



Wow your crowd!

First *for women*

THANKSGIVING MADE EASY

Cat Cora's timing secrets
Brilliant uses for leftovers

YOU, HOLIDAY BEAUTIFUL



- ★ Stylish at-home manicure tricks
- ★ Pro styling tips for every face shape
- ★ Belts that *really* slim

LUXE FOR LESS



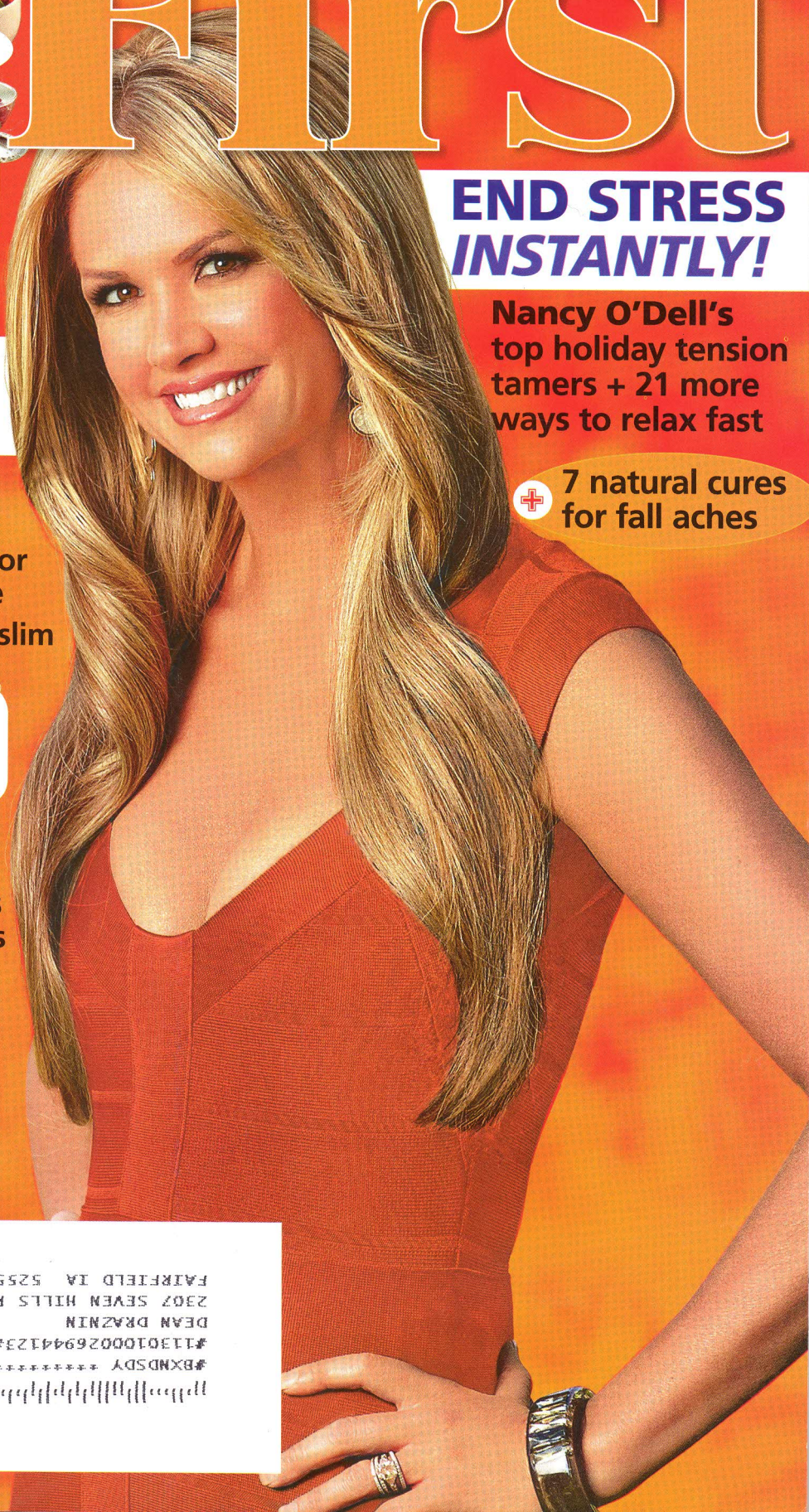
- ¢ Gorgeous tabletops
- ¢ Pretty citrus centerpieces
- ¢ Cakes that dazzle

HOW VITAMIN D ZAPS FAT

END STRESS INSTANTLY!

