

VITA

YOUR LIFESTYLE SUPPLEMENT FROM VITADAILY.CA • SPRING 2020



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EDITOR'S DESK

A

And just like that, everything changed. Coronavirus took the world as we know it and flipped it on its head. *VITA* saw its longtime advertisers and supporters (a majority of whom are fashion and beauty brands, small businesses, and local retailers and restaurateurs) experience never-before-felt hardships, and our own little media company suffered, too. For instance, we had to make the difficult decision to temporarily cease publication of the print magazine—there simply wasn't enough advertising to make it viable. As such, this spring issue covers content created for the months of April, May and June, collectively, and is the first digital-only edition we have produced since our launch in December 2014 (53 physical issues ago). But like it or not, times, they are a-changin', and there is no choice but to accept the "new norm," yield, as much as is necessary, to it, and adapt.

Which leads me to the obvious (at least, obvious-to-me) question: is there even room or requirement any longer for a magazine like *VITA*? We are, after all, largely about lifestyle—shopping, dining out, home décor, travel, wine—and there is absolutely no denying the fact that life, as we knew it, has been altered. Following the havoc that has been wreaked upon the retail, restaurant and tourism sectors, is there need for our kind of editorial coverage anymore? Are people still going to be making space in their closets for the latest fashions,



keen on learning about new beauty trends and techniques, eager to eat at recently opened restaurants, looking for a delicious bottle of wine to make the perfect hostess gift? Will they feel safe and secure enough to frequent bricks-and-mortar stores—let alone travel abroad—after weeks of social distancing and venturing no further than their own back yards? Will our readers, who may be going through employment insecurity or financial uncertainty, still enjoy our stories, when they may not be able to indulge in our editorial picks and suggestions as they did before COVID-19 hit? Will

our advertisers still wish to support our publication and promote their businesses in our pages, when they may have bigger fish, like employee wages and rent payments, to fry?

I have had plenty of time (between trying to entertain a restless toddler and, to be perfectly candid, dealing with intense feelings of grief over the potential loss of the business I have worked so hard to build) to grapple with this thought over the last couple of months, and have come up with a tentative (and hopeful) answer: yes. And I don't mean this in a self-serving way. I truly believe that, with the right

safety measures in place, we will begin to enjoy, again, a way of life similar to what we knew prior to the pandemic, in terms of visiting with family and friends, patronizing local businesses and, eventually, boarding airplanes to explore the world. I also know that many of us (myself included) recognize that helping each other out can mean spending some of our dollars with the brands and businesses we believe in.

We will, as well, be adjusting our content to reflect aspects of a new normal—read, for example, Laura Starr's piece on wine worth waiting in the liquor-store lineup for on page 7, and watch for stories on changes to your in-person shopping and salon experiences in our upcoming summer issue. We have also found new, creative ways to support and bring exposure to our partner brands and advertisers (we provided free space in this issue of *VITA* to local retailers who launched e-commerce sites in response to their physical locations closing) while also bringing a little joy to our audience—if you're not doing so already, I encourage you to follow us on Instagram, @vitadaily.ca, where we've stepped up our giveaway game!

A final note: my editor's photo was taken last spring, by the cherries that bloom along my street. I see happiness in my face that, a few weeks ago, was in danger of disappearing. Now, those feelings are beginning to return—and you know what? I am slowly starting to feel the joy again! I hope the same goes for you and yours.

Noa Nichol

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

IG @VITADAILY.CA
FB @VITADAILY.CA
TW @VITADAILYVAN
EM NOA@VITAMINDAILY.COM
QR VITADAILY.CA

VITA

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GARDEN variety

Treat your tresses to a plant-based protein shake with **AG Hair's** Repair line—a new category of powerhouse vegan products (shampoo, conditioner, treatment, serum) that strengthen and soften every strand while protecting hair against future damage. Aghair.com

This tapered vase (\$423) is part of a collection of handcrafted ceramics made exclusively for **Aerin** by celebrated ceramicist Frances Palmer. The fluted design was originally inspired by wildflower patterns, and comes in a selection of airy shades that add a touch of spring to a table. Aerin.com

OUR TEAM'S TOP BOTANICAL PICKS FOR SPRING



"For me, spring means (socially distant) time spent outdoors, and my favourite way to tote my on-the-go picnicking, hiking and general day-tripping essentials (not to mention, all the odds and ends my daughter insists on taking on our adventures) is with a backpack. This beauty (\$56) by local designer Petra Kaksonen boasts heavy-duty construction, a padded nylon back and bottom, adjustable shoulder straps, an interior pocket for a laptop and a minimalist botanically inspired design." Petrakaksonen.com



