



*inside the*

# MAY

ISSUE

**IN FULL BLOOM**  
Welcome May *with*  
Our Top Floral Picks

**TOGS FOR TOTS**  
Stylish Kid Clothes  
Made *by* Canadians

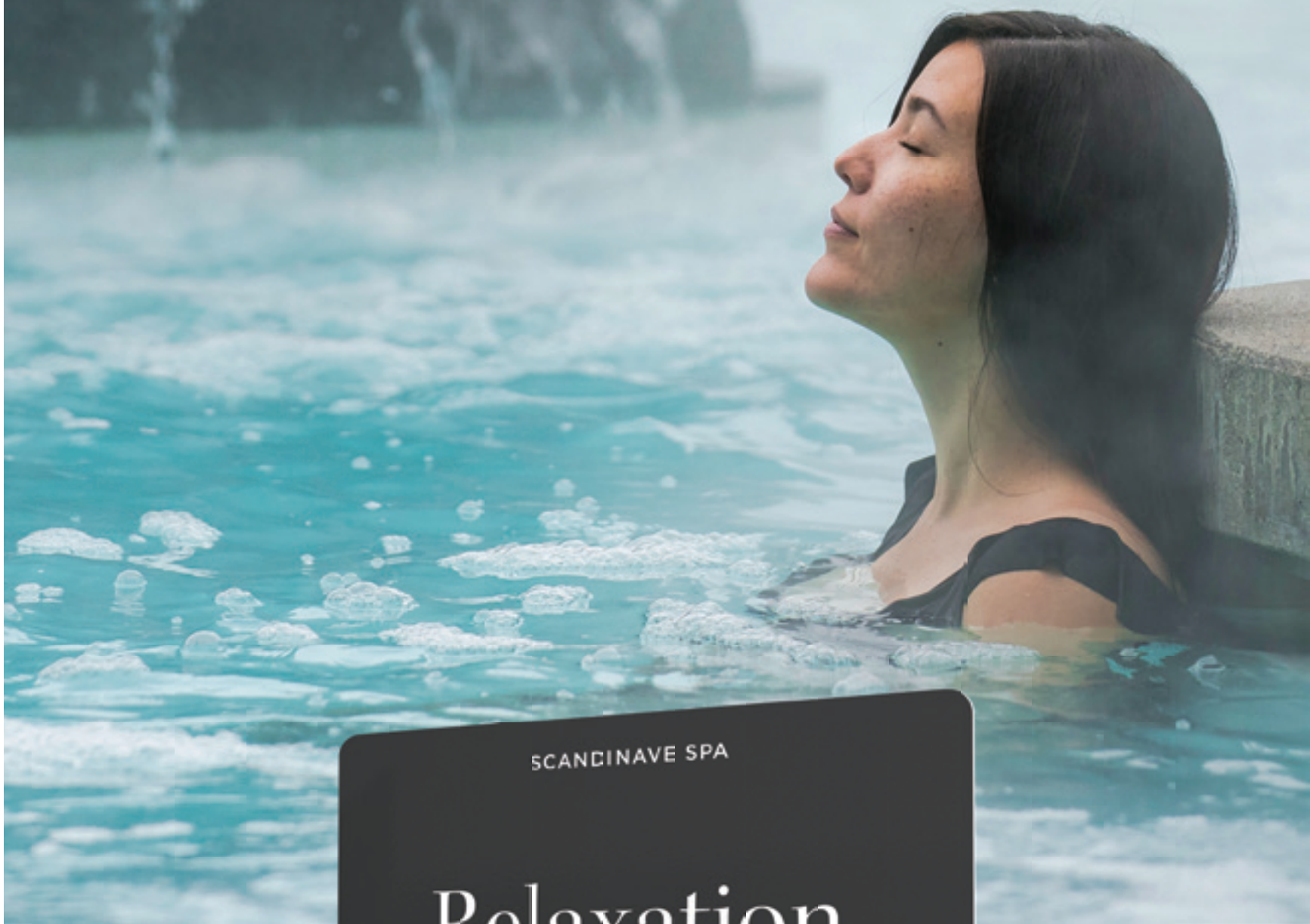
**STORE-Y TIME**  
Celebrating 38 Years  
of Diane's Lingerie

**FLOUR POWER**  
Bake *a* Bouquet of  
Lavender Cookies

**SWEDE DREAMS**  
The Enduring Appeal  
of Scandi Design

**VALLEY VILLAGE**  
Day Tripping *to*  
Downtown Chilliwack

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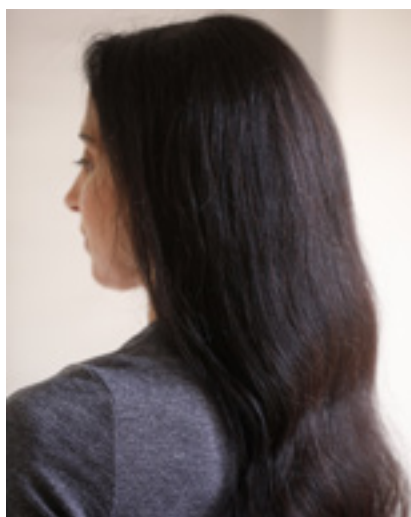
# EDITOR'S DESK

## Her Hair Day

THE PERFECT MOTHER'S DAY GIFT? GREAT HAIR

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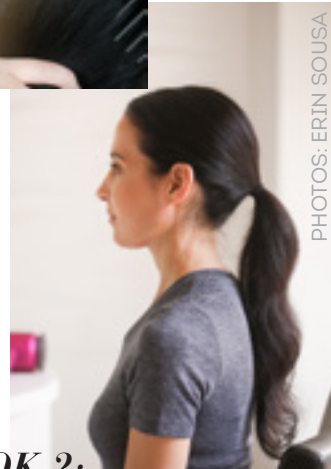
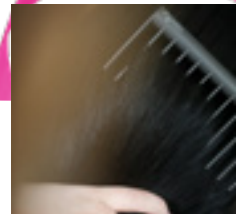
For Mother's Day we teamed with **Dyson** on a transitional (read: the first becomes the second) style "for her" that will make mom look stellar and are easy to create at home (even with kids around and a million to-dos). Both use the brand's bestselling Supersonic hairdryer, available in a gift edition (\$500) that features an all-over fuchsia colourway and comes with a 1.4-inch round brush and detangling comb. **701 W. Georgia St., 604-670-1135. [Dysoncanada.ca](http://Dysoncanada.ca)**



