

Into the Escape Room

Why people of all ages are choosing to “escape” for a fun night out.

You go into a room with friends or family, with an assignment to solve a puzzle or find clues against a clock or face a terrible fate. The drama is merely make-believe, but the excitement and fun are real, and the adventure is seemingly available in every metro area. The escape room phenomenon came to the U.S. from Japan in 2012, putting players into a kind of real-time action movie in which they are the stars.

In the eyes of many, escape rooms are hot because they have tapped into the millennial-driven “experience economy.” An escape room adventure has a social aspect; you can enjoy it with others, you have a memory that lasts, and the experience arguably becomes richer because it is shared. Small businesses and corporations are starting to use them for team-building exercises. New technology, costumes for participants to wear, and compelling “storylines” appear to be giving some escape rooms a competitive edge over others, but both high-tech and low-tech escape rooms are proving highly profitable – virtually any commercial space can host them.¹



The Perils of Penny Stocks

Clickbait claims for these securities should be taken with a few grains of salt.

Should you buy obscure, near-worthless securities on the rare chance that they might skyrocket in value? That is the argument for buying penny stocks, and it is a weak one. Yes, you might be able to buy many shares of penny stocks for little money. Yes, there is a chance you could profit handsomely later. On the other hand, you could buy

shares of quality companies instead – more expensive, but usually more sensible for the long-run investor.

A penny stock is any stock worth \$5 or less per share that is unlisted on a major public exchange. Speculation and penny stocks go hand in hand. Speculators bet on penny stocks, hoping to ride short-term hype to a quick profit. Sometimes hype seems to be all the shares have going for them. Many of the novice investors lured into penny stocks fail to realize that they are hard to sell, as they trade over the counter rather than on big exchanges. Pair that poor liquidity with the scant history or public information available for most of these investments, and investors may easily be burned. The casual investor and retirement saver would be wise to spurn the clickbait and stick to the investing mainstream.²



Are Health Trackers Truly Accurate?

These devices have improved, but are far from foolproof.

Mere activity trackers like Fitbit are so yesterday – or so it seems. The number of personal health devices to monitor you as you work out (or walk around) has multiplied recently, and some physicians still worry about the accuracy of the data; the algorithms involved have improved since their debut.

In the utopian view of their champions, the technology or artificial intelligence present in such devices could

measure health metrics 24/7 for everyone, from the fit to the ill. But questions linger. How useful are the devices if people find them bothersome and quit wearing them after a few weeks? If the trackers collect highly sensitive personal data, how is it stored? For that matter, the Food and Drug Administration conducts no trials for these trackers, as it does for medical devices – which makes clinicians and physicians wonder if they can truly be relied upon as a source for information pertaining to diagnoses and prescriptions. The next step may be for these manufacturers to meet new federal standards or tolerances for health care data.³



Recipe of the Month

No-Bake Creamberry Cheesecake

Crust:

1 Cup Graham Cracker Crumbs
1/4 Cup Butter

Filling:

24 oz. Cream Cheese (softened)
3/4 Cup Sugar
1/2 Cup Water (cold)
1 Tbsp. Gelatin (unflavored)

16 oz. Strawberries (fresh)
12 oz. Blueberries (fresh)
2 Cups Whipped Cream

Lightly grease a 9" pie pan. Melt butter, mix with crumbs, and press firmly into the pan, then set aside.

In a small saucepan mix cold water and gelatin, then let sit for 1-2 minutes. Move to the stove top and stir gently over low heat until all gelatin has dissolved, then remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.

Add cream cheese to a large bowl and beat until fluffy, add sugar and mix. Set aside. Coarsely chop (do not puree) berries in food processor, then add to the cream cheese and sugar mixture. Finally, fold in your whipped cream (store bought or house made) and combine until mixed evenly.

Spread the filling mixture across the crust and fill evenly. Refrigerate for 7-8 hours before serving.

Serving suggestion: Top with whipped cream and/or fresh berries.



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WHO SAID IT?

Henry David Thoreau

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ANSWER:

A: B, 6.8%.⁴



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Citations.

- 1 - forbes.com/sites/bisnow/2017/08/25/escape-rooms-how-these-unconventional-tenants-break-free-from-retails-woes/ [8/25/17]
- 2 - fool.com/knowledge-center/what-is-a-penny-stock.aspx [3/6/18]
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