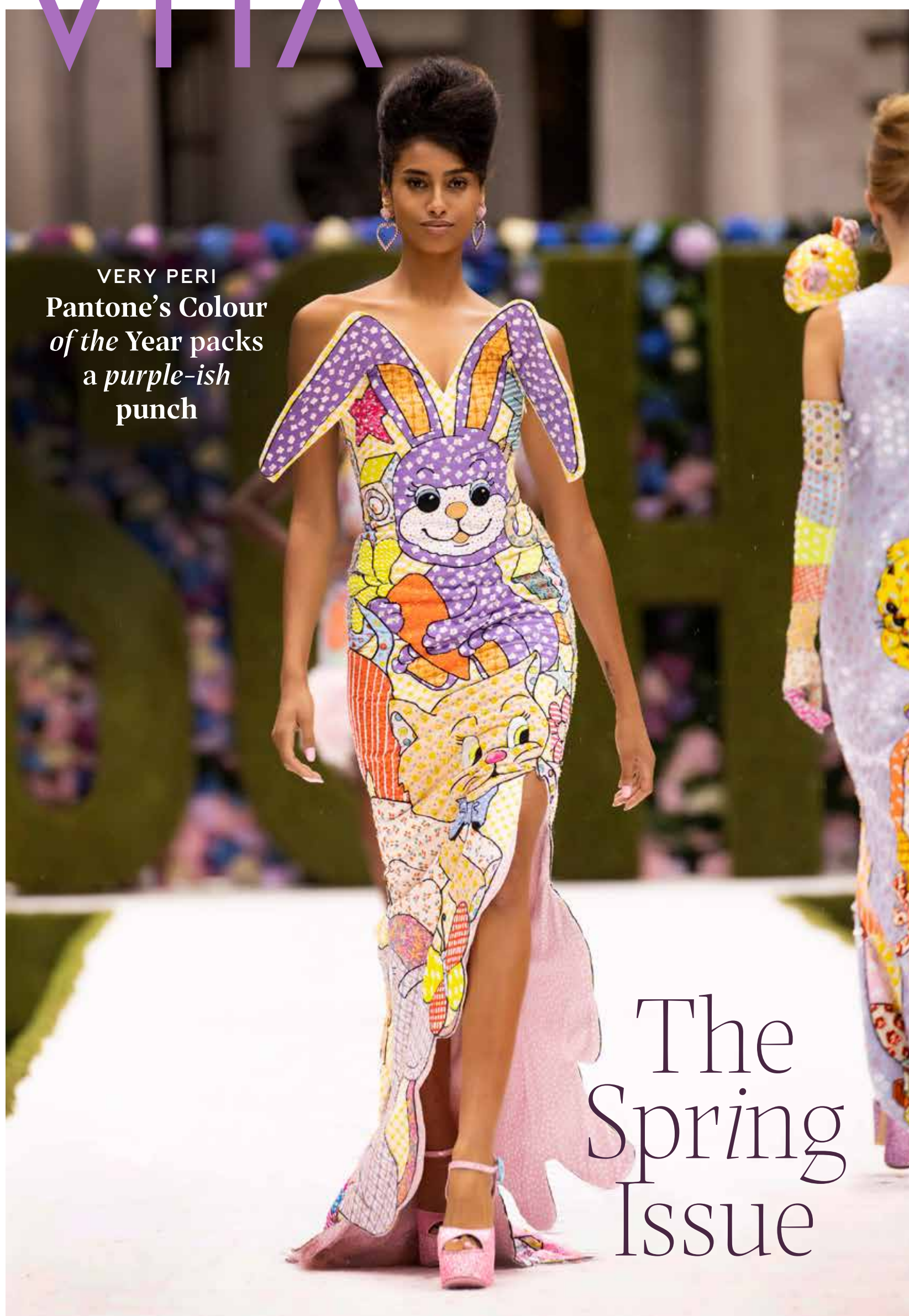


Lifestyle content you care about from *Vitadaily.ca*

VITA

VERY PERI
Pantone's Colour
of the Year packs
a purple-ish
punch

The
Spring
IssueINSIDE *the* ISSUE

BEAUTY London Calling *Now in Canada*, U.K.-based Trinny London is one of Europe's fastest-growing *beauty brands*

HEALTH Skin Deeper Understanding *collagen*—the key to *healthy skin, joints and bones*

WELLNESS Hot & Cold Sauna culture and cold exposures are next on the *wellness frontier*

WHISKY Night Cap A wander *in the wild* inspires an *innovative new Canadian drink*

Skin's deep.

