

Survive and Thrive September 2025: “I’ve Owned Gold Coins Since 1971”



By GINA SANDERS @ ADOBE STOCK

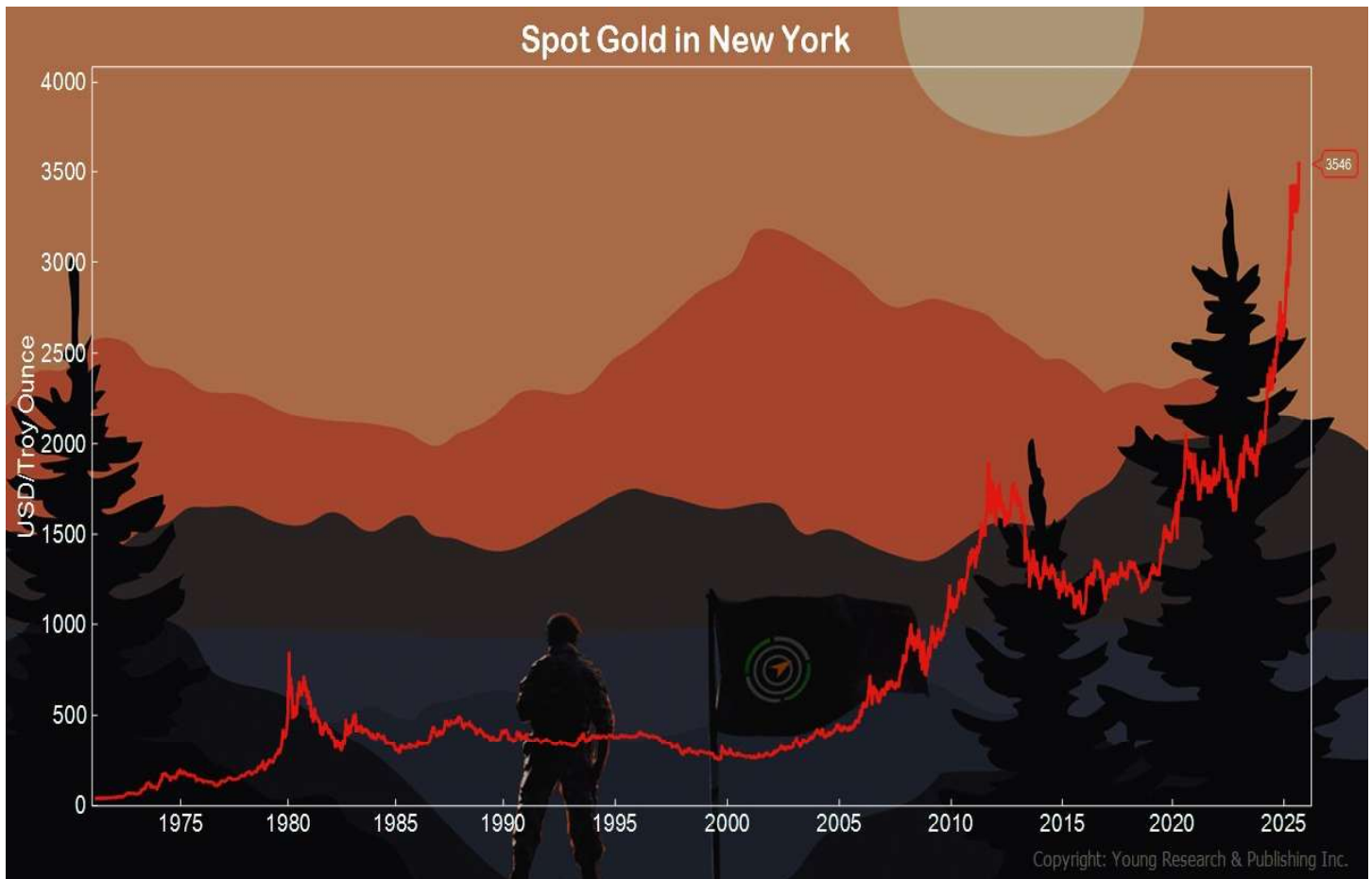
Dear Survivor,

Your Survival Guy was speaking with my father-in-law, Dick Young, recently, about gold. “I’ve owned my gold coins since 1971, and have never sold any of them,” he said. As you can see below, that’s turned out to be a winner.

We then talked a bit about Fidelity Investments, his experience calling on them when he was working in Boston, and my four years [working there after graduating from Babson](#). “I wouldn’t trade that experience for anything,” I said. Family-owned Fidelity continues to set the industry bar as far as I’m concerned. Well-run businesses have a knack for compounding good decisions.

