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VITA



The November Issue

POSE-ITIVE
CHANGE

*The shape of
Canada's modelling
industry is *shifting*—
for the better*

INSIDE *the* ISSUE

STYLE Cape Town Former *fashion editor* Lisa Tant reveals her *very local* wardrobe pick of the season

BEAUTY Singular Vision Some beauty brands are *stripping things back* to just one or two products to suit everyone

FASHION Off Runway Cool *designer collaborations* are prompting a *reimagining* of the way we define fashion

FOOD Spice Trail Savouring the *multi-dimensional, multi-delicious flavours* of Surrey

New & Now on West 4th

2



The retail scene on West 4th has gotten newer—and trendier!

With boutiques like Anían, Bailey Nelson, DUER and Melanie Auld joining old faves like Gravity Pope, Judith & Charles and The Latest Scoop, you'll find all the styles you need to build your fall/winter 2021 wardrobe now. Follow our trends guide below, and head to West 4th in a hurry!

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1



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5

1 | Anían

The idea for Anían sprung from the belief that the clothes we enjoy in the natural world should not be harming it. With this in mind, the Victoria-based brand has created timeless, for-a-lifetime clothing using entirely recycled natural fibre textiles from landfills. The label's new Loft coat is perfect for fall/winter wear—and perfectly in keeping with one of this season's biggest trends, the shacket. It breathes easily, sheds fog and showers and keeps you cosy and comfortable through a long season of cool-to-cold temperatures.

2 | Bailey Nelson

A new space for Bailey Nelson on West 4th means extra room to showcase its many fabulous eyeglass frames. Come in for an eye exam with an optometrist, who will check your vision and the health of your eyes using state-of-the-art equipment, and leave with a pair that perfectly suits your face. A top pick for the season: the Henderson is a "new classic" shape that works great as an everyday fall frame. With its timeless profile and minimal weight, this model is designed for medium-to-large faces, and comes in three shades: chocolate, matte jupiter tort and light-grey crystal.

2 | DUER

Denim's different these days. Say goodbye to skinnies and hello to wider legs, like those found on DUER's performance denim jumpsuit. Its easy fit offers stretch for ultimate comfort and flexibility, it's got deep pockets for safe storage (plus a handy zip front closure) and we think it would look just super layered with a shacket. Once open, the Vancouver-founded brand's function-meets-fashion styles will be available at its new West 4th location.

4 | Gravity Pope

Comfy, cosy clogs and slipper shoes have grown in popularity this season—like the See by Chloé Gema slippers. Crafted from plush shearling and smooth leather and decorated with the brand's signature ring in antiqued gold, these elevated slippers were made for dog walks and coffee runs ... and holding on to those word-from-home vibes.

4



5 | Judith & Charles

The puffer coat is, once again, having a moment, and Judith & Charles has answered the call in a sustainably stylish way. The Montreal-based brand's new collection includes down-filled quilted beauties available in several styles—the long, fitted Courchevel; the shorter Chamonix; and the Zermatt bomber—made with upcycled down and feather for cruelty-free warmth without compromise.

6 | Old Faithful Shop

Because style extends from the closet to the home, dress up your space with a print—or two, or three—by Botanik, available at Old Faithful's newest shop on West 4th. These exclusive art prints by Danish design studio Moe Made It for The Poster Club—a Copenhagen-based company offering a unique curated selection of high-quality posters and art prints from upcoming and established artists—are giving us all the autumn vibes.

7 | Melanie Auld

Pair Melanie Auld's coveted evil eye charm—now reimagined in the fall tones you've been craving, and soon available at the Vancouver jewelry maker's new West 4th store—with the latest addition to the brand's Author collection, the 2 in 1 paperclip chain, to build a necklace that tells your story. This transformable chain creates the foundation for personalized necklaces completed with charm clasps and meaningful pendants like these symbols of protection. (And why not add a little love to your story by layering it with Melanie Auld's new love lock necklace?)

8 | The Latest Scoop

Nearing the holiday season, we're seeing two old staples come back into style: satin and sequins. The Latest Scoop carries both in spades; the pleated midi skirt switches up the classic style with pleats, plus a pretty sheen that makes it easy to dress up and pair with a heeled bootie. Also, the absolutely fabulous sleeveless crossback sequin jumpsuit—Christmas party ready with secret slits up each leg for a little festive fun!

9 | Gravity Pope

The loafer has been in style for many seasons—you may even own a pair. If not, may we suggest Urban Outfitters' UO Esme chain loafer; inspired by the classic, it's made modern with a patent faux-leather upper, metal-chain detail and chunky tread sole.



6



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8



9

WEST 4TH

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Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

Welcome to the November issue. Before the frenzy of the festive season hits (boy, have we got a holly jolly holiday issue planned for you next month!), we're taking a breath and focusing on one of the things we love best here at *VITA*: fashion. And not just clothing (though former *Flare* editor-in-chief Lisa Tant's style pick of the season, below, is certainly spectacular; not to mention weather appropriate), but the industry itself. From high-fashion brands collaborating with some highly *unusual* suspects to the changing-for-the-better face of modelling, we hope you'll find some fashionable food for thought within these pages. Speaking of food, we're taking you on a tour of Surrey's Spice Trail (you won't regret hitting the highway for your next meal). Enjoy!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Our featured influencer this month is **Lisa Tant**, whose background in fashion journalism and retail make her a local style icon.

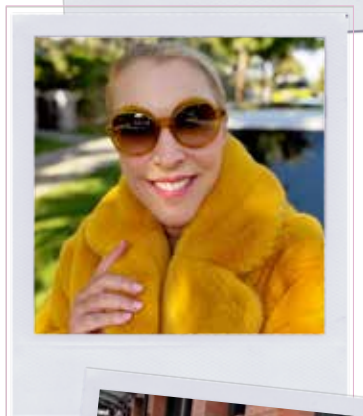
Lisa Tant
@LISATANT

Hi Lisa! Tell us a little bit about you and what do you do.

I started my fashion career in Vancouver when I was a teenager. I was a style columnist at the *Vancouver Sun* before I moved to Toronto, where I eventually became the editor-in-chief of *Flare* magazine. Following that, I did stints in corporate luxury retail at Holt Renfrew and Nordstrom, and now I'm back in Vancouver working in luxury design. I missed the ocean and mountains, and couldn't wait to come home.

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

I live a life of colourful style—from my home to my wardrobe. (I just bought a Mini Cooper to match my collection of Dries Van Noten toppers.) There's so much joy in fashion. I like my Instagram page to reflect my love of fashion, pattern and fearless style at any age. I admire women of all ages who have fun with their clothes.



“There's so much JOY in fashion. I like my Instagram page to reflect my love of *fashion, pattern* and *fearless style* at any age. I *admire* women of all ages who have fun with their clothes”



What's your personal style mantra?

I'm a curious person who loves pop culture, travel, film, arts and books. I like to wear an eclectic mix of things that reflect my personality. I invest in timeless pieces from Dries Van Noten. He has a terrific artist's eye for mixing and clashing colours, textures and patterns, and then adding embellishments such as sequins or embroidery. His designs are so versatile because they are so different—I just keep updating my styling approach season after season. I will wear my favourite toppers until they fall apart. I also believe in investing in distinctive necklaces and shoes to add an instant style flair with any basic outfit.

