



*Organic*  
**Connections**

MARCH—APRIL 2009

The magazine of Peter Gillham's Natural Vitality

**The Incredible Pomegranate**  
*A Super Superfruit*

**Chef Dan Barber**  
*The Culinary Art of Real Food*

**Bringing Conservation into Focus**  
*Photographers with Meaning and Purpose*

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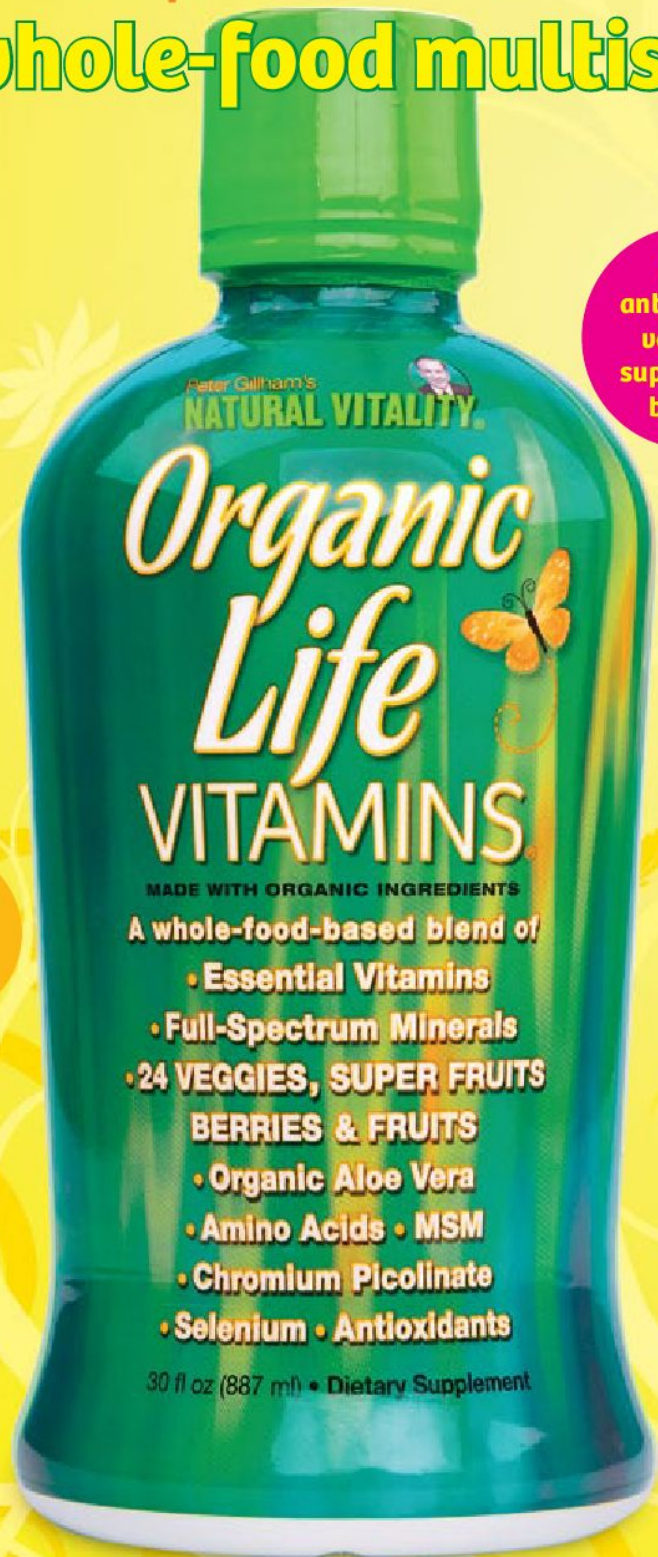
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# The science lab vs. Mother Nature

Despite the fact that the airwaves and print media are blanketed with advertisements telling you to “ask your doctor about —” or “ask your doctor if — is right for you,” the Pharma marketing message isn’t reaching half of the US population who prefer taking vitamin and mineral supplements. There is a growing preference for natural remedies versus powerful laboratory creations with long lists of alarming side effects. In fact, a recent survey found that 72 percent of physicians (nearly 3 out of 4) take vitamin and mineral supplements *for their own health*.

