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VITA

The September Issue

THE GREAT CLOSET RAID

Consumer-to-consumer *shopping* is as much about *the social* as it is about *the selling*

INSIDE *the* ISSUE

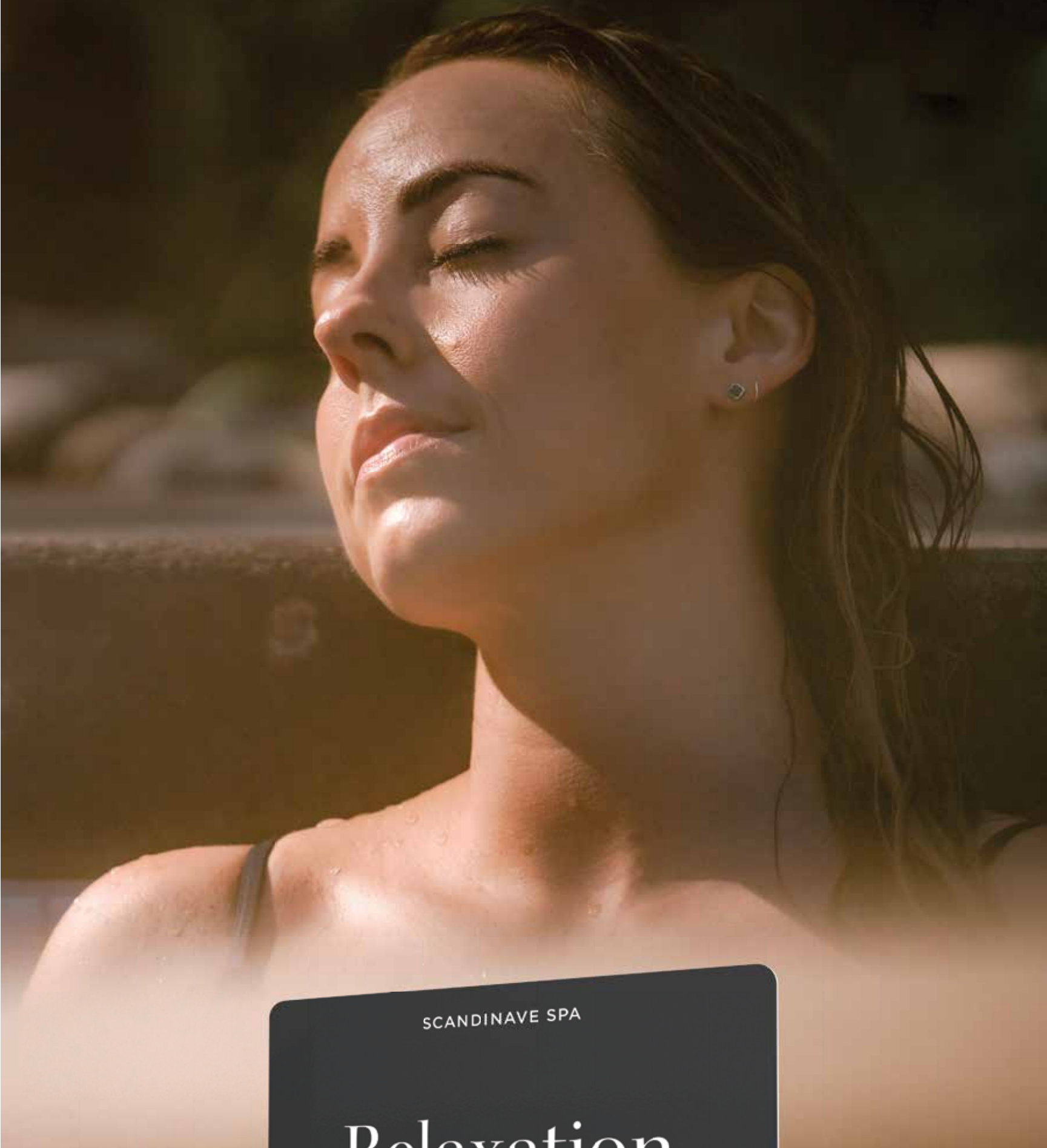
STYLE Underneath it All Top trends in underthings include *healthy materials, leakproof tech and sizing for all*

BEAUTY Gorgeous Goods Meet the *wonderfully natural* ingredients high-end skin-care brands are using in their products

DESIGN Chic Everyday Swaps Your *laundry basket, toilet brush and dish rack* do a lot of your dirty work—it's time to let them shine

HEALTH Fresh Air Worried about the **effects of pollution** on your skin and overall wellness? *Here's what you can do to reduce them*

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A Note From Noa

Welcome to the September issue of *VITA*, and welcome to our new look and feel! As summer ebbs to fall, it feels like the perfect time to effect a change of our own and switch up the design we've been working with for more than 70 issues. We hope you like what you see; it has been a long (hot) labour of love! That said, we are, as always, committed to bringing you *the lifestyle content you care about* in every issue of the magazine. This month, we're diving deep into the world of consumer-to-consumer (C2C) shopping, which is currently dominated by platforms like Poshmark and Vinted, and bringing you fully (not briefly) up to date on the ever-evolving world of underwear. Plus, a look at the precious ingredients, from sea kelp to caviar, that skin-care brands are including in their products, and stylish swaps for the most mundane objects in your home (yes, you can level-up your toilet brush). Finally, some fresh air: with a season of heat domes and wildfires behind us, we investigate what you can do to combat the impact of pollution on your health. Enjoy!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Our featured influencer this month is **Sue Randhawa**, who has been recognized as one of Vancouver's style icons. Read all about Sue here, and watch for more fabulous influencer insights in the coming months.

Sue Randhawa

@SUERANDHAWA
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TOP: KUNA PHOTOGRAPHY
BOTTOM: KATE WHYTE PHOTOGRAPHY / KARLA CRUZ MAKEUP

Tell us a little bit about you and what do you do.