### LOOK 1: SMOOTH ROUND-BRUSH BLOW DRY

*Note: Apply any products you wish for your hair type and texture.*

1. Using the Dyson Supersonic with the smoothing nozzle, rough-dry the hair on high heat and high airflow until 75 per cent dry.
2. Place your part using the Dyson detangling comb, then section the hair into manageable quadrants.
3. Switch out the smoothing-nozzle attachment for the styling concentrator and bring heat and airflow settings to medium. The styling concentrator delivers a focused blade of air perfect for brush work!
4. Using the Dyson 35-mm vented round brush, take subsections the diameter of the brush barrel and come underneath the hair to start to lift and smooth. For more volume, pull the hair in an upward direction with the round brush; for less volume, pull the hair in an outward and down motion with the round brush.
5. Work to dry out the root area of the section around the round brush before moving to the middle and ends of the hair.
6. Smooth hair around the round brush as you move toward the ends and roll the brush in your hand to encourage the ends of your hair around the round-brush barrel.
7. Use the cold-shot button to lock in style and texture and add shine.



PHOTOS: ERIN SOUSA

### LOOK 2: PERFECT PONYTAIL

*Note: The round-brush blow dry supports an effortless transition from Look 1 to a perfect ponytail.*

1. Using the Dyson detangling comb, part your hair down the centre and comb to tuck hair behind the ears.
2. Continue to comb and gather the hair in the centre back of the head a few inches off the hairline.
3. Place a hair elastic around the hair and tighten to create a bit of lift in the ponytail.
4. Place the smoothing nozzle on the Dyson Supersonic and bring your heat and speed settings to low. Use the airflow to smooth down any flyaways or baby hairs and finish with desired finishing spray.



SHOT AT ZALON SALON, 113-511 W. 7TH AVE., 604-739-9228. [ZALONSALON.CA](http://ZALONSALON.CA)

# VITA

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# FASHION & SHOPPING

# IN FULL BLOOM

"I've been nurturing my skin head-to-toe with new All-Over Skin Dew (\$60). A blend of rose, sandalwood and bergamot oils, it's made by Vancouver's own Mifa for the face, neck, décolletage and body." [Mifaandco.com](http://Mifaandco.com)

Grow Wild Ravishing Rosé (\$17 at local liquor stores) offers layers of pink grapefruit, watermelon and wild strawberry with a fresh, flourishing finish. 123 Carrie Cates Ct., North Vancouver, 604-264-4008. [Artisanwineshop.ca](http://Artisanwineshop.ca)

CELEBRATE MAY WITH THESE PETAL-PERFECT PICKS

We love a good coffee table book; *Flowers: Art & Bouquets* (\$175 at **Details by Mr. K**), showcases a glorious profusion of floral images. 2717 Granville St., 604-806-0510. [Detailsbymrk.com](http://Detailsbymrk.com)

"Rifle Paper Co. and Corkcicle have collaborated on this delightful canteen (\$58 at **Fine Finds**). A wide mouth makes it easy to add all the ice cubes, and it keeps drinks cool for up to 25 hours, warm up to 12. I'll be sipping from this beauty all spring and summer long." 1014 Mainland St., 604-669-8325. [Finefindsboutique.com](http://Finefindsboutique.com)

Put a spring in your step with **Manolo Blahnik's** BB floral-print pointed-toe pump (\$835). 799 Robson St., 604-699-2100. [Nordstrom.ca](http://Nordstrom.ca)

Achieve a floral OOTD with **Zimmermann's** Lovestruck linen wrap mini dress (\$1,060 at **Holt Renfrew**). 737 Dunsmuir St., 604-681-3121. [Holtrenfrew.com](http://Holtrenfrew.com)

Burnaby mom-and-daughter Tamara Saechao and Lisa Saepan of **Chao + Pan** handcraft traditional Laotian snacks in small batches—like these pretty lotus flower cookies (\$12) that can be enjoyed as-is or crumbled atop a sundae. [Chaopan.ca](http://Chaopan.ca)

**Mini Boden's** corduroy pinafore (\$65 at **Nordstrom**) is fit for your little flower girl. [Nordstrom.ca](http://Nordstrom.ca)

The Malle Fleurs (\$8,050) is a reinterpretation of an iconic piece created in the 1910s for **Louis Vuitton** VIPs: the flower trunk. Flowers, water or soil can be put in the metallic tray without damaging it. 730 Burrard St., 604-696-9404. [Ca.louisvuitton.com](http://Ca.louisvuitton.com)

A fragrant fave from **Marc Jacobs** has been given a refresh. Daisy Spring limited edition (\$99 at **Hudson's Bay**) boasts bursts of pink rosebuds, with spicy cardamom for texture. 674 Granville St., 604-681-6211. [Thebay.com](http://Thebay.com)



"Never overlook the power of dishware! Upgrading with something floral and punchy is a great way to inject spring into your space. If a new set is not in the budget, small plates like this one from **Bitossi Home** (\$40) look great under vases and candles, too." [Amara.com](http://Amara.com)

Featuring a signature **Valentino** floral print, this square scarf (\$710) is crafted from pure silk twill. [Holtrenfrew.com](http://Holtrenfrew.com)



Mask up, but make it floral. This woven face mask (\$225) features a **Missoni** signature print. [Holtrenfrew.com](http://Holtrenfrew.com)

**Family Botanic** offers a pretty, floral way to showcase a family tree in its spring collection (from \$135). [Familybotanic.com](http://Familybotanic.com)

