

MAIN STREET MONTHLY

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GIVE THE GIFT OF PEACE OF MIND THIS CHRISTMAS

The holidays are right around the corner, and many of us are making our gift lists. But let's face it, most adult children don't really need more gadgets, socks, or ties. What they *do* need is something far more valuable: **a solid estate plan that protects their future and their loved ones.**

At **Stratton & Reynolds**, we've heard time and again from our clients that once they complete their own estate planning, they want their children, siblings, or other family members to do the same. This holiday season, we're making that easier than ever.

We're offering a **special holiday discount** on estate plans that you can purchase for your loved ones — giving them the gift of security, clarity, and peace of mind for years to come. These gifted plans are only available to our clients who have previously done their own estate planning with us.

Holiday Estate Planning Gift Options

1. Trust-Based Estate Plan — \$3,700 (Holiday Pricing)

Includes:

- Revocable Living Trust (joint if married)
- Pour-Over Wills
- General Durable Powers of Attorney
- Health Care Powers of Attorney
- Assistance with funding the trust (including up to 3 SC deeds and beneficiary change letters)

2. Will-Based Estate Plan — \$1,500

Includes:

- Will
- General Durable Power of Attorney
- Health Care Power of Attorney

Each plan is personalized to fit your loved one's needs and comes beautifully packaged with a **gift certificate** so they'll have something special to unwrap this Christmas.

Important Details:

- The recipient must be a **South Carolina resident**.
- They'll become our client and receive full **confidentiality protections**.
- They must be willing to meet with one of our attorneys (in Lexington, Aiken, Columbia, or Bluffton, or by Zoom).
- The discounted fee must be paid at the time of purchase.

To take advantage of this limited-time offer, call us today at 803-358-7214 or email **Diane Ford** at Diane@strattonreynolds.com.

Give a gift that truly matters, **the gift of peace of mind and protection for the future.**

-TC and Charity



Festive Fun Made Easy

Traditions That Won't Cost a Fortune

The holidays have a way of sneaking up on us. Suddenly, the calendar is full, stores are packed, and wallets feel too light. But here's the truth: The most memorable moments don't come from expensive gifts or elaborate trips. We spark them from laughter, creativity, and time spent together.

Whether you're looking for cozy nights in or adventures out in the crisp winter air, here are fun, low-cost holiday activities for the whole family.

Festive Fun at Home

Let's turn home into holiday central! You can wrap your front door like a giant present, or craft homemade ornaments from everyday supplies. Popcorn and cranberry garlands,

paper chains with gratitude notes, and handmade snowflakes instantly transform your space into a festive wonderland. For extra coziness, plan a movie night complete with blankets, popcorn, and your family's favorite holiday classics.

Creative Crafts and Tasty Treats

You don't need to buy pricey kits when you can create your own fun. Build a gingerbread house from scratch, or whip up batches of cookies and let everyone go wild with frosting and sprinkles. If you're looking for something outdoorsy, make birdseed ornaments from pinecones and peanut butter, then watch the backyard come alive with feathered guests.

Outdoor Adventures

Bundle up and take a nighttime drive (or stroll) to admire the best light displays in your town. It's a free way to soak up the magic of the season together. If you're lucky enough to get snow, the options are

endless: snowmen, forts, snow angels, or even a friendly snowball fight. And when it's too chilly to stay outside, warm up with hot cocoa by the fire.

Share the Holiday Spirit

The season feels even brighter when you spread joy beyond your own home. Go caroling in your neighborhood or at a local nursing home, attend a school holiday concert, or deliver handmade cards to friends and neighbors. These simple gestures leave lasting impressions and remind everyone what the holidays are truly about.

Cozy Traditions That Last

For a touch of nostalgia, start a new tradition like sleeping under the Christmas tree one night, creating a DIY advent calendar, or hosting a family game night with holiday music playing in the background. These small rituals are the ones kids and adults both look forward to each year.

A Quick Reminder About Property Taxes

As a reminder to our clients, if you have created a revocable living trust with us in the last couple of years and have seen your property tax rate change on your primary residence, please give us a call. After your home is transferred into your trust, some counties require the tax exemption forms to be filled out a second time. We are happy to help our trust clients with filling those out and filing them with the documentation the counties need, and there is no additional fee for this service if you did your trust with us.

Also, remember that you will qualify for the homestead exemption the year after you turn 65. This can lead to a significantly reduced property tax bill. If you believe you may qualify, be sure to contact your county auditor's office, or feel free to call us with any questions. Keep in mind that a surviving spouse may also qualify for this exemption if their deceased spouse qualified or would have qualified. If you have any questions about any of the above, please give us a call!