I've been in the eyewear industry as a licensed optician since 1991. I own The Optical Boutique in Vancouver, where we've made fashion a strong component of how we do things. The store opened in 1979 and quickly became a key destination for eyewear lovers. Buying eyewear can be challenging because, when confronted with a mirror, we often become our toughest critic. We ease the process by making the selection for the client based on skin tone, bone structure and personal style ... we've created a safe place for self-expression through eyewear.

How do you use your platform to impact those who follow you?

Fashion has been an important part of my life. It has played an integral role in how I've raised my children, how I run my business, the people that I hire or don't hire. I find that fashion, particularly colour, intimidates many people, and my hope is that by doing what I do it inspires others to experiment a little bit. I'm 53 years old and I find that, as people age, they become less confident about the fashion choices they make. Age should not keep you from trying different things.

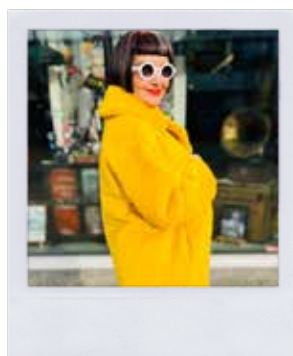
What's your personal style mantra?

My style changes constantly. I work with some of the emerging designers

in Vancouver and I'm inspired by their creativity. I also keep an eye on the international runways by attending the shows in Europe. My personal mantra: never be afraid to try something new. I will never be one to blend into the sea of black. The clothes that I wear tell my story without me speaking.

You were one of the *Globe and Mail's* Best Dressed for 2021. Was it a thrill?

That was a highlight of my career. I never thought that I would make the list simply because there are so many people in Canada that dress amazingly well.



What are some key FW21 style trends?

I think comfort is going to be important. I'm a fan of layering my favourite pieces and I plan on doing this with my sweaters and coats. Colour is also going to be key—bolder colours are outselling neutrals in my eyewear store.

"I find that **FASHION**, particularly colour, intimidates many people, and my hope is that, by doing what I do, it **INSPIRES** others to *experiment* a little bit"

Do you have any tips on transitioning to fall fashion?

Flipping a summer wardrobe into fall is easy for me—I love layering! Putting a turtleneck underneath a summer dress and adding opaque patterned or coloured tights is always great. Put a loose oversize sweater on top and you'll have a fantastic look!

If you could only buy one new piece this season, what would it be?

I love coats! If there is one thing that you must have other than a pair of great glasses it's a great coat. The yellow faux fur coat by Jayley (\$275 at Lord's Shoes) is a beautiful pop of colour for grey fall days, and can be toned down by wearing with neutrals. ✓

INSIDE THE September Issue

No. 71 ————— 2021

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The Great Closet Raid

Consumer-to-consumer shopping is as much about the social as it is about the selling

BY MIA GERMANSKI

Our online shopping habits have changed in the last year-and-a-half. From stocking up on essentials (toilet paper, please) to simply trying to lift our pandemic spirits, we've spent more time "adding to cart" than ever before. We've discovered the convenience of virtual grocery shopping and have even refused to let lockdown disrupt our daily 'fit game, filling our e-baskets with the latest styles (read: sweats). And there's one more thing that's changed: who we're buying from online.

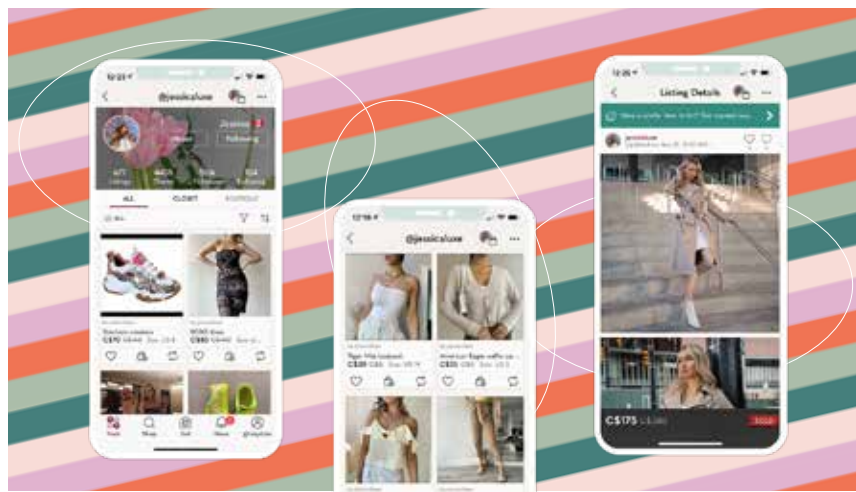
Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) shopping is on the rise, allowing people to make money selling their clothing, accessories and unused beauty products directly to a worldwide community of shoppers looking for a good deal—or, perhaps, a piece no longer available in store. Unlike eBay, these websites and apps are focused squarely on style, with a healthy dose of social thrown in.

"We operate on three value propositions, starting with simplicity. It has to be easy to sell, whether you're a newbie or experienced," says Maria Morales, GM, Canada, for Poshmark, a digital marketplace to buy and sell fashion. "We've relieved the pain points so that our resellers can focus on what matters most: connecting with their shoppers."

That social aspect, she continues, is pillar two, as sellers and buyers alike join Poshmark to be "part of a community, to socialize with each other. Since our launch in Canada in 2019 we've seen 1.1 billion social milestones met, from likes to shares to comments. They're following and engaging with and supporting each other



"This is where we see our current responsibility—making sure that *more and more people* find an easy-to-use and convenient tool that *empowers them* to buy secondhand"



and becoming what we call PFFs—Poshmark friends forever. People are making connections that go beyond a shared love of fashion, and beyond selling and buying."

She points to one group of resellers in Edmonton who have become friends IRL (in real life), meeting up to go thrifting together. This social aspect, Morales explains, actually helps the success of reselling: "The more you engage and connect, the more followers you have and the more eyeballs on your closet. It's a simple matter of increasing your reach, but the actual friendship part is a real bonus."

