

Hot Summer Issue

the Westchester WAG

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cool convertibles

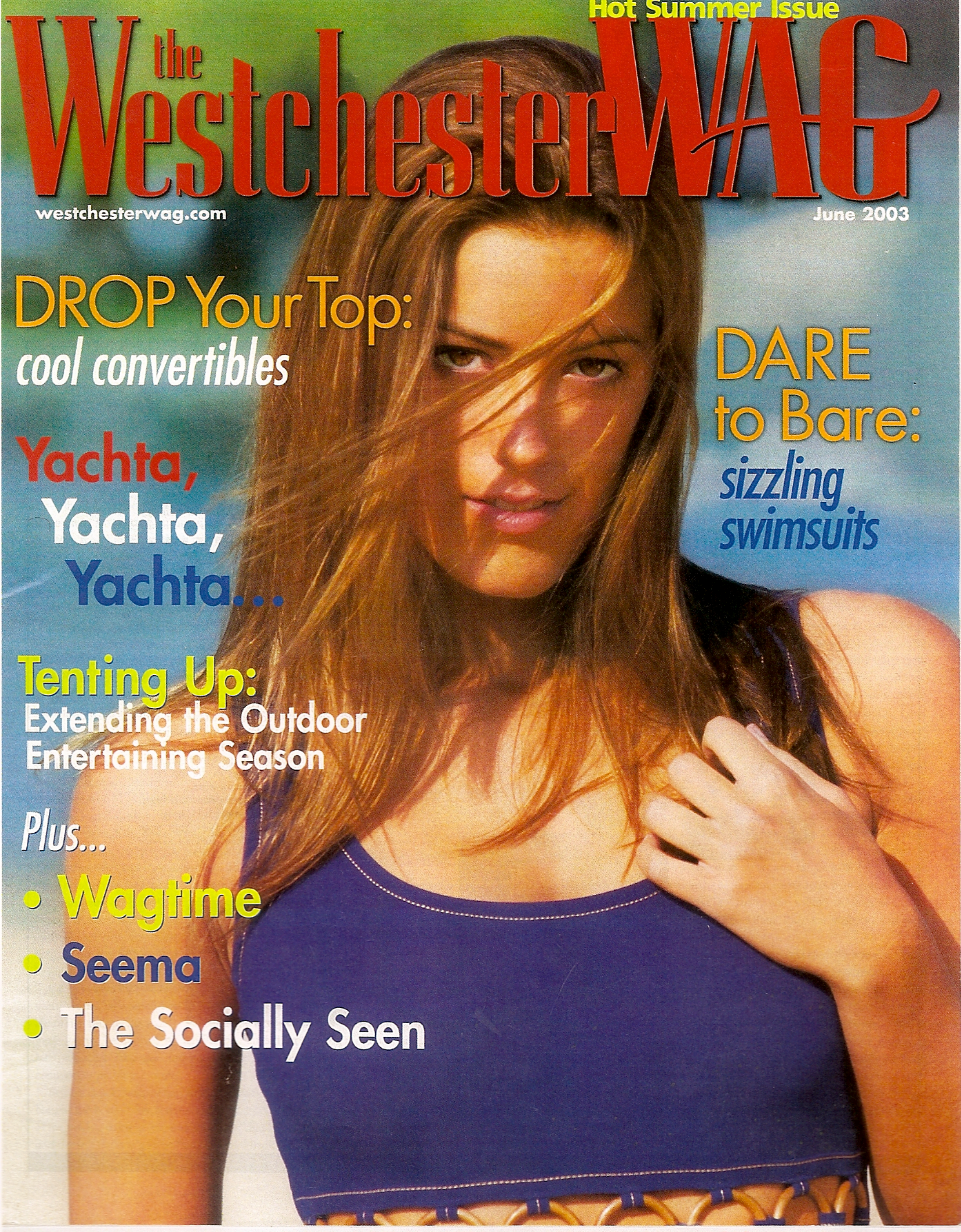
**Yachta,
Yachta,
Yachta...**

**DARE
to Bare:**
*sizzling
swimsuits*

Tenting Up:
Extending the Outdoor
Entertaining Season

Plus...