When it comes to advising their patients, the numbers are even more significant. Of the 1,200 doctors surveyed, 79 percent recommend dietary supplements to their patients for bone and joint health, heart health, overall health and wellness, and to maintain healthy cholesterol.

Science is good (like the Apple Computer I’m writing this on), but it can also have its downside. The excesses of the Industrial Age have wreaked havoc on the environment and it’s coming back to bite us. In agriculture, our policy of science-engineered quantity over quality gave us herbicides, pesticides, genetically modified seeds, toxic runoff, and produce that has lost between 15 and 75 percent of its nutrient content compared to half a century ago. In the health field, despite the enormous cost, the US has a healthcare system that ranks an embarrassing 37th in the world, according to the World Health Organization.

On the natural side of things, there is a great deal of positive activity. We have some shining examples in this issue—from the nutritional benefits of pomegranate to the culinary artistry of chef Dan Barber, who has found that organic nutrient-dense produce tastes better, to the International League of Conservation Photographers, who share their creative far-flung vision of both the human and wildlife of our environment. The message is simply that people are finding greater benefit from living in harmony with nature than from fighting it.

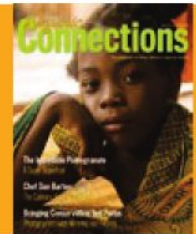
Of course, not everyone agrees. There are still corporations, lobbyists and their allies in government that seek to maintain their position and with it the status quo. (In case you haven’t noticed, it’s not a very good status quo at the moment.) But in the end, nature will prevail as it always does. We can either learn from our mistakes or continue to pay the penalty. At this juncture, it seems that half of the population (and the majority of doctors) are catching on to the “organic connection.”

*Ken Whitman*

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## In this issue



### or•gan•ic [ôr gan'ik]

denoting a relation between elements of something such that they fit together harmoniously as necessary parts of a whole: *the organic unity of the integral work of art* • characterized by continuous or natural development: *companies expand as much by acquisition as by organic growth*.

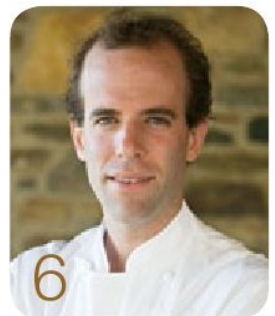
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What makes pomegranate such a super superfruit and how did university research help get the best out of it?



#### 6 Chef Dan Barber

From his Blue Hill at Stone Barns restaurant, Dan Barber blends his culinary artistry with the principles of good farming and the taste of nutrient-dense Real Food.



#### 10 Conservation in Focus

From Madagascar to the Tongass rainforest of Alaska, the International League of Conservation Photographers is bringing conservation into focus. Leading photographers Cristina Mittermeier and Amy Gulick share some of their compelling images.



## NATURAL REVITALIZATION

A portion of the profits from the sale of *Natural Calm*® and *Organic Life Vitamins*® goes to our Natural Revitalization environmental action initiative addressing global warming, which helps fund **Conservation International** ([www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org)) and **Remineralize the Earth** ([www.remineralize.org](http://www.remineralize.org)).

# The Incredible Pomegranate

## A super superfruit

# T



The amazing pomegranate is one of the oldest fruits known to man. Consisting of rich, red fruit surrounded by a hard leathery skin, the pomegranate has been cultivated and naturalized over the whole Mediterranean region and the Caucasus since ancient times. It was introduced into Latin America and California by Spanish settlers in 1769 and is now cultivated in parts of California and Arizona for juice production.

In addition to their luscious taste, pomegranates contain some of nature's most powerful antioxidants; and for the first time since the raw fruit itself, these properties are being brought to the consumer in a pure and consistently bioavailable form.

### Pomella® Pomegranate Extract

"Pomella is one of few pomegranate extracts that has clinical and safety research performed on it," said Ajay Patel, president of Verdure Sciences, developer of Pomella Extract. "Most extracts on the market are

not themselves tested but refer to third-party literature. In addition to the university research that led to the development of Pomella, multiple clinical studies have been conducted examining its benefits."