It's turned out to be a boon for Mother Earth, too. Sustainability is the third pillar in Poshmark's plan; in 2020, the marketplace launched Reposh to allow users to relist an item purchased on Poshmark and give it a third, fourth and even fifth life.

"We wanted to create a space connecting people to find new owners for their fashion and lifestyle items," says Maud Behaghel, global strategy director at Vinted, a European C2C platform boasting more than 45 million members that recently launched in Canada. "Our business model is based on circular fashion, and this is where we see our current responsibility—making sure that more and more people find an easy-to-use and convenient tool that empowers them to buy secondhand."

Luxury reseller LXR, based in Montreal, has been living and building on a philosophy centred around sustainability since 2010. "We believe in giving pre-owned luxury goods a second life at affordable prices," says CEO Cam di Prata, adding that, with a huge assortment of timeless designer handbags and accessories contributed by sellers around the world and carefully vetted by LXR, a second aim of the brand is to "democratize luxury"—that is, ensure everyday aspirational consumers can have access to quality pre-owned luxury items, at more affordable prices than brand new.

C2C has also created a not-too-shabby "side gig" opp for many, gaining certain high-powered sellers a highly engaged and loyal community of followers, all looking to fill their dressers with their favourite influencers' duds. Take Jessica Luxe, a digital creator and prolific Poshmark seller, whose feed is full of OOTD inspo. She says, "The biggest attraction for me as a seller is that every order includes tracked shipping so there's no extra guesswork that needs to be done. As a buyer, I love securing my dream items—like my Balenciaga Triple S—for less than retail price."

Real connections made between sellers and shoppers seems to be a key to success—and the reason Luxe has more than 500K followers on Poshmark. "When I see a user liking multiple items, I can look at what items they're looking to purchase from my closet, add their likes to the bundle and then make them an offer with a discount on top," she explains. The platform has also introduced a bulk sharing feature, which allows sellers like Luxe to multi-select the listings they wish to share, saving her time while allowing her to connect with even more so-called Poshers.

Social media, too, plays a big role, with Instagram and TikTok acting as extended marketplaces. Luxe often shares social stories on what she's selling, and even the most unique personalities have found their way into the reselling space. Viral sensation and canine trendsetter, Tika the Iggy, with more than a million Instagram followers, recently launched her own closet on Poshmark, targeting another shopper soft spot, offering leashes, collars, onesies and more, a portion of her proceeds benefiting an organization called the Rainbow Railroad, which helps LGBTQI+ people escape state-sponsored violence.

Indeed, the magically designed (and dare we say, more-aesthetically-pleasing-than-eBay) digital realms of Poshmark, Vinted and others offer more than just a place to sell, and buy, fashion—they also create an experience that feels like a champagne-popping party with friends, right at your fingertips. "When I first joined the app there were so many welcoming messages and people didn't hesitate to answer any questions I had," says Luxe. "Now that I've learned more about how it all works, the community has inspired me to be that for other people—it's such a positive space." V

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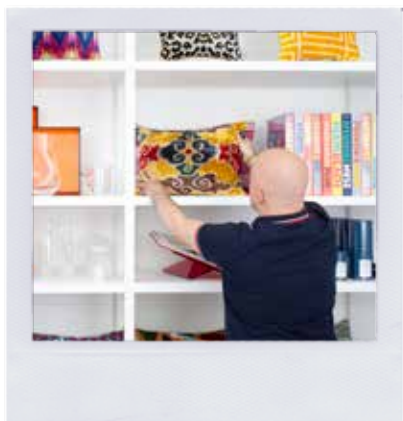
Retail Rewear

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On September 7 H&M Canada will launch a platform for consumers that will give a second life to their fave styles—from any brand. H&M Rewear is a C2C resell destination where Canadians can, for the first time among shoppers globally, buy and sell any piece of clothing in their closet, regardless of brand. Rewear.hm.com

Hot Shops

Vancouver's latest and greatest retailers



Behind the Store-y: Details by Mr. K

After finishing school, Andrew Karrasch left Vancouver for Montreal, where he immersed himself in visiting museums, trying new foods and meeting folks from around the world. The city awakened in him "a real appreciation of different cultures". He landed a job with Esprit, a position that took him overseas, and fell in love with living abroad, travelling and working in the creative world of fashion. After a role with Benetton, he settled at Calvin Klein Asia Pacific for 15 years, eventually becoming VP of design and merchandising.

On every work trip, Karrasch built in an extra half-day or more to seek out the area's fashion and homeware hot spots. His Yaletown apartment now displays reminders of those excursions. "We have a lot of small wood carved things," he says. "It's all of those eclectic and special things that you've found—that's what makes a home." After taking early retirement at 50 and working for a few more years in Hong Kong as a consultant, it was time to return to Vancouver and figure out what to do next.

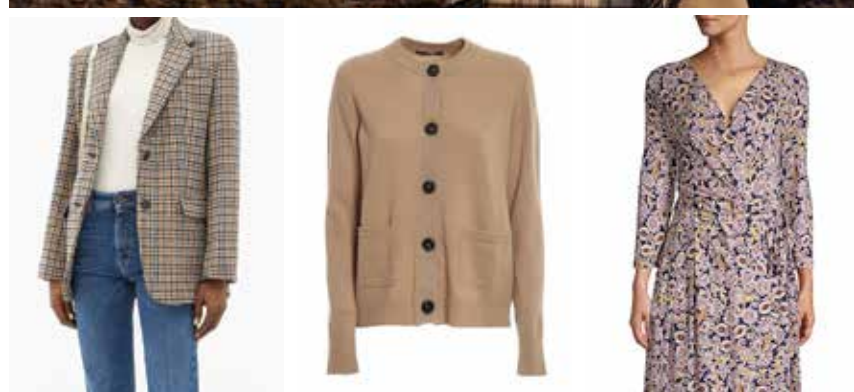
Analyzing his interests, abilities and passions led Karrasch to notice a gap in the local market: homewares. Big companies were bringing in high volumes of product, but it all looked the same and lacked colour, diversity and personality. He launched Details by Mr. K as the antidote to the prevailing monochromatic trend. The colourful store opened on South Granville in November 2020. Karrasch chooses every item with care, drawn equally to the item itself and the story behind it, "always balancing the beauty of the product with practicality." He says, "The beautiful teak platter on your island should still be able to hold fruit."

