



THIS IS A TEST

# Pilot Program

Take wing with a beginner's flight lesson. BY ANNE VICKMAN

I'm sitting in the cockpit of a 2,300-pound, single-engine, high-wing Cessna 172 Skyhawk at the top of the runway when a command crackles through the headset: "Pull the throttle all the way out in three seconds." The plane speeds up, lifts, and climbs into the air. I sputter two (very predictable) words: "I'm flying!" Oh—did I mention I hate flying?

To be fair, my copilot, certified flight instructor Tim Campbell, is doing the heavy lifting. Campbell, who's been flying for 30 years, is the owner of Eagle East Aviation in North Andover—and even though I'm in the driver's seat, he's in control.

Before takeoff, Campbell spent about half an hour explaining the nuts and bolts of flight. "It's not brain surgery, but there's a lot to it," he told me. We went over angles of rotation (roll, pitch, and yaw); how to brake and control the rudder using the foot pedals; how to make adjustments in flight; and what, exactly, all the dials indicate. "Feel is such an important thing in an airplane," Campbell said. "But it's also the hardest to teach."

Up in the air, I take in the spectacular view—through the clouds, I spot Haverhill below—and promptly forget everything Campbell has

just taught me. Which means I'm terrified and filled with adrenaline-fueled excitement when he turns over the controls. I practice keeping a level pitch, banking left and right turns, and rolling out of them, all with the slightest use of pressure in my hands and feet. It's a lot like driver's ed—only we're 3,000 feet above ground and going 110 miles per hour. And yet there's something Zen about soaring: Once you're in the air, it's just not that complicated.

As we descend over a humpback whale-size cloud, my stomach lurches, but Campbell lands the plane smoothly and gently. Going for a pilot's license doesn't top my bucket list, but the skies will seem a lot friendlier now that I've experienced flying firsthand.

\$99 FOR A ONE-HOUR INTRODUCTORY LESSON, EAGLE EAST AVIATION, 492 SUTTON ST., NORTH ANDOVER, 978-683-3314, LETSGOFLYING.COM.

## HAUTE HEADLINES

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BOSTON STYLE

### SEASIDE LOOKS

➔ Everything old is new again at the Strawberry Banke Museum's exhibit "Thread: The Story of New England Fashion," in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Highlights include 400 years' worth of garments and accessories, and fresh pieces from big-deal designers such as Philip Treacy and locals Carter Smith and Emily Muller.

603-433-1100, STRAWBERRYBANKE.ORG.

### OOH, SHINY

➔ Magpies should flock to Como, a new 750-square-foot jewelry shop in Newton Centre, for fun, mostly faux pieces from Azaara, Christina Defalco, and other artisans (prices range from \$25 to \$2,500). Ceri boutique owner Ellen Shapiro is behind the glitz.

617-527-9100, CERIBOUTIQUE.COM.

ILLUSTRATION BY KIRSTEN ULVE