The true effects of nutrition are best viewed under the microscope, and the story of a pure, clinically verified pomegranate extract is no different. It gets right down to some fascinating biochemical interactions and reactions.

Pomella Extract is actually the result of research motivated only by the desire to discover the best and most consistently bioavailable pomegranate extract—as opposed to research motivated by lowest-cost commercial interests. The development of the patent-pending, proprietary ingredient was conducted at a prominent university in California; in fact, this university holds the intellectual property rights under which Pomella is produced.

In 2003, medical researchers at the university were examining various parts of the diet to find the best antioxidant candidates. Their research determined that pomegranate was the most effective, so they set about isolating the properties that made it so.

This quest led the researchers to identify a group of potent antioxidants within the

chemistry of the pomegranate called punicalagins. It turned out that punicalagins are among the most ferocious scavengers of free radicals—small particles that start chain reactions that damage cells. Punicalagins were also found to provide protection to DNA and certain cellular functions. Being water soluble, they were additionally discovered to absorb and metabolize into the body extremely well.

But there were problems in rendering a pomegranate product that offers tangible health benefits. First, punicalagins can break apart into non-bioavailable compounds such as ellagic acid<sup>1</sup> during the extraction process, so they must be preserved intact to be completely absorbed. Second, while punicalagins are the primary factor contributing to the high potency of pomegranate juice, pure 100 percent pomegranate juice can be expensive and is not standardized to contain a consistent amount of punicalagins. Research has shown pomegranate juice can have more than 100 percent variability in such content, in addition to a high quantity of sugar and calories.

So the research continued, and it included comparing many different forms of pomegranates in various models of





**POMELLA EXTRACT IS ACTUALLY THE RESULT OF RESEARCH MOTIVATED ONLY BY THE DESIRE TO DISCOVER THE BEST AND MOST CONSISTENTLY BIOAVAILABLE POMEGRANATE EXTRACT—AS OPPOSED TO RESEARCH MOTIVATED BY LOWEST-COST COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.**

efficacy to find the best cultivated variety that offered the greatest health benefits.

What the researchers ultimately isolated as the best extract of pomegranate was quite intriguing, and very different from extracts that were commonly found on the market.

#### **The Result**

Bioavailability means that a nutrient is able to enter the bloodstream where it can reach target tissues. If it does not enter the bloodstream, it simply passes through the body, which is a waste. Lack of absorption has been one downfall with pomegranate extracts in the past, since those standardized to high amounts of ellagic acid were not completely bioavailable.

The secret of the formula for this unique pomegranate extract, as it turned out, lay in careful examination of the whole pomegranate fruit, along with a developed methodology for consistently preserving

the punicalagins. The result is Pomella Extract, one of the most nutritious and well-absorbed pomegranate extracts on the market today.

A key reason for Pomella Extract's potency lies also in preservation of the pomegranate's entire natural spectrum, and such preservation has been found by research to be the source of the product's effectiveness. As a matter of fact, research has demonstrated that Pomella Extract is more active than its isolated active ingredients.

#### **Control Is the Key**

"We feel that the consumer should know exactly where our ingredients are coming from," Patel told *Organic Connections*. "For the many years that Verdure Sciences has been in operation, our goal has always been to have full control of the raw materials that go into our products. For example, the pomegranates that make Pomella are

hand-picked at our company-contracted farms; and because we know exactly where our fruit comes from, we can ensure that our extract is pesticide free and contains no synthetic fertilizers or genetic modification."

#### **Included in New *NutraRev!***

Peter Gillham's Natural Vitality has just released a new product, *NutraRev!*<sup>™</sup>—a premium combination of anti-aging supplements. *Nutra-Rev!* features Pomella 100 percent all-natural pomegranate extract along with acetyl-L-carnitine, açai, mango-steen, goji berry, alpha lipoic acid, D-ribose, CoQ-10 and vitamins C, E and B<sub>6</sub>.