WIN THIS!  
[Vitadaily.ca](http://Vitadaily.ca)

Stay sun smart and stylish in a **Le 31** floral band fedora (\$69 at **Simons**). 1060 Park Royal S., West Vancouver, 604-925-1840. [Simons.ca](http://Simons.ca)

## May's It Bag

BY ALEESHA HARRIS

This summer is shaping up to be a season filled with casual backyard barbecues and picnics in the local park. A low-key social calendar calls for an equally low-maintenance—yet no less stylish—handbag, like this sunshine floral-printed tote from Australian brand **Zimmermann** (\$270 USD). The colourful cotton bag features leather straps that fit over the shoulder, along with a reinforced bottom for added structure, and its just-big-enough size ensures you can carry all the afternoon's essentials, and then some. [Zimmermannwear.com](http://Zimmermannwear.com)

## Flora Law

@THEFLORALAW



### INFLUENCER PICK

"Everything about a bouquet from **Landeau** is just perfect, including the fact that the business started right here in Vancouver! An arrangement is \$179; I love gifting these flowers to my mom for her birthday or Mother's Day." [Givelandeau.ca](http://Givelandeau.ca)

READ MORE!  
[Vitadaily.ca](http://Vitadaily.ca)

TEAM PICK | VICKI  
[@VICKIDUONG](http://@VICKIDUONG)

"Based in the Yukon, **Aurum** produces a calming birch serum (\$84) from a flowering weed called Canadian Willowherb that regulates oil production, proving that so-called plant "pests" aren't all bad!" [Aurumskincare.ca](http://Aurumskincare.ca)

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# Hot Shops

VANCOUVER'S GREATEST AND LATEST RETAILERS

BY NOA NICHOL



## BEHIND THE STORE-Y: DIANE'S LINGERIE

It was 1983 when Diane Thomson opened the doors of her specialty lingerie boutique, **Diane's Lingerie**, on Vancouver's South Granville Street. Backed by a decade of purchasing experience working with Canadian retail leaders, Thomson evolved the business as the neighbourhood grew, thanks in large part to the passion and dedication of staff members like Lynda Barr, who recently celebrated 28 years with the company. In 2004, Diane's welcomed Sharon Hayles, a seasoned retail consultant, to the team. When Thomson's thoughts turned to retirement, she passed the reins—or, in this case, the bra straps—to Hayles, who purchased the business and has been operating the store since 2012.

Today, Diane's continues to do things right, providing best-in-class fittings, beautiful merchandise sourced predominantly from Europe, a comfortable and inviting store environment and superior knowledge and service to guests. Says Hayles, "That is how we change women's lives with a bra fitting, and make magic happen behind the fitting-room curtains. The number one comment we hear from our customers is how much more confident and comfortable they feel when wearing a bra that fits properly. We hope to inspire customers to be just as passionate about their lingerie wardrobe—or as we say 'inner wear'—as they are about their outer-fashion wardrobe."

In 2014 Hayles and her team adopted the motto, "Every body is



PHOTO: ALFONSO ARNOLD



different—we fit them all," in order to keep abreast of and, indeed, become a local leader in the size-inclusivity movement (be sure to ask about the art canvases on display in the store to hear the story of how they were created). "We have always embraced that message and, in the last eight years, have been working with our suppliers to have them make a change in their photography images. We also do our own photo shoots so we can emphasize this even more," she says. "There is still a way to go but we certainly want to do our part in empowering women one fit at a time."

In a similar vein, Diane's has long supported breast cancer through awareness campaigns, fundraising initiatives and assisting breast-cancer survivors with their fitting needs post

surgery. "Health is also one of our concerns [when it comes to helping clients find the right fit]; many women come in complaining of neck, back or shoulder pain. This can often be the result of an improperly fit bra that is not the correct size or providing the correct support," Hayles adds, stressing that, when it comes to bras, panties and shapewear, "You shouldn't have that 'I can't wait to get this off at the end of the day' feeling."

More recently, Hayles' daughter, Jamie Slater, joined Diane's, working her way up from inventory co-ordinator to fitter and, finally, buyer. With Mother's Day approaching, Hayles reflects fondly on the dynamic of a mother-daughter working relationship: "As you can imagine, we have had to separate the mom-daughter role from the professional roles we both hold in the company, however, it is rewarding working together in the family business and has allowed us to enhance our relationship to appreciate each other in the work environment as well as the family dynamic."

Despite a tough year for all retailers, Hayles looks to the future of Diane's with boundless hope and optimism, and stresses the fact that the brand will continue to provide excellent service and knowledgeable bra fitting as well as noteworthy trend assortments. "We had a great retail strategy planned for the start of 2020 and then the pandemic hit. It stopped us in our tracks. We had to regroup but, during a time of great upheaval, we had the time to reflect on our purpose, what we are grateful for and what is next once we get through this," she says. "We are looking to launch some new merchandise brands in the coming year, we have revised our strategy that was in place before the pandemic and are looking to expand our virtual-fitting capabilities, as well as a brand program to further strengthen our ongoing commitment to inclusivity and body positivity."