What are some of your favourite things to do once the cold weather hits?

I walk my pug, Raffi, year-round, so that means long strolls along Kits Beach and Spanish Banks, and in Pacific Spirit Park. Granville Island is one of my favourite places, so I like to shop there at least once a week. I'll be sticking close to home this winter, but hoping to finally be able to plan my next big adventure: a small-ship cruise around the Greek Islands.

What's your top current fashion pick?

I'm really excited to wear my rain cape from Cape de Coeur, a new collection by Vancouver-based Austrian designer Bettina Mueller Reichl. Her capes are fashion-forward and practical thanks to their high-tech material that's weather-proof and washable. I can layer a sweater underneath, or use it as a chic evening-wear cape. I can't think of a more perfect West Coast cape.



THE MAKING OF THE
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Pose-itive Change

The shifting shape of modelling in Canada

BY SHERI RADFORD



When Sofia Cretaro first tried to be a model, she got rejected. A lot.

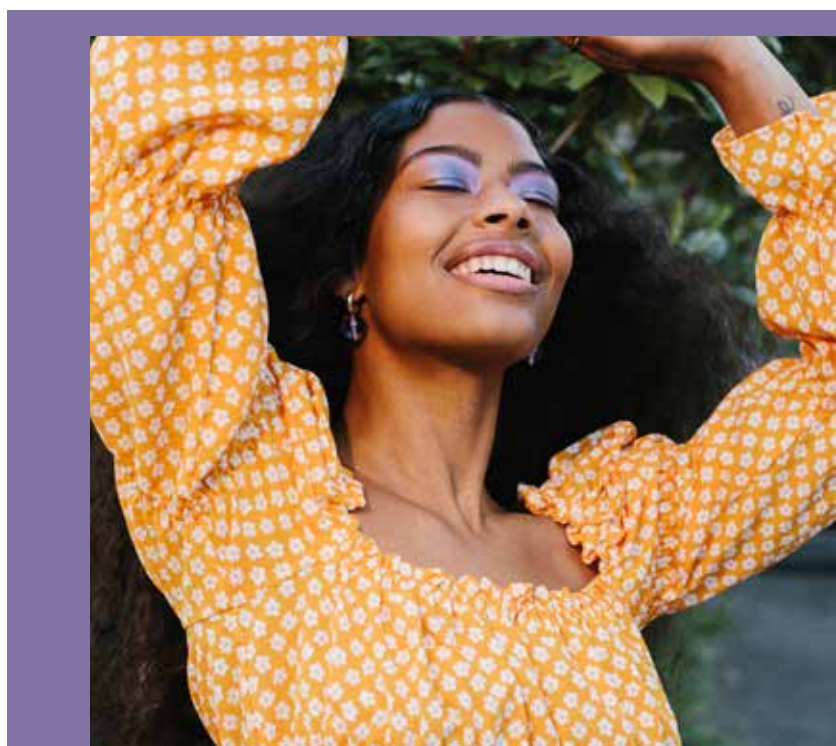
"I submitted my photos to a bunch of agencies in Toronto, and got declined by all of them because of my size," Cretaro says. "I'm considered an in-between size." The industry, she says, defines that as "anywhere between a size 4 and a 10."

Eventually, the Torontonian got her lucky break with Dulcedo Management. "They decided to take a chance on me, and I was one of their first in-between-size models to get signed," she says. That was two years ago, and she's been working steadily ever since.

Cretaro's repeated rejections are far from unusual. For a long time, aspiring models had to fit a specific mould. Leah Rowena, modelling agent for Vancouver agency Stranger and a former model herself, sums up the stereotype: "Blonde hair, blue eyes, quite thin." But, from the start, Stranger has been different, emphasizing diversity. The agency's roster of talent includes she/her, he/him and they/them models, all sizes and ethnicities. And when the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement dominated headlines last year, suddenly that diverse roster was in demand. "We had a really strong surge of all of our Black and BIPOC talent being booked," Rowena says.

Kaya Coleman experienced that increase in demand. She's a Black model from Calgary who now lives in Vancouver and is signed with Vancouver agency Alaeria. When BLM took off, her bookings doubled. Though she appreciated the work, she also worried: "Is this tokenism? Is this fetishization? Is this colourism?"

Joleen Mitton, too, worries about the way BIPOC models are used. A former model who's half Indigenous, Mitton is the founder of Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week (VIFW). She also co-founded Supernaturals Modelling in West Vancouver, to represent Indigenous models and focus on high-end cultural representation, with the goal of "changing people's ideals of what an Indigenous



"People of *all skin tones* want to know how a colour will look on them. People of *all body types* want to know how a garment will fit on them. It makes no sense to show one type of model"



person is and looks like." She says that VIFW is "changing the colonial perspective of what beauty is. You don't have to be a pale person."

Snejina Stoilova is a former model and the owner of Alaeria. Her agency works with brands such as Lululemon and Arc'teryx. "I feel like they genuinely love to work with diverse talent," she says. But she fears some other brands might not be committed to real and lasting change. "It makes you think, are you doing this because you genuinely want to? Or are you doing this to fill this need in the industry right now?"

Some Canadian brands have diversity baked right into their ethos. Ashley Freeborn, co-founder of Smash + Tess, says the company was created "to fill a gap in the fashion industry: to make inclusive clothing that all women feel comfortable and confident wearing." She adds, "Contrary to industry status quo, we sample all our products on a size large and grade up or down from there. We also test product on fit models of all shapes and sizes."

Jess Sternberg, founder of Free Label, agrees: "If the goal of modelling is to help customers understand how a product looks, fits, feels, there must be diversity. People of all skin tones want to know how a colour will look on them. People of all body types want to know how a garment will fit on them. It makes no sense to show one type of model."

Chloë Angus, founder of Chloë Angus Design, feels likewise: "Too often, fashion and style equate to being young, thin, tall and white. Since the beginning, I wanted to build a brand that leads with diversity and inclusion, showing models of all ages, shapes, sizes, identities, ethnicities and mobilities." She adds, "It takes little talent to design for young, tall, beautiful people who all look the same. True talent lies in designing for all shapes and sizes, for everybody who wants to feel stylish and included in fashion."

Everyone agrees that this is a time of huge change in the modelling world. Barriers regarding ethnicity, size, age, gender, disabilities and more are all being dismantled. Some folks attribute the rapid change to the pandemic. Kris Lyon, senior booking agent with Toronto/Montreal agency Dulcedo, says last year's lockdowns led to a surge in online shopping and, without the chance to try anything on, customers have been more reliant than ever on models to demonstrate how everything fits. And, increasingly, those customers want to see how the clothing, shoes and jewelry will look on someone just like them.

But the industry's groundswell of change has actually been underway for years. Lyon cites the examples of popular plus-size models Ashley Graham, who is white, Precious Lee, who is Black, and Paloma Elsesser, whose heritage is a mix of white, Latina and Black.