1. **ellagic acid:** a naturally occurring compound found in raspberries, strawberries, cranberries, pomegranates, walnuts, pecans, and other plant foods.

Orchard photo courtesy of Verdure Sciences Inc.

## Chef Dan Barber

### The culinary art of real food

by Bruce Boyers



There is a movement now gathering momentum throughout the world, that of whole, nutritious food actually containing all the nutrients it did in our forebears' time. Called the Real Food Movement, it is being embraced by a growing number of scientists, farmers and nutritional experts who are determined to restore health to the populations of Earth—and who also know that a great deal of the disease and infirmity now plaguing our society stems from the lack of nutrition provided by mechanized food production.

One outstanding proponent of the Real Food Movement is renowned chef Dan Barber, co-owner and executive chef of the famed Blue Hill restaurant in Manhattan as well as Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills, New York. His culinary acumen is legendary. He appeared recently as a judge on the *Top Chef* television show and has

But it's a personal matter for Barber, who has always had a hand in the growing of the food he is presenting. He began by farming and cooking for friends at Blue Hill Farm in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. In 2000, he opened the Blue Hill restaurant in New York City along with family members David and Lauren Barber, and by 2002 *Food and Wine* magazine had named him one of the country's "best new chefs." In the spring of 2004, Blue Hill at Stone Barns restaurant opened its doors alongside the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture in Pocantico Hills, New York; and as executive chef and co-owner of the restaurant, as well as a board member of the Stone Barns Center, Barber smoothly blends the principles of good farming with the dining experience.

Where Barber leaves the mainstream is with that connection to the source of great taste. "If you have an imperative for good ingredients and good flavor, I argue that you're also an environmentalist by definition," said Barber. "You're also a nutritionist by definition. Thus, great cooking—which we tend to forget—needs great agriculture. You can't have a delicious carrot or the most perfect kind of lamb without good ecological decisions behind those flavors, and good ethical decisions, for that matter—ethical decisions on how the soil is used, on how animals are treated. Therefore ethics, environmental stewardship and flavor are one and the same.

As with others in the Real Food Movement, Barber's methods—and those of his growers—focus on the "nutrient density" of the food. He has found that crops dense with nutrients have the best flavor—which, after all, is the goal. "I'm not a scientist, so on a biological level I wouldn't know where to start," he said. "I can't explain beyond what I know intuitively, which is that the more a vegetable or fruit or animal is raised in the right environment and given what it needs to thrive—not just survive, but thrive—the more we end up with ingredients that produce the best flavor. A potato grown in a conventional manner is literally a dead potato. It has the genetic makeup of potato, but it's missing many of the micronutrients and invisible enzymes and reactions that result in the things we find delicious. Again, I think this link between great flavor and great ecology is a very fortuitous reality that we often forget. The more dense the nutrients of what we are eating, the better it's going to taste. And I would imagine that's probably an evolutionary response of ours, seeking the best-flavored food."

Nutrient density holds a keen fascination for Barber—in fact, he has his very own Brix meter (otherwise known as a refractometer) right in his kitchen. A refractometer measures the amount of bend or refraction in rays of light as they pass through plant juices, indicating the quantity of carbohydrates, dissolved minerals and complex sugars contained in the crop.

### HE HAS FOUND THAT CROPS DENSE WITH NUTRIENTS HAVE THE BEST FLAVOR.

been featured in the *New Yorker*, *House and Garden* and *Martha Stewart Living* magazines and also on *CBS Sunday Morning*.

#### A Matter of Taste

Barber's philosophy as a chef is singularly unique—and, at the same time (as he is quick to point out), very much in common with other culinary masters. "I don't think I'm different from other chefs in the fact that we are always looking for the best flavor," Barber told *Organic Connections*. "In almost every way, I think good, thoughtful chefs that care about what they are doing have an imperative for good ingredients and good flavor."

"So I'm just doing what all chefs are doing. It's not like I'm breaking any molds by saying, 'Oh, I'm a chef who wants tasty food.' Every chef wants tasty food and will go to great lengths to achieve it. It just so happens that in doing that, I think I'm also treating the world in the right way."