"Though I might be spending a little more time indoors than usual this spring, I've been utilizing the extra time to refresh my skin-care routine. My latest fave? This emerald-green **Sarisha** Green Goddess Glow facial oil (\$50), jam-packed with vitamins, antioxidants and organic ingredients so fresh, the Toronto-based brand recommends you keep it in the fridge." Sarishabeauty.com

Alicia Haque

@ALICIA_HAQUE



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INFLUENCER PICK

"I love seeing botanicals featured around the home. Whether it's simple additions such as floral cushions, plants and artwork, or something a little more adventurous like this **Paradisias** wallpaper from **Anthropologie** (\$420), botanicals give your home a really uplifting tropical vibe, no matter the weather." Anthropologie.com



New from **Smash + Tess**, the **Papaya Duster** (\$145)—the fruit of a collab with Sarah Nicole Landry a.k.a. @thebirdspapaya—is the perfect go-to piece to throw over your favourite romper. Smashtess.ca

With a mix of delicate lace and satiny details in shades of soft green, this light, fresh set (\$181) by European brand **Mey** will put a spring in your step. Dianeslingerie.com



As we prep to go back to WFO (working from office), this jungle-inspired soft-shell lunch bag (\$45) from Vancouver-based brand **Rü** is spill resistant, machine washable, made from mostly recycled materials and easy on the eyes, to boot. Rusupplyco.com



The **Ethan Allen** vintage textile prints collection includes artwork curated from a rare portfolio of 19th-century drawings and paintings by artists of the Brulet Lecomte textile design studio in France and made into framed prints for your home. We love this botanical Lyon piece (\$1,112) that bridges modern and traditional esthetics with ease. Ethanallen.ca



"As the weather warms and plants flourish outside, it's normal to crave a little bit of that fresh spring feeling inside, too. Without having to run to your local nursery and put your green thumb to the test—or redecorate your whole space for the season—an easy way to bring the outdoors in is by re-covering your accent pillows. This lively and inexpensive **H&M** pillow cover (\$15) is, I think, the perfect first step to refreshing your favourite springtime seat." Hm.com

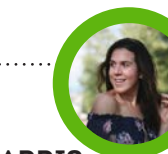


"Warmer days are ahead (I promise!), and a breezy number made from a natural fabric is the perfect way to step up your spring style game. This beautiful botanical-print **Adara** dress (\$158 at **Aritzia**) boasts an in-house-designed **Monstera-leaf** print in 100 per cent linen. The relaxed fit is ideal for lounging, working or taking a Zoom call. Venturing out for air? Simply throw on a denim jacket and white sneakers. Plus, this piece will make an ideal bathing-suit cover-up when we're able to safely enjoy beach days again." Aritzia.com



Spring's It Bag BY **ALEESHA HARRIS**

It's easy to usher the wild side of spring style into your day-to-day selection without getting your siltedos dirty thanks to this **Versace** jungle-print **Virtus** bag (\$5,208). Named after the Roman deity **Virtus**—celebrated as the personification of such values as valour and masculinity—the top-handle design is meant to symbolize "strength, courage and character," according to the brand. In addition to the fashionable flora on display, this structured satchel features eye-catching embellishments like a gold-tone metal Barocco letter V (yes, for Versace) and braided leather accents. Prepare to make a spring statement. Versace.com



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The Armoury Awaits

SHOPPING FOR DÉCOR AND DESIGN HAS NEVER BEEN MORE ENJOYABLE OR APPROACHABLE
BY JEANINE GORDON

A

Anyone in the process of a remodel or home makeover can attest to the hassle of driving all over the city to visit suppliers. Vancouver's **Armoury District**, reopened as of May 20th with adjusted retail hours and government-regulated safety protocols (think masks, personal distancing, gloves and hand sanitizer) provides a reprieve, with home-furnishing retailers and interior-design services all within walking distance.

THE DISTRICT

Located just west of the entrance to Granville Island and named for the Seaforth Armoury at the base of the Burrard bridge, the Armoury District is a Kitsilano treasure. Albert Yee of **LivingSpace Interiors** sees the location as one of the district's biggest draws. "It's open, easy, walkable and convenient to get to—with beautiful views," he says. This is exactly what Ravi Sidhoo of **East India Carpets** (EIC) envisioned when he spearheaded the development and spirit of the district.

SHOPPER'S DELIGHT

If you're debating visiting online retailers or suburban suppliers for your home-décor needs, there are plenty of reasons to reconsider. A trip to the Armoury District offers a distinctively unique and pleasurable experience. For Mary Watson of **Metropolitan Home**, "The selection and choice combined with the luxury of the area gives shoppers an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon."

Another stand-out quality is the collaboration and camaraderie between retailers, a spirit of community rather than competition. For Shawn Henderson of **Ann Sacks**, "The synergy between businesses is amazing." Patricia Kramer of **Kravet** praises the other businesses in the area, naming "fine art, rugs, gorgeous tile, fabulous kitchens and jaw-dropping architectural hardware," as goods that neighbouring stores offer.