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CRISPY PROSCIUTTO AND CHEESE SLIDERS

INGREDIENTS

- 3 oz thinly sliced prosciutto
- 1 package dinner rolls, halved lengthwise
- 1/4 cup fig preserves
- 3/4 cup shredded fontina cheese
- 3/4 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
- 2 chopped garlic cloves
- Black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. On a parchment-lined baking sheet, arrange prosciutto and bake for 8–10 minutes.
3. On a separate lined baking sheet, place the bottom halves of the rolls and spread fig preserves over them.
4. Layer with fontina and Swiss cheese. Top with crispy prosciutto.
5. Place the top half of the rolls over the prosciutto and gently press down.
6. In a bowl, mix butter, Dijon, Worcestershire sauce, thyme, garlic, and black pepper.
7. Pour butter mixture over rolls. Cover with foil and bake 10 minutes.
8. Remove foil and bake an additional 10–15 minutes, and separate before serving.

Inspired by HalfBakedHarvest.com



THE SWEET RISE OF FOODIE PERFUMES

Why Everyone Wants to Smell Like Coffee Shops and Candy Stores

Apparently, the hottest trend in beauty right now doesn't come in a lipstick tube or eyeshadow palette. Instead, it comes in a perfume bottle that smells like your favorite café, candy shop, or Sunday bake sale. Welcome to the era of foodie fragrances, where your signature scent could make someone crave tiramisu.

Dessert-inspired perfumes, which fragrance professionals and connoisseurs call "gourmands," are taking center stage. Savor rich espresso notes swirling with caramel drizzle, soft vanilla clouds, or the syrupy sweet nectar of peaches with whipped cream. TikTok can't get enough, with searches for these mouthwatering scents skyrocketing as perfume lovers show off their "scent layering" routines: body oils, lotions, and sprays stacked like a five-course meal, all to smell irresistible for hours.

Celebrities are fanning the flames (or the frosting?) of the trend, too. Sabrina Carpenter's Me Espresso literally bottles the joy of a sugary iced latte, while her Caramel Dream and Sweet Tooth fragrances lean fully into candy shop fantasy. It turns out, a whiff of whipped cream on your wrist is the ultimate mood boost.

But foodie scents aren't all sugar rush and cupcake chaos. Some go savory and chic, like Maison Margiela's From The Garden, which captures sun-warmed tomatoes, herbs, and citrus for those who prefer "farmers market fresh" over "triple fudge brownie." Others, like Malin + Goetz's Strawberry, dial down the sweetness with a minimal, peppery twist for those searching for a more mature scent that steers clear of strawberry shortcake.

However, we wouldn't blame you for grabbing bottles of Kayali Yum Pistachio Gelato, which smells of pistachio and hazelnut swirled in warm rum, topped with a playful mix of whipped cream, marshmallow, and cotton candy. It's nutty, creamy, and a little boozy, aka the olfactory equivalent of the perfect dessert you don't have to share.

Whether you're after the cozy comfort of vanilla or the zest of a ripe orchard, these perfumes turn everyday moments, like coffee breaks, picnics, and date night desserts, into something wearable. And honestly? Smelling like gelato sounds like self-care at its most delicious.

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Tracks and Treasures *Scenic Rail Journeys Worth Riding*

Flying over beautiful landscapes can be exhilarating, but what if you could experience those beautiful sights in a closer and more personal way? With railway vacations, you can. Whether you're a seasoned train traveler or curious about cruising on the tracks, here are three travel options you can only experience and appreciate on the rails.

A Euphoric European Escape

While there are plenty of thrilling sights to behold in America, the



glamorous international excursion of the **Venice Simplon-Orient-Express** is incomparable. From its pristinely preserved 1920s/1930s-era carriages and stunning Art Deco interior to its remarkable gourmet food (including breakfast in bed!) and live entertainment, this world-renowned train will take you through Venice, Paris, Istanbul, and other legendary European destinations.

A Symphony of Swiss Scenes

For many travelers seeking some of the most breathtaking visuals imaginable, all rails lead to the Swiss Alps. **The Glacier Express'** 292-bridge/91-tunnel track from Zermatt to St. Moritz gives passengers a personal view of picturesque valleys, mountain streams, and alpine meadows. Often referred to as "the slowest express train in the world," it travels 24 miles per hour, allowing you to feast your eyes on the scenery through its panoramic windows. Boasting millions of passengers in its decades-long history, the Glacier

Express has earned its rightful place as one of the most celebrated names in tourism.

An Alaskan Adventure

If you're looking for railway adventures closer to home, consider hitting the tracks in Alaska. Since 1903, **the Alaska Railroad** has provided travelers an intimate way to explore what later became our 49th state. Getting a seat will guarantee a breathtaking journey through scenic landscapes, national parks, fjords, snow-capped peaks, and valleys brimming with wildlife.

For the ultimate Alaska experience, opt for the Alaska Railroad's GoldStar Service, which offers glass-dome ceilings for panoramic nature viewing, a full-service dining room, and a one-of-a-kind upper-level platform for additional sightseeing.

The next time your wanderlust inspires you to explore new wonders, skip the plane and take a train!