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## An Ordinary Day in America

Plain vanilla moments—photographed over three decades in 50 states—compile to form an extraordinary mosaic, a spot-on portrait of American democracy. Meet the artist: Ojai's Joe Sohm.

[GIVING BACK](#)

### Nomad Gal

On the move with Ojai artist and humanitarian Leslie Clark

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### American Dream

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### In the Presence of Kings and Giants

The Falkland Islands—off the southern tip of South America, a little north of mainland Antarctica—aren't exactly at the cutting edge of new itineraries. But for intrepid travelers, isolation is the allure.

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### The World Comes to Camarillo

In the Santa Rosa Valley.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

### American Dream



Photo by Joe Sohm

**T**o be born American and have the means to travel is to have received one of the great gifts of life. This is something too few Americans understand. While the world surfs the Internet and slogs through countless channels of drivel, we can get up and go.

Not just dream.

When I was two-and-a half, a little older than my daughter is now, our family left the coziness of Ventura County for poverty-stricken Jamaica where we spent about a year. It was 1971. Swollen with sixties-era idealism, my parents loaded us onto a ship named Hope bound for the West Indies. Along the way, they administered polio and tetanus vaccines and tended to sick children in Central America and the Caribbean. Some of those kids, I imagine, are blending umbrella drinks right now, serving them in festooned coconut husks to lobster-red tourists.

Travel takes many forms: from all-inclusive resorts and Caribbean cruises to Chuck Graham's batten down the hatches approach to the Falkland Islands (p. 25), an off-the-radar locale for most travelers and all tourists. One of the hot trends in the travel industry these days is "voluntourism," a feel-good vacation with tax benefits. It's not quite adventure, nor is it strictly pleasure. To my inner skeptic, some of the companies on this bandwagon smack of marketing gimmickry. But it is heartening to know that a growing number of people want more out of travel than a suntan.

Leslie Clark's Nomad Foundation (p. 20) is anything but a marketing gimmick. The foundation evolved organically, not from a business plan, starting with a poor family's gift of precious milk to welcome a traveler. Leslie replied with a cow. And from that exchange, thousands of lives have been affected.

The spirit with which that nomadic family received Leslie is, I believe, the essence of travel. Life in America is good. So good in fact that we are allowed to forget the dramatic importance of things like milk. Travel wakes us up.

In magazineland, a Travel-themed issue typically means palm trees and tropical islands, masks and snorkels. And right about now, with a deadline closing in and all the pressing busyness of

## LAST ISSUE



Jarvis and Susan Streeter bring a world of eclecticism—where international art and antiques find a place in a contemporary English manor house—to their hands-on home renovation.

## COMMUNITY

### Gold Dust Gala

Ventura County Fairgrounds

## SHOPPING

### Who says you can't take it with you?

Luggage to accommodate all your travel needs

## SHORT LIST

day-to-day life in America, a postcard vacation sounds delightful (even better than a steaming gourd of milk). But rather than Bali or Bora Bora, you'll notice we gave this month's cover to the good ol' U.S. of A.

Locally based photographer Joe Sohm's recent book (p. 34) is perhaps the most poignant representation of American democracy ever put into print. Celebrated travel writer Paul Theroux wrote the forward to *Visions of America*. And yes, it is essentially a photo book. So I won't waste words rambling on about it here.

I will, however, point out that my luck-of-the-draw American citizenship enabled me to read Theroux's *Riding the Iron Rooster*—about train travel in China—while traveling by train in China, his South American saga *The Old Patagonian Express* while living in South America. Most of the people I met in those places will never say the same thing about Joe Sohm's book. ●

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