Retailers don't hesitate to send their clients to EIC for luxe rugs or Ann Sacks for their tile needs. In fact, several shops have adjoining entryways, allowing customers to easily flow back and forth. Tara Fraser of EIC also works with other retailers to create communal events to benefit the district's businesses and shoppers alike.

DESIGN DESTINATION

For David Keeler of **Provide Home**, "The Armoury District is a great community of complementary businesses. We are a destination for interior designers where they are able to visit multiple retailers in a matter of hours. Our customers benefit from the easy access and relaxed atmosphere." With one-stop-shop convenience and the benefit of chic cafés popping up, this friendly district takes the stress and intimidation out of interior-décor shopping.

Henderson praises the experience of visiting the area, saying, "Clients come to the Armoury District because they trust us. The experience of strolling from luxury business to business and having a prosecco or latte without experiencing high-pressure sales tactics is what every client wants."



PHOTO: TANYA GOEHRING



MODERN CONSUMERS

For Fraser, the sophistication of the district's businesses attracts modern clients who are savvy and educated. "New technologies introduce speed and design precision. At the same time, you are able to visit in person, touch the items, take them home and decide if they fit into the space."

For Yee, "Customers know more about styles, products and brands from online research, but they still see value in coming in person where they

get personalized service. You can't replace that."

Keeler enjoys seeing knowledgeable customers' visit the store. "Over the years people have become more aware of all elements of the home-décor industry. They follow design professionals and taste-makers online and want to apply the same level of sophistication to their own homes."

The education of Ann Sacks' customers excites Henderson, who says, "Our clients use Instagram and our website to realize their vision for their space. We support them with stunning products, exceptional service and project management."

UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

The Armoury District's future is bright. Kramer sees a boom in the shopping area's future. "There will be huge growth in terms of the population over the next few years as building around the Burrard bridge will happen, and we're looking forward to the evolving population," she says.

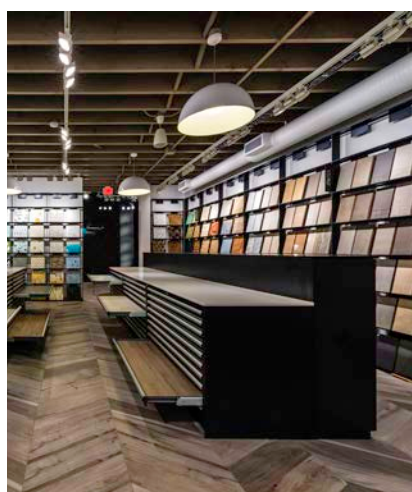
Watson is eager to see "more like-minded people and more retail" come to the area, and Fraser believes "we are currently witness to the evolving neighbourhood. It's super exciting!"

For Keeler, it's the district's independent spirit that he wants to see continue. "I love that there are so many independent retailers with their own viewpoint. It would be my wish that more local home-décor businesses pop up in the coming years. We thrive in numbers."

