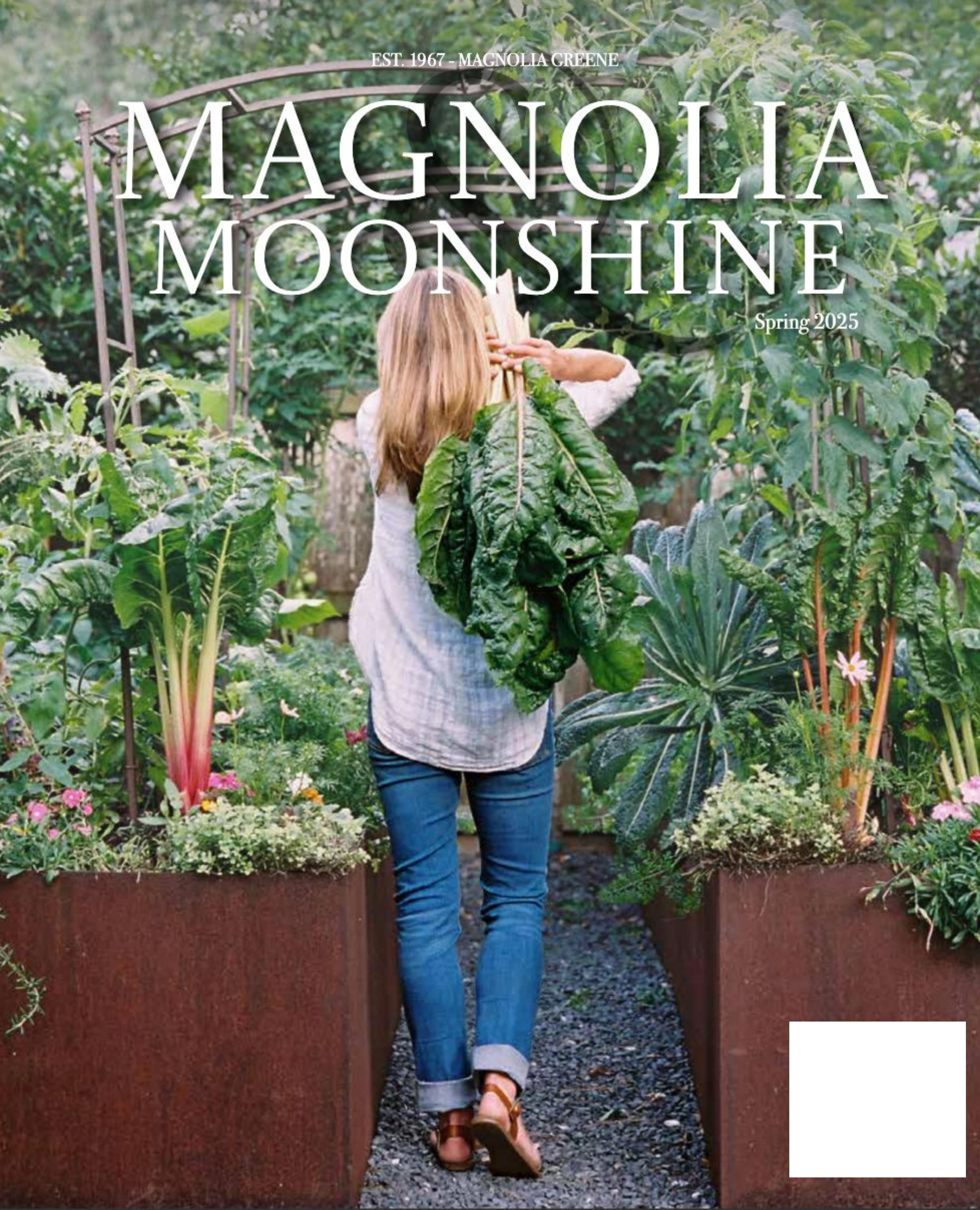


EST. 1967 - MAGNOLIA GREENE

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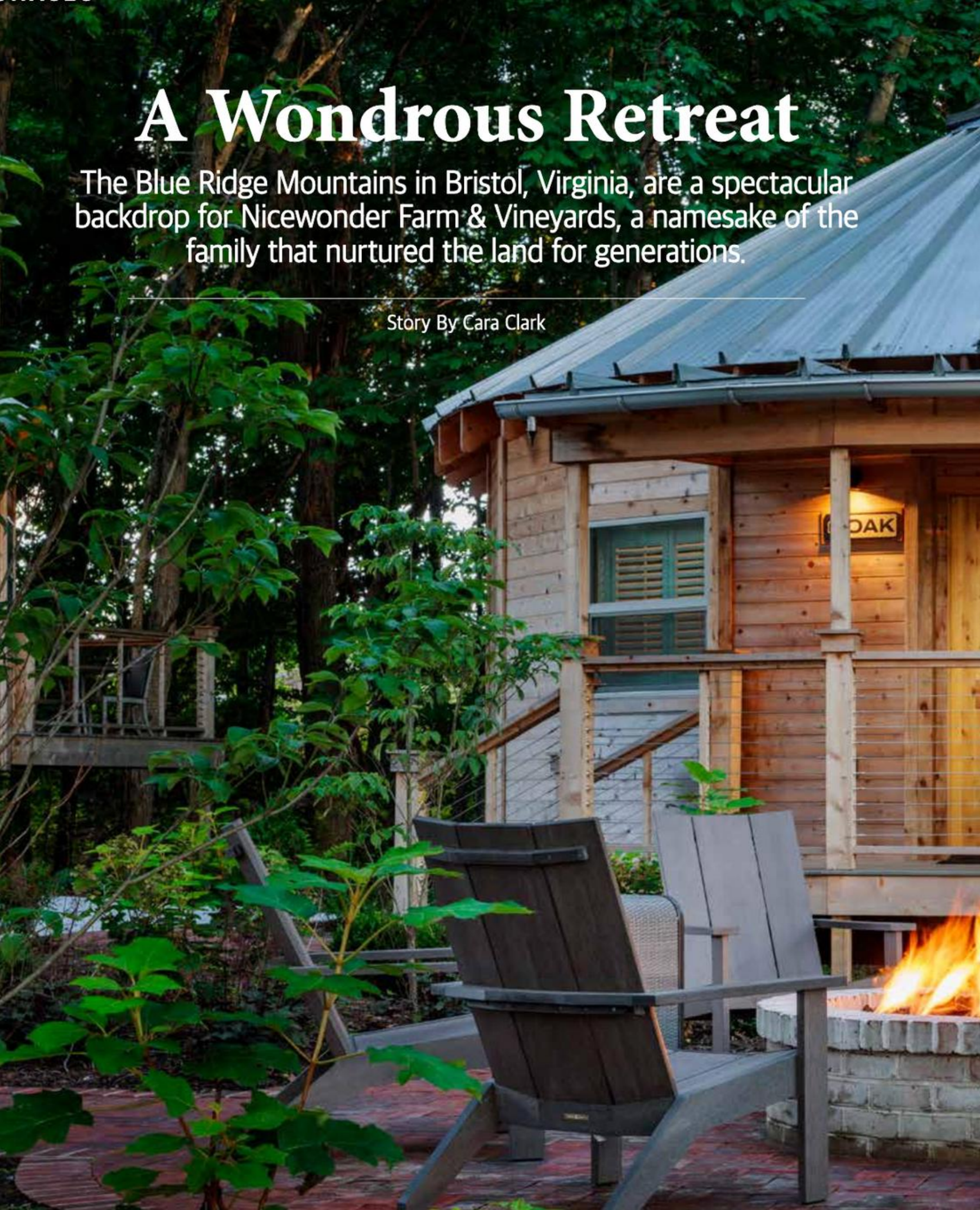
Spring 2025



A Wondrous Retreat

The Blue Ridge Mountains in Bristol, Virginia, are a spectacular backdrop for Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards, a namesake of the family that nurtured the land for generations.

Story By Cara Clark





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As spring breathes new life into nature with tender shoots emerging from trees and land, birds assemble their nests, and wildlife dances through the landscape. It's a season that heralds the long-awaited Spring Break escape from school for students of all ages — a time when families embark on unforgettable getaways, whether to luxurious city escapes or simple,

rustic retreats, creating memories that will be cherished for years.