Former model Eduard Soponar, founder of Calgary agency Monica Model Management, thinks customers have been bored for a while: "I feel like people are getting tired of seeing the exact same dimensions on the models." He mentions that social media and influencers have opened ideas around who can be a model, saying, "It doesn't really matter—your skin colour, shape, type, anything like that—you can make it in the industry."

Charlotte Elizabeth is a plus-size model and content creator in North Vancouver. Over the last decade, she's witnessed nonstop changes in the industry, including how posting modelling photos on social media morphed from no-no to must-do. She's also seen restrictions around size pretty much disappear: "Everything goes now. I feel like there's no rules."

This makes it an exciting time in the fashion world. Rebecca Benoit, commercial casting agent for Stranger, observes, "It's nice to be on the front lines and see companies waking up and figuring it out." But that doesn't mean all the hard work is done. Coleman says, "I'm seeing a lot more models of different ethnic backgrounds, different body types, different genders. Is it enough? Not yet." She also talks about the need for more diversity behind the scenes, including "producers, directors, photographers, stylists, designers—that's where the diversity and inclusion needs to happen."

And it can still be difficult to find certain types of models, such as older ones or ones with visible disabilities. According to Rowena, "It's about filling in all the gaps, every single ethnicity, gender, diversity, culture, background." The doors to the modelling world were closed tightly for far too long, she says. "I think it really just involves opening the doors a little bit and seeing who comes in." v

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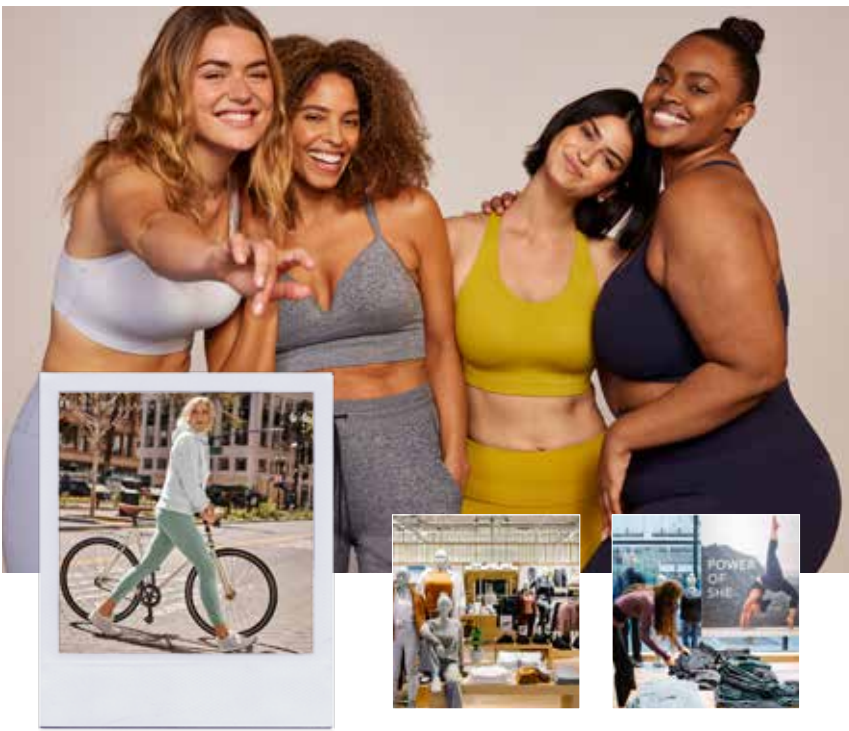
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Hot Shops

The latest and greatest retailers in Vancouver



Athleta

There's a new premium performance lifestyle brand in Canada and, beyond offering beautiful, technical and sustainable apparel (in pretty much every style you can think of), its mission to create and empower a community of active, confident women and girls couldn't come at a better time. Gap Inc. brand Athleta, with a newly opened retail store at Park Royal, isn't just an inclusive clothing line, offering everything from joggers to skinny jeans to print dresses to sports bras to swim shorts (and everything in-between, with 500 or so styles in extended sizing), it's also a sisterhood that's squarely focused on the overall wellness of women. First, a closer look at the clothes: designed by active women who are forever noticing and solving problems that only show when you're in motion, each piece in the Athleta range is relentlessly tested on some of the best athletes in the world—and on the brand's most demanding customers, too. If a fabric doesn't do what Athleta needs it to do, the brand creates its own. Multi-generational, on-trend and stylish, these clothes are designed to take you through your whole day, from workout to work to weekend, and will last for years. (Online tip: search by activity, like travel, yoga, SUP or restore, to hone in on just the right pieces.) Now the really good part: with a belief that our whole is stronger than our parts, and that being active opens doors to a bigger life, Athleta fosters community among women in a variety of ways. Now that its West Van location is open, watch for in-store events like Zumba and mindful journaling, free of charge. And, looking beyond our Canadian borders to the women of the world, Athleta's P.A.C.E. program provides its female factory workers advanced education and life-skills development, plus extra income and leadership roles through Fair Trade. Oh, and did we mention the brand's commitment to Mother Earth? A certified B Corp company, today more than 70 per cent of Athleta product is made from sustainable materials. We've already got our shopping cart queued up. **779 Main St., West Vancouver, 778-851-0217. Athleta.ca** NOA NICHOL

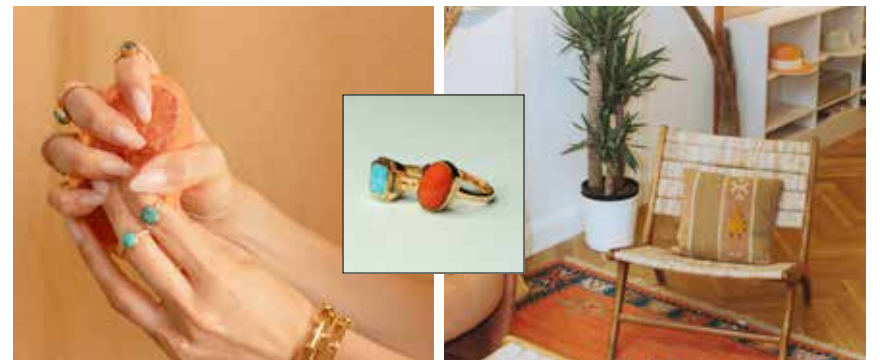


Fable

Though dishes, like dresses, can be purchased online, it's nice to touch them (before you buy them), too. Enter Fable's Gastown shop, where the premium dinnerware maker has set a table (in fact, two) with its coveted ceramic plates, bowls and mugs, stainless-steel flatware and brand-new ion-toughened glassware (insider tip: the tall glasses nest perfectly into their short cousins to save precious storage space in small kitchens). Our favourite find: the serving bowl, in blush pink, feels as good as it looks. **205-332 Water St. Fablehome.co** NOA NICHOL