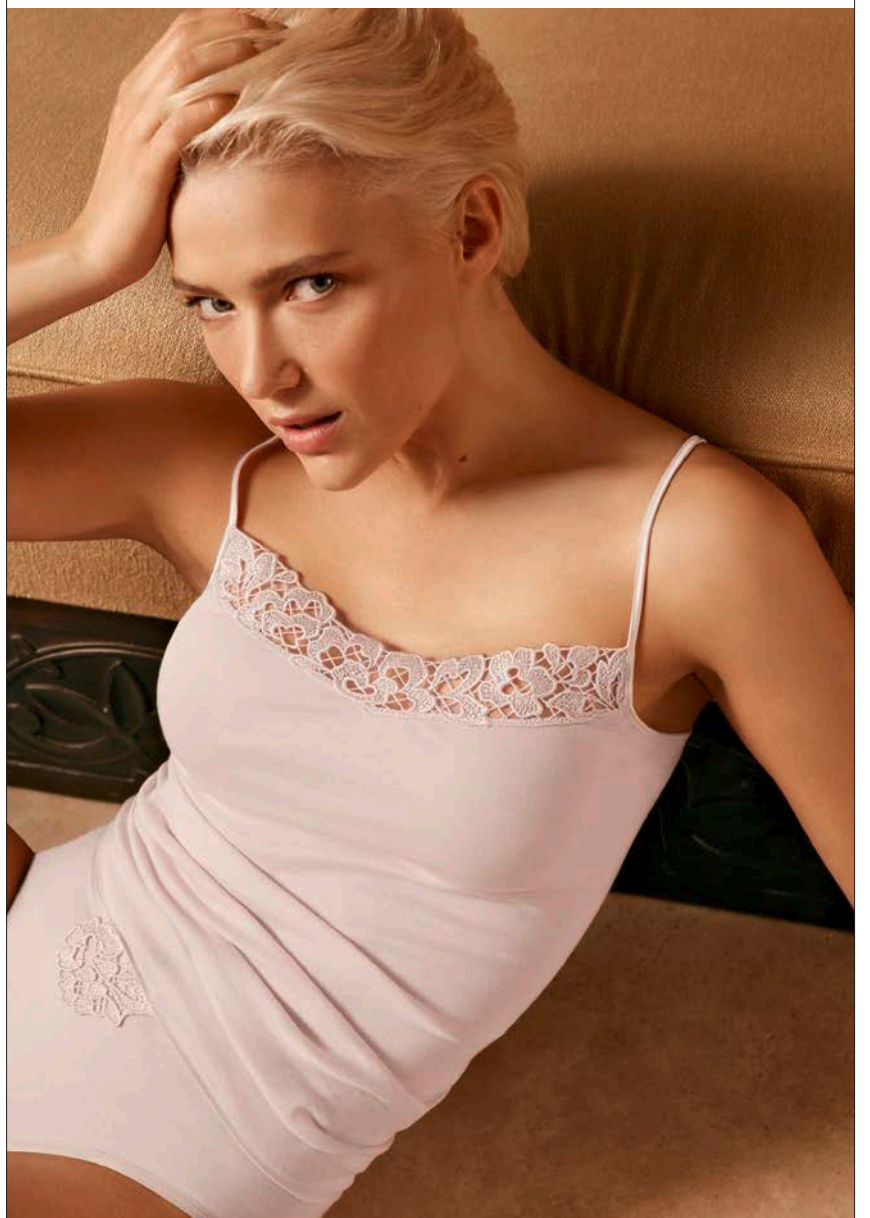
With the growing population of businesses and the surge of design-loving shoppers, a visit to the Armoury District is now an essential Vancouver experience. Thearmourydistrict.com



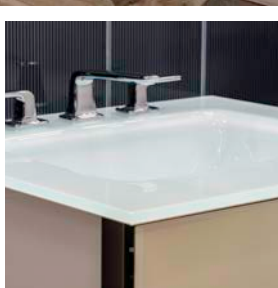
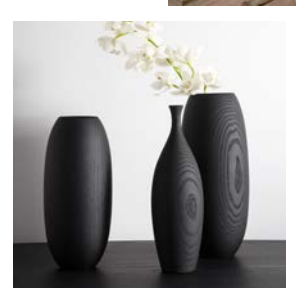
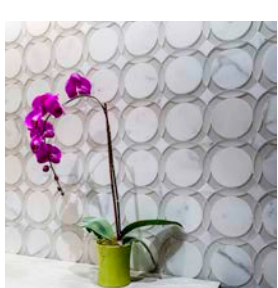
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Products of the Imagination

BEAUTY PRODUCT DESIGN ESTHETICS MATTER ON SOCIAL MEDIA
BY ADRIENNE MATEI

T

To love beauty and skin-care products is to make peace with one's susceptibility to marketing. It's 2020—the Internet is awash in frank reviews straight from fellow consumers, and shoppers have, perhaps, never been as critical of ingredient lists. Yet no amount of canniness can change a fact universally acknowledged by cosmetics lovers: determining our favourite mascaras, moisturizers or shampoos is not a hard science. Rather, the process contains an element of art.

In order to be really compelling, a product doesn't just have to work—it has to make us feel something, too. The emotional appeal of cosmetics has much to do with how they're presented. Whether consciously or not, we see a mahogany-hued **Charlotte Tilbury** compact or a spiked, golden **Christian Louboutin** bullet lipstick and sense glamour, sensuality and even an enchanting kind of danger—think *Killing Eve* assassin Villanelle's decision to name herself after a rich perfume and hide razorblades in red lipstick.

While once we may have first discovered new cosmetics at the counters of plush department stores,



“To be really compelling, a product doesn't just have to work—

it has to make us feel something, too”

where we could hold, smell and try them immediately, contemporary digital-first brands must now find ways to give customers a feel for products they come across online, where aspiration is defined by the tastes of influencers.

Sarah Lee is the co-founder of **Glow Recipe**, whose Watermelon Glow Sleeping Mask—a millennial-pink cream housed in an ice cube-inspired jar—became a cult phenomenon in part due to Instagram, where its design and esthetically-trendy-yet-unusual-for-skin-care hero ingredient helped it stand out.

“It's important to resonate to those who don't necessarily have access to our products right away but are making decisions based on what's on social media. The people who were first really excited to try our products were those who immediately felt the appeal of wanting to have it on their shelfie or vanity,” Lee says, referencing a kind of Instagram photo trend in which a user snaps the products on their bathroom shelf.