"I cannot thank our customers enough for the heartwarming show of support they have provided over this past year," she adds. "They have truly become part of the Diane's Lingerie family and it feels like we have walked through this difficult year together." **2950 Granville St., 604-738-5121. [Dianeslingerie.com](http://Dianeslingerie.com)**



## PLAIN JANE SKINBAR

We may not be able to fitness as usual, but we can still give our face a workout. A medical-aesthetic pro, **Plain Jane Skinbar** owner Amberly Donnelly created her biz with a gym-membership model, to make proven-to-work facials and skin care more accessible. Though Plain Jane is open to one-offs, an annual membership (\$179/month) yields a personalized, simple-to-follow routine that includes one treatment monthly and a percentage off other facials at any time—after all, the key to truly effective skin care is maintenance. The SoMa space is cool and calming, and the menu includes basic, hydrating, laser and fractional facials performed by a specialized tech in 30 mins. Pick up your favourite **SkinCeuticals** or **ZO** skin-care prods on the way out (just these two brands are sold, for simplicity's sake), and leave feeling fresh faced. **4387 Main St., 604-558-4833. [Plainjaneskinbar.ca](http://Plainjaneskinbar.ca)**



PHOTO: DAPHNE DAVID

## LOVE THAT BAG ETC

Here's a style-meets-sustainability win! **Love that Bag etc.**, the leading online consignment destination in Canada for authentic pre-owned designer handbags, fashions and accessories, has launched its Vancouver satellite office. Based in Montreal, the company specializes in consigning luxury brands like **Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Hermès, Dior, Gucci** and more. "Everyone benefits by playing their part in the circular economy," says Caroline Reny, president of Love that Bag etc. "Consignors give new life to their luxury goods by reselling them, and someone else gets to cherish and appreciate them. The best part is that we're all helping the environment by extending the life cycle of these fashions." The online boutique has a team dedicated to taking care of every step of the selling process, from authentication to pro photography and marketing efforts, and, Reny says, the opening of the Vancouver office means that a dedicated West Coast consignment co-ordinator, Claire Stobbart, will be able to receive clients in person by appointment or go to their homes to pick up their items. "Love that Bag etc has always differentiated itself from competitors by offering personalized VIP at-home pickups for local clients," she explains. "To qualify for this service, clients need only consign five or more items—a gratuity that will extend to Vancouver-area consignors when it is safe to do so. The Vancouver office, located downtown in the historic Seymour Building, will act as a drop-off point—with COVID-19 safety protocols in place—for clients who wish to consign outside of their home." **207-525 Seymour St., 604-230-8395. [Lovethatbagetc.com](http://Lovethatbagetc.com)**

## SIMONE PÉRÈLE PARIS



*Diane's Lingerie*

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# Tags for Tots

THESE CANADIAN ENTREPRENEURS SAW GAPS IN THE CHILDREN'S CLOTHING MARKET AND FILLED THEM WITH CUTE, COMFY, ECO-FRIENDLY DESIGNS  
BY SHERI RADFORD

## PK BEANS

According to Mr. Rogers, "Play is really the work of childhood." Traci Costa has dedicated the last 15 years to building what she calls the "uniform" for that important work: cute but comfortable and durable clothing that allows children "to stretch and bend and jump and move."

After Costa's first child was born, she felt disappointed by the kids' clothing available on the market; it all seemed restrictive and poorly constructed, not at all suitable for her busy, active, independent daughter. At around the same time, **Lululemon** was gaining prominence as a brand. Costa asked herself why she couldn't create something similar for children: "functional, fashionable clothing."

And so, with no background in fashion or design, she launched **Peekaboo Beans** in 2006 out of her Vancouver basement. The name was inspired by a game she played with her daughter with edamame beans. The company grew into such a thriving online business that, in 2016, she took it public. Last year, the company rebranded to become **PK Beans**, a more grown-up moniker that reflects how the brand (and its customer base) has matured.

The company has always focused on "designing for playful living." Costa worries that "with structured activities and academic pressures and technology taking over kids' lives, there's a real draw away from play." But, she says, "Play is the backbone to a healthy start in kids' lives."

Along with play, Costa feels passionate about the environmental effects of her creations: "Paramount to every decision we make is the sustainability of the product." This concern for the planet led her to launch PK RePlay in 2020. Gently used PK Beans clothing is mended or altered, then resold. If a piece can't be repaired, its fabric is repurposed into hair scrunchies, face scrubbies, doll clothing and bedding, bean bags, tooth fairy pillows, dog toys and more. Workers facing multiple barriers to employment do all the sewing.

Thanks to PK RePlay, Costa has become reacquainted with a few of her favourite pieces from over the years, including a "fairy tale coat" from 2009 that had her oohing and aahing over its "magical aesthetic." It's readily apparent that each PK Beans creation comes with a dash of magic. [pkbeans.com](http://pkbeans.com)

## IMAGINE PERRY

One evening over a glass of wine, Lena Shaw was trying to come up with a name for her new swimwear business and also attempting to convince her husband that they should have a third child. She'd always loved the name Perry for a girl, so she asked her husband, "Can you just imagine Perry?" Hearing it out loud, Shaw realized she'd stumbled upon the perfect name for her company. Soon, **Imagine Perry** was born—and, a bit later, daughter Perry followed.

The idea for the company sprang from Shaw's frustration trying to find well-made swimsuits in muted neutral colours for her daughters. It started as a hobby project three years ago, but last year she quit her teaching job to pursue her dream full time. She gets behind-the-scenes help from her husband, a lawyer who makes time to crunch numbers, order fabrics and pack shipments. Perry, at age two, isn't involved yet (beyond being an inspiration), but the older girls, at five and almost nine, put stickers on boxes.

Shaw acknowledges that her swimsuits cost more than items in a big-box store, but the quality is worth it. She uses polyester fabric recycled from plastic water bottles, which is purchased from a store in Vancouver and printed locally, and manufactures the suits here, too. "I think that it's becoming so much more important to people to support local, and it feels good," she says.

Imagine Perry also makes swimwear for women, and it's essential to Shaw to offer inclusive sizing. The company website features models from different ethnicities with a range of body types. Plus, all of the two-piece suits are available in mix-and-match sizing. Shaw knows women often feel daunted buying a swimsuit, especially online, so the company offers a full return policy.

In June, Imagine Perry will launch some bright floral prints, which Shaw's daughters are over the moon about. Other ideas under development include a UPF 50 sunhat for kids, a beach cover-up for women and adjustable straps for the women's swimsuits. When asked where she gets her ideas, Shaw responds with a sigh, "Oh, I spend so much time on Pinterest!" [imagineperry.com](http://imagineperry.com)



## BIRDZ

At the start of 2020, Caroline Lévesque and her sister, Stéphanie, were juggling six kids between them, along with two full-time jobs and their side business, **Birdz**. Soon after the pandemic began, they appeared on the French version of *Dragons' Den*. That's when Birdz exploded. The siblings realized the time was right to devote themselves completely to their business, so they quit their day jobs, rented an office and moved everything out of Stéphanie's basement.