Nancy O'Dell's top holiday tension tamers + 21 more ways to relax fast

+ 7 natural cures for fall aches



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of tiredness in 48 hours”

my limbs. On top of that, I was suffering from increasingly blurred vision and light-sensitive eyes, which prompted Martin to teasingly call me Gizmo, the creature in the movie *Gremlins* who hated bright lights.

“I couldn’t figure out what was wrong with me. I had always eaten a fairly healthy diet and exercised, plus I didn’t drink or smoke. I also made an effort to avoid sugar, using NutraSweet in my tea and eating sugar-free yogurt and other snacks. Still, I felt awful.

“My doctor ordered a variety of blood tests, but they came back negative. I was eventually diagnosed with depression, but I didn’t think the problem was in my head. Not sure what else to do, I attempted to eat even healthier by opting for more prepackaged low-calorie foods. But my energy and health continued to spiral downward.

Energized and alive

“One day while I was visiting with my son and his family, I was so overwhelmed with exhaustion that I opted out of a long-planned day trip. My daughter-in-law suggested that if I felt up to it, I could read any of the books

on her nightstand. The curious title of one, *Skinny Bitch*, by Rory Freedman and Kim Barnouin, leapt up at me.

“Incredibly, from the moment I started turning the pages on June 10, 2009 (I’ll never forget that date), my life did a total turnaround. A section on food toxins delved into the negative effects of artificial sweeteners, including my preferred sugar substitute, aspartame, or NutraSweet. It seemed all my symptoms were linked to it. I was shocked—I had no reason to think that I had been poisoning myself! I never questioned the safety of something that was available in supermarkets and approved by the FDA.

“I immediately stopped using the sweetener, and just two days later, my symptoms began to disappear. I became a whiz at using healthy sweeteners, and I now sprinkle either Sun Crystals—a low-cal sugar/stevia combo—or a bit of organic turbinado sugar in my tea.

“Today I feel amazing and I have energy to spare. And forget Gizmo—Martin’s new nickname for me is Gusto Girl, from a ’60s beer commercial. And all I did was stop using aspartame!”

—as told to Hallie Potocki

Alert!

ASPARTAME IS LURKING IN ALLERGY MEDS

Up to 67 percent of women notice a spike in allergy symptoms in the fall. That’s because there’s more mold in the air as leaves break down, and spending time indoors raises exposure to dust and pet dander. An antihistamine can ease discomfort, but caution is in order: Aspartame has made its way into chewable OTC allergy drugs. And in addition to raising the risk of fatigue and brain fog, this additive can intensify allergy symptoms. The reason: Some people have an allergic reaction to aspartame, which can cause increased production of symptom-triggering histamines, says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *Beat Sugar Addiction Now!* (Fair Winds Press, 2010). “Not knowing the source of the trouble, sufferers could keep going back to the medication that’s making them feel worse.” His advice: Choose antihistamines free of artificial sweeteners, and use only when needed.

Main photo: JC Reilly. Inset: courtesy of Valerie Szilardy. Stills: Christie Geiger. Science text: Olga Norstrom-Ojeda.

80% of American women suffer from aspartame overload

Aspartame has been renamed the healthier sounding AminoSweet, but Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., warns, “It’s still made of excitotoxins that damage brain cells and cause neurological symptoms such as poor concentration, migraines and sensitivity to light.”

Aspartame also contains inflammatory compounds that cause fatigue, weight gain, pain, GI troubles and fatty liver disease.

For most women, it takes repeated exposure to aspartame for ill effects to set in. But an estimated 20 percent suffer from symptoms almost instantly. Still, few M.D.s link the symptoms to the sweetener.

SWEET SMART SWAPS

To avoid aspartame, scan labels—it must be in the ingredients list because of its ability to cause seizures in some people. Two aspartame-free picks:



Diet Coke

Zevia Cola

Zevia Cola (\$25 for 24 cans, at amazon.com) is a zero-calorie soda with the herbal sweetener stevia.



Eclipse gum

Spry gum

Spry (\$6 for 100 pieces, at [Vitamin Shoppe.com](http://VitaminShoppe.com)) contains xylitol, a zero-calorie sugar alcohol that doubles as a natural antibacterial.