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Current Issue



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Did You Bring Bottles?, web site review

—By Nick Garafola, Utne

December 16, 2002 Issue

Freelance web designer David Gwynn claims observing commercial architecture as his biggest hobby. When traveling outside his home town of San Francisco he makes a special point to visit grocery stores, in a constant search for regional trends in supermarket design. Gwynn says he would be much happier if supermarket evolution had ceased around 1968 because he hates today's uninspired grocery store facades and floor plans that rival Macy's for square footage. "Supermarkets are one of the most important and overlooked elements of American life," Gwynn says. Spotting the overlooked might be Gwynn's golden talent. He can tell you where you are most likely to find Count Chocula and Grape Pop-tarts, which have somehow disappeared from California. He can cite pop-culture references to grocery chains, like the time Fred Flinstone tried to sell Wilma's gravelberry pies to San Safestone and his Safestone markets--an obvious parody of Safeway stores. This supermarket aficionado has learned a lot while studying grocery store history: first, that it is a very interesting subject about which he might get very obsessive. And second, that he really needs a life. --Nick Garafola

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