

VITA

YOUR LIFESTYLE SUPPLEMENT FROM VITAMIN DAILY • FEBRUARY 2015



*OSCAR DE LA RENTA'S
LAST COLLECTION
(and who's wearing it now)*

*THE ULTIMATE
BRIDE GUIDE*

CRUISING CUBA

*JUICE CLEANSE
CHALLENGE*

THE SARAH FILE

R

RED CARPET FACIAL

Having tried everything from magnets to acupuncture to attempt to defy gravity, I've finally found a non-invasive regime that actually works. Dubbed the "red carpet facial" for its popularity in Hollywood during February's awards season, the lifting and firming effects of the Venus machine are immediate. Here's how it works: the skin is coated with a protective layer then heated through to its deepest layers to stimulate collagen production. As the skin cools, it lifts and tightens, especially around the eyes and jawline. Now available at **Touch of Joy** in Vancouver, some actresses even have it written into their riders that they receive a series of seven weekly 30-minute treatments prior to shooting. Ready for your close-up; just beware the mani-cam. 497 W. Sixth Ave., 604-605-4046, Touchofjoy.ca



YOGA GIRL

While I am the last person to jump on a fitness fad (walking is my cardio) I still like to try new things. So when Sarah McLachlan's private yoga instructor published a DVD, I rolled out my mat faster than you can say sun salutation. Vancouverite **Janet Wallden's** *Asana: Our Landscape* is "Hatha Core Yoga," meaning it promotes long, lean muscles and core strength. Try not to get distracted by the beautiful scenery of Spanish Banks and Kits Beach at sundown in the video, which can be downloaded for keeps (\$22) or rented (\$6) from Wallden's website. And, if you are wondering where those cool yoga outfits she wears are from, wonder no longer: Vancouver's **Downtown Betty**. If Russell Crowe, Kelly Osborne and Kate Hudson can do it, you can do it, too. Janetsyogalink.com



THE GOLDEN SMILE

It was my nine-year-old daughter who first noticed that this simple, elegant, 18-karat-gold necklace from **Tiffany & Co.**'s Tiffany T collection resembled a smile. And that, it turns out, is precisely what it is called: the Smile Pendant (\$1,050). I've been dressing mine down with simple white tees and chambray shirts—because you're never fully dressed without ... oh you know. 723 Burrard St., 604-630-1300, Tiffany.ca



WEST COAST STYLE

Conveniently located near the **VITA** offices, **Much & Little** has been one of my favourite stores for gifts and home décor, and now its fashion offerings have expanded, too. Owner Sarah Savoy, a former interior designer, has a great eye for capturing the West Coast esthetic: cool and comfortable, with a timeless, understated elegance, like this look I'm coveting from L.A.'s Black Crane, new for Spring '15. 2541 Main St., 604-709-9034, Muchandlittle.com

W

editor's letter



W

When I think of February, I think of my mother, whose birthday falls on the 19th. This year, she'll be 70. And, while she's spent the winter trekking in Patagonia among other South American adventures, she'll return home to Bowen Island in time for her birthday and to see her 3,000 daffodils bloom in all their glory. How does she know she has 3,000 daffodils? I once asked her. "Because that's how many I bought," she said.

It's this type of joie de vivre that I love, too, and this issue of **VITA** has it in spades. From the fabulous florals of Oscar de la Renta's last collection (and the even-more fabulous local women who have worn his dresses over the years) to grand gestures of love for Valentine's Day and wedding days, there's plenty to celebrate this month.

As a budding fashion journalist in the early 2000s, a one-on-one interview with de la Renta was my first big "get." I remember him as charming, elegant, eloquent—and impossible, at least for me, to get to go off-script. I assigned this story to our Vancouver editor Adrienne Matei, a master at going off-script, to give it the youthful perspective that's also infused the late designer's collections in recent years.

So, whether you measure your life out in love letters, daffodils or coffee spoons (that's for you T.S. Eliot fans out there), please enjoy the issue.

Sarah Bancroft EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What would you like to see featured in **VITA**?

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VITA

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COVER STORY

JUST ARRIVED IN VANCOUVER, PIECES FROM OSCAR DE LA RENTA'S LAST COLLECTION REMIND US THAT THE ROLE PLAYED BY TRULY GREAT DESIGN IS EVERLASTING.

Oscar Night

WORDS ADRIENNE MATEI

L

Last year marked the loss of Oscar de la Renta, fashion's benevolent monarch. This year, Vancouver's **The Room at Hudson's Bay** will carry select pieces from his last collection. Always, the designer's memory, and the memories he helped to create through his clothes, will carry on.

Style, always subject to sweeping generalizations, is at its core exceptionally intimate, with what we choose to wear on our bodies revealing more than they cover. Good designers, then, are defined by their ability to maintain direct eye contact with their customers, to understand their clients' idealisms and humanity. The best designers, like de la Renta, love who they dress, and imbue every sketch with earnest affection.

De la Renta once said, "The qualities I most admire in women are confidence and kindness." Raised among six sisters in the Dominican Republic, his biography is pitch perfect: a young man foundationally impressed with the strength and grace of women, setting off at 18 to work with stately fashion houses (Balenciaga, Lanvin) before launching his eponymous label in 1965 and quickly joining their ranks.

Throughout the course of his career, de la Renta grew his company into a \$150 million business and financed the construction of an orphanage in his home country, among other charitable endeavours. Through savvily maintaining an interest in the digital age and mentoring social media queen Erika Bearman (@OscarPRGirl), he maintained not just respect but sharp, techie relevance.

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE



A Flawless Design
by Palladio



PALLADIO

TERMINAL CITY CLUB 855 WEST HASTINGS ST
604-685-3885 | palladiocanada.com

Winter Workout

THIS WINTER WE'RE DETERMINED TO BURN CALORIES WITHOUT SACRIFICING STYLE.

M

1 MAD HAT

Stay wired with Michael Kors' colourblock pom-pom hat (\$68 at Holt Renfrew), complete with built-in earphones so you can build a snowman to your own custom soundtrack. 737 Dunsmuir St., 604-681-3121, Holtrenfrew.com

2 LAYER CAKE

A quick-drying insulated Mountain Equipment Co-op crew (\$55) with reflective details, a convenient bicep pocket for your keys and thumbholes keeps you warmer (and makes you look more legit), no matter what you're doing. Rain in the forecast? Add a hooded Farpoint jacket (\$95) over top. Tissue-weight and breathable, it repels drizzle and doesn't ride up when you jog. 130 W. Broadway, 604-872-7858, Mec.ca

3 STELLA'S SO SPORTY

StellaSport, Stella McCartney's January-launched collab with Adidas, offers futuristic sportswear in pop-rock hues that transitions easily from gym to street. With all pieces under \$100, post-apocalyptic parkour bunny is the look. 860 Granville St., 604-681-9116, Adidas.com



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4 TRAINING TIME

The new year has us hitting pool, pavement and pedals on a mission to complete our first triathlon (yes we can), and collecting an arsenal of products to help us achieve our goal—including a watch that successfully manages to pair the practical with the pretty. On the road and in the water (up to 200 metres deep), features of the Timex Ironman Triathlon Vivid (\$30 at London Drugs) include a 100-hour chronograph with lap/split option, shock-resistant build and 99-lap counter. Its sleek, white, resin strap can even carry us to a dinner date decked out in Céline. Londondrugs.com

5 CONSCIOUS COUPLING

Fangirls of all things Gwyneth, we'd be rocking pieces from the new Lolë x Goop fit-wear line even if it wasn't created in collaboration with Paltrow's website. Part of Montreal-based brand Lolë's upscale White collection, we've got our eyes trained on sporty halter tanks that show off strong shoulders, drape-y tops with peekaboo backs and sheer-panelled leggings that optically elongate our gams. Lolewomen.com

THE FLASH

Don't worry, we're not in our birthday suits. We're talking about the wicked Flash running tight from the Nike Store. Not only do these leggings keep our stems warm as we pound the pavement in the cold, the graphic print is reflective and ensures we stay seen when it's gloomy out. 900 Main St., West Vancouver, 604-925-9667, Nike.com

Hot Shops

WHAT'S NEW. WHAT'S NEXT.