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Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

Working on this issue of *VITA* Toronto gave us a chance to turn our thoughts away from a pandemic-heavy winter and toward sunnier, spring-ier times. As restrictions ease across the country, we opted to make wellness our focus this quarter, with our featured influencer, Roxy Earle, giving us the scoop on her new app, Ana, which aims to help women feel happier, healthier and more confident. Inside, we report on the benefits of collagen, sauna culture, cold exposures and mushroom-based skincare. We've also got an exclusive interview with Trinny Woodall, the dynamic founder of a British beauty brand whose Canadian debut is making a big splash. And, speaking of splashes, don't miss our whisky feature (it, too, has a mushroom connection) and our tribute to Pantone's Very Peri colour pick for the year. Enjoy!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Speaking of spring (and re-openings), who wouldn't want to step out this season in a pair of Mach & Mach pumps, whose latest collection is only at Nordstrom. [Nordstrom.ca](#)

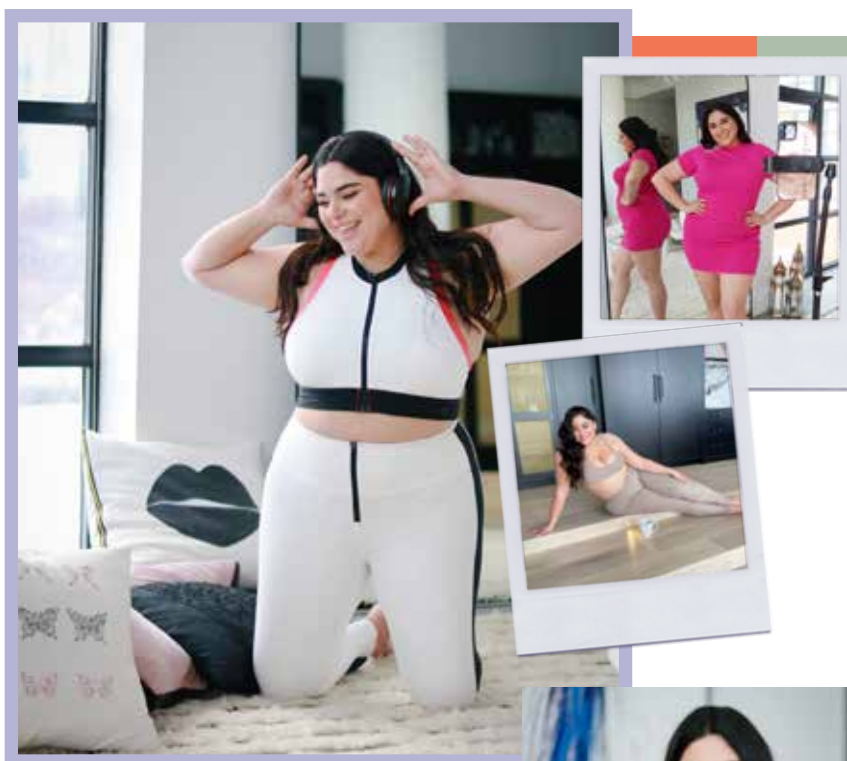
Our featured influencer this spring is Roxy Earle—a confidence guru, body activist and TV star whose latest launch, the Ana app, aims to inspire women to feel happier, healthier and more confident.

Roxy Earle

@LUXURIOUSROXY
@THEANAAPP

Hi Roxy! Tell us about your newly launched Ana app.

Ana was born out of my journey to transform my mind, body and soul over the last few years. I was tired of waking up not feeling my best, and the “aha” moment for my health was when I started tuning into my cycles and hormones and the effect that had on how I felt mentally. All of this was brought into focus by the mental-health crisis women were facing during the pandemic and the need for tools that would help them take back their happiness and confidence. Ana's technology identifies patterns in a woman's mindset and physical feelings to better predict how she will feel each week. This, combined with the medical expertise of how our hormones change throughout our cycle, helps Ana to understand what practices and insights



“The most beautiful thing you can be is yourself! And of course, #MySizeRox”



a woman needs each day. For example, Ana can help a woman understand that, each month, she may see a dip in energy or feel irritable around the same time, and then provide her with mental-wellness practices to help combat those feelings.