Glow Recipe has since found success with products inspired by other popular fruits like pineapple and avocado, which can't help but make one feel cute and healthy and influencer-like simply for owning.



Increasingly, other digitally savvy brands are incorporating the language and esthetics of the wellness movement into their cosmetics, serving consumers a certain juice-bar freshness. Consider adaptogen-enhanced skin-care line **Youth to the People**, hair-care company **Briogeo** (which sells superfood-infused products packaged like smoothies) and K-beauty company **Laneige**, whose updated Water Bank skin collection features kale, watercress and beet, among other vegetable extracts. The story these brands tell is one of health-guru perfection; the fantasy is of being the girl who not only carries a tote of farm-market produce, but pats kale serum into her skin to feel nourished inside and out.

The bright colours, familiarity and health connotations of fruits and vegetables make them an especially effective way to capture consumer attention online, where the senses cannot be actually engaged, and so must be carefully evoked through association.

Health food-inspired beauty that makes us feel holistically well? We're hungry for it. ♡



PHOTO: GARNIER HAIR TREATS



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New Noshes

WHERE AND WHAT TO EAT THIS SPRING
BY NOA NICHOL

LIL BIRD SANDWICH CO.

Mediterranean-inspired sammies take flight this spring from **Lil Bird Sandwich Co.**, housed in **Kafka's Coffee's** Main Street location. This new takeout window features sourdough sandwiches and freshly squeezed lemonade (read: the perfect social-distance picnic partners). The lunch menu includes four options: the Holy Grilled Cheese with a heavenly blend of cheddar, Swiss and Gouda; Meat Your Match with mortadella, salami, Swiss, sriracha mayo, tomato, pickled onions and greens; Uncle Antipasto with marinated peppers, fresh basil, tomato, fresh mozzarella, balsamic aioli and greens; and Super Chicken Shawarma with brined free-range chicken, preserved lemon aioli, pickled turnips, fresh herbs and tomato. Quench your post-sam thirst with a classic or pomegranate lemonade. **2525 Main St., 604-569-2967. @lilbirdsandwiches**



NIGHTINGALE PIZZA KITS

Nightingale's pizza is yours—to make at home. The restaurant has launched take-home kits (\$25 each), delivering a fun making-and-baking experience for families. Don't expect an ordinary pie to emerge from your oven; chef David Hawksworth, who worked with Italian "Master Pizzaiolo" Guiseppe Cortinovis on a secret recipe, went through 30 iterations of dough before landing on a winner, made with a combo of 00 and whole-grain flour and refrigerated for two days to achieve just the right level of fermentation. Along with this dynamite dough (two portions), each kit comes with toppings to build either of Nightingale's two signature pizzas: roasted mushroom or spicy spianata salumi. The kits come with instructions, an original colouring page by local artist Gina Figuera and a set of crayons to keep the kids (or adults) occupied during the baking process. **Hawknightingale.com**

PASTIFICIO DI LUIGI

The latest page in the **Ask For Luigi** story, **Pastificio di Luigi** (translates to Luigi's Pasta Factory), has turned up in a temporary location in Gastown's **Pourhouse** (worry not; it will move to its own permanent location at some point in the future). On offer: a full selection of Italian fare with "pasta fatta in casa" (made in house) as the centrepiece, plus take-home noods and sauces, household grocery staples and Italian specialty ingredients like sliced meats and cheeses, olive oils, canned tomatoes and preserves. Delight in to-go dishes like Polpetta Fritta (Veneto-style meatballs, breaded and fried) and Pasta alla Norma (radiatore, fried and marinated eggplant, and pomodoro with ricotta salata), or grab fresh and dried pasta and savoury sauces from the grocery case. The finishing touch? House-made bottled cocktails, including biciclettas, negronis, Aperol spritzes and americanos, plus bottles of Italian wine available to take away with your food order. **162 Water St., 604-568-7022. Pastificiodiluigi.com**



JUJU'S DRINK SHACK

Until we can get back to dining in restaurants (and it can open its own bricks-and-mortar location) a new takeout and delivery spot has popped up inside **Published on Main**. Grab (to go) one of **Juju's Drink Shack's** tiki bar-inspired kits, created in partnership with **Flor de Cana** and containing everything you need—from the mixes to the rum to the crushed ice and the garnishes—to mix up your own Piña Coladas, Mai Tais and more at home. Pair your tippie with dishes from a rotating assortment of "flavour bomb" pan-Asian food offerings: coconut prawns, chilled udon gomae, crispy squid, scallop crudo and sticky pork belly. Oh, and be sure to share your reviews and dish suggestions with chef Gus Stieffenhof-Brandson, who'll be switching up the menu frequently based on diners' feedback. **3593 Main St., 604-423-4840. Jujusdrinkshack.com**



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Green House

BRINGING YOUR HOME TO LIFE WITH PLANTS IS CHICHER—AND EASIER—THAN EVER
BY JEANINE GORDON

Y

You can't open a home-décor magazine without seeing lush greenery adorning the pages, or scroll your Instagram feed without spotting at least one potted plant edging its way into an influencer's shot. It's no secret—plants are one of today's hottest interior trends.