G

1 FIRST CLASS

The Global Watch Company, a new branch of Vancouver jewelry retailer Luvaro, has opened its first location. The line's esthetic is European high-end: the unapologetic glamour of gem-encrusted strands and sunny-hued canary diamonds that can elevate necks and fingers to dizzying luxury. Daintier pieces are available as well; we loved a rose-gold chain bracelet with a tiny arrow charm. Finally, a wide range of wrist watches by historic Swiss line Longines and finely wrought German Glashütte Original are on offer, making for thoughtful, romantic gifts worthy of those you really want to spoil this Valentine's Day (and every day). 925 W. Georgia St., 604-454-1200

2 LOVE OF LEATHER

For more than 20 years, Canadian line Rudsak's leather winter wear has been a cold-weather staple for fashion-conscious easterners. Now, with the opening of a new Pacific Centre boutique, the brand's signature studded leather jackets and waist-nipped puffer coats are also easily accessible to Vancouverites. "The city's cool factor really complements the cool-rebel esthetic we try to capture in our brand," says Rudsak founder Evik Asatoorian. That's flattering, almost as much as the heeled winter boots, elbow-length gloves and punkish leather jackets Rudsak's brought to our coast just in time for the cold. 701 W. Georgia St., Rudsak.com



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3 PRETTY THINGS

We couldn't resist an afternoon of unadulterated, no-apologies gift shopping at the recently opened Papyrus downtown. We spent hours perusing the store, ooh-ing and aah-ing over dotted Kate Spade journals, scented candles with soaked wicks (for optimal room-filling smell), beautiful baubles and the museum-worthy, scrapbook-style greeting cards that have made the brand famous. The shop is stuffed with gifts for moms, dads, kiddies, nanas, colleagues, best friends, Valentines and more. 765 Burrard St., 604-974-9904, Papyrusonline.com

4 GOOD WILFRED

Vancouver's well-loved fashion retailer has opened the first stand-alone boutique dedicated to its Wilfred line. Within the catalogue of Aritzia's distinct labels, Wilfred's esthetic is minimalist, bookish and enigmatic. Modern styling meets turn-of-the-century Paris (think girls clipping down cobblestones in brogues, wool coats, roomy fisherman's sweaters and knee-length skirts) in a range from \$35 for tops to \$450 for smart winter coats. This is where to find a milky sleeveless knit turtleneck, a slim skirt for the office or the season's best-selling wrap scarf in warm, earthy tones. The cerebral grad student to Tahlia's art waif or the TNA teen, Wilfred's elegant, loft-like shop is a new destination for women of classic tastes. 1112 Robson St., 604-684-3251, Aritzia.com



4

COVER STORY

Oscar Night continued

He dressed first ladies, A-listers and professionals (from Jackie Kennedy to Karlie Kloss to Amal Clooney), appealing to the world's most glamorous women with his pieces: lushly feminine, irreverent, flirtatious expressions. De la Renta melded modernity with classics (his masterful invigoration of the gown) and levity with gravitas, balancing all the visual contradictions and paradoxical aspirations of womanhood.

He made it look easy. His final collection, with its lace, pinks and greens, is as frothy and luminous as flowering cherry trees. Its arrival at The Room is sort of odd and poignant; his last works are the first to be stocked here, to be touched, cooed over, gazed at and tried on (move quickly: the collection has been enthusiastically pre-ordered by local Oscar devotees). But his presence here, as anywhere, has long impacted women's lives (mothers wearing Oscar jumpsuits in the '70s, little girls sniffing the peach-basil-cardamom notes of "For Women" at the cosmetics counter and feeling sophisticated for it).

In the case of Heth PR director Shannon Heth Vergette, who wore de la Renta for her 2011 wedding to artist George Vergette, his designs became part of treasured memories.

"I felt very special," she says of the dress. "I thought the way it fit, and fell and moved, and also how comfortable it was, and how beautifully made, that it was just so many perfect things at once. That's how a wedding dress is supposed to make you feel; that's why women buy them. And I'm not sure if maybe I'm giving too much credit to the dress, but it seemed to create all these beautiful moments."

At the moment of her marriage in that de la Renta gown—A-line, with abstract floral cutouts and flat, transparent sequins—Heth Vergette says, "It began to snow like crazy and we ran outside to take photos. With the white of the dress and the snow it was all giddy and beautiful and magic. I was



PHOTO: JONATHAN CRUZ

transported wearing that dress." These memories are sentimental. They're romantic and unabashed—they are the goal of special clothes. That is, to take deep feelings and convey them unmistakably, with a quiet power. In the words of the master himself, "Everything I make is emotional." ♡

674 Granville St., 604-681-6211, Thebay.com

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ROLEX

Gifts for Lovers

FLOWERS, CANDY, SPARKLY THINGS. HERE'S OUR TAKE ON GIFT-GIVING (AND RECEIVING) PERFECTION.



A

A BOX FULL OF JOY

Our theory that pre-assembled gift baskets are a dime a dozen (and that they often include mass-produced items inevitably destined for the trash) was completely turned on its head when a special delivery from **Old Joy** arrived at our door in time for Valentine's Day. Filled with lovely, local goods nestled in a for-keeps wooden box, opening this package made us feel crazy special. Based out of Vancouver, Old Joy founder Melissa Mills personally hunts down beautiful B.C.-made products and one-of-a-kind vintage items to include in her gift boxes, which can be shipped to lucky recipients across Canada. Mills' gift boxes start at \$100 and are available in three sizes: small, medium and large. Beautiful, thoughtful, local gifts can definitely be pre-boxed. Lesson learned. Oldjoygiftboxes.com



SOLE MATES

We think a cosy gift can be particularly thoughtful this time of year. **Love Winter** is a Canadian company on a mission to make the world fall in love with cold weather. How? By introducing us to legendary Valenki boots—a 300-year-old Siberian footwear design with a modern, fashionable twist (\$190). These beauties are made of sturdy wool felt, with colourful rubber galoshes that clip on and off and, best of all, leave little “Love” prints behind in the snow. Lovewinter.com



EVERYTHING'S ROSY

Flowers are always a welcome delivery, Valentine's Day or not, but one Vancouverite's managed to elevate the experience. After living abroad, Trevor Patterson wanted to bring a piece of Europe back to Canada with him—and so **Landeau** was born. As a specialty florist, Patterson will hand-pick between 22 and 25 of the most flawless, fresh-cut roses, package them in an elegant, signature box and deliver them—with flower food, and with or without a handwritten greeting on heavy, creamy stock—to virtually any address in the Lower Mainland (\$95). Our choice bouquet would be a deep, velvety red, but you can also pick from pink or yellow-and-blush blooms. The scent is heavenly, and the sentiment is most certainly there. Givelandeau.com



BIRTH RIGHT

Hint to your hubby that you'd like a pair, because these little earrings are (we think) among our finest gift finds (you're welcome). Handcrafted by Vancouver designer Katherine Huie of **Foe and Dear Jewellery** and available exclusively at **Cavalier Jewellers** in Gastown, who wouldn't love to receive a pair of these gold-claw, rough gemstone studs (starting at \$60) from their Valentine? They can be matched to the giftee's birth month (red garnet for January; pink tourmaline for October; aquamarine for March; and so on), so the personalized factor is there. Total gift perfection. 217-207 W. Hastings, St., 604-681-0047. Cavaliergastown.com

WE HEART PIE

The **Pie Hole** goes where no pie has gone before, supplying kitchens and cafés (and, therefore, ravenous pie fiends like ourselves) around town with its s'more pie (lightly toasted, no campfire required), maple French toast bacon pie (breakfast in pie form), mac 'n' cheese pie (topped with a panko-parm crumble) and more good stuff. For February 14th, this boutique bakery is once again taking individual orders for its sweetest offering: an assortment of its most popular-flavoured mini pies packaged in a red, heart-shaped box, tied with a ribbon and topped with with a vintage Valentine's Day card (\$45). Vancouverpiehole.com

NAUGHTY & NICE: A LINGERIE LOVE STORY

WHAT END OF THE SPECTRUM WILL YOU FALL ON?

This Valentine's Day, embrace a dainty dichotomy and consider the merits of naughty and nice (and, bonus, new).



NAUGHTY

A bondage style that serves cleavage and the snarling appeal of a pin-up-girl murderess, this set calls to be shown off under mesh or light-hued apparel. If you listen closely, it's whispering something about trysts, Russian oligarchs and bourbon-heavy Boulevardiers. Push-up bodice bra (\$218) and webbed suspender belt (\$215) by **Bordelle**, at **Honey Gifts**. 3448 Cambie St., 604-708-8065. Honeygifts.com



NICE

What says “sweetheart” quite like cornflower blue trimmed in satiny pink? This look's got the doe-eye down pat, a total ponytail-twirler sharing a milkshake down at the soda counter, if you ask us. But, replace the angora sweater with some bunny ears, and you're telling a whole 'nother story. The Yuri balcony bra (\$134) and briefs (\$56) by **Marie Jo L'Aventure**, at **Dianes Lingerie**. 2950 Granville St., 604-738-5121. Dianeslingerie.com

NEW

With impeccable timing, lingerie e-tailer and app **ThirdLove** landed in Canada on January 21st, offering beautifully feminine pieces designed



to suit every shape and size—we're talking hard-to-find half-sizes for the girls and an at-home sizing app that makes it easy to get a perfect fit from the comfort of your own boudoir (plus a few strategically posed selfies). We're lusting after pieces from ThirdLove's latest love-day collection, like the subtly sexy Breathe Easy Bralette (\$55). Thirdlove.com



BRIDE GUIDE

WHAT'S HOT WHEN IT COMES TO TYING THE KNOT IN 2015? THINK SEVERAL SHADES OF GREY, OFF-THE-SHOULDER WEDDING GOWNS AND OVER-THE-TOP DIAMONDS NO GIRL COULD TURN DOWN.