He encourages people to take the time to fully explore the shop, from the African wooden stools to the Mexican resin bowls to the Swedish/Indian velvet cushions. There's a fabulously diverse mix of items to peruse, including cool glassware and tableware, luxurious cushions (don't miss the cushion wall), throws, trays, home fragrances and more. "There's a lot of treasure and a lot of feast for the eyes," he says. Sourced from around the globe, the eclectic products mix "modern design and traditional techniques."

If there's one common thread that runs through Karrasch's life (and his store), it's being unafraid to try new things. "Where I am today is because of always going outside of your comfort zone." **2717 Granville St., 604-806-0510. Detailsbymrk.com** SHERI RADFORD

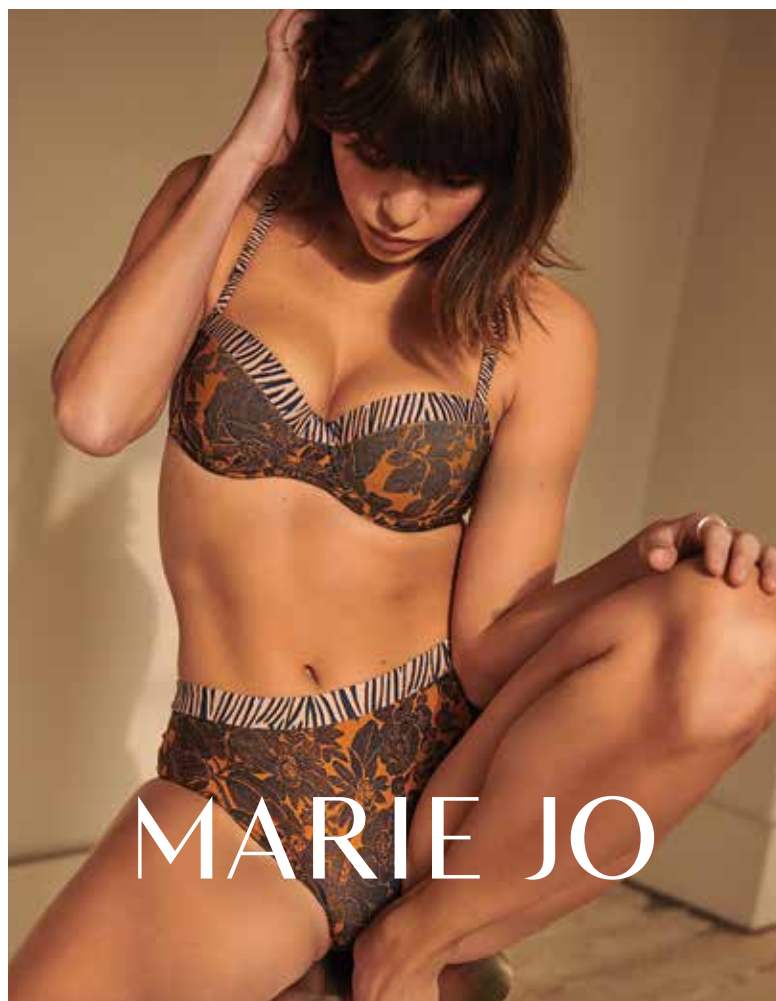
Max Mara, Weekend Max Mara, Blubird Outlet

With cooler weather here, there's no better time to reinvent your wardrobe—and we have the perfect way to make a stylish statement this fall. The Max Mara, Weekend Max Mara and Blubird Outlet location at McArthurGlen offers luxury fashion from Italy and the world at incredible discounts. Keep your clothing game fresh and easy in the most wanted designs from Max Mara, Weekend Max Mara and Blubird brands like Michaela Buerger, Jonathan Simkhai and Self Portrait. Need more reason to head to Richmond tout suite? From September 3 to 19, the Max Mara, Weekend Max Mara and Blubird Outlet is offering extra savings on autumn ensembles that stand out—buy three pieces, get an additional 10% off, and, buy four get an additional 15% off on styles already up to 50% off retail prices (doesn't include outerwear; some exceptions may apply). It's your best chance to snag the most luxurious trends, from cashmere sweaters to denim to wool trousers—and you didn't think you could fall any deeper for fashion! **126F-7899 Templeton Station Rd., 604-676-5460.** NOA NICHOL



Ecologist

Sustainable fashion brand Ecologist opened its new facility in Victoria earlier this summer—an integrated retail, factory and warehouse space that enables the ethical label to expand local production, provide transparency on the manufacturing process and facilitate direct connections between consumers and the talented people who craft their clothing. The multi-use facility, housed in an 1892 heritage building, includes a shoppable showroom in which you'll find the company's collection of outdoor-inspired apparel, each piece crafted with all-natural, biodegradable materials that are designed to stand the test of time (these clothes come with a lifetime guarantee to replace or repair, as needed, to boot). **2110 Store St., Victoria, 250-381-3178. Ecologist.com** NOA NICHOL



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Underneath It All

Top trends in underthings include healthy materials, leakproof tech and sizing for all

BY SHERI RADFORD

Have you been wearing the same sad sports bra and granny panties since the start of the pandemic? Ditch those droopy drawers and treat yourself to fresh undergarments. You'll notice new—and necessary—developments shaking up the intimates department.

Chantal Carter was a wardrobe stylist when she first saw an issue. “The models were supposed to come with nude undergarments but the problem is, the nude was only for Caucasian skin. There wasn't anything for people who looked like me or darker than me.” Desperation led her to attempt a solution. “I bought a white bra and panty, and I found fabric paint in the store, and I painted it.” She remembers, “It was hard and it was crusty on my skin, but I had the look.”