Why? For one thing, they're easy: a décor novice's best friend. Michelle Hodgson, owner of **Blossom & Vine Floral Co.**, says, "Plants are fail-safe if you don't have a keen eye for design. They bring life and personality to a room without the clutter of other décor items."

But, beyond looking good, the love affair for so-called "plant parents" goes much deeper than appearance. Vancouver-based entrepreneur, influencer and plant-lover Christie Lohr says, "Plants really do bring a room to life and that creates a calm vibe for me," while Hartley Rosen of **Figaro's Garden**, describes it as an innate human desire.

"As a species we love to take care of things," he says. "It's lovely and exciting to see your influence on a living object." Adds Lohr: "It feels good to take care of something and watch something grow. It can be therapeutic."



Hodgson credits this emotional boost with house plants' popularity today. "There's a mental aspect of decorating with plants. They add harmony and comfort. They make people feel good," she says. And who doesn't want that?

If you've had bad luck with plants in the past and are hesitant to add greenery to your home, don't fret—Rosen is a big believer that the concept of having a "black thumb" doesn't exist. And Hodgson's advice to plant owners is simple: "Be realistic in the amount of time you can put in. Think of your lifestyle—are you home a lot to care for your plants or do you need something low maintenance?"

Rosen recommends four types of plants that are easy for busy people to maintain without sacrificing style. His top picks include: the snake plant, which grows upright and is good for placing on the floor; the ZZ plant, which is a popular choice for low-light conditions; the pothos, a trailing vine that works well on a shelf or along a wall; and the philodendron, whose glossy heart-shaped leaves simply look fantastic.

As for what's hot to pot, both Rosen and Hodgson say they're seeing customers gravitating to species that add unique character to their space. According to Hodgson, "The rarer the better. People are playing with more unique varieties instead of one size fits all."

She adds, "Pass on anything that's too tricky to care for. People want to enjoy the benefits of plants without fuss. There are no rules when it comes to using plants as décor. Work with what you love and lean into your esthetic."

There you have it: plants are more than just one of today's chicest décor trends, they're a whole mood. "It's an exciting time for plants," Rosen says. We couldn't agree more. ♡



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FOLIAGE: More so than flowers, choose leafy plants in shades of green that pop against your interior décor.

LEAF SHAPE: Large, unique shapes like round or heart shapes stand out as winners.

Simple Pleasures

HOW TO DELIGHT IN STAYING HOME
WITHOUT SPENDING BIG
BY MADISON HOPE-VEITCH

B

Being at home has its benefits: we can sleep in a little before making the commute to our home office, get more experimental with our skin-care regime and regrow the brows we overplucked in high school. The downside? Being “stuck” inside tends to bring all of the things you don’t love about your abode front of mind. While it’s tempting to fill that online cart with things to help you complete projects and upgrades, it can be equally nice to appreciate what you’ve already got. Below, some low-cost or free ways to upgrade your space and help you enjoy being at home just a little bit more while we’re all still social distancing.

FRESHEN YOUR AIR

First, open your windows—yes, even if it’s still a bit chilly outside. Second, light your favourite candle, put on your diffuser or create a simmer pot on your stove including things you’ve already got, like lemons, limes, oranges or cinnamon, to add a nice scent to your home. Third, insert dryer sheets into your accent pillows and sofa cushions—it’s a great way to make your couch (that’s likely working overtime at the moment) smell fresh and clean when you sit down.



ADD SOME GREENERY

If you’ve got the budget, place an order with a floral shop (shout out to locals like **The Wild Bunch**, **Blossom & Vine** and **Celsia Florist**); fresh flowers will lift your mood and the way you feel about

your space. If you’re working with a tight budget, kill two birds with one stone: go for a refreshing walk in your neighborhood and, while you’re at it, clip a few things to bring home. No, we’re not saying you should ransack your neighbour’s yard, but a few tiny

sprigs from here and there can add so much to your kitchen, dining table or coffee table.

REFRESH YOUR ACCESSORIES

Choose a spot that could use a refresh (for example, a bookshelf, credenza, coffee table or nightstand) and remove all items currently on it. Then, walk around your home and see if there are any forgotten things you think might look nice there. At this point, don’t worry about the spaces you’re stealing the item from. You might be surprised at how much you love this new arrangement! An easy way to get started: take some accent pillows from your living room and swap them with ones from your bedroom, or vice versa.