RINGS

A simple solitaire may be classic, but, if those in the know, well, know, we're still in "the bigger the better" mode when it comes to putting a ring on it (thank Kim and Kanye). And what better way to illustrate the trend than with this jaw-dropping emerald-cut Canadian diamond from the Birks Square Phillips collection? Set in platinum, this baby starts at an ice-cold \$36,050. Just, wow. 698 W. Hastings St., 604-669-3333, Maisonbirks.com

FLOWERS

Arrangements with "high flower content" are in, with a focus on more-bang-for-your-buck blooms (hydrangea, hyacinths and orchids) that are naturally fuller than some of their garden counterparts. Also en trend: the floral crown, such as those created by Vivien Low of Vancouver's own **Crowned by V** (top left). No longer reserved for the free spirits among us (or our moms, back in the '60s), a bride of 2015 could easily ditch the tiara in favour of flowers in her hair. Crownedbyv.com

GOWNS

When it comes to the dress, timeless and romantic, yet far from fussy (and certainly not casual) is the style most brides will say "yes" to this year. We're looking to features like off-the-shoulder necklines, ornate backs and gauzy overlays to provide real interest without necessitating a tonne of tulle—like the gorgeous Ugo gown from designer Rosa Clara's 2015 Soft collection, available at **Blush Bridal**. 1189 Hamilton St., 604-336-6696, Blushoccasions.com

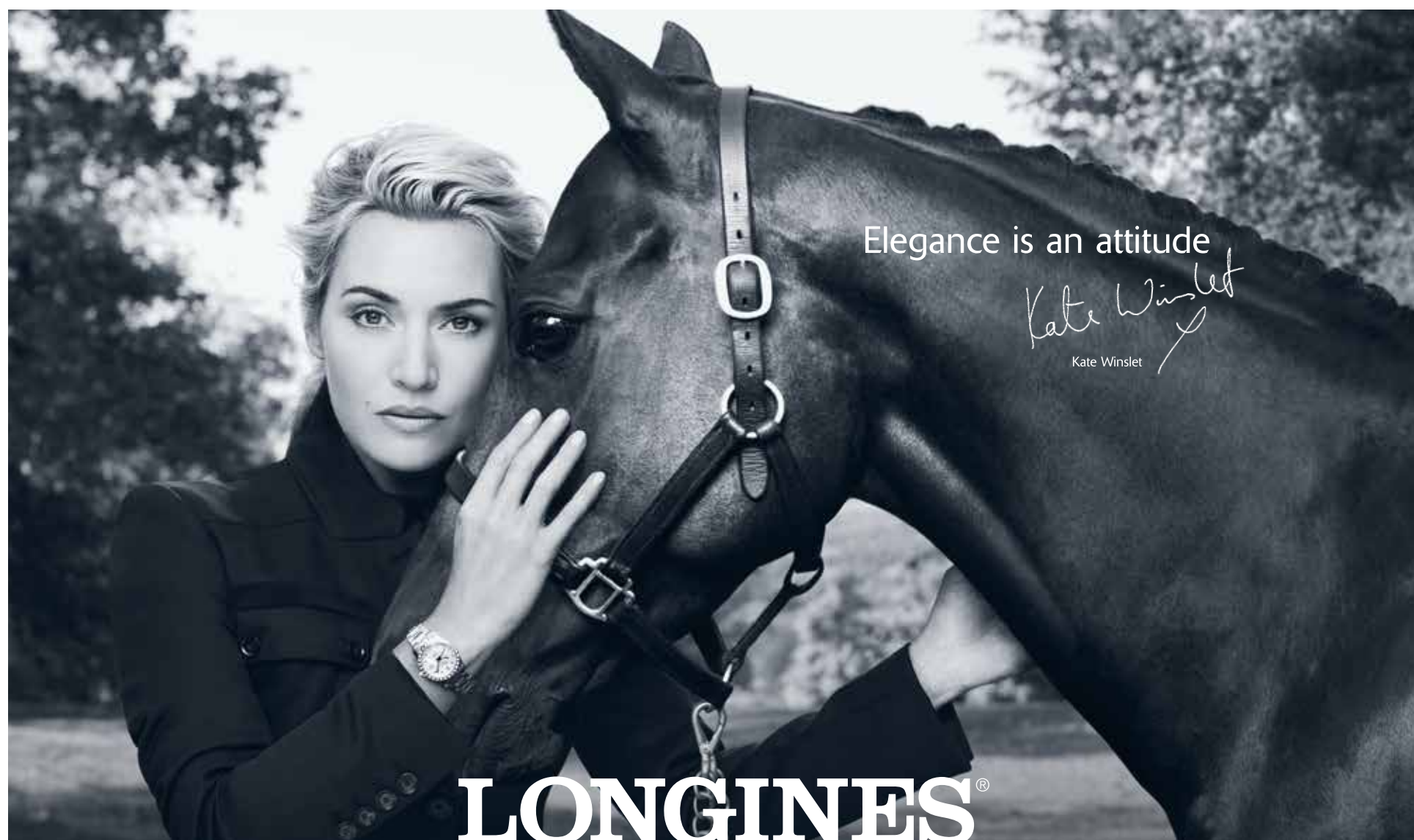
V

VENUES

Rustic ruled last year (rough-hewn barn or off-the-beaten path ciderhouse, anyone?), but the current trend in wedding locales is simple, slick and modern. A glittering hotel ballroom would make the perfect place to say "I do" (though you'll have to wait a year before you can book the **Trump**). If your gathering is intimate, try one of Vancouver's many fashionable restaurants—the new private dining area at **L'Abattoir** is all brick and beam, with sleek industrial glass, steel accents and space for 50, seated (the food's really good, too). 217 Carrall St., 604-568-1701, Labattoir.ca

COLOURS

Pantone's palette for '15 includes cool and calming aquamarine (a "restful blue" that can actually act as a stress reducer for the bride on her big day), minty green and neutral toasted almond. Grey's also looking to walk down the aisle this year—a light-toned suit paired with a tan tie or a dark-grey ensemble with bright-blue accents for the groom will do, like this **Topman** multi-coloured checked suit jacket (\$229) from **Hudson's Bay**. 674 Granville St., 604-681-6211, Thebay.com



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Conquest Classic

Salad Days

BECOME A GREEN MACHINE. WORDS ADRIENNE MATEI

B

Between stress, sitting, hunching and poor choices re: mindless snacking, office life is like a sniper assassin with our physical prime in its crosshairs. So we've vowed to mark 2015 as the year we bring a healthy lunch to work daily—because if birthday cupcakes and Friday beer are going to happen, then mason jars of kale are going to happen, too.

And who better to approach for some healthy-lunch tips than Christina Culver of Vancouver's **Culver City Salads** food truck (parked at Hastings and Thurlow every Tuesday to Friday, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.)?

"I started the company because I was cooking for my friends all the time and they began to offer to pay me to bring them lunch at work," says the longtime (mostly) vegan, who sells fresh, local, incredibly healthy salads to hundreds daily.

Well, we nabbed Culver's excellent dressing recipe, plus some advice on how to prep primo take-to-work lunches.

"It's all about pre-prep," she says. "People forget that their blenders and food processors come with that one disc attachment—it's for shredding veggies! You can ribbon kale and brussels sprouts quickly, and they keep for three, four days."

Another DIY salad tip: a mix of raw and cooked things is easier to digest than just raw. Culver, who likes roasted yams, kimchi for that macro-tang, and brown rice vermicelli, says, "Add some protein, like quinoa. People always ask



which salads will keep them full—quinoa, and anything with legumes, which you can buy dry and soak in a half ratio, and nuts and seeds will keep you going for hours."

Mason jars, she adds "are more than just hip."

"They actually work really well because you can pack a lot in, and when

you upturn it all, it mixes itself," she explains. "Another question I get asked often is how many calories a vegan lunch salad has. I'm just like, 'Look, it's a vegan lunch salad, don't sweat it, you're doing great.'"

Culvercitysalads.com



CULVER CITY SALAD DRESSING

This super-clean dressing recipe is so balanced with healthy goodness, you'll be able to skip your daily supplements. Some of Culver's friends have even confessed to drinking it, and she puts it on everything.

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup organic miso paste
1/2 cup organic apple cider vinegar
1 cup water
2 tbsp organic tamari
1 organic lemon, juiced and zested
1 clove garlic
2 tbsp organic chia seeds
Fresh-ground pepper to taste
1/2 cup organic tahini
1/2 cup organic basil

DIRECTIONS

Combine everything but the tahini and basil in a blender. Once emulsified, add the tahini and blend until smooth (a few more minutes); lastly, chuck in the basil and pulse the blender a few times until the basil is chopped up but not totally blended in. Drizzle on your salad and enjoy!

Here's a hint: you can pour the remaining dressing into a jar and refrigerate. It will be good for at least one month. If you don't feel like making the dressing from scratch, no problem; Culver sells bottles of it off of her food truck and is hoping to get it into other retail locations this year, so keep an eye out!

