

By Tim Moloney

FROM GLUTTONY TO GLUTEN-FREE: WELCOME TO A HEALTHY NEW YEAR



HAPPY NEW YEAR, WISE GUYS AND GALS! CARRYING AROUND A FEW EXTRA POUNDS AFTER ALL THE HOLIDAY REVELRY? MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU JUMPED ON THE GLUTEN-FREE BANDWAGON THAT SEEMS TO BE SWEEPING OUR FAIR CITY. IN CASE YOU'VE BEEN IN THE DARK, GLUTEN IS A PROTEIN COMPOSITE THAT APPEARS IN FOODS PROCESSED FROM WHEAT AND APPARENTLY, IT IS WREAKING HAVOC ON THE DIGESTIVE AND IMMUNE SYSTEMS OF YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS. THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THE GLUTEN-FREE CRAZE IS A BUNCH OF HORSESHIT, BUT OTHERS SWEAR BY IT, SO MUCH SO THAT SOME OF OUR FAVORITE RESTAURANTS ARE NOW OFFERING GLUTEN-FREE MENUS.

Eat healthy without sacrificing taste at Ruggles Green, Tony's (gluten-free pasta), RDG/Bar Annie (where Mimi is probably the most spirited anti-gluten advocate going), Fleming's, Lupe Tortilla, Pei Wei, LaGriglia and more. Give it a try. Supposedly you'll lose bloat, your skin will clear up, your eyes will shine and you'll drop the lbs. toot suite!

SHOE IN

Props to Mortar once again! The Montrose men's store with the terrifically well-edited offerings has landed a Houston exclusive: Common Projects' brogue wingtip loafers, featuring the brand's high-quality craftsmanship and attention to detail. So who or what are Common Projects? Glad you asked. The cool, understated New York-based accessories brand was established in 2004. The products, mainly bags, shoes and sunglasses, are hand-made using the finest materials in Italy, which contributes to the clearly luxurious touch.



The shoes' medium brown leather will continue to age as they are worn. Probably the coolest thing about these shoes is that they are stamped with individual serial numbers on the outside of the heels. According to the Mortar folks, these shoes can be dressed up or worn with the laces removed for a more casual look. Snap 'em up today for just \$552.

RING IN THE NEW YEAR

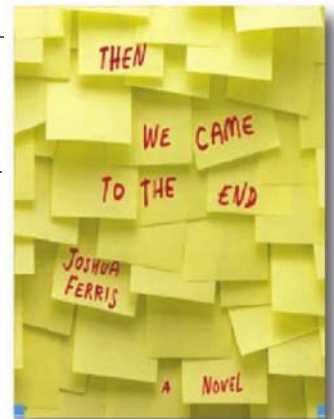


OK, so it goes Christmas, New Year's and then Valentine's Day. If you want to get a jump on your "Jour de l'Amour" jewelry shopping, come on out to the DeVille Fine Jewelry showroom on January 26 to check out the line's "best of" pieces – doing it two weeks out will allow enough time for custom sizing/alterations. Pricing is pretty great, too. Liz Glanville, DeVille's owner and custom fine jewelry designer, will work with you to create something really spectacular without breaking the bank. Her showroom is at 5700 Woodway, Suite 250 and the number is 281.501.3810.

TURN THE PAGE

I recently had the pleasure of dining with a group of friends who all used to work together at a local advertising agency in the late 90s – early 2000s. I have never known a funnier or smarter group of people, or a more hilarious yet punishing work environment. Looking back, it was probably the best job of my life. That's why I am crazy about Joshua Ferris' book, "Then We Came to the End."

Set in 2001, it's deadly accurate in its portrayal of a burst dot-com bubble and the coming waves of layoffs hitting the advertising industry – and one Chicago firm in particular. As a parade of employees depart, the remaining survivors turn on each other with a siege mentality that's both heartbreaking and funny as hell. If you've ever worked in the advertising field, I would recommend this book to you – and to anyone that lived through the heaven and hell that characterized the dot-com era. It's got a lot of similarities to today's economic situation as well. Thanks to Austin art director Sarah Gollither for recommending it.



SO HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL. MAKE IT A GREAT ONE. LET ME KNOW HOW THAT GLUTEN-FREE THING IS WORKING OUT FOR YOU. I JUST MIGHT JOIN YOU ONE OF THESE DAYS, ONCE THE WORLD RUNS OUT OF BREAD.