Kingdom Fine Jewelry

There's a new jeweler on South Granville, and it's not your typical bling boutique. Designed by Studio Roslyn to give major southwestern vibes, Kingdom Fine Jewelry features a studio and lapidary workshop, rare Cartier display showcases from Paris and a cocktail lounge, and is in part a celebration of Navajo jewelry artists from across North America. Find everything from Victorian earrings with pearls and turquoise to Art Deco platinum ruby rings to famous Mexican jewelry; more than a mere bricks-and-mortar, this stunning space offers a rare opportunity to view, learn about and invest in fine and unique, collectable and vintage jewelry from around the world. Plus, in addition to the antique showpieces, co-founders Dylan Lee and Natasha Peck personally design all their in-house collections, with many of the pieces made right here in Vancouver with such rare gemstones as garnet, teal sapphire, Egyptian turquoise and lavender quartz. Insider's tip: their handmade felt hats have a cult following, and Kingdom currently offers the largest selection of premium-quality (read: influencer-approved) cheapeaus in the Lower Mainland. **2956 Granville St., 604-255-0365. Kingdomfinejewelry.com** NOA NICHOL



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



WEEKEND
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Jumping the Runway

Cool designer collaborations are prompting a reimagining of the way we define fashion

BY ALEESHA HARRIS

A designer bag created by a celebrity; a city guide curated by a French brand; a fitness tool featuring the branding of an iconic luxury fashion house—these are just a few of the new and noteworthy creations that are prompting a reimagining of the way we define “fashion”. At the heart of this evolution is collaboration between designers and creatives and also other brands—think, the wildly coveted partnership between Louis Vuitton and the skateboard-lifestyle brand Supreme back in 2017, or the unexpected 2020 pairing of Birkenstock and Valentino Garavani—many the likes of which have never been seen before.

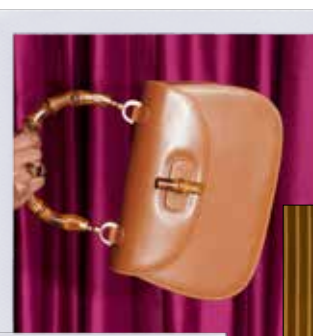
Of course, fashion brands branching out into other realms of consumer goods isn't entirely new. Louis Vuitton's popular *City Guides* book series, which debuted in 1998, sees the company issue recommendations for a variety of establishments including hotels, shopping and nightlife in 15 international hotspots including Paris, Beijing and Rome. This fall, the editions were revised and updated. But it's the increasing frequency and prestige of the collaborations that seem to be pushing the envelope even further.

“Seeing these large fashion houses collaborating has truly disrupted the fashion industry,” says Joseph Tang, fashion director at luxury retailer Holt Renfrew. “Designers have been collaborating with artists for a while now, but having two lead designers of iconic fashion houses has been something we only started to see a few seasons back.”

Tang points to the Spring 2020 Dries Van Noten collection designed alongside Christian Lacroix as one of the first



FENDI BY VERSACE



examples of an unexpected partnership that brought “a revolutionary blend of two creative geniuses” to the runway. “This intersection of design has also been seen within Moncler's Genius collections, where leading designers like Simone Rocha, J.W. Anderson and Pierpaolo Piccioli of Valentino showed their take on the iconic puffer coat,” he adds. “Ultimately, this drives hype and excitement around the brands and also helps large fashion houses reach new audiences and customers for the brands they collaborate with. The unexpected collaborations are always newsworthy collections that drive people into stores and create a sense of buzz.”

One such buzzed-about release occurred on the runway in Milan in September, when the creatives behind the Italian fashion house Fendi, Silvia Venturini Fendi and Kim Jones, created 25 looks for Versace, while Donatella Versace created an equal number of designs for Fendi. They called it Fendace. In October, Fendi's Jones also announced a collaborative collection with Kim Kardashian West's line, Skims. These types of designer mashups are part of a larger industry story that sees brands eager to hold on to consumer interest amid the constant onslaught of newness encountered online and via social media.

“Heritage brands are continuing to think of ways to RE-INVENT & ENGAGE new customers”

“Heritage brands are continuing to think of ways to re-invent and engage new customers,” Tang says. “Within the past two years we've seen a significant increase to fashion collaborations that is being driven by the customer's thirst for something new and special.” Canadian brand Knix, known for its size-inclusive undergarments and activewear, recently teamed up with American designer Anna Sui. The partnership signifies the first foray for the Toronto-headquartered brand into “the fashion space,” with designs including bras, underwear and loungewear separates, each featuring the “bold prints and whimsical wearability” often found in Sui's designs.

Multi-hyphenate entertainer Jennifer Lopez recently teamed up with American fashion and leather goods brand Coach to create her second collab for the company. Including handbags, accessories and ready-to-wear, the creations were said to represent the “hi-lo, relaxed approach to style that Coach and Jennifer share” and were made specifically available to the company's outlet stores. Further pushing the boundaries of fashion, French fashion house Dior has announced a teaming with high-end Italian sporting equipment brand Technogym to release a limited-edition collection in January. The release includes a treadmill, weight bench and other assorted workout accoutrements—including dumbbells and a gym ball—each one featuring the moniker “Christian Dior” along with the Dior star and the five horizontal stripes that are emblematic to the house.

Fashion collaborations such as these undoubtedly resonate on a social media level—the hashtag #fendace has been used nearly 4,500 times on Instagram alone—and it's a level of hype that Tang says often translates strongly into sales offline, too. “We've started to develop a shopping culture where the release date—or drop date—has cultivated a sense of urgency to buy into these collaborations,” he says. “Creating exclusive collaborations apart from the traditional brand offering allows the customer to see the brand in a different lens that validates their relevancy in the market.”

But how the collaboration makes the jump from virtual reality to in-person experience is key to its success. Shoppers, Tang says, want to feel as engaged with the products in person as they do with the online content promoting each limited-edition drop: “We find customers best resonate with these collections at the retail level when we engage them in a fulsome, 360-degree experience, from in-store displays to online animations.” And as the interest in unique, boundary-pushing partnerships continues, shoppers can expect to see more of these mash-ups in the future.

“The fashion industry is always changing and the design talent of today is always challenging the traditional fashion calendar and rules of the houses,” says Tang. “So, we hope to see more innovative ideas and groundbreaking designs come forward.”

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VERSACE BY FENDI



Flax Home

Needing a new work/warehouse space, the Flax Home team moved its operation to a building on East Hastings—a building with a storefront, perfect for a small shop. Find all of Flax's offerings here, in a minimally decorated, grey-toned space where touching and testing (two things you can't do online) are encouraged. We spotted the brand's famous linen sheets, heirloom quilts, light robes and antimicrobial towels, plus the recent collab with designer and pastry chef Jackie Kai Ellis that produced a range of aprons, napkins, dish towels and more. Make a weekday appointment, or drop in weekends. **858 E. Hastings St., 604-423-5810. Shopflaxhome.com** NOA NICHOL