3 OVERNIGHT MASKS THAT REALLY WORK

You've heard your skin repairs itself at night, right? It's incidentally also the best time for seriously rejuvenating masks that work overtime to ensure the phrase "beauty sleep" really rings true. Whether your goal is to moisturize, smooth or soothe, make one of these night owls the final step of your evening routine (so much for not being productive at night):



KORRES GREEK YOGHURT ADVANCED SLEEPING FACIAL

Remember when yogurt was a salve for peel-y childhood sunburns? This aerated cream extends that soothing, moisturizing effect, babying your skin while you sleep so you wake up soft and all aglow. \$59 at Sephora.ca



FRESH OVERNIGHT BLACK TEA FIRMING MASK This mask claims a corset-like effect, banishing lines during the wee nocturnal hours. A morning peer at the mirror reveals visibly smooth, plumped-up skin. \$92 at Fresh.com



SKOAH KLEARITY MASK Post-dusk is battle-time for acne-fighters. With this tea tree oil powerhouse in your camp, you'll awake, relieved, to calmed blemishes and quelled redness (a.k.a., victory). \$45 at Skoah.com



Tried & Tested: Nectar Juice Cleanse

WORDS SARAH BANCROFT & ADRIENNE MATEI

Here's the DL: Nectar Juicery offers cleanses aimed at restoring your body to its personalized ideal state of being. Our editors Sarah (a veteran cleanser) and Adrienne (we're gonna go with "cleanse virgin," here) simultaneously attempt to subsist off six daily juices, with Sarah's geared toward chill-out purposes and Adrienne's strategized for anti-laziness, so, ouch. Let the games begin.

DAY ONE

SARAH: Prescription: Alkaline cleanse, "best suited to those who run hot in body and temper." Apparently I will spend the next three days hangry (hungry/angry). The first green "Daily V" juice is delicious, but I still covet the steaming food-truck boxes downtown. I want them more because I can't have them. Grrr. I'm a step or two behind at my Barre class today. Some things never change.

ADRIENNE: Prescription: Energize cleanse, "for those looking for motivation and energy." I feel cold and infirm. I'm not particularly hungry, but when food Instagrams appear on my feed, I'm like, "Oh that looks good." By 6 p.m. I thought I'd be asleep but I actually embark on a super-productive evening of writing, arranging work collaborations and mediating familial conflict. Huh, go figure.

DAY TWO

SARAH: Morning is easy; it's around juice number 4 that I start feeling like I can't be sated by liquid alone. The "Cool Aid" cucumber-based juice goes down quick and easy; the chia-and-hemp-based "Release" with bubble tea-type floaties, not so much. I run into Adrienne in the office kitchen. She's drinking water and flipping through the new Lesley Stowe cookbook. "I'm having lunch," she says. Nectar's cleanse coach warns me that I may be feeling a bit head-achey and tired now (actually, not till Day 3). An infrared sauna and massage after work help. Hey, the cleanse instructions say to "treat yourself well."

ADRIENNE: I woke up #flawless at 5 a.m. and had juice No. 1 in bed listening to a podcast about the Galapagos, read, cleaned my apartment and danced around ... all before work. Truthfully told everyone I felt "spectacular." I am a fembot with no need for human sustenance.

DAY THREE

SARAH: It's not so much that I am hungry, I just miss the mouth-feel of food. Plus, I'm now at the Whistler Food and Wine Festival, den of temptation. Adrienne dares me to bring a spittoon to my wine dinner. I do not.

ADRIENNE: Received a message from Nectar warning Day 3 would be emotional. Opened and read it in the midst of an unprecedented laugh-cry. I've had trouble making it to juice No. 6 each day; it's like the final level of Banjo-Kazooie, i.e., weirdly impossible. Still haven't been hungry, but would really like to lie face down and whine.

CONCLUSION

SARAH: Do I feel a new mental clarity? Boosted and energized? Did I drop five pounds like I had hoped? Yes, yes and no. But I loved the morning juices so much that I plan on integrating them into my routine. No need to be hangry after all.

ADRIENNE: I have to admit, it felt pretty cool to not have to eat, I wasn't hungry and I did get a ton of energy and a conversational topic I wanted to bring up to everyone/tweet about relentlessly. Plus, I felt like I deserved a medal the whole time (possibly reading "No. 1 Juice Drinker Except for Juice No. 6, Too Much Juice"). Will definitely attempt another cleanse, A+.

Nectar Juicery offers three-, five- and 10-day cleanses, plus fresh, on-tap corporate catering. Nectarjuicery.com



The Art of Hair

WORDS ADRIENNE MATEI

G

Gastown's new **Brush Salon** has a couple of key mantras.

There's the salon's signature decor piece, a quippy neon sign reading "Girl, roots are for trees," in owner Michael Gibson's own hand, and the proclamation "Life is too short to have boring hair" on its Instagram page. But perhaps the most applicable mandate comes from straight from Gibson himself: "For every person who comes in, I always look at face shape, bone structure, their whole look and how to make something different that enhances everything but still feels perfectly 'them.'" Gibson and partner in work/life

Calvyn Cass know what works ("We like texture. We're obsessed with Shu Uemura's texture spray; you use it dry after a blowout and it gives that relaxed look, so it's less perfectly bouncy and more true West Coast girl") and why ("Greys are a trend in the city, and they look really cool as long as you use shine sprays for lustre").

They even keep tabs on red-carpet trends, where Cass predicts awards season will see sleek shininess—a look he recommends achieving with Shu Uemura's collection of hair products containing Camellia Oil (once used liberally by Geishas).

In fact, Brush is one of only three salons in the city where Shu Uemura's top-shelf hair products can be found (though, as a certified eco-friendly Greencircle salon, they're also fans of eco-luxe Italian line Davines—gorgeously packaged and carbon-neutral).

The experience is rounded out by some of the most design-minded chairs we've seen in a salon, fresh decor care of a living wall, and a mean latte while you wait for your highlights to cook. ♡

