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LIFESTYLES

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with the **WILD THINGS**
at the Nashville ZOO

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breaking down their
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RECIPES

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SLOW BURN

BY HEATHER HELTON, PHOTOS BY RON MANVILLE

WHEN YOU ARE IN NASHVILLE you know you can find handcrafted guitars; you may not know you can also find handcrafted cigars. The local stogie industry is burgeoning and making quite the distinguished impact on Music City. In a town not traditionally associated with tobacco, it's a win-win scenario for businesses and cigar enthusiasts alike. With the entrance of Nashville-based Crowned Heads and Franklin-based Bellaterra, everyone can support the expanding Nashville cigar industry. And with buying and sourcing local being a prominent theme, consumers can now add cigars to their list. Fortunately for the aficionados, there are also various noteworthy establishments where smoking is not a thing of the past, but of the present.

CROWNED HEADS

Cigar company Crowned Heads was founded by Jon Huber and Mike Conder. Previously with CAO for many years, they began their own premium cigar upstart following a corporate merger of CAO, which relocated headquarters from Nashville to Richmond, Virginia. Luckily for Nashvilians, Huber and Conder stuck around and decided to do cigar business their way, with customer satisfaction at the forefront. Huber says, "When Mike and I sat down to carve out our company's philosophy, we agreed that quality, loyalty, and integrity would be integral to everything we'd do going forward. As such, we chose to remain loyal to 'those that brought us to the dance,' so to speak, and decided there was no place to launch Crowned Heads other than our hometown of Nashville. The hometown support has been nothing short of amazing and we're extremely grateful to those that have been behind us since day one."

Crowned Head's first cigar, Four Kicks, attributes its name to a tune by none other than Nashville rockers-in-residence, Kings of Leon. It's only fitting that Four Kicks comes in four sizes, with Corona Gorda, Robusto, Sublime, and Piramide. The second major brand release, Headley Grange, arrived on the scene in March 2012 to ready fans with rave reviews. One Twitter follower exclaimed that if Headley Grange "is anything like the Four Kicks, I'm gonna need a bigger humidor." Crowned Heads cigars are at present available in over 180 cigar shops across the country from Rhode Island to the island of Hawaii. Clearly, Huber and Conder have carved out a niche in Nashville for their cigars, and the sky is the limit for Crowned Heads. crownedheads.com

BELLATERRA RANCH

With a flourishing winery operation under their belt that began in 2004, Mike and Catherine Murphy of Bellaterra Ranch of Franklin cultivated a new concept: To create cigar blends that pair well with wines. Bellaterra, which translates to "beautiful earth," has become quite the pioneer for wine and cigar pairings, with other American wineries expressing