- **Wagtime**
- **Seema**
- **The Socially Seen**





BY SAMANTHA ALTEA

On a mission for a hot summer story, the WAG spent the first warm day of this year out in picture perfect weather, tripping from one luxurious yacht to another—it's a hard job, but someone's got to do it.

If you've always dreamt about being behind the helm of your own yacht, then dream on—we've got the skinny dip—the dos and don'ts of buying and owning your own home away from home on the water. But beware; before you take the plunge and think that this is an easy feat—think again. Make sure you have the facts and figures about buying and maintaining a yacht, because if you're not careful, your sweet dream could turn into a nightmare.

As Armonk resident Felix Carcano, 34, of MAC yacht sales tells us, with a knowing grin, "Boats can be the very best and the worst of things to own." It seems, however, that if you do the research and know what you're getting yourself into, all boaters agree that owning a yacht is definitely worth the trouble. (Carcano chats about his boats and those he sells almost as fondly as he does of his son, and company's namesake, Michael Andrew Carcano.)

We're in Mamaroneck marina, sitting in the saloon of a stunning, sleek lined, Neptunus 56-foot Flybridge. It's a beautiful, custom, handmade yacht, with highly polished wood interiors, exquisite all-inclusive fixtures and fittings, and attention to every detail. On board it's spacious enough to have drinks for 20, snacks for 12, dinner for 8, and sleep 6. The main stateroom is luxurious and roomy, with a private bathroom. Then there are two guest staterooms, both slightly tighter, but space on boats is a premium—so get used to it. This boat screams luxury item, "it even comes with a pair of monogrammed bathrobes," says Carcano. But then it should, at the bargain price of \$1.3 million. "You know you've made it in life when you can afford this," he continues.

Carcano says that the typical proprietor of this kind of yacht would be a small business owner, "you're talking about five million net worth." Most people who purchase these yachts, he informs us, tend to be married, in their late 40s and 50s, not retired, and with only one commodity problem—time!

Buyers don't flinch when learning that once they've bought the boat—any boat—it usually costs about 10% of the buying price to run and maintain. That is, per year, and doesn't include gas. So this particular boat would set them back about \$130,000 + annually. Even when they can

afford it, owners worry about how to find the time to enjoy it. They only have weekends and holidays. But Carcano's got the solution to that—he'll just have a captain take your yacht to any destination you desire and then fly you out to it in a private jet.

"Sailing from Mamaroneck, it takes three hours to Sag Harbor, four to Montauk, and five to Block Island," says Carcano. But if you pay a captain \$200–\$300 he'll have your boat waiting for you. Then just throw in an extra \$2,000 for a quick and exclusive trip on MAC Aviation, and you can be cocktailing on your yacht before sundown Friday night.



That's what many do in the summer. In the winter, boats are more often transported to Fort Lauderdale or Miami, with jaunts to Puerto Rico, the Bahamas...and so on.

Fort Lauderdale can be a 90-hour trip, so it's simpler to pay a two man crew about \$3,000 to relocate your boat for you, (not forgetting another \$9,000 in fuel.) Then you can fly down whenever you feel like it—or have the time. This way, people can use their boats as second or third homes.

So, what do owners do on their boats? Carcano gives us a mock scenario...

"Let's go to Sag Harbor," he suggests. "We'd meet Friday afternoon—we're driving ourselves—and on the boat there'd be three couples. We'd load up, maybe have dinner while sailing up the Sound; it's usually calm," he smiles. (It's common to bring prepared food, because while most boats have a kitchen with burner, microwave etc., it's much easier to bring provisions—yachting is

about fun, not cooking in kitchens that are almost impossibly small—although, on the Neptunus, you can barbecue up on deck.)