Stéphanie has three sons; Caroline has two girls and a boy. After struggling to find clothing for their boys in colours other than blue, black or white, the sisters decided to try making vibrant, colourful pieces themselves. Caroline says, "We really jumped into that world without knowing a thing about fashion. When we look back, we're like, how did we make it?" They launched Birdz in 2017, with an eye toward sustainability, and surrounded themselves with people who did know about fashion. Because

they're based in Quebec, they wanted a company name that would be easy to pronounce in both English and French; they chose a name that is also a nod to their children, their "little birds."

At first they just made clothing for kids, but quickly noticed that the two largest sizes always sold out immediately. They learned that women were buying these pieces for themselves. They started making sweats and tees for women and, later, men. "So now the full family is included in Birdz," Caroline says. Their perennial bestseller is the Chalet Sweat: a cosy long-sleeve sweatshirt that comes in solids and fun prints, like jungle and water skis. And, just in time for Mother's Day, they've launched an adorable collection of sweats for proud moms of "boyz," "girlz" or "tiny creatures."

The Lévesques hope to expand their business outside Canada in the future, possibly to Australia first. But, after a tumultuous 2020, they're taking things slow. As Caroline says, "We want to do it one step at a time." [bebirdz.com](http://bebirdz.com)

## PETITS VILAINS

Rachel Shamash and Jennifer Christie have been BFFs since kindergarten. Some people might say that going into business with a friend is a recipe for disaster, but not these two. "It's a dream come true," says Christie. "We have very different brains but so many similarities in how we want to work with each other."

"It helps that we have different domains," adds Shamash. She's in charge of marketing and ops, while Christie handles the creative side, coming up with the brand's classic-looking designs. It was back in 2012, after they each had their first child, that Christie noticed the lack of choice in children's clothing in Vancouver. Shamash was living in Brooklyn, and Christie envied the "beautiful, heirloom-quality clothes" her pal was able to find in New York. The two discussed their love of kids' clothing and joked they should start their own brand, to fill such an obvious hole in the market. But it wasn't until after they each had a second child, and Shamash moved back to B.C., that the stars aligned enough for them to launch **Petits Vilains**. They chose the tongue-in-cheek "little villains" name as a playful acknowledgement that children can be mischievous little devils at times but still charming and loveable.

Now, Shamash and Christie agree that leaving the corporate world to be their own bosses and work on products they believe in was the right path, and it feels extremely rewarding. They focus on making ethical, sustainable choices at every step, from choosing natural, organic fibres as much as possible to implementing a reusable bin system at their factories, which eliminates the use of one poly bag per garment, as is common in clothing manufacturing. Pieces are made in Vancouver, and everything is thoughtfully designed so that a single garment can fit a child for up to two years.

The brand's goal is to create tops, pants, skirts and dresses that stand the test of time. According to Christie, "We want to create styles that can be passed down." They each buy a lot of secondhand clothing for their own children, and they aim to create garments that are sturdy and timeless enough to survive into that secondhand economy.

Throughout the entire process, Shamash and Christie never forget who, ultimately, they're creating Petits Vilains clothes for. Shamash says, "We really think about the kid who's going to wear them." Christie adds, "And the mom who's going to appreciate them." [petitsvilains.com](http://petitsvilains.com)

## TAKASA

For Vancouver couple Ruby and Kuljit Rakhra, 2020 was going to be a chaotic year no matter what, with their third child on the way and a new company also being born. In early March of last year, just as they were about to fly to a trade show in Toronto for **Takasa's** official launch, COVID-19 brought the whole world to a halt. But the Rakhras didn't let a global pandemic—or a brand-new baby—stand in their way. "Luckily, he was a very good baby. He hasn't given us any trouble," Ruby says with a laugh. And because Takasa was always planned to be e-commerce, the pandemic didn't alter the plans for the company much.

The desire to start Takasa had been growing for several years, ever since a home renovation caused the Rakhras to seek out eco-friendly materials for their living room and bedroom. In their research, they were horrified to learn about common practices in the textile industry: pesticides used for traditional cotton, harmful chemicals in most dyes, horrendous working conditions. When they couldn't find the environmental and ethical products they were looking for, they decided to make these products themselves.

Kuljit explains, "We just thought that if we're going to start a business, we're going to make sure that from the seed all the way to final delivery, everyone's getting paid properly. Everyone's being treated humanely." Ruby adds, "We wanted to make sure that whatever we were going to do, it was going to be impactful and make a difference."

Takasa now sells sheets, duvet covers, pillowcases, towels and baby items that are organic and fair-trade. Ruby says the company name comes from a Swahili word that means "to purify, to make clean." The designs and colour palette are all clean and simple—with the notable exception of a new, delightfully eye-catching baby line. These swaddles, bibs, burp cloths, washcloths and hooded towels feature striking mid-century modern patterns that Ruby describes as "clean but a little bit snazzy."

The Rakhras plan to keep growing

# FASHION & SHOPPING

their brand, moving beyond the bedroom and bathroom to outfit the whole house. They hope their children will become interested in the family business at some point. The older two, at ages 10 and 11, are especially good at testing their parents' creations. According to Kuljit, "They're great product testers because they have no filter." [Takasa.co](#)

## LITTLE YOGI

It was 2016, and Nancy Caouette was shopping for baby clothing for friends and family members who were expecting. The stereotypes she saw in stores shocked her: "One side was all pink and glitters and princesses, and on the other side it was courageous little boys." She asked herself what impact this messaging must have on girls and boys, then headed to her mother's house with an armful of fabric and a head full of ideas for unisex baby clothing. Caouette's mom, who is skilled at sewing and DIY projects, rolled up her sleeves and helped.