#### Nutrient Density: It's in the Taste

All of the food served at Blue Hill at Stone Barns is grown within a 250-mile radius of the restaurant, from providers that meet Barber's strict standards. Two of these providers are, of course, Barber's own Blue Hill Farm and the Stone Barns Center.

"We actually have a few Brix meters in the kitchen," Barber continued. "We're just testing to get more familiar with Brix levels and to try and understand what we are shooting for, and to discover if it is a really reliable indicator of what we're going to like. We know it's a reliable indicator of sugars, but what does that mean in terms of cooking and how does that change our cooking? I don't know enough about it at all and I'm really fascinated by it. But I'm more interested in how Jack Algieri, who runs our vegetable operation, is using it when he's picking vegetables. Is he using that as a determinant for when things should be picked? I think the more he does, the better the farming."

One important factor—if not *the* most important factor—in growing nutrient-dense food is the treatment of the soil. Barber and his growers are all firm believers in remineralization of the soil—that is, the restoration of the broad spectrum of nutrients to soil so that it provides proper nutrition to crops. “We are very big on remineralization,” Barber stated. “Jack is a strong believer in remineralizing the soil and so am I. He does it through tons of different ways—through soil rock phosphates, crab meal and a lot of other different things, depending on the time of year, the crop and the location.”

The grasses animals are raised on are treated very similarly. “The attention to soil and diversity and to the caring of the grass that animals feed on is fundamentally the same idea,” said Barber.

Compost is also a highly important factor in the growing of crops at Stone Barns Center. Their compost is so effective that Stone Barns’ compost is now sold as a product to the public. “I don’t have numbers to back this up, but the effects on the crops from the compost have been dramatic,” Barber told *OC*. “We’ve always added compost, but the quality of the compost we’ve added recently has been extraordinary. And that’s because it’s gotten better every year. We hired a nutrient management person who is fabulous and has been improving the biological activity available in the compost. It has influenced the flavor of everything in the greenhouse. The difference between each gallon of compost we’re using now and that gallon four years ago is of a magnitude I would never have believed. That’s both in vitality and, of course, in flavor.”

### **From the Farm to the Table**

Visitors to the Blue Hill restaurant at Stone Barns will find they are never very far from the field—in more ways than one. The obvious way is that the growing crops and grazing animals can be seen right from the table. But Barber is there to ensure that visitors fully understand their tasting experience—and as such sees that every patron is educated on each item they taste.

“I think it’s so important because it gives a context to what people are eating,” Barber explained. “That sounds a little bit fancy, but I mean it no more than just, very simply, when you know something about where your food came from, when you know how that lamb was grown or you know what variety of carrot you’re eating and you have some type of





narrative that's associated with them, the food ends up tasting better. It's not really education in a formulized way; it's more like storytelling—a narrative that allows people to see connections between what they're eating and the way the world was treated in the process."

This kind of education also leads Barber to another unorthodox approach in his restaurant: there is no menu; instead a list of ingredients is available for that particular month of the year and the meal is designed so that patrons sample these items, served at the discretion of the chef.

It wasn't always that way. "We did have a type of very traditional a la carte menu, and also a "Farmer's Feast" option, which was sort of a tasting menu," Barber related. "I felt like we were running two separate restaurants, as if the people who were ordering a la carte

said. "The more we know about how what we choose to eat affects ourselves and the world, the more intelligent our decisions will be. If we continue to know nothing about the food we consume, we'll continue to see the health and environmental effects that we have been seeing over the last 30 to 40 years and the true high cost of our cheap food. And that's a function of lack of knowledge. That's exactly what the conventional big food chains want; they want you to be uninformed and they want you to be unsophisticated.

"It's interesting that being informed and sophisticated about food is sometimes viewed to be elitist, to be snobbish, which strikes me as very odd, because in our culture one does not say that about somebody buying a car, for example. The guy buying the car knows all the information about that car—the

global climate change, and properly raised food to nutrition. I like that kind of thinking because it ends up showing how food and food issues affect energy and health issues. All of those are big-ticket items, and to begin to try and solve them and to begin trying to think about them without considering food is crazy. That's what people who study it and understand it start to realize. It's exciting to work with people at Harvard because that's the way they're thinking, and it seems that is more of the way we should be thinking for the future."