Her creations have come a long way since that first prototype. Carter's company, Love & Nudes, produces bras and panties in an array of shades for BIPOC—honey, butterscotch, nutmeg and espresso. Other lingerie brands are, too, embracing diversity and inclusion by expanding their range of sizes—including Victoria's Secret, whose newest VS Bare Infinity Flex bra offers adaptive technology that allows for size fluctuation.

In its marketing campaigns, Knix features women ages 20 to 81 in sizes 0 to 22. The Canadian brand's WingWoman Contour Bra provides extra support (so long, side-boob) from 32A to 42G, while the LuxeLift Pullover Bra goes from 28A to 44G. The company's products are a hit with consumers and investors; Knix raised \$50 million in growth equity funding, just three days before founder and CEO Joanna Griffiths gave birth to twins. And, recently, model Ashley Graham was signed as global brand ambassador for its activewear line, which includes leggings and shorts in sizes XS to XXXXL.

Another brand offering an extensive size range is Aisle. The company makes period panties in XS to XXXXXL suitable for all menstruators, not just those who identify



“I felt most underwear made of synthetics exacerbated my symptoms”

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her own struggle with body image, binge-eating disorder and mental-health issues.

“One of the ways [Jess] began to make peace with her body was to sit in her bra and undies and get comfortable seeing her stretch marks and tummy,” reads a bio on After Evie's site. “That led to doodling cute ... designs that would actually be comfortable and things she would want to wear.” Now the label, whose launch includes a set for “apple-shaped bodies”—aims to represent Black and Indigenous people (like Alfaro herself), plus-sized, disabled and marginalized bodies, plus “encourage those struggling with mental health to know that they are capable of doing all the things they dream of.”

For Montreal's Frank and Oak, Mother Earth is top of mind—even when it comes to her underthings. The brand recently launched 100 per cent sustainable intimates, with a trio of bottom styles and waist heights for various levels of coverage and made of organic cotton and spandex for breathability and movement. Bonus: both bralette styles are “pull on” for comfort—and use less trim!

No local shopping trip for new underwear is complete without a stop at Diane's Lingerie. According to owner Sharon Hayles, “We're still seeing the trend, as we did through COVID, that people are wanting comfortable. They're wanting non-wire. They're wanting bralettes.”

She's also noticed more customers “wanting to get back into lacy, pretty bras” with an eye-catching pop of colour. “We're moving back into embroidery and embellishments,” she says. For fall, she's seeing a surge of retro styles that are a bit architectural, geometric and Art Deco in design—“Roaring Twenties” looks that embrace “some fun, some femininity.”

Hayles has a tip for anyone unsure about current lingerie etiquette: “It's OK now to actually see your bra.” After all, she says, “There are so many with such great straps that you want to show them.” So go ahead and do so. Flaunt all these new styles—and, while you're at it, please toss out those sad and saggy pandemic undies. v

Pain-Relief Panties

The next time menstrual cramps hit, grab the Keep It Brief and the Original Heat Pack from Undu Wearables. Pockets in the front and back of these innovative panties hold specially shaped heat packs in place, exactly where they're needed most. Undu was dreamt up by three female entrepreneurs who wanted to address—in an affordable, ethical and discreet manner—a problem that 84 per cent of menstruators experience at some point in their lives. Unduwearables.com

Gorgeous Goods

Meet the wonderfully natural ingredients high-end skin-care brands are using in their products

BY AILEEN LALOR

Natural resources were our first beauty products, from the time Cleopatra picked up that stick of kohl to the avocado you mashed up in high school and slapped on your face. Now, some of the world's most luxurious brands are (re)turning to nature to find the finest and rarest ingredients, and then turn them into skin care for us.

La Mer famously uses pacific sea kelp, grown around Vancouver Island, in all its products. "It's very abundant, growing ... 30 or 40 metres deep in underwater forests," says Paul Tchinnis, the brand's research and development director. "The water there is pristine and protected—there's no boating allowed—and the team of harvesters has the expertise to hand harvest the kelp in a sustainable manner."

Kelp, said to have innate antioxidant and anti-inflammatory abilities, has been used in skin- and body-care for years (seaweed wraps are a staple of the beauty industry), just like ginseng (used by Korean brand Sulwhasoo), collagen (a mainstay for Quebec brand Clayton Shagal), honey and royal jelly (Guerlain signatures) and caviar and sturgeon-derived extracts (favourites of La Prairie and Valmont). So what makes luxury products so different? Well, it ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it, that gets results.

"You need the highest-quality pure ingredients, extracted in the right way, and then to use them in the right concentration in your products," explains Melany Renaud, VP of Clayton Shagal. "People know that there are different levels of product—drugstore, pharmacy and luxe—but they don't know that there are different levels of ingredient quality and ... expertise in blending nature and science."

La Mer has a famous extraction process invented by the brand founder Max Huber 50 years ago. "The key is with the fermentation, not only the time—it takes 40 days—but also the energy in the form of light and sound that help act as a catalyst for the process," says Tchinnis. "When it's finished, you don't see or smell sea kelp, it's something else, transformed, like when grapes become wine."

Ginseng has been a key ingredient for Sulwhasoo for more than 50 years. The company uses four components of the antioxidant-rich plant—seed, flower, stem and roots—in its Concentrated Ginseng Renewing Cream, plus tried-and-true anti-aging powerhouse retinol. The ginseng is processed using a patented fermentation technique called bioconversion. A collector's edition (only 500 or so units)



intact, so that it can penetrate the layers of skin without injection," she says. "It's a treatment, not a superficial ingredient, and it can really go to work in the dermis to regenerate the skin."

La Prairie famously uses caviar (sturgeon eggs) in its products, but its fellow Swiss brand, Valmont Cosmetics, goes even further, using sturgeon milt—seminal fluid—as the starting point for its Essence of Gold Sturgeon range. "Their flesh and caviar is used in restaurants and we take the milt for my cream," says Sophie Guillon, the brand's CEO. "From there, we extracted the DNA, which is a very complex sugar that gives skin energy, and put it into this amazing line."

