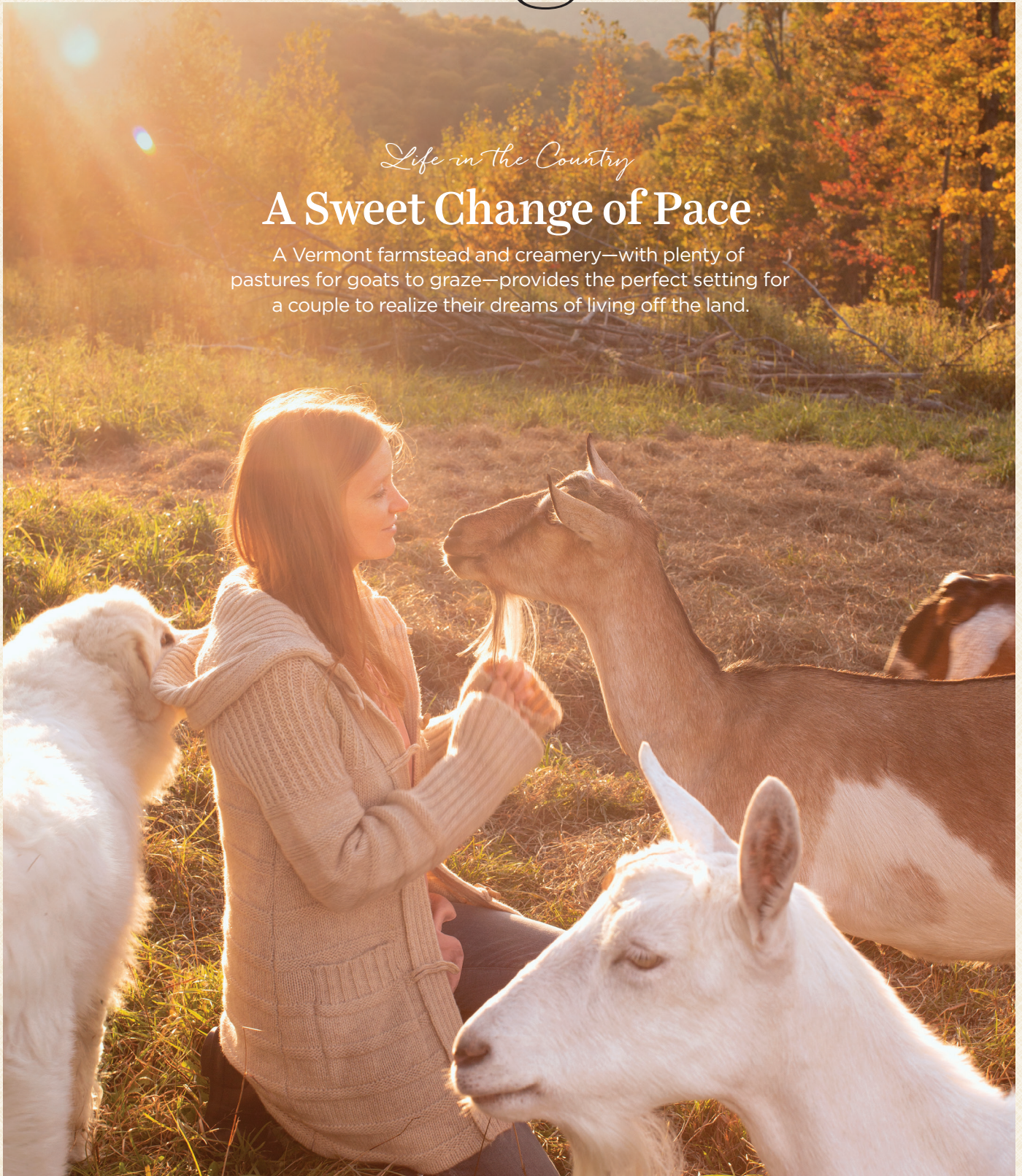


Life in the Country

A Sweet Change of Pace

A Vermont farmstead and creamery—with plenty of pastures for goats to graze—provides the perfect setting for a couple to realize their dreams of living off the land.



Reserve an hour-long "goat hangout" in the pasture with Big Picture's herd, or book a night in an Airbnb located on the property.

The trees in Vermont's West River Valley are ablaze with fall colors, and on the 100 acres of Big Picture Farm (bigpicturefarm.com), life is in full swing. "You never know when the snow will arrive, so in autumn we're running around making sure everything is ready for winter," says Louisa Conrad, an artist raised in New York City who, alongside husband Lucas Farrell, a poet from Aspen, Colorado, moved to the farm 11 years ago hoping to begin a goat-milk caramel business.

"The beginning was tough," Lucas remembers. "Louisa would spend six hours a day hand-stirring caramel in our tiny, rustic kitchen." But her confections soon won awards, and the business grew, as did the number of dairy goats (now 46) that roam the pastures. "Goats are so intelligent and loving and much more like dogs than other farm animals," says Louisa. "Each has its own personality."

These days, they also share the farm with two daughters, Maisie (4) and Minna (1). "Watching our girls grow up so connected to the land is wonderful," says Lucas. "In the fall after a day of work, we'll go on a family hayride, pick vegetables from our garden for dinner, and check on how the apples in the orchard are growing." The land is also the backdrop for community farm feasts. "We all bring what we've grown to share. The kids play, and the adults swap stories about country life, taking time to appreciate the turning leaves, the beauty of living with the seasons."



"Our daughters are growing up with the goats," says Louisa. "I don't know how they'll translate that to success, but Maisie [below] can sure outrun anyone on a pile of rocks!"



"Goat milk is perfectly suited to caramels and makes them extra smooth and velvety," says Louisa. Shop their caramels, chocolates, and cheese at bigpicturefarm.com.



TOP PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LOUISA CONRAD.