DOWNLOAD DIGITAL ART PRINTS

A quick and typically inexpensive way to update your home is to purchase some digital prints to download. This does require you to have a printer, but it is a great low-cost way to update your art. There are tonnes of great options on **Etsy**, with art of almost every style, but another favourite is **Juniper Print Shop**. Digital prints typically cost between \$5 and \$40 and can be printed right at home.

GET CREATIVE WITH WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE AT HOME

Wishing you had a new tray, vase or decorative bowl? Try looking inside your kitchen cupboards for something that might find its perfect home in another area of your, well, home. Fancy ribbed drinking glasses can become vases while cheese boards and dinner plates double as trays. Try it! You might be surprised by what is lurking on your shelves. ♡



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Press Paz

PLAYTIME AND DOWNTIME IN MEXICO'S BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR
BY NOA NICHOL

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Many happy holiday-ers who land in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, set up at a beachy resort and stay there. But a mere two hours north by car lies an equally idyllic seaside escape: La Paz, offering opportunities not only to unwind, but also for unparalleled outdoor adventure.



STAY
The **CostaBaja Resort** (soon to be renamed **Hotel Indigo**) is a plush place to call home base. Dive into an ultra-comfy bed and Mérida-made toiletries in your room and, outside, the sole heated pool among La Paz's hotels. For a small daily fee access the beach club's ample bar, infinity pool and private spa cabanas—not to mention, views of the marina that's filled, in winter, with super yachts, including Spielberg's Seven Seas and Steve Jobs' Venus. Costabaja.com



SEA
They don't call La Paz the Gateway to the Sea of Cortez por nada. Water activities are part of daily life here, and you're encouraged to partake, too. Try an **On Board Baja** excursion to swim with whale sharks (at certain times of the year chances of seeing one are excellent, so consider your bucket list one step closer to being complete) and tack on a snorkel with playful sea lions (they're called the Labradors of the sea for a reason). Or, take a three-hour trek by car north to Lopez Mateos to see grey whales (also almost a certainty, depending on season; just be sure to book with a guide before you go). It's a guaranteed whale of a time. Onboardbaja.com



Travel may not be possible right now, but we're dreaming of visiting some of our very favourite destinations in the near future!

STEER
Playtime doesn't end once you're back on dry land. In La Paz, ATVs are called Rzrs (say razors), and you can rent them for some off-road fun from **Baja Rent**. Once you've mastered driving the dunes, strap on a board and slide down hills of sand for a sunny rather than snowy experience. (Bonus: bailing will give you the best exfoliating facial of your life.) Bajarentcars.com



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SAVOUR
If you're craving Mexican food, well, yes, you've come to the right place. Find mouthwatering homemade street food in carts and stands on every block and fish plucked straight from the sea and deposited on your plate in restaurants across town—you'll be spoiled for choice. Our top picks (with twists): **Quinta La Peregrina** (elevated regional cuisine with a tres leches cake that's to die for); **Steinbeck's** at the CostaBaja (named for the author, who spent much time in the area; check out the look-but-don't-touch tequila collection lining the walls); **Sea Side**, with panoramic water views (and a friendly resident feline, *Sambias*); and, for vegetarian-friendly Mexican breakfast, brunch and lunch fare, **Capuchino** (small, unassuming, but oh-so-delicious; don't deny yourself a platter of pastor tacos, with falafel, pineapple and purple onion, washed down with a signature coconut lemonade).



CELEBRATE
In La Paz in late February? Lucky you! The city's annual Carnival takes over the impressively restored waterfront for several days, offering an assault (in a great way) of music, games and tchotchke-buying chances. Beyond the staggered entertainment stages (mariachi bands and standup comedians among the performers), there's Mexican savoury and sweet foods (grilled cobs of corn (elotes) slathered with mayo and cotija cheese and fluffy clotted-cream biscuits (gorditas de nata) topped with Nutella are both musts) and a range of rides to test your stomach on. Facebook.com/carnavallapazbes



SPA
Ready to press pause? Back at the hotel, book into the full-service **Spa Espiritu** for a treatment (or two). There are 90-minute "rituals" that range in aim from deep relaxation to chakra balancing to detoxification and lymphatic drainage. Got limited R 'n' R time? Get the half-hour "stress be gone" massage or organic flaxseed exfoliation body wrap and get out—after all, there's a whole more playing in La Paz to do. Costabaja.com

TRIPS & SIPS

Waiting in Wine

LINING UP FOR THE LIQUOR STORE IS THE NEW NORM;
HERE ARE SEVERAL BOTTLES WORTH THE WAIT
BY LAURA STARR

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It is endearingly surprising to see how well Vancouver has taken to lineups, whether it's for the bank, a drug store or a grocery pickup. As we navigate our new spatially distant reality, though, two things are for certain: we love our frontline workers, and we are oh so grateful that liquor stores have been deemed an essential service.