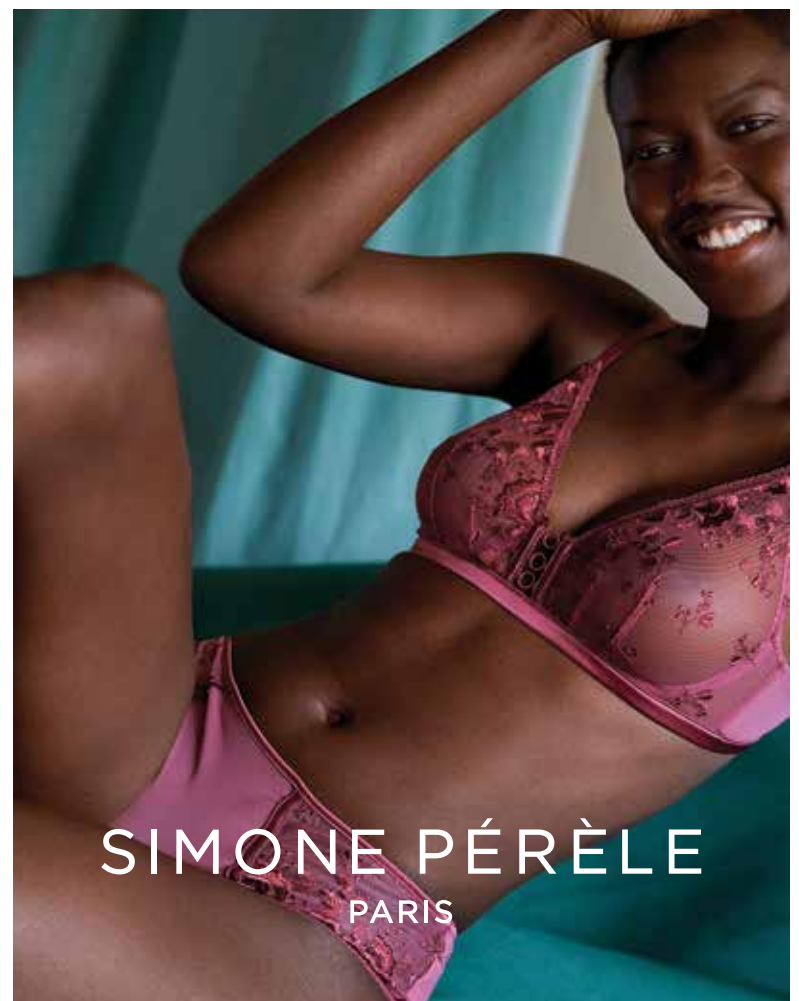
Mine & Yours

Vancouver's original designer consignment boutique is newly occupying two attached storefronts on Davie Street, making high-end secondhand shopping double the fun. From the rose marble cash desk to pink neon in the dressing room, no detail has been spared to make Mine & Yours' Yaletown location ultra luxe. Don't miss the wall of designer handbags (complete with a sliding ladder to reach the highest shelves)—it's truly the stunning focal point of the store—and the racks of carefully edited fashion and footwear. As you browse, keep Mine & Yours' opening motto in mind: more luxury, more space, more Chanel! **418 Davie St., 604-652-2947. Mineand yours.com** NOA NICHOL



Jo Malone

B.C. smells a bit more like the Brits, thanks to two Jo Malone boutiques opened in Pacific Centre and Richmond Centre malls. The latter, newer, houses the brand's best offerings, including its extensive fragrance collections, candles (including travel-size options) and bath and body care. The black-and-beige scheme and hardwood flooring create an airy, welcoming space. Old English toy cars, an adorable Airedale terrier statue and the delightful wafting scent (English pear and freesia, wild bluebell and red roses) make the store look, feel and, we're guessing, smell like a London apartment. Sidle up to the focal point—a marble island displaying Jo Malone's signature fragrances—to experience a one-on-one session with a "scent stylist" to find your fave fragrance and learn to custom-layer several. More reasons to visit IRL: the online-exclusive archive collection is here (smell before you buy), as are gift boxes featuring Vancouver's skyline, ornament-like coloured bottle caps and a free engraving service. **1806-6551 No. 3 Rd., Richmond, 604-279-3449. Jomalone.ca** LOUISA CHAN



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Singular Vision

Today's coolest beauty brands are stripping things back to just one or two products that suit everyone

BY AILEEN LALOR

A few years ago, multi-step beauty routines were everywhere—we went from three steps (cleanse, tone, moisturize) to nine or 10, including masks, pre-serums, emulsions and more. Hair care was getting more complex, too. The term “skinification” took hold—the idea that we ought to be exfoliating and priming our scalps, and nerding out over hyaluronic acid in our conditioners.

Then came Vintner's Daughter, launched in California by April Gargiulo in 2014 with just one product: Active Botanical Serum, a 100 per cent natural multi-beneficial face oil suitable for all skin types, all issues, all ages. It was a challenging start; retailers just didn't know how to merchandise it. “They would say, ‘Call us back when you have five more products,’ and I would say, ‘I don't know if I'm ever going to have another!’” Gargiulo says. “In order to show your commitment to skin care you needed 12 steps or they didn't believe you were a serious brand.”

Then Vintner's Daughter was discovered by stars like Lady Gaga, Tracee Ellis Ross and Gwyneth Paltrow, who described it as “a little serum I love” to *Vogue*. Sales went through the roof—and the multi-step beauty backlash began. “There's something I think—in this wild, crazy world where more is better—in carving out a quiet and thoughtful niche,” Gargiulo says.

Her brand, which now has a whole two products (Active Treatment Essence debuted in 2019), was launched just as self-care was starting to be part of the cultural conversation. “I was a new mom and self-care to me was not spending an hour in the bathroom,” she says. Part of what spurred her to explore beauty was her complex skin; she suffered from cystic acne and found even luxurious products did nothing for her.

In Montreal, Amandine Azran was



having a similar experience. She suffered for years from multiple skin issues like eczema, dermatitis and acne. “I'd taken the approach of trying many different products and they made my problems worse,” she says. “And then I stripped things right down to basics and found I had fewer problems, but my skin was dull and so was my regimen. It wasn't luxurious at all.”

Azran moved to a farm just outside of Toronto and “realized how well my troubled skin reacted well to the simplicity of being outdoors.” In 2019, she and mom Heather launched Amandine Sol Botanicals Inner Glow, a product she felt “would be able to carry so many benefits in one simple step. The ingredients marry together without competing with or overshadowing each other.”

It was a challenging time to launch a single-product brand, “the peak of the Deciem era when people were really into layering up many single-ingredient products,” Azran says. “We needed to explain ... that we were prebuilding all those ingredients into one product and educate them on the value of that.” She sees Inner Glow as a multivitamin, and described her Dream Dew (an essence), launched early this year, as a green smoothie.

Another value that simple regimens have? People are more likely to comply with them. Azran says: “There's no wondering what goes first, last, in-between. I'm a skin-care junkie and I don't have the time or patience to do all those steps, but I still want them to feel luxurious.”

The same philosophy is now being applied in the hair world. “We don't want to add 10 more products to your lineup—and if you're using a quality shampoo and conditioner you shouldn't really need a lot either,” says New Zealand's Jaimee Lup-ton, founder of Monday Haircare. “We are currently expanding our range in a really considered way, with the products our customers most ask for and want to see.”

It's all about quality, agrees Clarissa de Queiroz, founder of The Hair Routine. “The important part ... is not necessarily the number of products we use, rather the quality and purpose of the ingredients in those products. It's important to only focus on the necessary ingredients our hair needs to be healthy to replenish it with water, oil and protein. It's about understanding what the hair needs and when it needs it.”