Barber concludes with perhaps a lesson for us all. "At some point not that long ago, we were hunter-gatherers. We were searching around, trying to figure out what was good for us, what was poisonous, what was good for our children, and all the rest. I don't think we're so very far

## RESTAURANTS SHOULD BE PLACES OF **ESCAPE** FROM THE EVERYDAY WORLD, BUT THEY'RE ALSO PLACES OF **CONNECTION**.

were considered sort of conservative and uninterested in our themes. And we weren't really giving them attention; we were focusing on the people who we knew were putting themselves in our hands and were really excited about the agriculture of the food and all that. My brother and I got to the point where we just didn't want to have that kind of place. What we went for was an experience."

Educating people on intelligent food choices, even beyond the restaurant dining experience, is something else Barber takes seriously. "I think most people are not making good food choices because they are not educated about good food choices," Barber

dealership, the mileage, the bells and whistles; he is an informed shopper and a smart guy who's not going to get suckered. But the guy who knows all about food is considered kind of a so&ie, and that's a perception that we need to overcome, it seems to me. If we don't, this knowledge is going to stay separate and not ever become a part of the mainstream."

As part of Barber's educational efforts, he has been involved in projects with the Harvard Medical School's Center for Health and the Global Environment, the Kellogg Foundation and New York City's Greenmarkets. "Harvard is a very good example of seeing the connection of properly raised food to

removed from that. In today's world we're really disassociated from who's growing our food, where it's coming from and how it's getting to us. The fact that we're so disassociated makes us even hungrier for some information.

"Restaurants should be places of escape from the everyday world, but they're also places of connection. And when we do it right, those kinds of connections lead to an involvement that supersedes the everyday mundane eating experience that is our food culture. That's what we're trying to do."

Photo credits: Vegetables on a Fence (this page) and salad (opposite) by Thomas Schauer; all other photos in this feature by Jen Munkvold.





**Bringing Conservation into Focus**  
Photographers with Meaning and Purpose



# B

“Bringing Conservation into Focus” is their motto—and it’s something the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILCP) does extremely well. Consisting of the who’s who of conservation photography, this group wields its power to help educate the world community on ecological issues and to further conservation goals. Member photographers work with the top conservation organizations, including Conservation International, the International Wilderness Leadership Foundation and The Nature Conservancy among many others.

“The ILCP was born when I realized there might be other photographers like myself who had given meaning and purpose to their work by attaching it to conservation issues,” founder and Executive Director Cristina

the highest standards of photojournalism.

“I think the most interesting thing about ILCP is that the majority of photographers are loners—they don’t generally work in groups or in teams. It was told to me that it would be impossible to get these people to work together. In assembling the organization and working with them, though, I’d say exactly the opposite has been true. When it comes to putting our work and our voices together for conservation, I’ve never had an issue. We have felt a real sense of camaraderie and community. I think that is one of the gifts of the ILCP, in a profession that otherwise is very competitive and lonely.”

“For myself—and I think for a lot of us—the ILCP was a long time coming,” remarked conservation photographer and writer Amy Gulick. “Photographers tend to work independently. While many of us knew each other and kept track of each other’s work, we were never organized as a group to come together and take all of our collective knowledge and images and try to tackle some of these larger issues.

“It’s been really exciting. Among the

would have been a year later. With pressing issues like global warming, we don’t have a year. We’ve really got to get this message out now.

“The synergy among us is powerful, and reaching people with our images to help the world understand the critical conservation issues of our time is what we do best.”

## Cristina Mittermeier as Photographer

Cristina Mittermeier has a knowledge of the importance of conservation that few possess. Born and raised in Mexico City, her original training was as a marine biologist, and her first job out of college was working for Conservation International in Mexico for the preservation of the Gulf of California and the Lacandona rainforest. Through her work with CI, she met her husband, Russell Mittermeier, president of Conservation International.

