

SARAH AND JULIA COMMON

This mother-daughter team bolsters a Vancouver community with bees.

AS AN AGRICULTURE student at the University of British Columbia, Sarah Common planned to study food security. Little did she know that a larger mission buzzed beneath the surface. While volunteering in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, a neighborhood stricken by poverty, Sarah realized that her mother's beekeeping expertise could forge a path to purpose. Together, the two established a colony of bees in a local green space and Hives for Humanity was born. "Very quickly, community residents came to the apiary wanting to take responsibility for the bees and for the garden," Sarah recalls. H4H participants produce rich urban honeys along with candles, body balms and lip salves using the fruits of the hive. "The Downtown Eastside is often profiled as dark and dismal," says Sarah. "Now we've got this beautiful honey that tells a different story—one of possibility, love and skill." Perhaps most importantly, the program has cultivated self-worth. "One of the most transformative experiences people can have is having their value acknowledged," says Sarah. "All that the bees require is for you to be present and respectful. It doesn't matter where you're coming from." — **GINA DECAPRIO VERCESI**



▶ **Worker bees** carry pollen, a source of protein, on their hind legs and feed it to their young to grow the colony.

▶ **This past January**, nature photographer Clay Bolt captured images of the rare Wallace's giant bee on a remote island in Indonesia.

▶ **Ancient Egyptians** floated rafts carrying beehives up and down the Nile to pollinate crops growing along the river.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Pollinator gardens, urban hives and honey-based liquors are the bee's knees.



1 At Vancouver's **Fairmont Waterfront**, beekeeper Julia Common educates guests about the hotel's apiary, native plants and pollinators.



2 Delta worked with **Bee Downtown** last spring to install three beehives at its Atlanta HQ to support the airline's sustainability efforts.



3 In Door County, **Hatch Distilling** transforms pure Wisconsin honey and local organic grains into small-batch spirits.