"We'd arrive just before sunset in time to rev up the blender for cocktails," he says, grinning, and adds that a blender is one of five essential items to pack for a weekend on a yacht. Along with, "suntan lotion, good music, definitely good people—oh, and a toothbrush," he says. "So, we'd bring our cocktail outside to the top deck and 'be seen.' Yachters love to be seen, but not known." They might not talk to passersby, but if you've got a boat yourself, even an 18-footer—you're in. "No matter what type you own, boaters have incredible camaraderie," he notes.

"The next day we'd explore, sunbathe, swim...shop; then maybe have a party that night—we might have arranged to meet other yachts in Sag Harbor. At some point the men would go from boat to boat comparing gadgets and all the wives would look to see who's got better taste in interiors. Then we'd go home and plan the next trip!"

If an even bigger yacht is more your speed, say a 90-footer, you'll have to fork out roughly five to six mill. Then, if that doesn't deter you, for this size boat you'd have to employ a captain and crew. (A 90-ft boat typically requires a two-man crew; any larger calls for a crew of four or more.) The captain earns anywhere from \$75-90K a year and the first mate, who usually doubles as a chef, pulls in about \$50K. Often, they are husband and wife teams, but not always.

If a stateroom on board doesn't meet their needs, you'll have to supply them with an on-shore apartment near the marina, which will probably run you between \$1,000–\$1,500 a month. And where would everyone be without a car? You'll need something substantial—like a Chevy Tahoe (about \$40K or roughly \$600 a month to lease)—to pull any tenders that go along with the boat, and for general maintenance and chores involved with yachting. However, it should also be comfortable enough for the captain to chauffeur you and your guests to and from the airport.

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But if your budget doesn't quite stretch to the millions, there are plenty of other options like the Formula 400 Super Sport (40-footer) at \$400,000 and the Fairline Phantom 46-ft at \$740,000. We went aboard with Total Marine's, **Rodney Hill**, in Mamaroneck.

These yachts may be a little smaller than something like the Neptunus and might not have quite the same bells and whistles—but one thing's for sure, you certainly won't be slumming it on these babies.

They still have three staterooms, beautiful wood interiors and fittings, gorgeous sun decks, and more. Hill says that the types of people who buy these boats have usually owned four or five others previously—they've worked up to these—often have two or three homes, and can afford the 10% yearly upkeep. He estimates that people usually use these boats on average 100 hours a season, roughly May through October, which works out to about \$10,000 in gas, plus maintenance costs, and Total is a full service marina. They sell new boats, broker used boats, and provide all services and dock space. If you want to dock, store for the winter, clean or maintain your boat—they're your men.

One such owner is Pound Ridge resident **George Roach**. His 44-ft Viking Sport Cruiser cost a whopping \$680,000 and it was his first boat! "But age appropriate," he says with a giggle. "At fifty four, I wasn't going to buy an eighteen footer." Roach, who had always dreamt about owning his own yacht says, "As life goes on and gets shorter you just say, 'hey...why not.'"

Since prior to buying his own boat Roach had only driven a friend's for up to ten minutes here and there, when he first purchased the Viking, he paid a captain roughly \$200 per trip for about a year and a half. "This was not a trial and error situation," he says. But, now, in his third season, Roach is well acquainted with his