As a marine biologist, she obviously had a keen interest in science and conservation; but when she began raising children, she realized she didn’t quite have the time to keep abreast of the constant advances

**TO ASPIRE TO BE A MEMBER OF ILCP, YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE AT THE TOP OF YOUR GAME AS A PROFESSIONAL, AND ALSO MUST HAVE A SUSTAINED RELATIONSHIP AND DEDICATION TO CONSERVATION. YOU MUST ALSO HAVE A CERTAIN STANDARD OF INTEGRITY AND ETHICS AND ABIDE BY THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM.**

Mittermeier told *Organic Connections*. “I thought that if I were able to gather the biggest names in nature photography and get them to speak about how they give purpose to their work, we would be able to influence a large number of amateur photographers out there, as well as people in general.

“To aspire to be a member of ILCP, you really have to be at the top of your game as a professional, and also must have a sustained relationship and dedication to conservation. You must also have a certain standard of integrity and ethics and abide by

first 40 or so founding photographers, we virtually had the whole world covered in terms of images. Now we’re this collective force that can act quickly. For example, a coalition of conservation, science and faith organizations approached the ILCP to put together an exhibit on global warming. Within a few days, we were able to come up with almost everything they needed. Prior to having this organization, it would have been, ‘Okay, we’re going to hire so-and-so to go to Antarctica and other locations to do a shoot,’ and by the time it was done it

and discoveries in science. She had already recognized that photography was an excellent method of communication and so returned to school to pursue a career in that field in earnest.

In striking out, however, Mittermeier made an interesting discovery about herself. “I started my career thinking that I was going to be a wildlife photographer,” she said. “Even though I can do it, I have never really felt the amazing rush that you feel when you are achieving great photographic success.





“It was almost by accident that I discovered my real passion is in photographing people. I have found that my most passionate and sincere and honest and relevant work came about when I was in villages working with indigenous people, trying to show the intimate relationship between healthy ecosystems and some of the most vulnerable and marginalized people on the planet. It translates into a larger message of how important nature is to the well-being of us all.”

Through her career, Cristina Mittermeier has gained access to very remote places that few westerners have ever seen. These include the highlands of New Guinea and South America’s Guiana Shield. The bulk of her work has been in the Amazon rainforest with a group of Indians called the Kayapo, who live in a pristine region given over to them by the Brazilian government. These people are charged with the stewardship of an area of forest the size of the state of New York. “There are about five thousand people living in this area,” Mittermeier stated. “They are maintaining a traditional lifestyle very independent of outside influences. It is truly amazing that the only reason this large region is not being logged or burned is because these Indians are conserving it.

“When we talk about carbon emissions and forest markets, it’s very difficult to bring a human face to it. So part of what I am trying to do is use my relationship to the indigenous communities to say, ‘These are people that are doing an enormous favor for humanity.’”

### Madagascar

“I was hired by Conservation International to travel with a team—a writer, a filmmaker and myself as a photographer. We spent three weeks traveling to a series of protected areas in Madagascar to document the many benefits of conserving the rainforest for carbon sequestration, for healthy communities, for wildlife, for ecotourism, for clean air, clean water, pollination and other important factors. Conservation International will use those images to communicate the imperative of conserving forests. I am very privileged and lucky to be attached to these efforts.”

### ILCP Member Amy Gulick

“I spend as much of my life outdoors as I possibly can,” ILCP member Amy Gulick

told *Organic Connections*. “I finally made my total passion my career.

“Early in my career, the more I was photographing and writing about places I liked to visit, the more painfully obvious it became to me how much of the wilderness—all of these special habitats and species—we were losing, and how much we have lost. So my focus became educating people and making them aware of these issues and these incredible areas, and that there are things we actually can do to preserve them. I wasn’t so much trying to alarm and depress people—a lot of conservation efforts can be ‘doom and gloom’—but rather exciting people and making them fall in love with these places and animals. When people love a place, they will act on its behalf when it’s threatened.

“I find things beautiful that others wouldn’t necessarily. Watching grizzly bears in Alaska tear apart thousands of salmon and leave stinking rotten fish carcasses along streams—that’s beautiful. It’s this amazing cycle of life that’s going on right in front of you.