The range consists of Fluide, a dewy essence that is said to wake up skin and make it look fresher, and Crème Merveilleuse, which hydrates and firms. Guillon says this range is particularly good for women who are in what she calls "second puberty" (menopause) where the skin has begun to collapse and lose density and thickness, as "it really builds back elasticity."

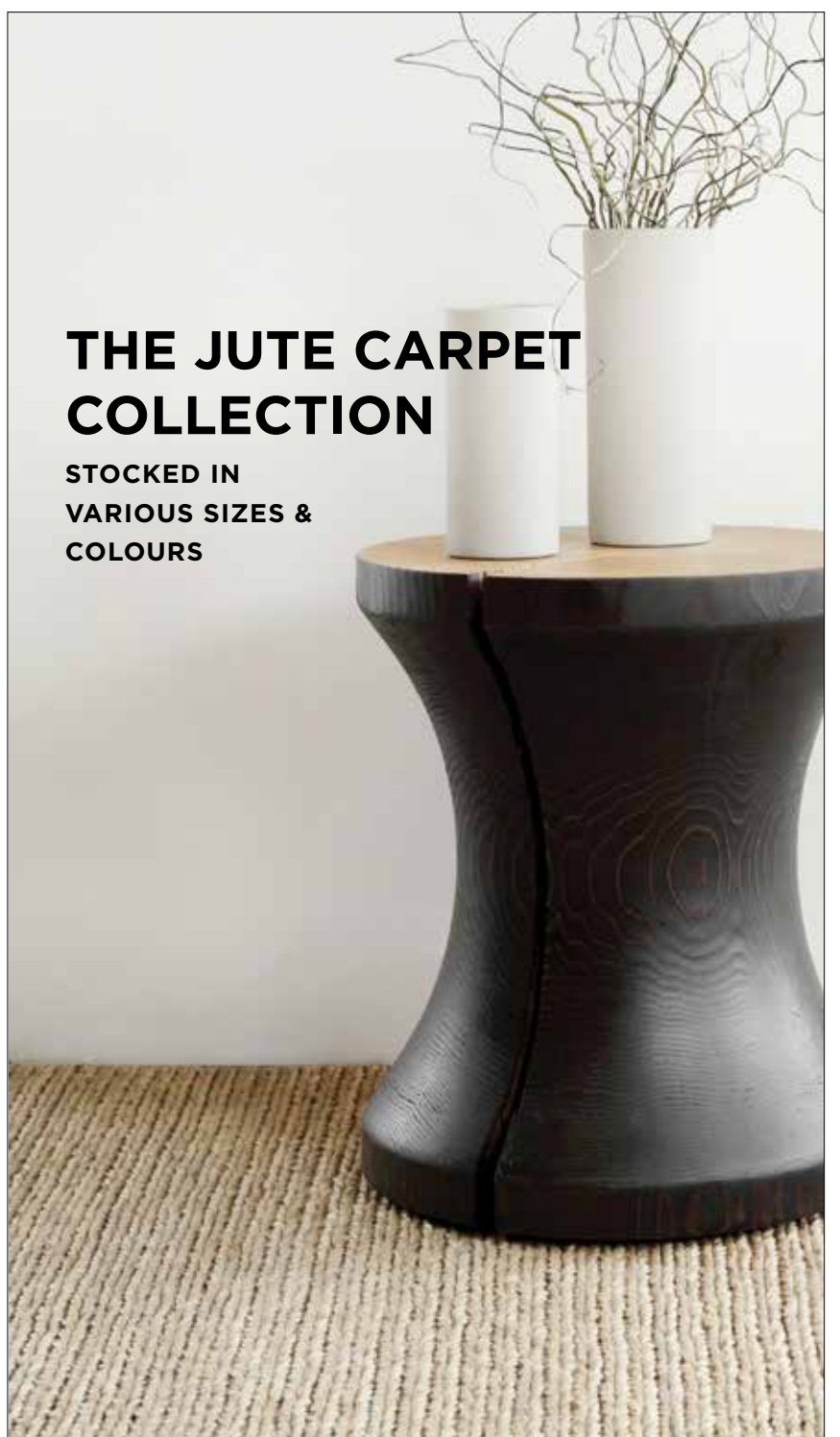
These brands aren't marketing themselves as one thing but, rather, four—nature, science, luxury and efficacy—which could explain their cult-like following and long-term success. There's also an air of confidence in the products they make: they let the results speak for themselves.

"We obviously run extensive clinical testing on different skin types all the time, but we don't talk numbers, which is part of our philosophy," says Tchinnis. "La Mer has been around a long time because people use it, continue to use it and see wonderful benefits. We know it's one of the longest products on the market for the past 50 years. We know it works. We don't have to tell people it works." v

"When it's finished, you don't see or smell sea kelp, it's something else, transformed, like when grapes become wine"

THE JUTE CARPET COLLECTION

STOCKED IN VARIOUS SIZES & COLOURS



of this is currently available in Canada, dressed up in matte-gold packaging.

Chanel's Sublimage line includes extracts of vanilla planifolia (a type of orchid), hand-cultivated in the brand's open-sky laboratory in Madagascar, harvested at a particular growth phase. The key ingredient, a vanilla oil, was discovered as a byproduct of perfume production and is said to regenerate skin thanks to collagen- and elastin-preserving properties. The latest addition to the range, La Crème Corps et Décolleté is a light-but-rich body cream that also contains micropearls to add an instant glow to skin.