62 W. Cordova St., 604-559-1737, Brushsalon.ca

MUSEUM OF VANCOUVER PRESENTS

FROM

RATIONING


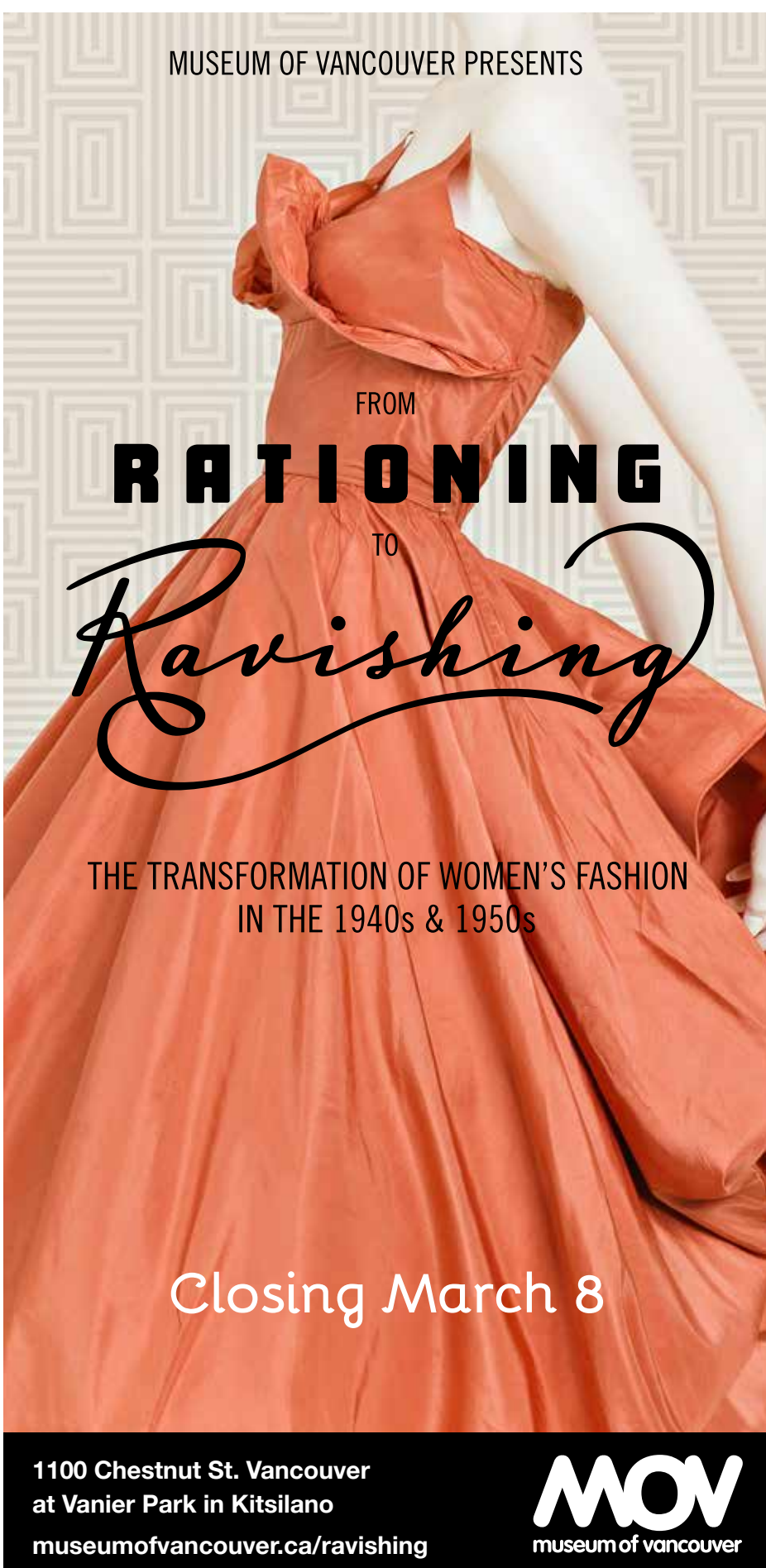
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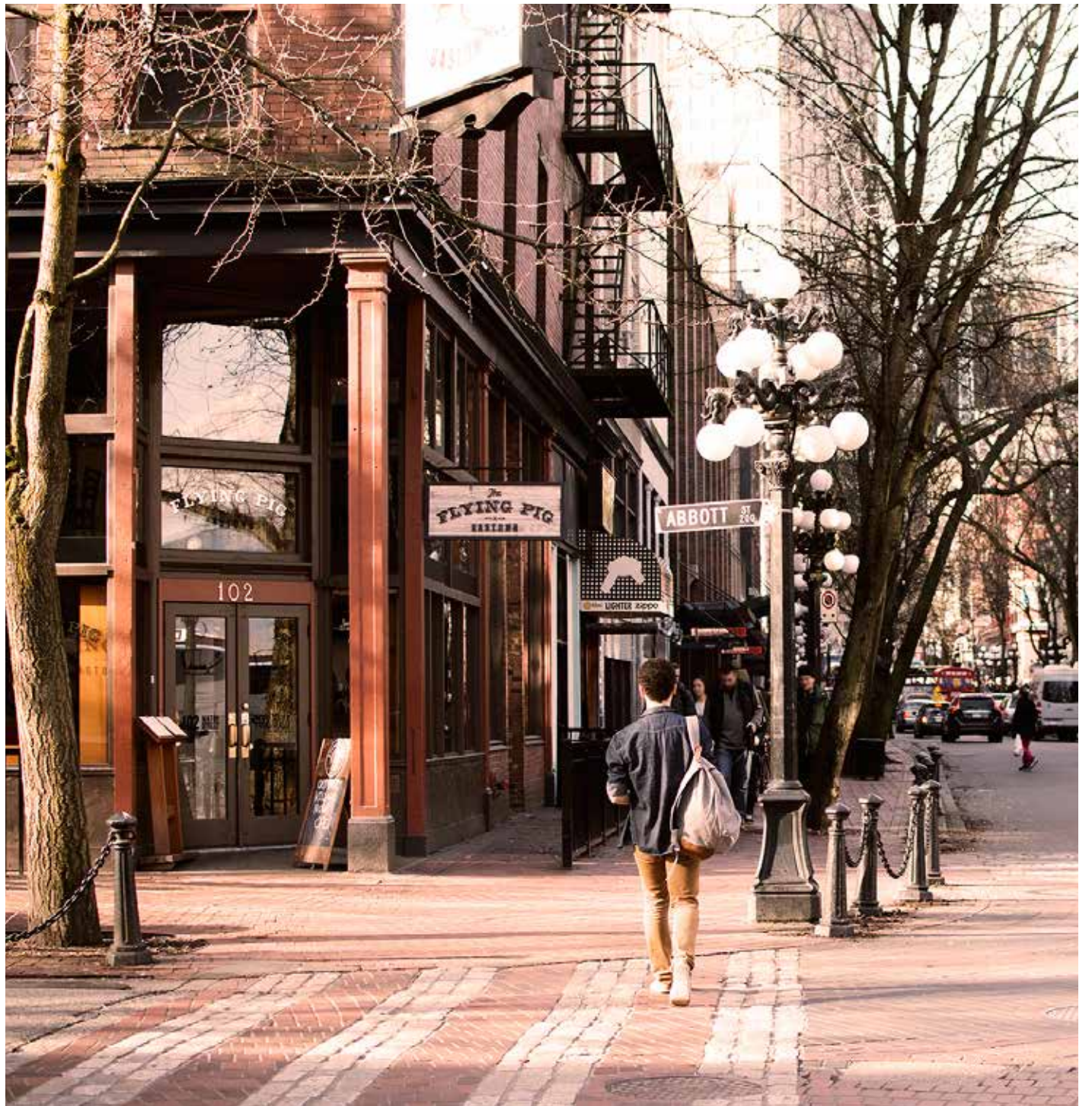
ADRIENNE MATEI ON SHOPPING & DINING GEMS IN VANCOUVER'S OLDEST 'HOOD.

T

There's something about Gastown that lends itself easily to prose—from cobblestones to its tendency to catch bluish dusks rolling in over shipyards and the most historic buildings in sight. In fact, this district's enjoyed painfully hip repute since our dads flocked there for platforms and powder-blue paisley. Sure, the area's changed, but its clutch of cool boutiques and bars has only evolved, making the wiry tangle of streets a destination for gourmet taster-makers and tony shoppers by day, and a loud, young crowd by night.

Enter from Water Street Station and you're greeted by **Oak + Fort**, a local gem always restocking with affordable and well-made pieces inspired by high-fashion minimalists. Across the street is **One of a Few**, which curates fun and modern luxury (it's the only spot to find NYC-label **Chiyme's** clean-lined leatherwear) alongside awesome local treats like **Reassembly** perfumes and **Strathcona Stockings** printed with tropical fruit and occult-ish all-seeing eyes.

Further down you'll hit **ComplexGeometries**, arbiter of the perfect elusive-drape with its Montreal-inspired, often-unisex separates, avant-garde Italian-made shoes and personal-care products by Toronto's **Province Apothecary** (including a hyper-gentle organic lube labelled "sex oil," with a fragrance-free promise we substantiated by sniffing like weirdos). The



VERSACE HOME

prysmatically mirrored dressing room is a must-see in itself—almost as cool as the high-tech version at **Secret Location**, where you can peruse conceptual haute-art stylings that would make Schiaparelli smile.

If it's décor you're after, Yaletown's chic **espace d.** just moved to Water Street, or try the new, gilded and sumptuous **Versace Home**. Meanwhile, **Old Faithful** caters to urban-earthly clientele and is the best place ever to buy gifts for guys (soon to open in Toronto, as well). Also expanding (naturally, into Portland) is home and accessory darling **Litchfield**, where everything from axes to chocolate bars find their most stylish iteration and you'll finally understand the term "glamping."

Wonder where hipsters get their glasses? Since opening in 2014, the sharpest ones have come from **Bailey Nelson**—an Australian brand that chose Vancouver for its first Canadian outpost and will be getting an in-house optometrist soon. Our own **Eyeland Framemakers** recently left Granville Island for Gastown, too, joining trend-setting **Bruce Eyewear**.



BAILEY NELSON



CHIYOME AT ONE OF A FEW



PROVINCE APOTHECARY AT COMPLEXGEOMETRIES



OAK + FORT

If you're seeking cool-casual wear (who isn't these days), new **Kit & Ace** decided to make silky technical cashmere a "thing," and with aplomb (the brand's T-shirts feel like pudding). Meanwhile, Columbia Street's **STR/KE MVMT** ups the city's sportswear game with pieces that reference vintage athletic club clothing but feel modern and cool (and, like if you wear them, you need to be able to throw a good punch). It's also got self-designed footwear that's Vancouver's answer to Nike, plus a little inner café to grab a healthy snack while you shop.

Speaking of snacks, hellooo Gastown. We'll give you the quick and dirty. **Meat & Bread's** porchetta sandwich will whiteout your vision for three seconds (the local mini-chain is expanding to Seattle), while **Bambudda's Top Chef** Curtis Luk serves up adult versions of his Hong Kong childhood favourites. **Purebread Bakery** offers a "crack bar," which is sweet and salty—but, what-

STREET SMARTS

ever, we had you at “crack bar”—and **Mosquito** (nuzzled next to **Orling and Wu**) is a super-new champagne and dessert joint with a sexy interior and (hopefully) an enthusiasm for puns about “bites.” Little sibling restos really shine, with **Nieli’s Next Door** opening adjacent to its pizzeria big sister and perfect for wine and Italian nibbles (meatballs and tuna conserva), and **Tacofino’s** new burrito bar serving up chicken karaage, tempura cod and even vegan burritos at the mouth of the venture’s new 3,000-square-foot (plus patio!) flagship.

Elegant Japanese with a teppan-focus can be found at **Shirakawa**, **Blacktail** has date night down pat with clean flavours and Scandinavian decor and, if you’re willing to wander three blocks into Raintown, you’ll be rewarded with the city’s best handmade pasta at **Ask for Luigi** (try it for brunch, when ricotta-rolled eggplant starts your day off right). Treat-seekers must hit freshly opened **Soft Peaks** ice cream, for not-too-sweet soft serve topped with a drippy golden hunk of honeycomb or chocolate Tim Tam biscuits and pure maple syrup. Also excellent: **Timbertrain** coffee roasters, for a smooth espresso after a big meal.

Enjoy nightlife at new creative club venues like **Alexander** and **303 Columbia**, which eschew cheesy club glitz for a welcoming community feel. For drinks, turn to **Clough Club’s** grown-up hip atmosphere and smart cocktails, or catch a burlesque show Tuesday nights at **Guilt & Co.** You can also approximately DIY the experience with a pole fitness class at Water Street’s new **Tantra Fitness**, where all sorts of sexy moves are taught. If you’d prefer something more chilled out, relax in a mineral salt bath at **Float House**. ♥

COMPLEXGEOMETRIES



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Objects d'Art

LIVING PIECES WE'RE LUSTING AFTER.