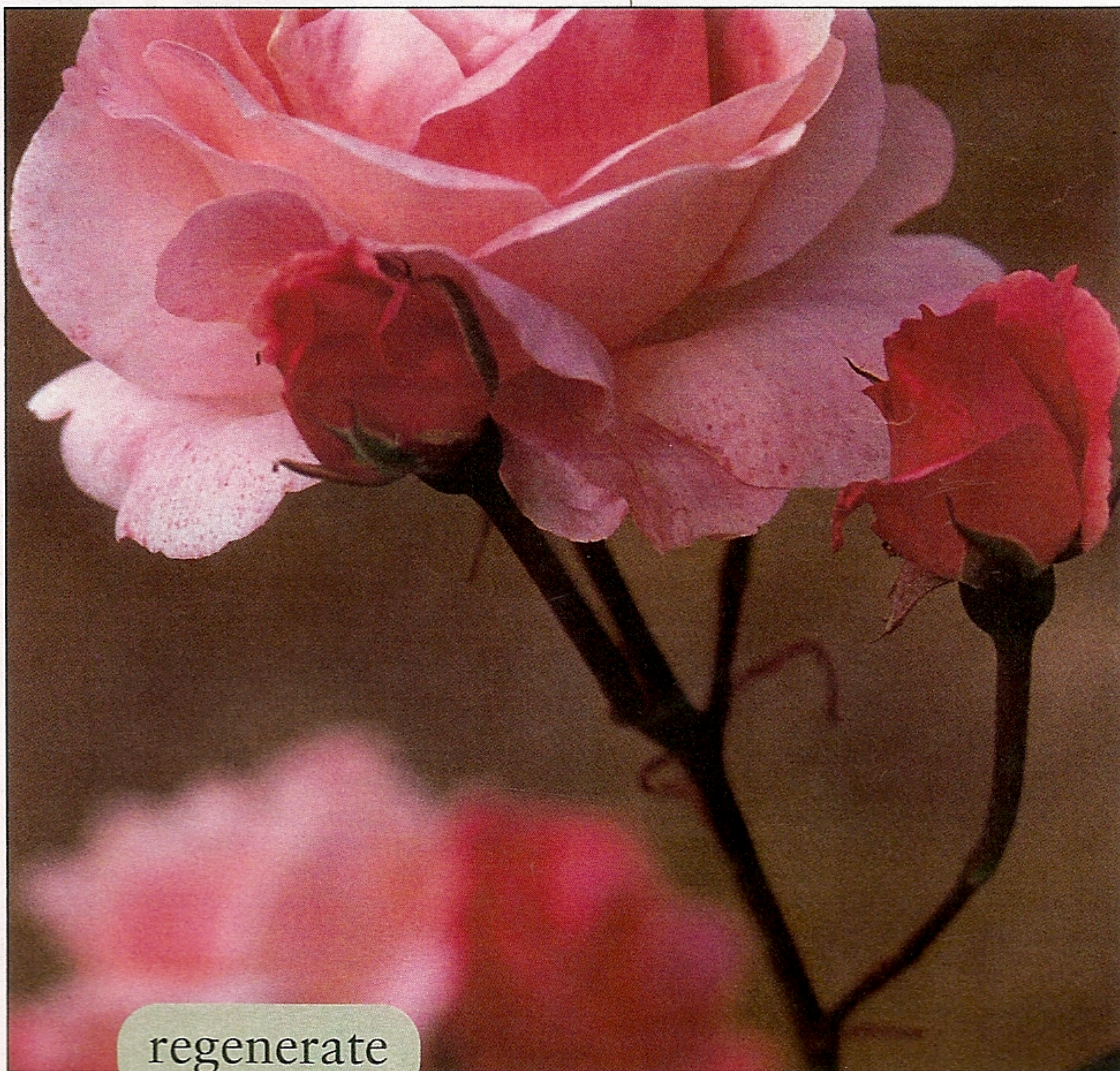


yacht, using it both for business and pleasure. One of his favorite activities is spending an hour of alone time on a weekday afternoon on his boat (his architectural woodwork company is five minutes from the marina). "Being out on the water really relieves stress. It's so relaxing."

When cruising for business, Roach will often employ a captain so that he is free to entertain. Typically he'll take clients out for a sunset cruise and then dinner. For pleasure,

he'll spend time with his family, day tripping up the Sound, docking to explore, swim, sunbathe, and relax. This season, Roach, along with his wife **Maria** and their three children—29, 16, and 14—is going on his first overnight trip.

If all of this sounds tempting, don't delay. Reserve your own boat—however big or small—but not until you've done your research. Study industry magazines, ask other boaters for advice, go to plenty of boats shows, and search the Internet. Once you've got the keys for your own dream yacht, remember one last thing—your toothbrush. **WNC**



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