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Special

What's *Your* American Dream?

by Kimberly Fusaro



Life, liberty...
and unlimited cupcakes?
A perfect pair of jeans?
A sweet, simple love life? We
asked women just like you
what *they're* striving for.
Let their answers inspire
you to start dreaming...
and start doing.

photograph by Roland Bello



“My American dream is living with the knowledge that it’s OK to measure my success in how many times I smile in a day and not how many dollars I make in a day.”

—Beth Doane, 26, Columbus, Ohio

“I crave the 1950s version of the American dream. I want to be the black Donna Reed, with romance, a husband, a home, 2.5 kids and a cute dog in the backyard. It sounds anachronistic—especially for a gal with an Ivy League degree—but the American dream was always about defying expectations. I guess it still is!”

—Alicia Gay, 30, New York City

“The new American dream is living at the highest standard that you can afford while still saving. Always spend less than you have. And always choose happiness.”

—Michelle Hartley, 25, Tampa



“My American dream is to travel the world as if it were my playground. I want to see and experience everything I possibly can. I wasn’t put here to be stuck in a cubicle day after day.”

—Jenny Leonard, 28, Houston

“There are material things that are part of my American dream—owning a house, having an IKEA within driving distance, being able to get a McDonald’s cheeseburger whenever the mood strikes—but there are bigger things, too. My dream isn’t that different from my great-great-grandfather’s when he came to America in 1853; all anyone has ever wanted is to be financially sound, healthy and happy.”

—Stephanie Nero, 25, Minneapolis



“The American dream in 2010 is about finding the sublime in the everyday, like taking a stroll at dusk through your neighborhood or sipping wine with friends on a Friday night. It’s that simple.”

—Amy Swift Crosby, 37, Los Angeles

“Achieving my American dream means getting my 15 minutes of fame, and publishing a book. But I’m in no rush to get married—and I’m not meant for breeding!”

—Cristy Raposo, 28, Providence, R.I.

“After I lived miraculously through a brain hemorrhage, my new American dream involves keeping stress to a minimum and trying to achieve just a few clear goals slowly over time, rather than all 500 by next week! I no longer need to visit the pyramids, have three perfect children, grow my business to \$20 million in revenue—and still find time to be sexy and fabulous in every waking moment.”

—Maria Ross, 37, Seattle



“I’m an old-fashioned girl from Oklahoma. I still want my picket fence—I just want to paint it red!”

—Cherrisa Milton, 33, Oklahoma City

“My husband and I already live our American dream. All I need is a big backyard, a pitcher of sweet tea and a place for my iMac, since I work from home.”

—Kayla Selans, 26, Orlando, Fla.

“Achieving the new American dream is not about the number of ‘friends’ I can rack up on Facebook or the number of Jimmy Choo shoes in my closet (for the record, zero); nor is it about finding the ‘perfect’ man and starting a family. It is about embracing life as it actually is, warts, wars and all, and trying to become a better, more educated, well-rounded, empathetic and informed person.”

—Ciara McLaughlin, 29, New York City