U

UP THE CREEK

Artist and avid canoeist Natasha Wittke launched **Norquay Co.** in 2013, consequently making her painting canvas and her boat paddle one and the same. Each of Wittke's painted paddles, which range in price from \$275 to \$380, is handcrafted from solid Ontario cherry wood and embellished with bright, vintage camp-ware-inspired designs, making them both functional and beautiful for sluicing through dark forest lakes (though we wouldn't blame you for using one as a point of interest in your home). Norquayco.com



ETERNALLY SATURDAY

Saturday feels optimistic. So of course **Kate Spade's** poppy Saturday collection (which launched in Tokyo, 2013) is characterized by weekend-y ebullience. We're excited for Saturday's new collaboration with (and available at) **West Elm**, which brings the line's buoyant housewares to Canada. Think splashy floral-upholstered chairs, neon-print wall art (reading what else but "good vibes?"), galaxy-bedecked sheets and all sorts of refined-but-whimsical updates to your space. Surrounded by that sweet style, every day's gonna feel like the weekend. 2947 Granville St., 604-733-6730, Westelm.com



KATE SPADE FOR WEST ELM.



MOE'S HOME.



CUSHY CANVAS

In filling our homes with pretty things, we're passing up big-box wares and opting for something a little more personal instead. To spruce up our seating, **MOE's Home** offers a series of grey-and-blue-toned feather throw pillows (\$139 each) from its private-label collection that look like watercolour paintings worthy of gallery placement. With names like "fog," "mist" and "murky water," these crush-worthy velvet cushions will fit right into our winter décor. 1728 Glen Dr., 604-687-5599, Moeshome.ca

COLD HARD

Concrete is the new kid on the home décor block, perfect in a sleek and durable bench top, an eye-catching bathroom sink or intriguing artwork. If you're as obsessed with the cold hard as we are, you'll be chuffed with **Concrete Cat**. Based in Edmonton but with an online shop that ships Canada-wide, the studio's interdisciplinary team of designers and artists turns out concrete art of the decorative and architectural variety that positively oozes effortless industrial chic—everything from clocks to wall sculptures to fireplaces. On our list: these cute **Concreep** planters (\$28 each), adorable grins and all. Concretecat.com

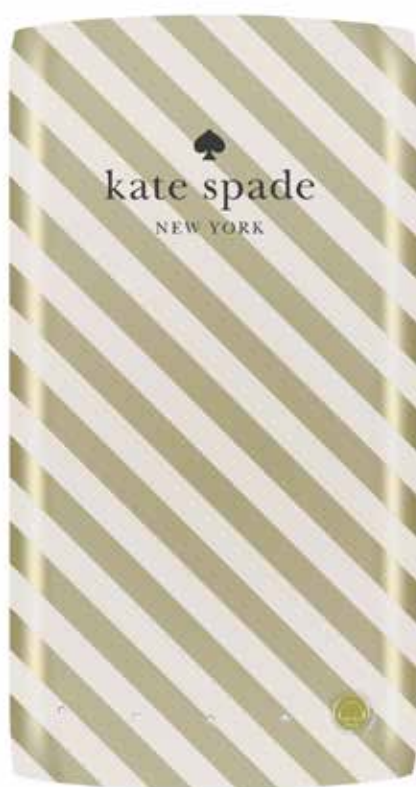
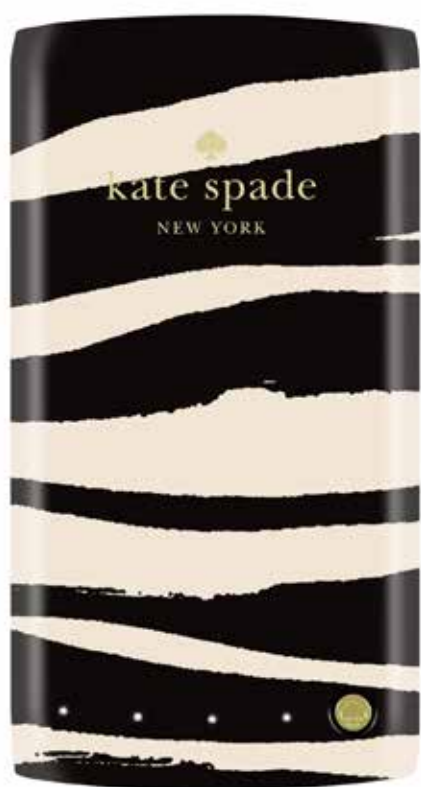


Mobile Style

WORDS KATE LEGRESLEY

POWER PACK

Never let your tech devices run out of juice again. Not only are portable **Kate Spade** New York Battery Bank chargers (\$80 each at **Telus** stores) designed to suit your style (they come in six crazy cool colour prints and patterns, including candy stripe, zebra and polka dot), they're also good for up to three charges—in other words, the perfect accessory for the unstoppable woman. Shop.telus.com



GIMME A RINGLY

"You've got mail." No, not the movie—it's **Ringly** (\$195), a teched-out accessory that, with gentle vibrations and a tiny coloured light, alerts you to new emails, social media activity and more.

Beautifully designed (something we can't say about most wearables; Google Glass comes to mind), the ring comes in four styles; we tested the Stargaze Black Onyx ring, with an 18K matte gold band. Setup was easy and fun. First, the ring box doubles as charger, complete with mini USB hub. Downloading Ringly's simple-yet-sophisticated app to our iPhone and customizing our settings—phone calls, most important, got four vibrations plus a red light, while a single buzz and blue light sufficed for Facebook—was a breeze. We then slipped our precious on and went about our day.

Running to and from meetings, phone in purse or pocket, it was fun to get that instant ping on our ring (and then check our phone). Our only issue: the distraction factor. Smartphones already seem an extension of our bodies—rarely are we without our phones and, if we are, it's usually intentional. But it's hard to resist that buzz. Meeting, date, whatever. As soon as Ringly vibrated and lit up, our minds instantly went from being engaged and in the moment to, "OMG, someone just liked my profile pic." But, it's so pretty.

Ringly.com



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MUSEUM OF VANCOUVER.

Cultural Affairs

DON'T MISS THESE MUST-SEE LOWER MAINLAND MUSEUM & GALLERY EXHIBITS.

FROM RATIONING TO RAVISHING

A private look at the Museum of Vancouver's most stylish exhibit yet? Sign us up. MOV marketing officer Myles Constable welcomed us to the museum's From Rationing to Ravishing show, on until March 8th, just a smidge before opening hours on a rainy Tuesday morning, giving us time to linger at every mannequin in the two-room space at leisure—a real treat for our inner (but really, outer) fashion fiend.

The exhibit tells the story of war-time to post-war fashion, exemplifying through an enviable collection of vintage garments—many made in Vancouver or, alternately, worn by local trendsetters of an era past—how a shortage of fabric during the Second World War necessitated some very inventive design skills (bridal gowns made from discarded parachutes, the use of colour and prints rather than scarce beads and baubles for embellishment, and one-shoulder looks to save the need for two). Also showcased: drop-dead-gorgeous gowns by no-intro-needed designers like Christian Dior, Cristóbal Balenciaga and Elsa Schiaparelli that, trust us, are total must-sees.



The exhibit isn't all look-but-don't-touch; we projected an image of ourselves onto a wall and dressed our likeness in digital period pieces before trying our hand at paper-doll play (those with cloth-cutting skills should excel at this activity; us, not so much). There are also special events to attend, including a live concert of rationing-era songs and a fashion show (which we hear is sold out but, hey, you never know).

Rationing, ravishing and riveting, don't miss this MOV offering. 1100 Chestnut St., 604-736-4431, Museumofvancouver.ca



MARITIME MUSE

Cherry blossoms and glass skyscrapers aside, no picture paints our city more precisely than a scape of verdant mountains, a glittering blue harbour, and red-and-black tankers waiting to enter port. Hong Kong-born, Burnaby-based artist Chi-Ming Yeung captures that very scene in his paintings, a selection of which are on display until April 5th at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. Walking through the exhibit with time to read each of Yeung's notes on his works is a submersive experience that brings the sea to life—a perfect pairing with the scene that sits directly outside the gallery's own windows. 1905 Ogden Ave., 604-257-8300, Vancouvermaritimemuseum.com

CHI-MING YEUNG'S "THE EMPRESS OF CANADA." PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

BURROWS AT THE BELKIN

We recently took a private tour of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery's newest exhibit, featuring the work of legendary B.C. artist Tom Burrows. As if being guided through solo by museum director Scott Watson wasn't treat enough, we spied none other than the artist himself diligently working to complete the installations before opening night.

The show, which runs until April 12th, took us on a journey of Burrows' work from the 1960s to present, starting with the sculptural installations on the Maple Wood Mudflats that first propelled him to prominence. We simultaneously learned that social activism around land rights and squatter communities as well as protest performance art are a big part of this artist's story (just ask any longtime Vancouverite if they recall news of a naked, silver-painted man walking across the Second Narrows Bridge).