Back to Renaud, whose family-owned brand was started 40 years ago, inspired by the way collagen was used in the medical field as a treatment for post-surgical scarring and burns. For its collagen-enriched products Clayton Shagal takes collagen from fish skin, which is close in composition to human collagen. "We have the purest form of collagen and we leave the molecules

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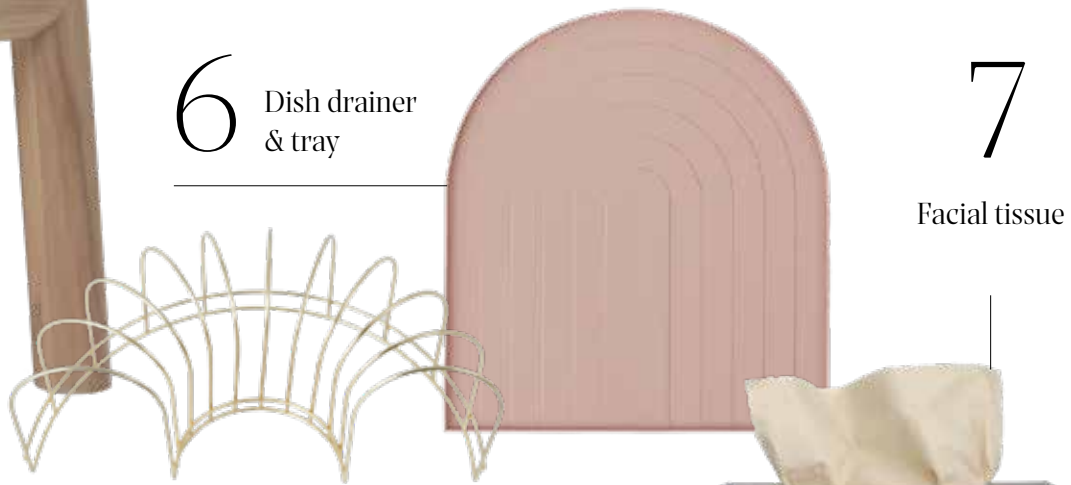
Armoury District Vancouver

Chic Everyday Swaps

Your laundry basket, toilet brush and dish rack do a lot of your dirty work—it's time to let them shine

BY MADISON HOPE

If you had plans for renos or décor DIYs in the last 15 months, chances are you've already completed them (pandemic rules around staying in place can do that to a person). However, what you may have overlooked is the chance to upgrade an otherwise utilitarian, everyday object to something beautiful that interests and inspires you. Don't just take it from us—according to famed British textile designer William Morris, "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful." Indeed, there is beauty and inspiration to be found in everything—even in a scrub brush. Here, our top stylish swaps for the most (seemingly) mundane stuff in your home. ♡



HOME ACCESSORIES WITH PERSONALITY



the Shopping List

- Seagrass fringe placemat \$22 *at* RAINSFORDCOMPANY.COM
- Always Pan \$19 *at* FROMOURPLACE.CA
- Marble paper-towel holder \$29 *at* CRATEANDBARREL.CA
- Biau stool \$400 *at* EQ3.CA
- Dish brush \$12 *at* BETTERBASICS.CO
- Oyoy dish drainer & tray \$48, \$58 *at* THEMODERNSHOP.COM
- Bamboo facial tissue \$19 *at* MOUCHEHOME.COM
- Hand sanitizer \$14 *at* ATHOMEWITHDOM.COM
- Zone Denmark Ume toilet brush \$118 *at* AMARA.COM
- Porcupine basket (large) \$299 *at* DETAILSBYMRK.COM

New Noshes

Where and what to eat this month



New @ The Teahouse in Stanley Park

With new hours, a new executive chef and a new menu, there's no better time to reacquaint yourself with Stanley Park's landmark restaurant, The Teahouse. Now open Thursday to Sunday from 4 p.m. on, with dinner service available both indoors and on the open-air patio (read: scenic views of the lush forest landscape, the North Shore Mountains and the sparkling waters of the Burrard Inlet), industry veteran Sic Kim (formerly of Bin 941, Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, Giardino and Cardero's) has rolled out an impressive menu of premium meat, seafood and vegetarian dishes. New signature items include: a bone-in 16-ounce New York steak with pommes frites and seasonal vegetables; Brome Lake duck confit with an apricot and port glaze paired with truffled mushroom croquette; crab and shrimp crusted halibut with garden herbs and vegetables; and charbroiled rack of lamb served with pave de pommes de terre and a Cinzano demi. New has never tasted so good. **7501 Stanley Park Dr., 604-669-3281. Vancouverdine.com/teahouse** NOA NICHOL

Blind Tiger

Chinatown has welcomed a new food spot, Blind Tiger, to its restaurant roster. Open concept, with brick walls, faded paint, nostalgic posters and weathered furniture, this looks just like one of the street-food vendors that frequent Shanghai's longtangs (alleyways). Owner Lewis Hart spent years working and travelling in Hong Kong and China, and dumplings have become his go-to comfort food. The menu's six dumpling options represent different regions of China: scotch-infused single malt xiao long bao for Shanghai, bison momos with turmeric for Tibet, spicy zhong dumplings for Sichuan and vegetable shaomai for Inner Mongolia. Many locally sourced ingredients figure, some from the surrounding streets: pork from Carley Bbq & Hot Pot Supplies next door and spices from Ga Cheong Herbal Medicine 'round the corner. There's even a secret dumpling; number 7 is the code that will get you through a heavy freezer door at the back of a stall to a hidden world. Stay tuned for what's inside! **251 E. Georgia St.** LOUISA CHAN



Super Veloce

New to Coal Harbour, Super Veloce (it means "super fast" in Italian) is Vancouver's first health-focused Italian coffee bar. Located in the lobby of the Shaw Tower, the café features an extensive wellness-conscious menu ideal for the nutrition nut on the go. Premade juices and snacks (plus bottled smoothies) make for a quick-and-easy pitstop; our personal fave for a lunchtime protein boost is the pollo bocc, boasting a brined and roasted chicken thigh accompanied by a vegan Calabrian chili aioli for dipping. Looking to satisfy your sweet tooth without the junkie stuff? Try a pronut—a protein-packed donut, in chocolate coconut and vanilla cherry. Need a caffeine boost? The Bulletproof-style carro veloce will really rev your engine. And Fido is welcome, too, to enjoy dog treats made with healthy chicken liver, sweet potato and rice. **150-1067 Cordova St. W., 604-566-1661. Caffesuperveloce.com** VICKI DUONG

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Fresh Air

Worried about the effects of pollution on your skin and overall health?
Here's what you can do to reduce them

BY AILEEN LALOR

Air quality has been top of mind for Canadians this summer—not just because of the coronavirus, but also, and more visibly, the wildfires that have blighted the West Coast. We know, intuitively, that smoke pollution is not good for our health—it hurts to breathe, our eyes sting and we get headaches—but what actually is going on?