As such, we've rounded up seven wines that are fully worth lining up for—just like the comfort food so many of us are indulging in these days, these bottles are rich and warm, with depth and complexity.

Find six of them at **Marquis Wine Cellars** on Davie Street, which (besides frequently boasting a shorter wait than some **BC Liquor Stores**, offers free delivery on orders more than \$200 and, for the entire month of May, is running an initiative that sees \$1 or \$2 donated for every bottle of B.C. wine sold to **St. Paul's Hospital Foundation**. The seventh pick (in the sidebar) can be purchased winery direct.

These wines are also worthy of the 7 p.m. cheer for our frontline workers, including those in the liquor industry, who have been at the forefront of this crisis, and who are the only reason we are able to safely drink these wines at home. ♡



BLUE MOUNTAIN RESERVE PINOT GRIS 2016

A standout B.C. Pinot Gris (\$38) boasting rich fruit and creamy texture, with a touch of spice and a fresh, zippy backbone.

CATENA ZAPATA WHITE STONES CHARDONNAY 2016

As the name suggests, this opulent Argentinian Chardonnay (\$150) is known for her stone-y, salty minerality.

LITTLE ENGINE GOLD MERLOT 2017

A ripe, full-bodied B.C. Merlot (\$76) that gives you warm baking spices, rich cocoa and voluptuous tannins.

SEGURA VIUDAS BRUT RESERVA N/V

Toasty and nutty, this Spanish bottle (\$20) is hands down the best bang-for-your-buck rich-style sparkling wine.

LOIMER ACHTUNG! MUSKATELLER 2015

This orange wine from Austria (\$57) is warm and spicy, with pretty floral aromas but a meaty, grippy palate.

MAQUINA & TABLA RUEDA VERDEJO 2015

A weighty Spanish Verdejo (\$45) that boasts its signature acidity but rounds out with creamy oak, toasted hazelnuts and rich apricot, yellow plum and candied lemon peel.

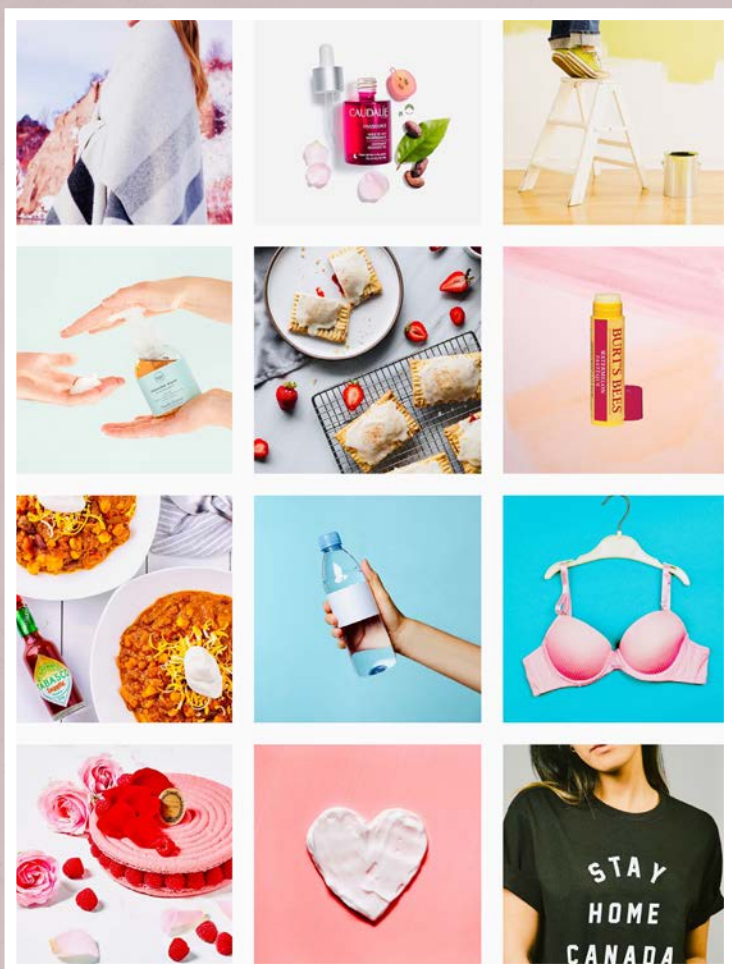
Doctor's ORDERS



CLOS DU SOLEIL CAPELLA 2017

A special shout-out to Dr. Bonnie Henry, who hails as our provincial health officer and also happens to be one of the founding members of this Keremeos, B.C.-based winery. This blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon (\$25 winery direct) has seen some oak, and so the zesty grapefruit and pear are balanced by spice and creamy body. *Closdusoleil.ca*

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