Our look at the exhibit revealed some of Burrows early sculptures—geometric shapes in rusted iron—alongside



1

images of his iconic hand-built Hornby Island houses, simple and with open floor plans that read, architecturally speaking, as rustic, mid-century modern. The several gallery walls dedicated to more recent polymer resin sculp-



2



3

tures really appealed: despite being completely flat, these pieces are lent enormous depth thanks to Burrows' choice of rich, monochromatic hues. It can really pay off to be a stick in the mud. 1825 Main Mall, University of British Columbia, 604-822-2759, Belkin.ubc.ca

- 1 Tom Burrows, the artist's house on fire in the Maplewood Mudflats, December 1971.
- 2 Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery Archives. Gift of CAUSA, 2014.
- 3 Tom Burrows en route to an exhibition in Toronto, 1988. Photo: Rick Morrill.
- 4 Tom Burrows, Blanket Statement #10, 1992-93. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



4

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Year of the Sheep

February 19th and it's time to say "Kung Hei Fat Choi" in welcome of the Year of the Sheep—or, as it's come to be known, Year of the Sheep/Goat/Ram (some kind of bovidae is the gist here). Sheep-people (not rude in this context) are defined by their creativity, obstinance, sweetly romantic nature and healthy love of luxury. With that in mind, we rounded up a collection of items to help you celebrate all things that go "baahhh."

GRASS FED Real-deal authentic Quebecois preserves company **Société Original** makes a goat's milk dulce de leche-like jam you'll eat off the spoon. \$10 at *Litchfield*, 38 Water St., 604-428-5880, Litchfieldtheshop.com



WOOL WORTH Waltz around pantsless like a Victoria's Secret model in this silky, oversized cashmere Team Playa jersey. \$108 at *Kit and Ace*, 151 Water St., 844-548-6223, Kitandace.com

WATCH THIS Canada's own Berg & Betts makes hand-crafted watches from local designers' leftover scrap leather, such as shrunken lambskin, that would otherwise go to waste. Our iPhones can't tell time this stylishly. Etsy.com

RING AROUND Vancouver-based jewelry line **Army of Rotosz** produces unconventional, ornate, nature-inspired pieces, like this unique ram's horn ring. \$160 at *Cavalier Jewellers*, 217 - 207 W. Hastings St., 604-681-0047, Cavaliergastown.com

SHEAR PLEASURE Shearling is the second-most luxurious thing about these caramel-coloured "smart gloves"; the first is that you can text with them still on. \$125 at *UGG*, 2633 Granville St., 604-245-0040, Uggaustralia.com



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Food for Thought

ADRIENNE MATEI SAMPLES THE CITY'S BEST NEW BITES.

V

VICTORY IS OURS

When barre classes and brow-threading leave you craving a fresh baguette, visit Yaletown's new coffee and bake-shop, **Small Victory**. The open kitchen of this spacious café conjures classic French loaves, muffins, scones with clotted cream and chewy cookies (try the pistachio white chocolate chunk). Small Victory's also hot on the foodie toast trend, serving thickly sliced bread with butter and sophisticated jams (our seed slice topped with lemon-pear marmalade could never be replicated at home). The white-and-gold space is sure to be popular for business lunches (the menu sees salads and sandwiches) and coffee dates. With milk and cream on gleaming, gilded tap, it suits the neighbourhood seamlessly. 1088 Homer St., 604-899-8892, Smallvictory.ca



JELLY BABY

Casual Lebanese is on at **Jamjar**. Seasoned olives and muhammara (roasted red pepper dip with walnuts) mean you could happily snack your way through an entire meal, but then you'd miss the lamb laban emmo—a braised shank tenderly sliding into a yogurt-mint sauce—stellar falafel, crispy fried cauliflower and zucchini and a tabbouleh caesar that really beats kale juice when it comes to drinking your salad. Then, buy house-made sausage at the counter to take home (plus all of Jamjar's dips and sauces, packed in, what else, jam jars). 2280 Commercial Dr., 604-525-3957, Jamjaronthedrive.com



SOFT SERVED

Soft Peaks opened last month with some of the most ambrosial ice cream we've had. Brothers Dan and Ken Kim had a concise vision for their ideal product: local and organic (thanks to milk from Avalon Dairy), free from dubious chemical stabilizers, not too sweet and elevated by sophisticated toppings (the signature add-on is a show-stopping, sticky, golden piece of local honeycomb). Our favourite flavour so far is Himalayan pink sea salt and chocolate, but the Kims are keen foodies with an awareness of international dessert trends, so expect cool seasonal variances and sweet collaborations. Open late, and situated perfectly for a post-dinner-in-Gastown treat. 25 Alexander St., 604-500-7060, Softpeaks.ca



PHOTO: LAURA MCGUIRE

TACO FINE

Tacos, mescal and a patio; this is the new place to be. **Tacofino's** certainly come a long way from its Tofino food-truck roots, having just opened a perfectly atmospheric, spiritually surfer-y, 3,000-square-foot space in a heritage brick building off of Gastown's Blood Alley. The new resto has a burrito bar

out front, where you can grab a tempura cod wrap (or nix the tortilla for a bowl) and help yourself to a Mexican blanket-covered seat, plus a Taco Bar, with hand-woven, sunset-hued light fixtures and cool tiling that's already sparked its share of Instagram shots. The latter's menu sees all the tacos you need (steak, crispy chicken, chorizo),

accompanied by plates of squash and cauliflower tostadas loaded with savoury veggies, flame-blistered Shishito peppers with tamarind salt and crispy pork Chicharrón that comes to you audibly cracklin'.

15 W. Cordova St., 604-899-7907 Tacofino.com



RAISING THE BAR

A coffee shop that sells wine at 9 a.m. Do we have your attention? Great, because the opening of **Allegro Café** is not something to snooze through. Newly established on the uppermost floor of Cambie Street's **Whole Foods**, the café ensures all possible needs are met, with plenty of Union Wood Co.-designed seating, pastries, cheese plates and sandwiches, primo espresso drinks (hello, flat whites) and, yes, a smart selection of local wine plus Parallel 49 beer on tap. The province's first Whole Foods to go whole drink, happy hour's at 3 p.m. We suggest dropping in and repeating to yourself, "Now this, this is civilized." 510 W. Eighth Ave., 778-370-4210, Wholefoodsmarket.com

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W

WORDS & PICTURES
SARAH BANCROFT

When I was in my early 20s, fresh out of university, we jetted to Havana to celebrate with friends and see, with our own eyes (for surely the last time) communism in action. “Action” may not be the most appropriate word, as we spent most of the time in lineups: for paint for the diplomatic licence plate to travel in our lawyer-friend’s car; for markets that yielded no food; for police checkpoints that would not let us pass without a marriage certificate, prostitution being a problem at the time. We funded our trip by re-selling Romeo et Julietta cigars to Vancouver’s Yaletown Cigar Company, which was then in its heyday.

Fast-forward almost 20 years and my husband and I recently had the opportunity to circumnavigate Cuba aboard the *Louis Cristal*—a re-purposed Finnish ferry (how very socialist!) now operating as *Cuba Cruise*. It’s a second-year startup by two intrepid Torontonians, one of whom is a harbinger in the cruise industry in Northern Canada. Their experience venturing into uncharted cruise territory and conscripting the locals in their operations proved useful in entering the long-disused ports and less-travelled waters of Cuba, not to mention unwinding the bureaucratic red tape of a benign socialist dictatorship. With the recent détente in U.S.-Cuban relations as a news hook, and a promised stop in



Montego Bay as a carrot, we signed on for the week-long expedition.

This was not a cruise about counting stars (well, except for the ones in the night sky) but more about adventure. We cruised by night and, every morning, we arrived at a new place, some so remote we dropped anchor and accessed the shore via the ship’s lifeboats. Once, locals set up a bar on a pristine white beach and used machetes to harvest coconuts for us to drink from. The best day, by far, had us arriving by

catamaran on Paradise Island, where we snorkeled off the pontoons. The island is populated solely by ostriches and herds of water buffalo, which we observed from somewhat rickety Russian army Jeeps. This corridor of baby powder-white beaches punctuated by beautiful shells and lush foliage was where Christopher Columbus (or a Spanish conquistador, depending on whom you ask) first landed in the Americas in 1492, declaring it the most beautiful place on Earth. Can’t argue

with that.