After making gifts for the moms-to-be in her life, Caouette had several outfits left over that she posted for sale on Facebook. She received 100 orders almost immediately. Soon, she realized she was more interested in making baby clothes than in continuing her career as a therapist. "Six months later, I left my career and my studies behind, and I officially launched **Little Yogi**," she says.

From the start, the Quebec brand has focused on sustainability and durability, opting for high-quality organic cotton and bamboo fabrics as well as non-toxic water-based inks. Tanks, tees, dresses, rompers and gowns are all designed to be comfortable but tough, allowing each child "to move like a little yogi."

Caouette is particularly proud of the grow-with-me harem pants, with their adjustable waist and ankle bands offering a fit that adapts to the ever-changing size of a growing child. She says, "They fit forever and, because of the quality, not only do they grow with the kids but they also stay beautiful, wash after wash after wash." They're available in solid colours or whimsical prints such as surfers, hippos and flying pigs. Each illustration is drawn by hand then printed on the fabric.

Since starting the company five years ago, Caouette has scarcely paused to catch her breath. She now has two children, ages three and two, and another one due any day. She's launching a new swimsuit made from recycled plastic bottles at the end of the month, and she's also contemplating doing a small run of clothing for women before summer. Despite this hectic pace, she feels no regrets about abandoning her old career to launch her brand: "It was a big step, but the best step I've ever taken." [En.littleyogicompany.com](#)

## PETIT LEM

Based in Montreal, and with a name that translates to "little lemur," **Petit Lem** is a family business that's been going strong for 30 years. According to Emilie Tardif, marketing director for parent company **Groupe Lemur**, "We launched focusing more on newborns and infants, and now we're expanding to toddler, junior and even mommy-and-me styles for adults."

To help parents of newborns, Petit Lem recently released the Layette collection. It includes all the must-haves for a new bouncing bundle of joy, including sleepers, bodysuits, sleep sacks, hats, socks, bibs, burp towels, swaddles and more. Made from incredibly soft organically grown cotton, the pieces feature cute-as-a-button prints such as rainbows, stars and giraffes.

The goal of Petit Lem has always been to craft high-quality children's wear that is comfortable and beautiful but also sustainable. "We've been sourcing organically grown cotton for years now," Tardif says. "We're continuing to look at social responsibility and quality control."

The brand recently added more styles for women, giving moms the option to "playfully match with their kids and take really sweet photos." As for the future, Petit Lem plans to add more daywear options and also expand the range of pieces available for the entire family—including furry, four-legged family members. [Petitlem.com](#)



## SMASH + TESS

"Am I wearing a romper right now? One hundred per cent," Ashley Freeborn says with a laugh. She has just minutes to chat by phone on a day jam-packed with online panels and awards presentations for Canada's Top 40 Under 40. Freeborn is being honoured as one of the co-founders of **Smash + Tess**. She notes that all of the other recipients are wearing suits, while she's rocking a romper with a blazer overtop. That sartorial choice won't surprise anyone who knows Freeborn—after all, she's built her company on disrupting the fashion industry.

"We like to say we're pioneering the romper revolution," she says. "The idea is that we make clothes to fit women's bodies and not the other way around." Though Freeborn started out teaching high-school English and theatre, in 2016 she launched **Smash + Tess** with her mother (Tess) and her best friend. Freeborn herself is **Smash**, a nickname she earned as "the klutziest person ever," equally likely to trip over something or walk into a door.

In five short years, the brand has gained a dedicated following of women (along with kids and even some men) who love the stylish-but-soft rompers

made from sustainable fabrics. "It's been a bit of a whirlwind," Freeborn says. "Like a rocket ship!" The company also sells tops, pants, skirts, dresses and robes. Sizing is inclusive, ranging from XXS Petite to XXXL, and the pieces are all designed in Vancouver and made in North America.

Sales have been especially brisk during the pandemic, as more and more people have discovered rompers as the quintessential work-from-home attire. As for the future, Freeborn hopes "to continue to uplift, encourage and support women who are busy, and really just simplify their lives and bring them joy."

And yes, **Smash + Tess** makes rompers for kids, and they're every bit as popular as the adult versions. In fact, for Mother's Day, the brand is launching a special edition of its popular Tuesday Romper in the aptly named shade **Pop of Pink**, with 10 per cent of proceeds going to the **BC Women's Health Foundation**. To guarantee the cutest Mother's Day photo ever, pick up matching rompers for mom and daughter. Freeborn herself has two daughters, and it isn't hard to guess what all of them will be wearing on May 9th. [Smashtess.ca](#)

## Gifts for Mom ... and Me

BY NOA NICHOL



Made by a fashion-obsessed mother-and-three-daughters team in collaboration with artisans in Korea, **ai Toronto Seoul** has released a mini version of its popular **Band 1** headband (\$75 for the set) just in time for Mother's Day. Bonus: 10 per cent of sales will benefit women affected by domestic violence. [Aitorontoseoul.ca](#)

Vancouver-based loungewear brand **Brunette the Label** is offering a Mother's Day capsule collection (timed perfectly with founder Miriam Alden's announcement that she is expecting her first!) of its famous crew-neck sweatshirts for moms and minis with matching slogans like **Mama, Call Your Mom** and **I Got It From My Mama**. [Brunettethelabel.com](#)

Cause mom means everything, **Aritzia** has launched a limited collab with **Cause We Care** to support single mothers and children living in poverty. The collection includes cosy, casual co-ordinates—hoodies, sweatpants, tees and crews—cut from Aritzia's signature fabrics that both you and mama can feel good about wearing. **1100 Robson St., 604-684-3251. Aritzia.com**

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**Bethany Menzel**

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PHOTO: ELISSA CROWE

## MOM-FLUENCER PICK

"I'm so excited that my 24/7 Collection of gold jewelry essentials with Vancouver's **True Curated Designs** has launched ahead of Mother's Day. The range includes eight pieces in total—rings, necklaces, earrings and bracelets—all designed with the realities of everyday life in mind ... especially the daily adventures we get into as moms! I love that you can layer them together or wear them alone—they're made to last for beach days, and decades to come, and the fact that they are special enough to be passed on to the next generation makes them, I think, a pretty great gift for Mother's Day, too." [Truecuratedesigns.com](#)

# DÉCOR & DINING

## Swede Dreams

EXPLAINING THE ENDURING APPEAL  
OF SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN  
BY AILEEN LALOR



# T

The Scandinavian home aesthetic has become so popular in its 60-odd-year existence that it's practically the standard, says Albert Yee, sales and design consultant at **LivingSpace**. "It's proven so accessible, human and relatable, it serves as an enduring baseline from which we establish our interior spaces."

