are going to go crazy for: Chocolate Brownie. The FitCrunch Chocolate Brownie Flavored Baked Bar is packed with rich chocolatey layers that capture the soft center of a brownie along with the crunchy edge everyone fights over. Like all FitCrunch bars, the Chocolate Brownie bar is a baked, six-layer bar created by Robert. With its irresistible taste and 16 grams of protein and only 4 grams of sugar at 210 calories, this bar takes the cake—or, perhaps all the brownie points—when it comes to treating yourself on-the-go.

[FitCrunch.com](https://www.FitCrunch.com)



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TITANIC 4K

It is a well-worn cliché to call a beautifully-shot film a “visual feast,” but Titanic, which was for a time the highest-grossing movie ever, fully earned that descriptor. Filmed in a sort of golden era where fledgling CGI made it possible to enhance the scope and small details of a wide shot, but before it could be used to create whole characters—or giant steam liners—Titanic enjoys a luxury afforded to precious few blockbusters today: because most of its effects are practical, it has aged gracefully. The richness of the costumes and sets, the grandeur of the ship, and the terror of its sinking, all look more glorious than ever in 4K. In particular, the fatal iceberg-striking scene—which takes you on a high-speed tour of the ship from the lookouts in the crow’s nest to the bowels of the engine room and everywhere in-between—will take your breath away and make you wish they still made movies like that. Well, one silver lining of all this technology is we do get to see it in a brand-new way.

\$28, [Walmart](#)

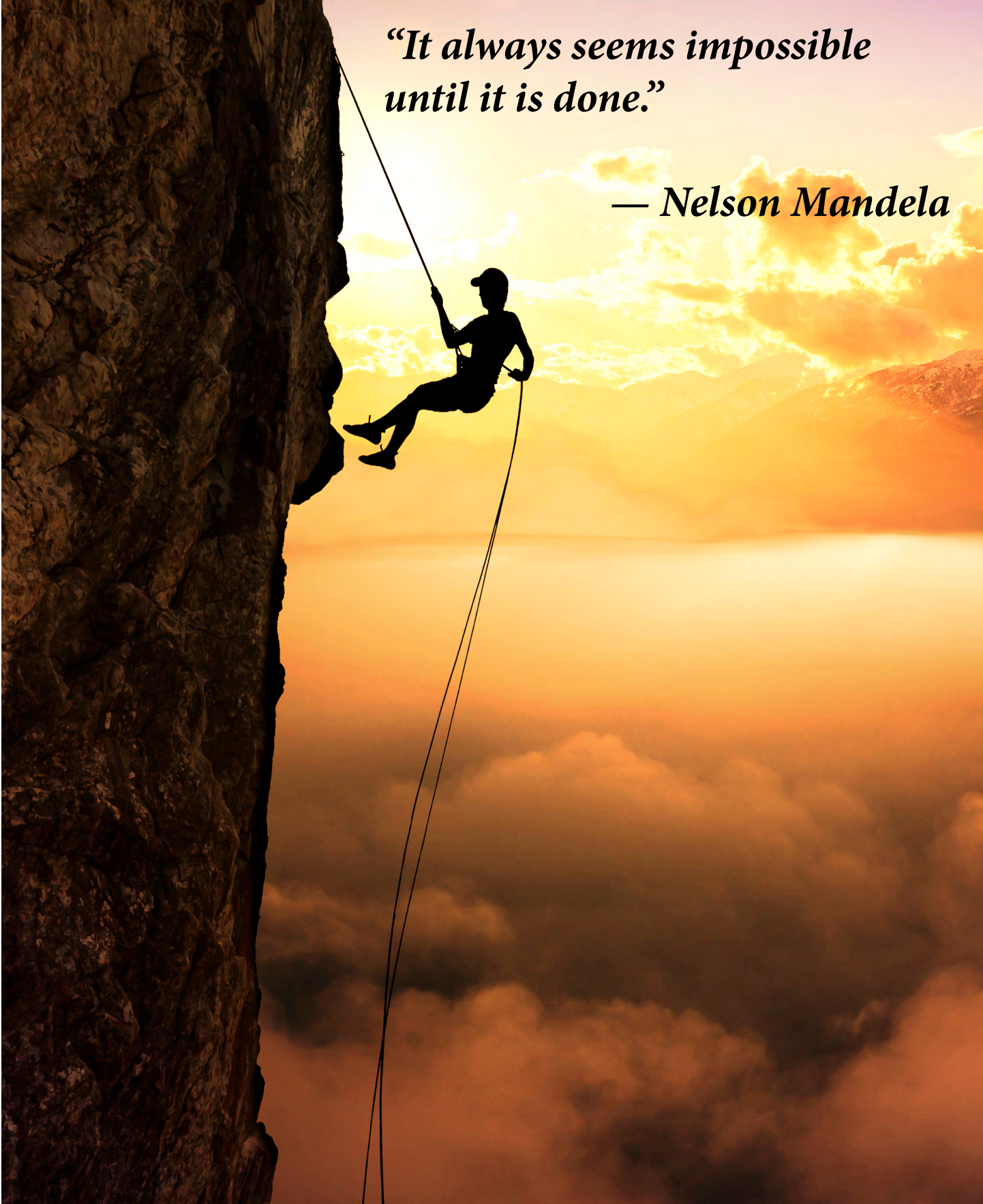
SCHOOL OF ROCK BLU-RAY STEELBOOK

It is in the public interest to turn Jack Black loose on the screen and just let him run with his wildest, most unhinged ideas. School of Rock is Exhibit A, and so it is equally within the public interest—or at least for physical media enthusiasts—that this one get a handsome steelbook release, as it just has. Though this one didn’t make the jump to 4K, it’s hard to get bummed out when the original Blu-ray transfer was just fine. Besides, the jokes are the star of the show, and 20-plus years after its debut, they still hold up, and there’s probably no greater compliment than that.

\$18, [Amazon](#)



WORDS TO LIVE BY



*“It always seems impossible
until it is done.”*

— Nelson Mandela