What's FUN in 2017!

From Jimmy Fallon's ride to new twists on games, exercise and old-fashioned supper clubs—here's how we're whooping it up this year.

By Kristin Luna · Cover and opening photography by Mary Ellen Matthews

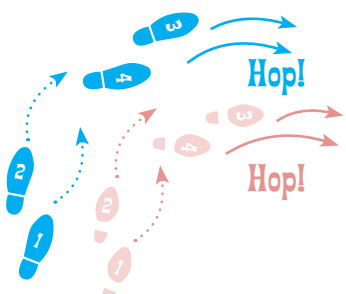
Riding For Thrills

We've been amused by amusement parks since the first one opened in Connecticut in the mid-1800s. But, oh, how they've changed. The "thrill" of the first 360-degree looping roller coaster, which debuted in 1976, now pales in comparison to immersive 3-D simulator rides like Race Through New York Starring Jimmy Fallon, which seats more than 70 people at a time in a "flying theater."

"We're always trying to marry technology to a story that gives us the ability to take people on an adventure like they've never been able to experience," says Mark Woodbury, president of Universal Creative and vice chairman of Universal Parks & Resorts. "People's expectations have become much more complex and we've had to evolve." The Virginia-based International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions estimates that 385.2 million people visited parks in 2016 alone, generating a whopping $20.7 billion in revenue.

Kicking Up Our Heels

If you were inspired by Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone tapping their way through *La La Land* or Rory Gilmore stress tapping on the *Gilmore Girls* reboot, you're not alone. "I cannot say that didn't influence me," says Charlsie Niemiec, 29, of Great Barrington, Mass.



"Taking dance as a little girl was something that always brought me joy, so I signed up for tap. I feel like I'm reconnecting to my 5-year-old self."

Embracing Vitamin N

Turn your frown upside down! Studies have long linked being out in nature to an improvement in mood, and a little eco-therapy goes a long way in lowering

blood pressure and counteracting digital overload. Today's nature lovers aren't just hiking. The most popular outdoor sports include stand-up paddling (SUP), kayaking, BMX biking and surfing.

Playing Games at Home

Gone are the days when stately Trivial Pursuit was the standard recipe for family fun; highly interactive, widely social games now dominate the market. "People are passionate about playing games. There are more than 2.1 billion gamers in the world," says Jonathan Berkowitz, senior vice president of marketing for Hasbro Gaming. "Games bring families and friends of all ages and generations together for fun and meaningful interaction." Board game sales soared some 20 percent in 2016, according to the consumer trend and marketing group NPD, thanks in part to such hot properties as Hasbro's Speak Out (where players try to speak various phrases while wearing a mouthpiece) and Pie Face Showdown (where players compete to try to avoid a face full of whipped cream).

Being Surprised at Supper

Supper clubs, all the rage in the '40s and '50s as a way to climb the social ladder, have seen a resurgence. "The name originally was used to conjure the feeling of exclusivity," says filmmaker Holly De Ruyter, who chronicled Wisconsin's supper club movement in her documentary *Old Fashioned*. Supper clubs now come in many forms—brick-and-mortars, pop-ups in one-time locations, even gatherings of strangers inside a private home. And while the food might be inventive and good, it often takes a backseat to the clubs' social aspect. "They bring people together, creating a place to engage and connect," De Ruyter says—something many people are looking for "as technology has enabled us to have fewer interactions with each other."

Channeling Peter Pan

Lovers of AcroYoga and other circuslike arts such as trapeze flying are sometimes fitness freaks, but thousands of amateurs are jumping on this trend to channel their inner Peter Pan (and possibly create their next viral social media post). Other activities that mix fitness with fun include challenge competitions like the vibrant Color Run 5K (in more than 40 cities across the U.S.) and grimy Tough Mudder races; both have seen a meteoric rise in recent years. These obstacle-course-driven races burn off last night's binge, serve as solid team- or family-building exercises and are just plain fun.

Heading Out for Game Night

Ping-Pong, cosmic bowling, escape games, pub trivia nights—all are entertainment options that incorporate an element of competition. "I love doing different escape rooms with friends and co-workers, because I'm competitive by nature and I always want to win," says Elizabeth Keaney, 35, of Austin, Texas. "They're also great activities for a group of varying ages and interests, especially with older kids." Topgolf locations—golf-based theme parks with food and drink—have been popping up all over the U.S. They're a game-night magnet for golfers and nongolfers in search of a good time.

Releasing Our Inner Artist

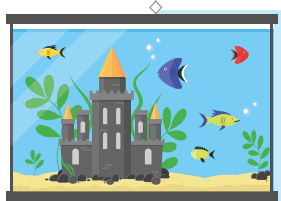
It's trendier than ever to be artsy, thanks to the nationwide DIY movement that Pinterest spawned. Franchises such as Paint Nite have cropped up across the country, making painting a popular activity for birthday parties, bachelorette

A FEW OF Jimmy's FAVORITE THINGS

1. VINYL
"Music sounds better on my record player. I love the crackles, the space between songs."

2. DATE NIGHT
"My wife and I make meat tacos, Ortega from the box and add toppings. Then we'll sit down and watch *The Bachelor*, *Survivor*, *Big Brother* or *The Challenge*."