De Queiroz helps customers understand their hair and streamline their regimes by asking them to complete a simple questionnaire to determine when and how much of a product they need. “The goal is to be able to leave your house with fresh hair without worrying about styling it,” Queiroz explains. “It's about having beautiful and healthy hair every day and not just for an occasion.”

But, if you're basing your approach on not having too many products in your range, how do you expand and grow your business? Azran says she doesn't have more skin care in the pipeline because the plan for growth is to continue to make products that are meaningful, effective and simple—though she envisages innovation in other areas where she can make simple products more luxe and beautiful. “Maybe there'll be a point when there are no more products to make,” she says.

It's the same for Gargiulo. “We will not be doing serums for mature skin or dark skin or acne-prone skin. We make a serum that is for skin, and all our skin thrives off the same nutrients,” she says. And she's not looking to the beauty industry for inspiration as she builds her brand. “I think of Brunello Cucinelli as a brand that has gone its own way and is so steadfast in its commitment to its purpose. Or old family wineries that are passed down from generation to generation and uphold the same philosophy. We are going for that—being a heritage brand, with formulas that are passed from mom to daughter, sister to sister, friend to friend, because they'll always be able to communicate with skin at a deep level.”

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New Noshes

Where and what to eat this month

Sebastian & Co.

There's meat. And then there's Sebastian & Co. Fine Meats. Canada's first and only butcher shop with an upscale meat locker and custom dry-aging room has opened location No. 2 in downtown Vancouver. The discerning carnivore in us all couldn't be happier. Or hungrier. Much like the boutique liquor lockers in London, Paris and New York, Sebastian & Co. allows customers to store and age their meat in a carefully controlled environment with precise temperature and humidity levels. When a steak or roast is needed, the butcher cuts whatever the customer chooses and hands over a delightfully old-school, neatly-wrapped-in-butcher-paper parcel of prime rib roast, Porterhouse, T-bone steak, New York or ribeye. The remaining rib or loin will be returned to its reserved position in the dry-aging room, where naturally occurring enzymes in the meat continue to break down tougher muscle fibres and connective tissue. The result is tender and flavourful meat with rich beefy tones; no supermarket meat counter can come close to this. Owner Sebastian Cortez immigrated from Chile in 1999, worked for Toronto chef Jamie Kennedy, then moved out to Vancouver as a trained professional chef-turned-butcher. Cortez opened his first butcher shop in West Vancouver's Dundarave Village in 2007, and now with his second location continues to specialize in dry-aged beef including Wagyu, plus wild game, poultry and more. Be sure and try his charcoal rub, jars of house-made foie gras you'll want to eat by the spoonful, plus charcuterie and cheeses. Not just a butcher shop, but a culinary experience. **1299 Howe St., 604-564-9393. Sebastianandco.ca** CATHERINE DUNWOODY



PHOTO: STASIA GARRAWAY



Alimentaria Mexicana & El Caminero

When a restaurant bothers to source its Mexican corn from not one, not two, but 32 different community farmers across the state of Oaxaca, you know you've struck culinary gold. At the excellent Alimentaria Mexicana, in the middle of Granville Island, that carefully sourced heirloom corn is milled to create golden tortillas, hearty sopes and crisp multicoloured tostadas, all with distinct flavours. These recipes are accentuated with toppings and fillings, of course: slow-cooked braised-beef birria tacos, sopes with bone marrow and refried beans (a Tijuana classic) and locally smoked salmon-topped tostadas doused with cucumber crema. Vegetarians, too, will be satiated by inventive dishes like heirloom beet ceviche and grilled cactus with halloumi and charred tomatillo salsa. Drooling yet? These bright, bold, and spicy flavours will transport you straight to Oaxaca—there's no shortage of lime, cilantro and chile to be found here—with an unmistakable West Coast flair. As for the vibe? Cool as can be. Sit in the colourful dining room, under a thatched umbrella on the large patio, or simply order fresh tacos and churros to-go from the side take-out window, El Caminero. Don't leave the premises without a stop at the mercado in the back, which sells fine Mexican imports like artisan-made bowls, tortilla presses and spices galore. **1596 Johnston St., 236-521-8440. Alimentariamexicana.com** KATIE NANTON

Winterlust

Winterlust, the beloved seasonal dome dining experience at H Tasting Lounge, has returned for the winter season. Featuring five brand-new heated Alpine-inspired domes set aglow on HTL's waterfront patio, Winterlust is an unrivalled picture of elegance in Coal Harbour. As the colours of autumn fade, the enhanced domes deliver a divine private-dining space from which to gaze at the stars and take in the snow-capped North Shore Mountains. Each spacious dome boasts panoramic glass panelling bound by an intricately designed wooden framework. Inside, sheepskin throws, faux-fur pillows and woodland-inspired décor add to the Nordic charm. These new-and-improved domes are also well-equipped for long winter nights, with heaters, fresh-air circulation and independent sound systems. Sliding glass doors and a crescent-shaped sitting area ensure a comfortable atmosphere for six to eight guests. Retreat to Winterlust for an enchanting escape and discover these luxurious new domes right through to winter 2022. **1601 Bayshore Dr., 604-691-6962. Htastinglounge.com** NOA NICHOL



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Follow the Spice Trail

Savour the flavours of Surrey

BY NOA NICHOL

Think the drive from Vancouver (or elsewhere in the Lower Mainland) out to Surrey for a meal isn't worth the trouble? Think again. The city, which is multicultural to its core and set to become B.C.'s largest municipality any day now, is a place to feast, and feast well, with restaurants (from so-called mom-and-pop shops to modern mid-range to fine dining) you simply won't find anywhere else. And, though it may best be known for its South Asian offerings, eateries with Latino, Vietnamese and Caribbean roots are widely available, too—and authentically delicious, to boot. The best way to navigate Surrey's many flavourful options? The Spice Trail, with nearly 30 current members and at least 30 more coming on board soon (all are listed on Discover Surrey's website, and can be searched by neighbourhood or by cuisine). From arepas to banh mi to naan, we came, we ate—and we'll be back for seconds soon. Spicetrailsurreybc.com