“Most people would look at an iconic picture of mountains in gorgeous light and say, ‘That’s the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen!’ For me, it’s not that it isn’t beautiful; it’s just that I prefer to look at the whole ecosystem and the life cycle and the process. To me, if those things are complete and functioning as they should be, it doesn’t get any better than that.”

### The Tongass Rainforest

Gulick is currently working with a coalition of conservation organizations to preserve critical areas of the Tongass rainforest in Alaska. Through her project “Salmon in the Trees: Life in Alaska’s Tongass Rainforest,” she is assisting in outreach to the general public and decision makers, creating a book, a website and a traveling exhibit, and making both live and Web presentations.

“The Tongass is a wonderful example of a coastal temperate rainforest. Worldwide, coastal temperate rainforests are rare,” Gulick explained. “They have historically covered one one-thousandth of the earth’s land surface; and they’re rare because they need very specific conditions to exist—cool temperatures and a coastal mountain range that traps air and causes a lot of moisture.

“North America’s original coastal temperate rainforest stretched from central Alaska along the west coast all the way south to the

northern California redwoods. About half of the original forest is gone due to logging, agriculture and other development, but the Tongass is amazingly intact. In fact, it contains one-third of the world’s remaining coastal temperate rainforest. Some of it has been logged and the remainder must be protected. But all of the species that existed at the time of European contact in the 1700s are still there—there’s not a single piece missing from that beautiful life cycle.

“I always try to get people excited by how complete it is and how rare it is. All the large predators are still there—grizzly bears, black bears, wolves and wolverines. And it’s one of the last places in the world that can support healthy runs of wild salmon.

“There aren’t many places left on our planet with intact ecosystems, and they won’t stay that way if we continue business as usual. What’s exciting in the Tongass is that today we have this incredible opportunity to ensure that the cycle of life does not get broken, that all the pieces remain.”

### The Photographs

**COVER:** Taking a break from the midday heat, this young girl sits nearby as the elders in her community association have a conversation with Conservation International’s communication team concerning ecotourism. © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **PAGE 10:** Madagascar has more than 100 species of lemur, but perhaps the most famous is the ring-tailed lemur. Looking intently down at his fellow lemur friends, this ring-tailed lemur lives near the Berenty Reserve in southern Madagascar. © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **PAGE 12 (top left):** Bald eagle with salmon. More than 50 species have been documented feeding on salmon, an important food source for both wildlife and people. © Amy Gulick/amygulick.com | **(top right):** The Tongass rainforest of Alaska is America’s largest national forest and contains the greatest remaining reserves of old-growth forest in the country. © Amy Gulick/amygulick.com | **(center left):** The Tongass is a coastal temperate rainforest that exists due to its proximity to the ocean and the Coast Mountains, cool summer temperatures, and high rainfall levels throughout the year. © Amy Gulick/amygulick.com | **(center middle):** Perhaps the most beautiful among the sifakas, this Diademede Sifaka lives on Lemur Island in Andasibe (southeast of Antananarivo). © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **(center right):** Clapping hands, drums and singing swirl around this Antandroy dancer as he performs a traditional dance with twelve other members of his village. The Antandroy, literally “the people of the thorns,” are from southern Madagascar. This man, Rakanouk, is a well-respected elder and dance leader in his village near Berenty Reserve. © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **(bottom left):** Mondruis stands proudly by an airplane he made in his village of Antreatrea, near Fort Dauphin in the very southernmost region of Madagascar. When I visited Mondruis, he had at least 20 airplanes on display. © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **(bottom right):** Larger than life in this image, this crab has a claw reach of a foot and it stands six inches tall. The crab was on the muddy road leading from the city of Diego Suarez to the town of Ambadivahibe. © Cristina Mittermeier/cristinamittermeier.com | **PAGE 13:** Salmon in the trees? Scientists have found a marine nitrogen in trees along salmon streams, which they trace back to the bodies of the fish. The trees absorb this marine nitrogen from the soil, enriched by decaying fish carcasses and the droppings of animals that have fed on the nutrient-packed salmon. © Amy Gulick/amygulick.com

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