3. WINDOW SHOPPING
"I love wandering through Williams Sonoma asking myself if there are things I don't need. Like, 'Do I need another way to cut an avocado? I don't think so!'"



4. AQUARIUMS
"I'm obsessed. They're so peaceful, cool, dark and calm. I'm not underwater, I'm not in their world, but I'm looking at the fish."

5. POPCORN
"I love those tricolored tins where you mix the cheese with caramel. I sometimes walk into a movie theater, get some popcorn and leave—without seeing a movie!"

6. MEDITATING
"I use this app called Headspace. It's great. This British guy comes on and tells me it's going to be all right."

7. YANKEES GAMES WITH LORNE MICHAELS
"I always get Cracker Jack—we're back to my love of popcorn! Or a beer, hot dog and a cheesesteak—love those."

8. THEME PARKS
"It's great, it's fun and everyone is full of joy."

PHOTO SHOOT: MAKEUP BY CYNDIE LOU USING SKYN ICELAND/TRACEYMATTINGLY.COM; HAIR BY KUMI/SWA; WARDROBE STYLING BY BRIAN COATS/THE WALL GROUP; TAILORING BY STEPHANIE BIER; PROP STYLING BY SHAWN P PRODUCTIONS; WARDROBE (COVER) SUIT BY GUCCI; SHIRT BY LANVIN; TIE BY TOM FORD; SHOES BY O'KEEFE; BELT BY PRADA; (OPENER) LEFT-CARDIGAN BY PRADA; SHIRT BY GUCCI; PANTS BY LANVIN; SHOES BY O'KEEFE; RIGHT-CARDIGAN BY DAVID HART; POLO BY RAG & BONE; PANTS BY GUCCI; SNEAKERS BY TOM FORD

weekends and girls' nights out. "People can come in and create without the time and money required to invest in products, setup and cleanup," says Annie Rone, 46, the owner of the Painted House in Tullahoma, Tenn. "It's like a restaurant but with really great art supplies—and you leave with something you had fun doing." Not into painting? No problem—other trendy artsy endeavors, from pottery to woodworking, let you embrace your creative side without ever picking up a brush.

Supporting the Arts

Lin-Manuel Miranda made the stage cool again when he brought his historical hip-hop-era *Hamilton* to Broadway in the summer of 2015, and more than 600,000 theatergoers have attended to date. Broadway as a whole welcomed 13.25 million visitors in 2016, while other theaters (of the film variety) saw a record-breaking box office year with $11.36 billion in revenue domestically, thanks to blockbusters like *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* and *Finding Dory*.

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Visit ***Parade.com/jimmy*** for Fallon's blow-by-blow tour of his new ride.

Jimmy Fallon JUST WANTS TO HAVE FUN

His motto: Fill each day with lots of laughter.

By Lambeth Hochwald

Thank-you notes. Slow-jamming the news. Song parodies. The Wheel of Carpet Samples.

We all know how much fun Jimmy Fallon, the high-energy Emmy- and Grammy-winning TV host, has on NBC's *The Tonight Show*.

Now Fallon, 42, is about to rev up the fun even more with the new high-tech amusement park ride Race Through New York Starring Jimmy Fallon, which he's rolling out April 6 at Universal Studios in Orlando. "It's like going to *The Tonight Show*, the best tour of New York City and the scariest roller coaster simulator you've ever been on," he says.

"I like having a good time. Life is better that way."

The ride's creators have pulled out all the stops: There's a replica of the 30 Rock building and the *Tonight Show* set, a Manhattan subway, a dive into the East River (with splashing water!), cameos by Fallon, his sidekick Higgins and the show's house band, the Roots. Plus, piped-in pizza smells, fireworks and loads of other surprises.

Next week, just before the ride officially opens, Fallon will bring *Tonight* to Orlando for a week of tapings. "I love taking the show on the road, especially when we get to go to a theme park," he says. "Everyone is there to have a good time."

If you think Fallon lives to find the fun in every moment, you wouldn't be wrong.

To him, the American way of having fun is a big vacation—something he remembers vividly from his childhood in Saugerties, N.Y.

"My parents saved up money to go on vacation," he says. "We ended up going to Lake George [New York] every single year," he says. "That's where I remember riding the Steamin' Demon [at the Great Escape amusement park in Queensbury]. Vacation is that time when you say, 'I worked so hard, I earned this week, I'm going to go and have fun.'"

Now that he's a dad—Fallon and his wife, Nancy, have two daughters, 3-year-old Winnie and Frances, 2—he says his fun game has "amped up five notches."

"Kids take fun to a whole new level," he says. "Going to the potty is fun, reading is fun, walking them to school is fun. They make every single thing fun.

"I like having a good time," Fallon says with a smile. "Life is better that way."

FROM LEFT: NBC; MARY ELLEN MATTHEWS; WARDROBE-SWEATER BY MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA; SHIRT BY THOM BROWNE; DENIMS BY JEAN SHOP; SNEAKERS BY TOM FORD