Smoke from wildfires, vehicle exhaust and industry contains a mix of solid and liquid particles, some of which are so small they can enter the lungs and pores of skin. “Even for healthy people, this can trigger respiratory issues and allergies and reduce lung function, especially in children,” says Martin Mercier, a product specialist at Cyclo Vac, which specializes in centralized vacuum cleaners and air purifiers. “For people with lung disease, that’s even worse, and it can also lead to asthma attacks and worsen conditions like chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD).”

And you not only need to be concerned about air quality during wildfire season. “The World Health Organization estimates that more than 90 per cent of the world’s population is exposed to daily air pollution that exceeds its guidelines,” says Vancouver dermatologist Dr. Katie Belezny. “Air pollution is increasingly believed to play a role in a number of common skin conditions including acne, atopic dermatitis and psoriasis. In addition, research suggests it may contribute to skin aging including wrinkles and pigmented spots.”

What might you notice IRL? “A more dull appearance of the skin may be noted compared to counterparts living in non-urban sites that have a more radiant appearance,” says Dr. Renée Beach, a dermatologist based in Toronto. “Depending on the skin tone, this could be a more ashen appearance or more fine lines.”



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Mercier says we might not even get respite indoors, where cooking, renovations, wood-burning stoves and even incense and candles can create tiny particles in the air. Dusting, sweeping and vacuuming with a device that doesn't have a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter can disturb particles that have settled on surfaces or floors. And then there are the liquid pollutants—even from substances like air fresheners—that can be absorbed into soft furnishings and slowly released over time.

In terms of skin health, Dr. Belezny suggests that a good cleanser, sunscreen and topical antioxidant can help prevent damage from the environment. Says Dr. Beach: “Commercially available serums that contain antioxidants like vitamin C (L-ascorbic acid), vitamin E (tocopherol), ferulic acid and phloretin are great at providing protection from free-radical damage. They can be applied daily or every two days to provide protective benefit.”

Short of moving to the countryside, there's not much we can do to improve the general air quality of the world outside, but we can take steps to improve the indoors. Typically, the best thing to do is to throw open the windows and let the pollutants and, potentially, coronavirus particles, out. But if the air outside is bad, that's not going to help, which is where purifiers come in.

There are two types, explains Mercier: portable ones, and ones that can be installed in your home's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system. These aren't the same as air filters: purifiers like those made by Cyclo Vac will filter out the particulate matter, but also contain UV lamps that de-activate the DNA of bacteria, viruses and other pathogens, and neutralize bad smells.

“Customers need to do their homework to see what they're getting,” he says. “You can go to Costco and buy something that has no UV and no capability of getting rid of odours. Or you can buy something higher quality—though not necessarily much more expensive—and you will see the difference very quickly.” Odours both nice and nasty will dissipate more quickly if you're using a purifier; Mercier suggests that, if you cook bacon in the morning, it will take five minutes to disappear instead of 20.

What does he recommend between an HVAC system and a portable one? “Get the best option you can afford. Most new homes have the option to have an air-exchange system installed depending on the province and bylaws. It's easy to add a UVC system to the cold-air return. Then you need to consider the running costs: are replacement UV lamps and filters expensive? Can you find them easily?”

And in real, everyday terms, will you actually notice the difference in your health and skin if you start to pay attention to the air around you? It's an emphatic yes from Mercier. “I have asthma and have noticed that, since I started using a portable device that I take from room to room, I use my inhalers less often, I don't have to fill my prescription as frequently. My allergies aren't as bad. I'm sleeping better. Did I live 40 years without one? Yes. Am I happy I have one now? Absolutely.” **Cyclovac.com**

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Skin Deep

Some skin-care products might protect you against the worst effects of environmental pollution. One essential is a good cleanser to physically remove pollutants from the surface. Cetaphil Gentle Cleanser is soap-free, non-irritating and helps skin retain moisture without clogging pores. Biossance Amino Aloe Gentle Cleanser has amino acids to break down dirt, plus morninga to counteract the effects of pollution.

You also need a good antioxidant serum. Clinical brand Skinceuticals has a number of options; the newest launch, Silymarin CF, has L-ascorbic acid and ferulic acid, plus salicylic acid to improve texture and fight acne. Algenist's Blue Algae Vitamin C Skinclarity Brightening Serum contains vitamin C from spirulina, which as well as counteracting the effects of pollution can help brighten skin. Ole Henriksen's Banana Bright Vitamin C Serum has texture-improving polyhydroxy acids as well as vit C and hyaluronic acid. And Uriage Barié-derm-CICA Daily Serum repairs the skin's moisture barrier, which can be damaged by

pollutants, with vitamin B5, hyaluronic acid and centella asiatica.

For an extra-refreshing boost, add an antioxidant-rich mist. Tanit Neroli Water Balancing Mist is made in Canada and has green tea and neroli to help fight pollution, plus soothing aloe vera. Finish with a moisturizer like Moon Juice Cosmic Cream Collagen Protecting Moisturizer with ashwagandha—an antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, adaptogenic herb that's supposed to neutralize environmental aggressors.

During the day, top with a sunscreen like Reversa Radiance Cream SPF30, with vitamin C to help reduce the effects of pollution, plus broad-spectrum UV protection. At night, use a mask. L'Occitane's Precious Overnight Mask has extracts of the immortelle flower, one of the hardest plants around. Neostrata's Overnight Anti-Pollution Treatment includes antioxidant lilac plant cell extract for visible pollution damage, and amino acids and evening primrose oil to strengthen the moisture barrier. And Valmont's Deto2x Pack has single-use pods designed to “depollute” skin, thanks to deep-cleansing Swiss watercress and a complex that supposedly revives cellular oxygenation. **V**

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