Changing gears a bit, when you look at how high real estate prices are in Newport, RI, it’s hard to believe how far they’ve come since Your Survival Guy and Gal bought our little cottage in the Point neighborhood in 1998. You would choke on your lobster roll if you saw the Zestimate today. And this was in a neighborhood you wouldn’t dare venture into back in the day.

In my conversations with you, you tell me about your investments through the years and how well many of them have turned out. Sometimes just being in the game, getting in front of it, is all it takes.



When Nasdaq Fell Nearly 78% from Peak

“When the dot-com bubble burst in March 2000, the Nasdaq fell nearly 78% from its peak,” writes William Goetzmann for the WSJ in “Financial Bubbles Happen Less Often Than You Think.” “Many of the era’s highest fliers plunged more than 90%, and vast swaths of dot-coms disappeared. The ones that survived, though, helped spearhead a radical tech revolution that is still changing our economic, personal and social lives today.”

His sub-head reads “Bubbles and market crashes make for great horror stories. But research shows how rare they are—and that the consequences aren’t all bad.” Really? Tell that to an investor who may have retired before the crash. This is coming from The Edwin J. Beinecke Professor of Finance and Management Studies at the Yale School of Management.

The problem with financial history is you just don’t know how you’re going to feel in the future. How are you going to deal with a market crash? Make sure you have an idea before you realize your risk tolerance was, in fact, an intolerance.

The dot-com crash was one of the three deadliest markets this century. You can see the damage they caused in my table below. Prepare your portfolio before you’re a victim of the next crash.

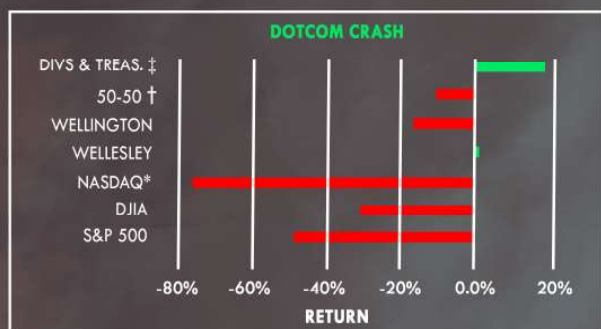
YOUR SURVIVAL GUY **WARNING:** DEADLIEST MARKETS THIS CENTURY

| CRASH | PEAK | TROUGH | S&P 500 | DJIA | NASDAQ* | WELLESLEY | WELLINGTON | 50-50† | DIVS & TREAS. ‡ |
|---------|----------|----------|---------|--------|---------|-----------|------------|--------|-----------------|
| DOTCOM | 03/24/00 | 10/09/02 | -47.4% | -31.5% | -77.6% | 0.9% | -17.1% | -8.1% | 18.6% |
| HOUSING | 10/09/07 | 03/09/09 | -55.3% | -51.8% | -54.8% | -28.3% | -41.6% | -34.9% | -16.6% |
| COVID | 02/19/20 | 03/23/20 | -33.8% | -36.5% | -30.0% | -17.9% | -25.8% | -21.9% | -15.8% |

*TOTAL RETURN EXCEPT FOR NASDAQ PRIOR TO 2013, WHICH USES PRICE RETURN DATA.

† A PORTFOLIO MADE UP OF 50% WELLESLEY FUND AND 50% WELLINGTON FUND.

‡ A PORTFOLIO OF 50% S&P 500 DIVIDEND ARISTOCRATS AND 50% BLOOMBERG BARCLAY'S US INTERMEDIATE-TERM TREASURY



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First Gimme Shelter, Then See If Money Floats

Even if you've been living in a cave, you still have a good idea it's been a good year. In Newport, you don't even need to look at your computer. Just walk to the waterfront and peer out into the harbor to see with your own eyes that money does, in fact, float.

What I'm thinking about this morning is how to clear the decks of your balance sheet to prepare for the storm that may or may not come. Either way, you will benefit. Because what I'm talking about is getting out of debt and owning your home.

Not that long ago, Your Survival Guy and Gal were refinancing our home when the snarky banker sitting across from us said, "Yeah, we (his bank) wouldn't mind owning a home on the Point (my home)." That stung, and ever since then, I've always worked to own my home.

"Oh, but what about the interest deduction?" one thinks. What about it? My goal isn't to play money games. It's simply to own my shelter, which brings me peace of mind. Yes, there are the real estate taxes, and yes, it's valuable to look at [Your Survival Guy's Super States](#) for good governance, an oxymoron if I've ever seen one. But at the end of the day, you live where you live.

If you want some help organizing your balance sheet so you can see for yourself that money can float, then first off, let's get that snarky banker out of your life and you into some home ownership. Email me at ejsmith@yoursurvivalguy.com.