A TASTE OF SPICE



AFGHAN KITCHEN

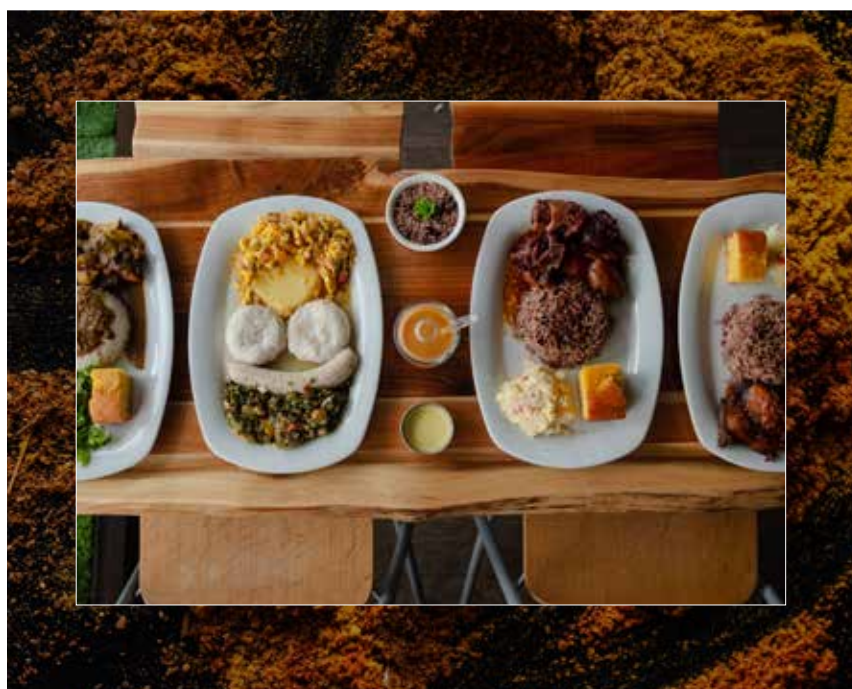
"Mum's recipes" make up this restaurant's menu, with food so good, it was featured on the Food Network's *You Gotta Eat Here!* Be like host John Catucci and try the mantu: steamed minced beef dumplings topped with split peas, tomato sauce and yogurt.

CHACHA'S TANDOOR & GRILL

Set to become a popular franchise, grab a bottle of Thums Up, a can of White Claw or a thick, booze-free mango mimosa and get the Delhi-style gol gappay shots: puffed crackers stuffed with potatoes, chickpeas and chutneys, downed with a shot of mint water.

CLOVE

If you want to photograph your food before you eat it, this is the place to go. Clove serves elegant, elevated Indian cuisine in a stunning setting. Try the



avocado and chickpea chaat: a palate-cleansing combo of sweet, salty, crunchy, spicy and savoury ingredients.

DI REGGAE CAFE

If you missed your Jamaican vacation this year, restaurateur Richie Husset has your ticket. Keeping real Caribbean cuisine alive, he serves up perfectly golden Jamaican patties, rice and peas, oxtail, curry goat and rum cake that taste, well, just like home.

GUACAMOLE MEXICAN GRILL

This all-female kitchen serves up savoury tamales, hearty tortilla soup, slow-cooked birria beef and Salvadoran pupusas: corn tortillas stuffed with cheese, chicken, chorizo and other delights that come served with pickled cabbage and red salsa.

GULBERG TANDOOR

Though you can dine in this Halal restaurant, in-the-know customers head straight for the freezer to grab pre-made frozen meals under the owners' Barakah Eats label, including butter chicken, channa masala and veggie biryani with varying levels of spice to heat and serve at home.

KERALA KITCHEN

Food from India's coastal southern state of Kerala is the mainstay here, so expect lots of coconut-based dishes. Order the mammoth crispy plain dosa with coconut chutney and the soupy, silky, sumptuous Kerala vegetable curry.

K.G COFFEE & BANH MI

Cash only, this unassuming strip-mall café doubles as a local hangout for casual card players. Ask for a bursting-with-flavour bahn mi sandwich on some of the lightest, fluffiest baguette bread we've ever tasted. Wash it down with a soursop or avocado smoothie.

MEKS DELIGHT

At this Malaysian and Thai restaurant, regulars know to order the red curry, with chicken, onion, peppers, bamboo shoots, basil and lime leaves, the four-piece curry puff and, to drink, The Tarik—pulled tea, made from a mixture that's poured back and forth repeatedly between two vessels from a height, giving it a thick, frothy top.

MR. TONKATSU

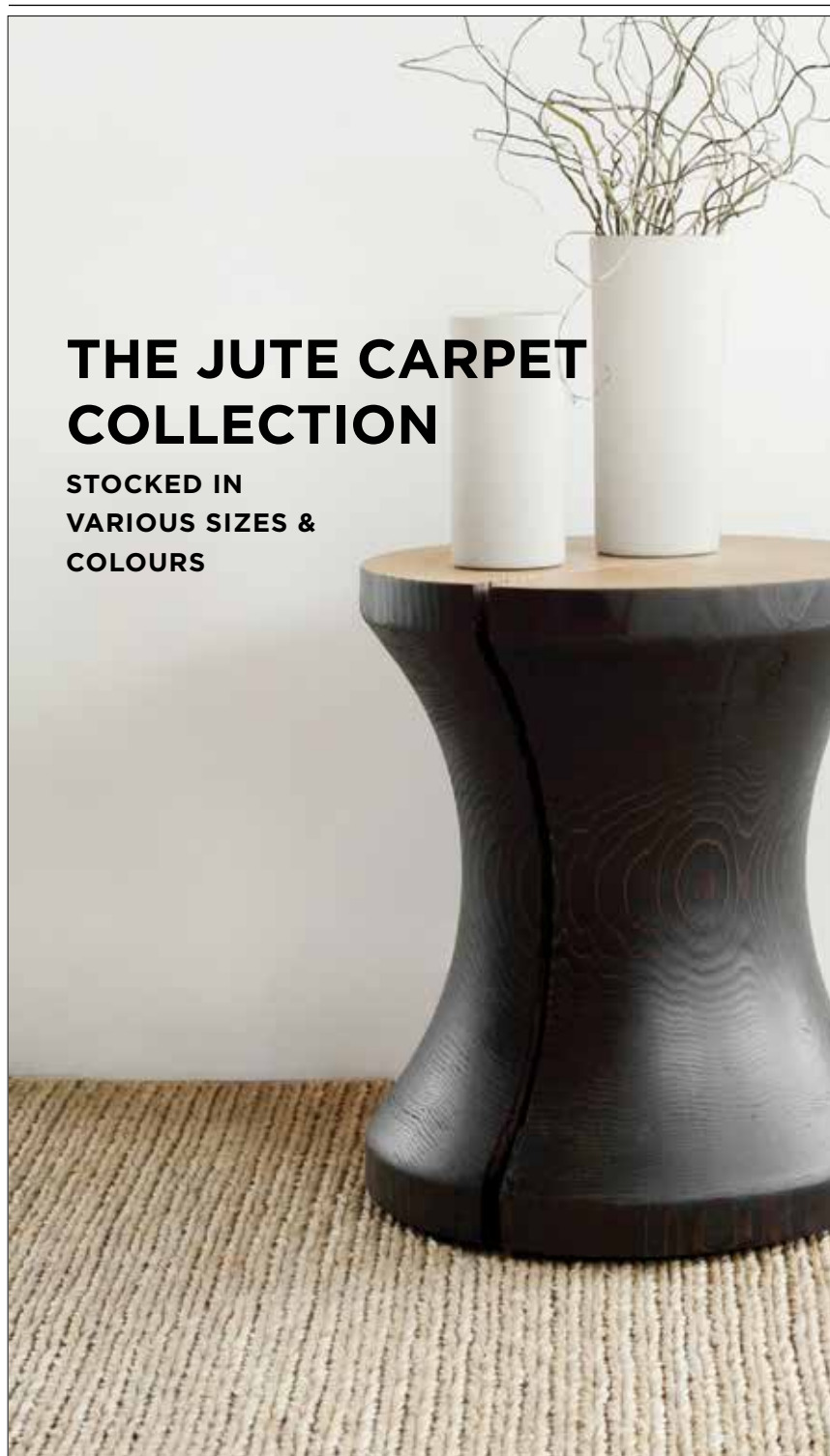
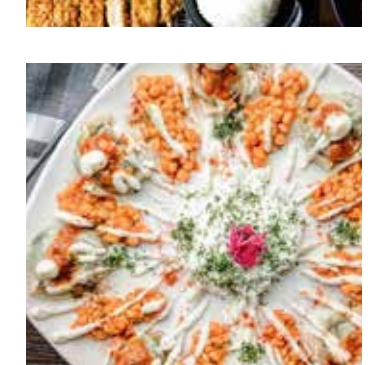
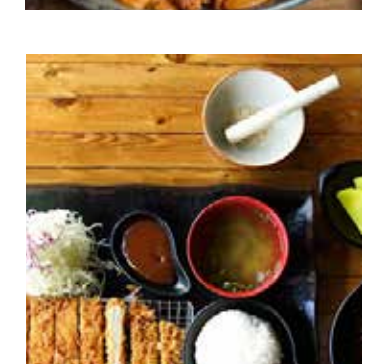
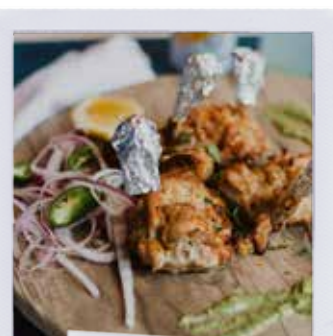
If you're crazy about katsu—breaded and deep-fried pork, chicken or shrimp—this Japanese restaurant is a must. You may even get to make your own condiment, using a mortar and pestle to grind toasted sesame seeds at your table into a paste and then adding your creation to a provided dipping sauce.