Settled like native stone in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards—a family-owned gem—has curated experiences that promise to leave an imprint on the soul. In an age when sprawling properties are increasingly rare, this 450-acre retreat passed down through generations, offers an escape like no other. With meticulously cared-for vineyards stretching across rolling hills and woodland, the wonders of Virginia's highlands unfold, inviting exploration. This scenic Bristol, Virginia, haven is home to a luxury boutique hotel and, for a truly unique twist, a collection of luxurious yurts that blend nature with comfort, offering a glamping experience unlike any other.

“The yurts were introduced in 2021 and have remained our most sought-after accommodations,” says Chuck James, general manager. “They are tucked beneath a canopy of trees to create a secluded setting for wildlife watching and reconnecting with nature. We like to say our yurts are more of a luxury mini-home than a traditional yurt. Each of our yurts features custom handmade furniture and dome skylights for a camp-like experience in the trees.”

Every yurt is standalone, offering a private experience with all the amenities of a traditional guest room in an upscale and comforting environment. With metal roofs and cedar construction, the yurts each have an inviting front porch with rocking chairs where visitors can savor the first cup of java in the morning or late evening lingering among the stars. Set among the native trees as they are, it was fitting for the cottages to take on names such as Birch, Dogwood, or Oak. For kids, it's an irresistible draw to vacation in a circular space with a view of the sky through the roof and nature only steps away from the bed.

Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards has grown into a mountain destination with refined accommodations, farm-to-table dining, a destination-inspired spa, an infinity pool with vineyard views, and a slate of activities to appeal to all tastes and to keep cell phones and iPads packed away for a time.

“As a family-founded property, Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards has family values weaved throughout its DNA, from the accommodation types to the programming available,” Chuck says. “The vision behind the property was to craft unforgettable experiences blending luxury and fun for all guests to enjoy. From catch-and-release fishing and hatchet throwing to archery, disc golf, paddleboard yoga, and mountain biking, we offer something for every member of the family. They are guided by our trained team to safely learn the target sport of their choice, surrounded by wooded acreage. It's a safe and confidence-building experience that provides our visitors a sense of place in Appalachia.”

Nicewonder offers an opportunity to reconnect with the





land and learn about how food is grown at the property's Farmstand. Families can opt to tour the greenhouse and garden with farmers Dan and Heather Huard, an experience that makes a lasting impression.

"Visiting our farm is an opportunity for families to create unforgettable memories and learn something new together," says Heather. "Kids love our farm tours, where they can ask questions and learn firsthand about the crops we grow right here — they also get to taste some of it."

For adults on the journey, a visit to the winery is a must. It pays tribute to a family of former coalfield owners in southern Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia, that lovingly kept the farm intact for generations. The late Kenneth "Don" Nicewonder broke ground on Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards. With interests in wine and golf, the now lauded vineyard began with six acres.

"The full team is immensely proud of the efforts of our vineyard and winery, which has produced award-winning blends with the Viognier, Chardonnay, and Merlot varietals," says Kevin Sutherland, winemaker and vineyard manager. "Our vineyard's prime

location in the hills offers a unique terroir that is not typical of Southern vineyards. I would like to say that the vines aligned when we founded the vineyard in 2013, as the family-owned land here has been protected and honored for hundreds of years, enhancing the flavor of grapes that guests can taste for themselves."

While the first lodging phase began with nine luxury yurts, the team at Nicewonder expanded accommodations to meet demand, introducing the boutique-style inn shortly after. The family's sister property, The Virginian, also in Bristol, was begun in the early 1990s and boasts a golf course designed by expert Tom Fazio, a complement to Nicewonder Farm and Vineyards.

"In 2022, we expanded and officially introduced The Inn, which houses 28 farmhouse chic style rooms and the signature restaurant, Hickory," Chuck explains. "Most recently, we launched The Spa at Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards, which rounded out the property's resort-style amenities. The property maintains its boutique feel, even with these exciting additions, so guests can authentically experience the calmness of the natural surroundings."