Survive and Thrive this month.

Warm regards,



"Your Survival Guy"

- If someone forwarded this to you, and you want to learn more about Your Survival Guy, read about me [here](#).
- If you would like to contact me and receive a response, please email me at ejsmith@yoursurvivalguy.com.
- Would you like to receive an email alert letting you know when *Survive and Thrive* is published each month? You can subscribe to my free email [here](#).

P.S. In towns and cities across America, supporters of Charlie Kirk have gathered in peaceful vigils to celebrate the life and mourn the death of the Turning Point USA co-founder. At one meeting in front of Trump Tower in New York City, those gathered chanted "Charlie! Charlie!" NJEG Media caught the moment on video and posted it on X.com.

In response to the video, the popular X.com account, @MAGAVoice posted, "They created 10 million Charlie Kirks now. Keep it going."

Political violence has a way of backfiring on those who commit it. Kirk's death could galvanize a disparate movement into a unified force to bring about the change in America that Kirk was seeking.

P.P.S. Nice to see Your Survival Guy's alma mater, Babson College, hold on to its #2 ranking in *The WSJ* "Best Colleges in America. The *WSJ* writes of Babson:

Babson's entrepreneurial emphasis

Many collegiate business programs require soon-to-be-graduates to pitch their own entrepreneurial idea as part of a capstone-style class. Babson College, which landed at the No. 2 spot overall in this year's rankings, demands this of first-year students.

Hands-on learning begins right away at Babson, with a yearlong course called Foundations of Management and Entrepreneurship where groups of students receive a loan of up to \$3,000 to fund their own business. The class teaches accountability and resilience, as well as how to create value, says Babson's president, Stephen Spinelli.

"That has a real impact on how they view all the other courses they take," Spinelli says. "They're going to be thinking about: How is this going to help me find opportunities and create business models so that value can come from this?"

Matthew Shadid, a junior, says one marketing class he took included a project where students had to create an event and persuade people to attend. His group ran a matcha stand. "Every class has something of this nature," says Shadid, who is heading off to a partnership program with the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Real-world experiences at Babson can help graduates land higher-paying jobs, Spinelli says. "They show the skills that, 'I can immediately do something important that's going to affect your business,'" he says.

The Top 10 were:

1. Stanford University
2. Babson College
3. Yale University
4. Princeton University
5. Harvard University
6. Claremont McKenna College
7. University of California, Berkeley
8. Columbia University
9. University of Pennsylvania
10. Davidson College

If you're visiting colleges in New England this year and want to stop to talk to Your Survival Guy about your investment portfolio, email me at ejsmith@yoursurvivalguy.com. And [click here to download my Special Report: How To Invest After Graduating College](#) for a graduating or soon-to-graduate student in your life.

P.P.S. Back in 2012, Your Survival Guy was in the market for a power boat. It was after my weekly pilates class that I told my instructor I was looking, and she said to give Skip a call. I did, and that's how I learned how to buy a boat. You can read that series here:

- [How to Buy a Boat: Part I](#)
- [How to Buy a Boat: Part II](#)
- [How to Buy a Boat: Part III](#)
- [How to Buy a Boat Part IV](#)
- [How to Buy a Boat Part V](#)
- [How to Buy a Boat Part VI](#)

Lately, especially after [attending the Newport Boat Show this month](#), I've been thinking about how nice it would be to have a small cabin or a pilot house to a) get out of the weather and b) perhaps spend the night. Careful what you wish for, Survival Guy, I say to myself, knowing all too well it's not for the faint of heart getting involved in this sunk cost endeavor.

As one of you reminded me recently, it's hard to fight off getting another 3-feet or "three-feetitis" and if there was such a thing as a perfect boat, everyone would own it.

The way our journey began, buying a power boat years ago, was because I grew up sailing. You never quite get over that feeling of "when are we going to get there?" Yes, I miss sailing, but at times my joints can feel like a creaking deck. I don't miss the work. After a day of sailing, you can be exhausted, and grabbing a mooring at your one particular harbor simply means the next stage of tucking her in for the night has begun.

And that's how we ended up with a center console, [which got hit by lightning a few years ago](#) and was replaced with the same model, just a newer version, a Grady White Canyon 306. It's the simplicity of it all, something Dick Young has written to you for decades, that makes it an almost perfect boat. [There's wisdom in KISS.](#)

Packing a cooler, grabbing the keys, and heading to the slip is pretty simple. Don't let the complicated stuff keep you on land. When you're ready to begin your cruise, let me know by emailing me at ejsmith@yoursurvivalguy.com.