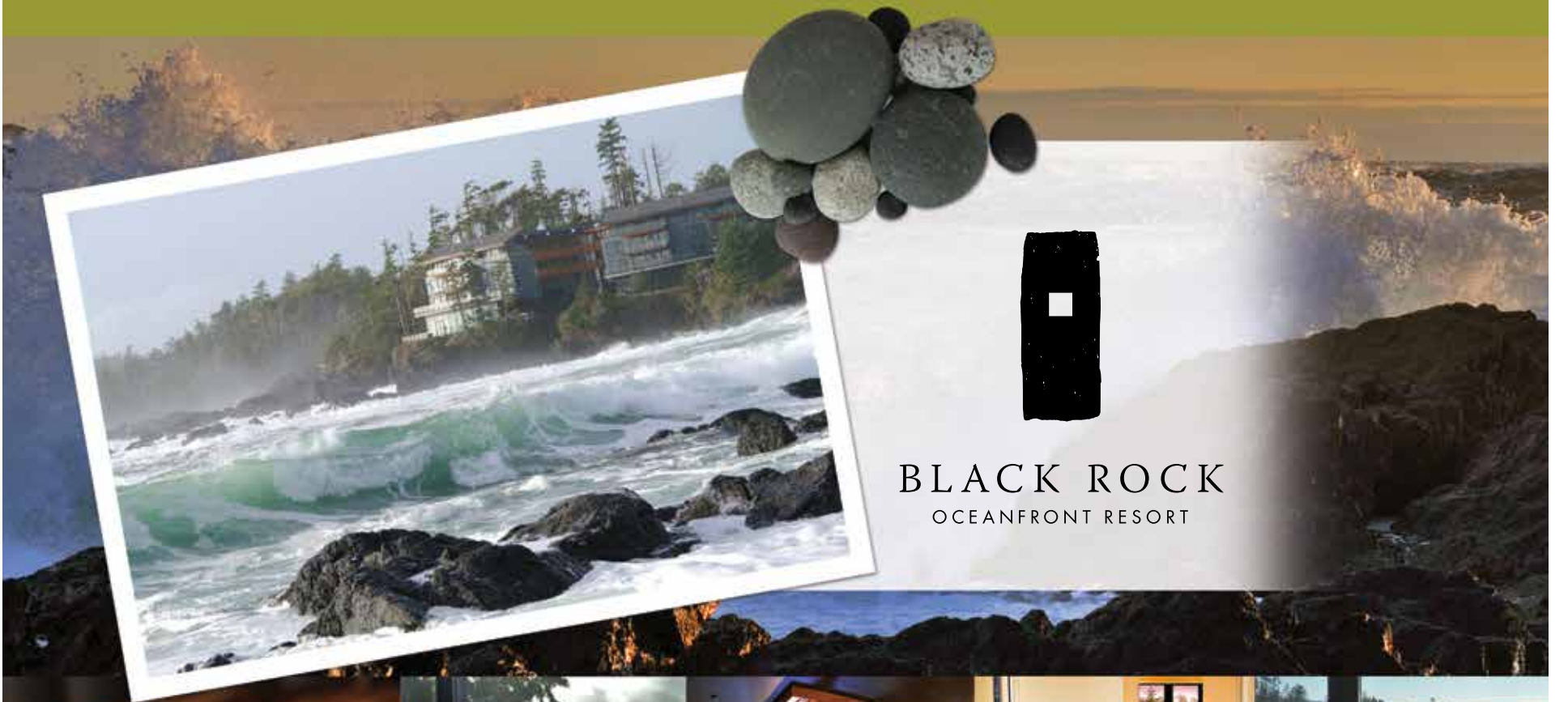
While our one night in Old Havana was a highlight—tracing the romantic path of watering holes of Ernest Hemingway and Errol Flynn and marveling at the crumbling Colonial architecture—the cruise also took us to more far-flung destinations. In Trinidad and Santiago de Cuba, the real-life struggles and tenacity of the Cuban people were more apparent, the music more raw and haunting, the cobblestones more uneven. Everywhere we went we saw children flying homemade kites of balsa wood and tissue paper, a metaphor if there ever was one for hope and resilience in times of adversity. Jamaica’s Negril beach, with its curry goat and jerk chicken cooked over coals, ample ganga and rum punch and dramatic cliff jumping (not necessarily in that order) was unforgettable—and a stark foil to its Caribbean country cousin, Cuba.

While we didn’t lounge in the touristy all-inclusives of Veradero or even, unfortunately, get to check out the retro-Soviet restaurant in an apartment on the oceanfront Malecon in Havana—currently all the rage and opened by our old lawyer friend Gregory of the licence plate-paint days (look it up if you go, it’s called Nazdarovie)—we did enliven our senses, recharge the batteries and kick-start our imaginations. And the cigars we brought back? Straight into the humidor. ♡

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IS WINTER WEATHER A THORN IN YOUR SIDE? IT'S TIME TO GAIN NEW PERSPECTIVES.

Storm-watching in Ucluelet

WORDS NOA NICHOL

A

A recent trip to **Black Rock Oceanfront Resort** in Ucluelet on Vancouver Island taught us there's nothing so exhilarating—or cosy, if that's your MO—as watching a storm roll in off the ocean, whip the waves into a froth and cast an ominous gloom across the sky. Here's how to make the most of your storm-watching adventure:

SOJOURN Travel to the westernmost point of Canada requires several vehicular aids, and we were lucky enough to make the trip aboard **BC Ferries** (offering a number of excellent storm-watching packages), in a sporty, stylish **Audi S4** sedan. The car, which accelerates to 100 km/h in but 5.1 seconds, handled the twists and turns of winding Highway 4 to Ucluelet with ease—like a volcano-red bullet through a storm, in fact. Heated leather seats kept our backs and buns toasty and a music interface with seamless iPod integration let us listen to something other than the howling wind outside our windows (though that was fun, too). An unexpected luxury: the windshield, embedded with sensors, measures how hard the rain is falling and adjusts the wiper speed accordingly. [Audi.ca](#)

STAY The secret to a successful storm-watching trip may lie in where you lay your head. Whether you want to snuggle up by the fireplace to watch the rolling waves or trek along the Wild Pacific Trail to snap the perfect pic, **Black Rock Oceanfront Resort** is just the



place to take in wicked winter weather. We loved warming up with specialty coffees in **Float Lounge** and relaxing in our giant soaker tub, which offered a private, front-row seat to an awesome Pacific Rim storm (and frolicking sea lions, to boot). When we finally left our lovely corner suite for a wet-'n'-wild walk along the seashore, the hotel lent us coats and brollies to keep dry (we'd left ours at home; talk about coming unprepared). 596 Marine Dr., 877-762-5011, [Blackrockresort.com](#)

WATCH The **District of Ucluelet** offers plenty of storm-watching tips online, with insight into how a winter storm is brewed (arctic and subtropical air masses colliding over the ocean). The best time to view tempests in the area is between November and March, when gale-force winds tear along the coast at breakneck speed. A favourite storm-watching spot is the **Amphitrite Lighthouse**—an easy walk along the Wild Pacific Trail—where powerful waves often send sprays over the lighthouse itself. In the calm after the storm, beachcomb for driftwood, trees and Japanese glass fishing floats brought in by the sea. [Ucluelet.ca](#)

SATIATE Storm-watching works up an appetite, and a fun, 30-minute drive through Pacific Rim National Park (with plenty of beach stops and photo opportunities along the way) to nearby Tofino yields such culinary options as fried buttermilk chicken and navy bean chowder at the **Spotted Bear Bistro**, freshly landed salmon and foraged shrooms at the **Wolf in the Fog** and signature donuts (try the maple bacon) at **Rhino Coffee House**. But that's all after the fact; to fuel a full day of watching wind and waves, head to Ucluelet's **Blue Room Bistro**, where a Ukeke-Ranian Breakfast starring perfect potato pierogies is served all day long. 1627 Peninsula Rd., 250-726-4464, [TheBlueroombistro.com](#)

Go Deep in Nelson

WORDS MIRANDA POST

If Whistler is the blingy, brawny brother of B.C.'s ski and snowboard scene, then Nelson is the wild, bohemian and beautiful little sister. This West Kootenays small town has everything you could ever want in a winter ski weekend: a hill stacked with champagne powder, a walkable downtown and a reputation for strong coffee and a fun club scene, with sweet spots to shop, relax and sleep to (ski) boot.

SKI **Whitewater Ski Resort** is one of B.C.'s best-kept secrets, with an average snowfall of 12 metres, a vertical drop of 623 metres and runs for intermediate and expert snow bunnies. The best part? Sleeping in is an option, thanks to the mountain's close proximity (20 minutes by car) to accommodations in downtown Nelson. [SkiWhitewater.com](#)

STAY Rebranded in mid-2014, the **Adventure Hotel's** 40 rooms vibrate with bright colours (think canary yellow and tangerine orange doors), wood walls and exposed brick. A stay in the king deluxe suite includes access to the hotel's rooftop infrared sauna, while those with wee ones can book an economy room with a dangling bunk and queen-sized bed. Either way, a funky common space on the second floor acts as a (free) coffee shop and a great place to watch the game. 616 Vernon St., 250-352-7211, [Adventurehotel.ca](#)

EAT Nelson has more delicious eateries per capita than many small towns. Perk up prior to hitting the slopes with a cup of java from Kootenay coffee king **Oso Negro**, then dig into one of the **Full Circle Café's** highly sought-after eggs benny offerings (our faves: Nanny's Benny or the West Coast). Mid-snow day, break for lunch at Whitewater's award-winning **Fresh Tracks Café** (of cookbook fame); refuel apres with a burger and local **Nelson Brewing Co.** taps at **Rel-ish** on Nelson's downtown Baker Street. For a more intimate meal, book a romantic table for two at the **All Seasons Café**, tucked away in a cosy alleyway half a block north of Baker.



SHOP Small town or not, Baker Street is a fantastic place to break from skiing for an afternoon of retail therapy. Stop by **Tara Davis Studio Boutique** to peruse Canadian-made jewelry from Winnipeg's **Dconstruct**, Nelson's **Clever Fawn** and Vancouver's **Black Drop Designs**. For warm and sexy—yes, really—leg warmers and boot cuffs by **Grace and Lace** and buckets of locally picked vintage household goodies, head to **Birch'n Burlap**. Feel like checking out a DJ at the **Spirit Bar** but only remembered to pack snow attire? **Bia Boro Boutique** carries the cutest dresses for a grooving night. ♡



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