What is it in the Scandinavian culture that has caused the look to develop in such a way: minimalist, prizing craft and exposed handwork, ultra-functional yet still beautiful? It's all about purposeful, intentional design. "We design our products based on a use-case," explains Kresten Bjørn Krab-Bjerre, creative director of design at Danish luxury audio brand **Bang & Olufsen**. "We start by defining the basic hypothesis and then interview customers, propose opportunities, investigate pain points and follow technology trends and build mock-ups. When we have gained some strong indicators, we engage with the designers and engineers and begin working on real solutions and visual directions. This process goes on for around half a year until we've found the perfect blend of performance, emotional value [magic] and beautiful aesthetics within the given scope."

Krab-Bjerre says that's uniquely Scandinavian in the sense that it is a joint project between everybody. "The goal is one concept and to succeed



“Often in high-end décor people are thinking about entertaining, designing for the other people who will be in their homes. This year it's sweatpants, it's comfortable and not corporate—very accessible”

together, and it works,” he says.

Scandinavian design also prizes balance. “**Ikea** approaches design in a simple tool we call ‘democratic design,’” says Carmen Ciesielski, director of home furnishing and design at **Ikea Canada**. “Democratic design has five dimensions, which are function, form, quality, sustainability and low price. When there is a balance between all five, we consider that the design is democratic. Altogether it's **Ikea's** cultures and values boiled down to five dimensions, together with simply using common sense in everything we do.”

The Scandi look may be the baseline—partly due to its simplicity and perhaps also down to the sheer force of **Ikea**, which has 347 stores in 30 countries. But there's no doubt it's become even more popular in the past year. “On **Etsy** we've seen a 55 per cent increase in searches for Scandinavian décor in the last three months compared to the same time last year,” says Etsy trend expert Dayna Isom Johnson. “This is likely due to the fact shoppers are continuing to spend so much more time at home, turning rooms into multi-functional spaces, and we're looking to bring a sense of order, tranquility and lightness to our daily surroundings.” Yee agrees: “Often in high-end décor people are thinking about entertaining, designing for the other people who will be in their homes. This year it's sweatpants, it's comfortable and not corporate—very accessible.”

She is also seeing the look evolving and fusing with other similar aesthetics—in particular, Japanese and Scandinavian, a.k.a., Japandi. It's a marriage made in heaven: “The Japanese term wabi-sabi celebrates the imperfections of handcrafted goods from natural materials, while the Nordic term hygge is all about bringing comfort and cosiness to the home. Together these simplistic designs bring tranquility, comfort and calm to any home.”

Japanese design often incorporates plants and greenery, like Scandinavian. “The aesthetic ... is influenced by nature and incorporating aspects of [the] outdoors within our spaces,” says Ciesielski. “Capturing Scandinavian design includes incorporating more-natural materials, having solutions that enable us to live healthier and sustainable lives, elements of greenery including house plants and adding texture throughout, which creates a sense of warmth.”

As well as Japanese design, we see the Scandi influence in other styles. Yee says it's present in a lot of Italian furniture by designers like Minotti and Poltrona Frau: “Both Scandinavian and Italian modern designs have a very simple and efficient look to the way the curves flow. The Scandinavian is a little more restrained, where the Italians will typically put a flourish or a little bit of sexiness.”

Andrew Karrasch, owner of **Details by Mr. K** on South Granville, says, “The Scandinavian design lends itself to the way we live here in B.C. because of the natural beauty on the West Coast. I have nothing against that, but ... I like colour, I like shiny things!” His tip for getting Scandi with a twist is Indian-Swedish brand **Chhatwal & Jonsson**: “There's opulence from some of the fabrications and the velvet, but also linens and amazing prints. It's a highly functional and beautiful product. People respond to this simplicity but also the hint of opulence. I believe you can put a couple of amazing cushions on a nondescript-but-well-designed sofa and really elevate it.”

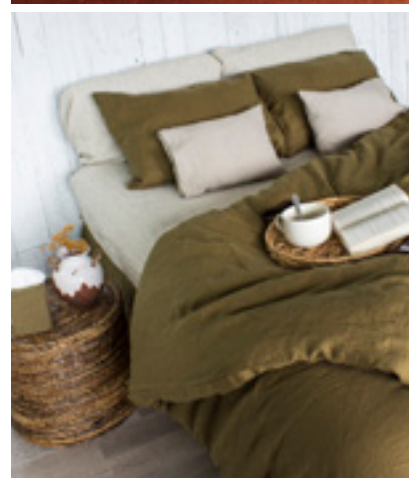
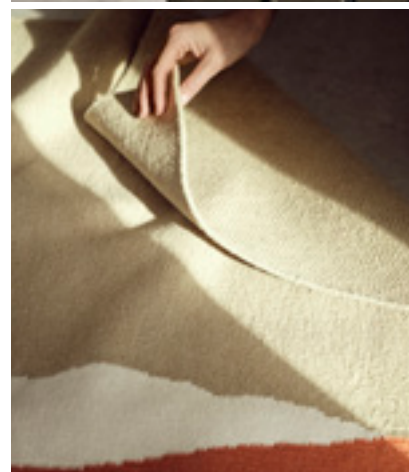
Yee wouldn't be surprised if there's eventually some pushback against the Scandi look, similar to the way we're anticipating a return to glamour and glitz in fashion and beauty post-pandemic. “I think we're going to see a move toward some stronger colours and spaces that feel more dynamic,” he says. “People are going to be taking chances again. Maybe by this time next year we might be seeing more design that focuses around entertaining and gathering—more fun pieces, more optimism.”