SPICE OF NEPAL

From staple foods like dal bhat (rice and lentils) and momo (dumplings, 28 types of them in total) to fusion-style dishes (butter chicken poutine, anyone?) and oodles of noodles, this hidden gem is well worth seeking out.

UNION LATINO'S FOOD

The arepas at this unassuming eatery are out of this world (and just \$4 apiece), but the best plan is to order the tray paisa, with beans, rice, beef, sausage, pork rind, egg, avocado, ripe plantain and arepas; it's Colombia's national dish.



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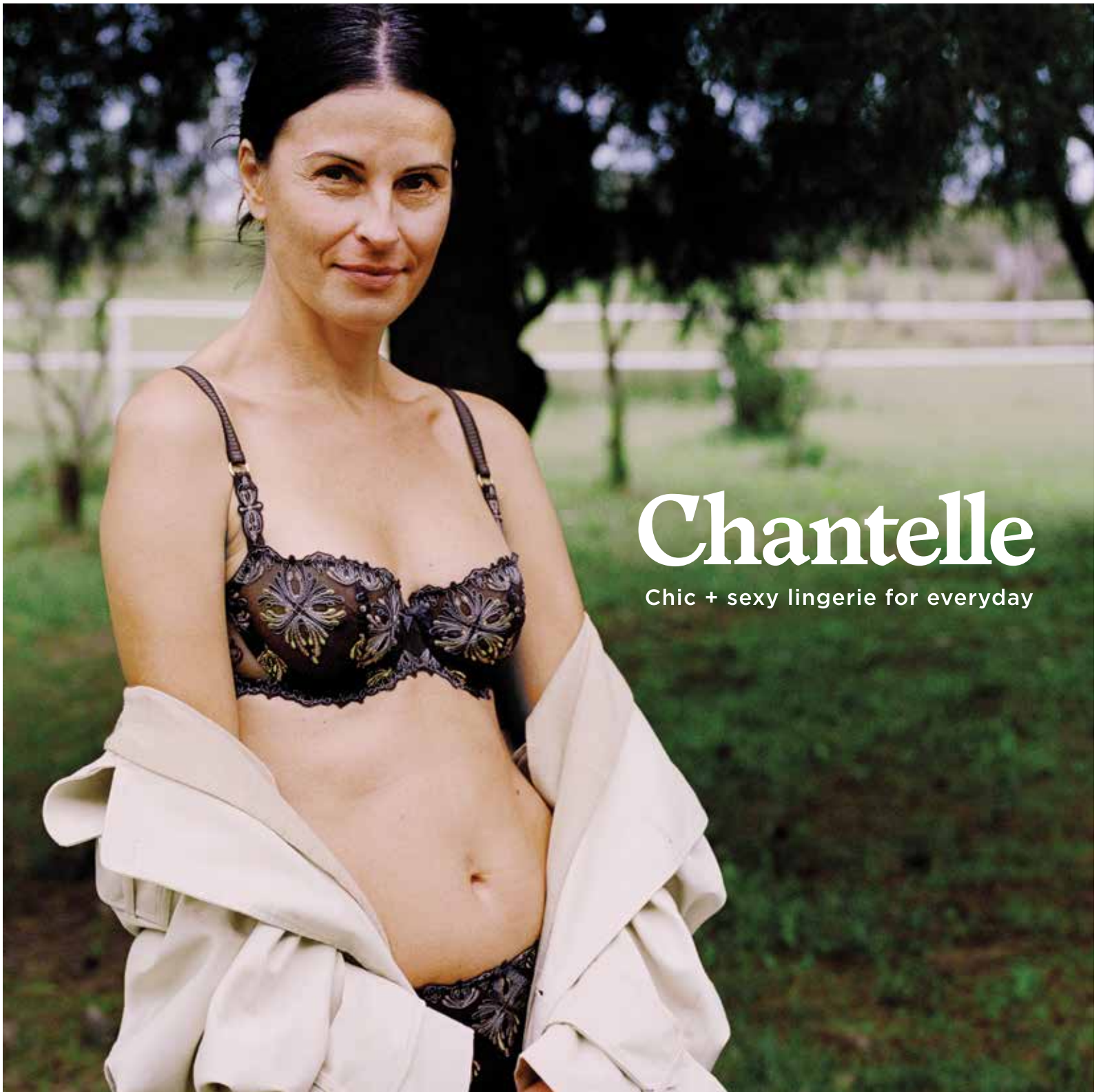
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Savour the Flavours of the Surrey Spice Trail

Surrey's Spice Trail showcases over 25 multicultural restaurants ranging from modern dining rooms to neighbourhood take-out favourites.

With so many choices, do you go with a familiar favourite like Indian, Thai, or Mexican? Or do you try something a little off the beaten path like Nepalese, Jamaican, or Afghan? The Surrey Spice Trail is both an interactive map that helps you find out more about each restaurant and a "foodie guide" to help you explore the flavours, people, and experiences that inspire Greater Vancouver's most diverse dining scene!

Book a self-guided South Surrey Spice Trail Tour or a 'Stay & Dine' package at one of Surrey's hotels and savour the flavours of Surrey today!



SpiceTrailSurreyBC.com



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