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# New Noshes

WHERE AND WHAT TO EAT THIS MONTH

## MAXINE'S

Launching during a pandemic is no easy feat, but newly opened **Maxine's Cafe & Bar** has risen to the challenge. With Soho and European design influences, the interior (which will surely be in full use once indoor-dining restrictions lift) features high-top seating, warm lighting and an impressive bar smack-dab in the centre of the action. For now, the spacious patio (to which 20 more seats will be added in late May) offers a lovely vantage point for people-watching along Burrard while enjoying a breezy bite. Whether you have a sweet tooth or prefer savoury, Maxine's promises peak flavour and freshness via a plethora of breakfast, brunch and lunch (and soon, we hear, dinner) options. Try the back-bacon breakfast sandwich with built-in soppressata and a crispy potato patty alongside a Jitterbug: cold espresso, chocolate liqueur, orange brandy and oat milk. Also, the chickpea falafel bowl—lovely, light and crispy. Take your next meal to the max(ine) with this welcome West End addition. **1325 Burrard St., 604-707-7224. Maxinescafebar.com** VICKI DUONG



PHOTOS: KYOKO FIERRO



## TEA TO-GO

Given the current situation, it's hard for afternoon tea-goers to enjoy their weekend ritual. Pinkies up: **Notch8 Restaurant** at the **Fairmont Hotel Vancouver** has the fix. The newly launched afternoon tea to-go service (\$69 per person, minimum order is for two people), available Saturdays and Sundays for a limited time, is a three-tier takeout tower piled with bite-sized savoury and sweet treats. Enjoy prawn sandwiches with cucumber, smoked salmon on rye with Neufchatel cheese and salmon roe, strawberry cream cheese blinis and Notch8's signature scones (among the best in town). And, of course, Fairmont Lot 35 tea, hot or iced. Add sparkling wine or champagne to your order; however you stack it, this tower is picnic and photo friendly. **900 W. Georgia St., 604-662-1900. Notch8-dining.com** LOUISA CHAN

## Lavender Shortbread Cookies

Celebrate spring—and Mother's Day—with this beautiful bouquet of a bake

BY MATINA SOMLAI



### Ingredients

- 1 cup icing sugar
- 454 g salted butter, room temperature
- 3 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- Lavender, for garnish
- Edible flowers, for garnish

Pre-heat the oven to 300 F, and line your cookie sheet with parchment paper. Blend icing sugar and butter with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add the flour and cornstarch, and continue to beat on low until the mixture is crumbly and soft. Transfer dough to a flat surface. Gently knead with hands until just combined, making sure not to over-work. Roll dough out until about 1/4-inch thick, and cut into desired shape using a cookie cutter of choice. Place some petals of the edible flowers and some crushed lavender on the cookies, pressing these gently into the dough. Transfer to a cookie sheet, and bake for 15-20 minutes. Let cool for a couple of minutes before transferring to a cookie rack to completely cool down. Makes about 20 cookies. @thehappyfig

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# TRIPS & SIPS

## Valley Village

DAY TRIPPING TO CHILLIWACK'S  
CENTRAL VILLAGE  
BY NOA NICHOL

# O

Only an hour's drive from downtown Vancouver, in the heart of the sun-filled Fraser Valley, you'll find the most unique collection of independently owned shops and restaurants in a little block known as Central Village. Chilliwack's best shops and Instagram photo opps are on Mill and Wellington streets, where the city's first mural festival made a big splash last summer. Here is our list of top must-visit spots for your next day trip to Chilliwack. [Tourismchilliwack.com](http://Tourismchilliwack.com)

### ALLEY CAT MURAL

Artist Oksana Gaidasheva painted Alley Cat last summer; she says the cat's name is Clementine. This mural has become a favourite photo spot and can be found in Court Lane, just off Mill Street by **The Grove Salon & Spa** (more on that stop later!).

### THE BOOK MAN

Searching for a hardcover copy of *The Catcher in the Rye*? Need a lazy beach-read recommendation based on the last page-turner you devoured? Book it to **The Book Man**, where the staff will be able to point you in the right direction. You can even ask them to create a profile for you based on your literary style so they can continue to make recommendations for you!



PHOTO: CLAUDIA WYLER



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# TRIPS & SIPS



## CHILLIWAX RECORDS

Vinyl is where it's at these days and, if you appreciate high-quality sound and an incredible music selection, **ChilliWax Records** is a spot you can browse for hours. Plus, as a locally owned business, you know you're supporting independent entrepreneurs.

## THE BUTTON BOX & LOLLY'S

Two spots in Central Village are at the top of the fashion game: **The Button Box** and **Lolly's**. If you need a new lounging-at-home outfit or planning your post-pandemic wardrobe, ask the owners to help you style the perfect look. The Button Box also has the sweetest selection of gifts and home goods.



## HARVEST STORE & CAFÉ

For the very best donuts and Fancy Pants grilled cheese, stop at **Harvest Store & Café** on Mill Street. They embellish their donuts with creative toppings like Fruit Loops or maple and bacon. The Homer Donut is a staple, named after—who else?—Homer Simpson! Their secret back patio is also the most beautiful green escape.



## WELLINGTON NATURAL HEALTH

For a yoga class, acupuncture or Reiki energy healing, **Wellington Natural Health** is your go-to spot. A newcomer to Central Village, this is the perfect place to get centred.



## THE GROVE SALON & SPA

If, after a long day of eating and shopping, you just want to kick back and relax, an LED or hydro jelly facial at The Grove or a relaxing massage is the way to go. The team here stocks top-of-the-line brands and the space alone—created by renowned carpenter Matthew Pysh of **Crafted Design**—will leave you saying spa-ahhh.

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