How do you think having a better understanding of the link between our physical and mental wellbeing can benefit us overall?

Traditionally these are two sides of wellness that never intersect—physical and mental—but how can we tell a woman to live her best life if she is not happy in her heart and confident in her mind? She can only truly be healthy when her mind matches her physical wellness.

What's your personal style, beauty and wellness mantra?

The most beautiful thing you can be is yourself! And of course, #MySizeRox.

Spring is coming! What's your favourite thing about the season?

As winter thaws it gives us the opportunity to melt away the stress of the season and brings on a new sense of excitement and joy for warmer days—I love that about the change in seasons.

THE MAKING OF THE
Spring Issue

No. 02 ————— 2022

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very peri

Pantone's *Colour of the Year* packs a purple-ish periwinkle punch

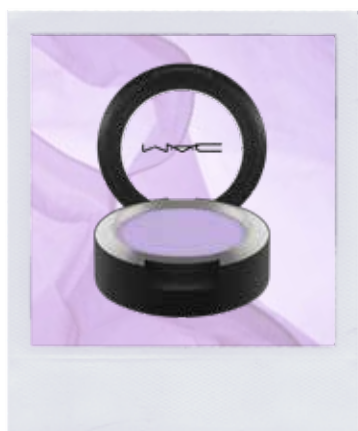


- 1. MINICHELLO EARRINGS, \$1,625** These tanzanite and diamond drop earrings are pear shaped and periwinkle perfect. Minichellojewellers.com
- 2. WEEKEND MAX MARA SWEATER, \$595** Pure cashmere, pure weekenders vibes. Ca.maxmara.com
- 3. AMINA MUADDI SLIDE, \$1,205** This strappy sandal embellished with rainbow-hued crystals looks minimalist yet is majorly impactful. Nordstrom.ca
- 4. ALEXANDER MCQUEEN SCARF, \$310** Featuring a repeating skull print, this rectangular scarf is made from soft modal and finished with frayed edges. Holtrenfrew.com
- 5. JEFFREY CAMPBELL LOAFER, \$146** Colour blocking brings charming style to this glossy, tasselled loafer. Nordstrom.ca
- 6. STONEY CLOVER LANE POUCH, \$285** This pouch is saying what we all want to be doing right now. Holtrenfrew.com
- 7. DOLCE & GABBANA SHIRT & SKIRT, \$1,330 & \$1,670** Welcome spring in this wisteria-print poplin shirt and high-waist pencil skirt. Dolcegabbana.com
- 8. SWAROVSKI NECKLACE, \$850** Designed with a row of violet octagon-cut crystals, an additional insert gives this Millennia necklace optional extra length. Swarovski.com
- 9. DIOR EYESHADOW PALETTE, \$75** 5 Couleurs eyeshadows smooth and soften lids while delivering rich, radiant colour. Dior.com
- 10. WEEKEND MAX MARA TRENCH COAT, \$860** Make spring showers super stylish with this water-repellent gabardine trench coat, double breasted, lined and oh-so-chic. Ca.maxmara.com
- 11. SISLEY PARIS PRIMER, \$125** Helps to create a perfect, even base with just one swipe. Nordstrom.ca
- 12. MICHAEL HILL RING, \$269** Update your style with this amethyst ring, set in yellow gold. Michaelhill.ca
- 13. CLARINS LIP COMFORT OIL SHIMMER, \$28** In Purple Rain, this lippy offers 3-D shine. Clarins.ca
- 14. MUGLER ANGEL EDT, \$145** Floral, fruity and made in France. Thebay.com
- 15. THEMOIRE CLUTCH BAG, \$675** A testament to its name, meaning "life" in Greek, the Bios bag is a versatile everyday accessory. Holtrenfrew.com
- 16. NEW BALANCE SNEAKERS, \$130** The 327 sneaker boldly reshapes classic design elements from the 1970s with a contemporary outlook. Newbalance.ca
- 17. ALEESHA HARRIS' IT BAG** Said to combine "simplicity and comfort," the Chanel 22 features an oversized shape and two leather-woven chain shoulder straps, with a gold Chanel Paris medallion adding an extra touch to the relaxed design. Available in three sizes, the bag represents a continuation of the house's obsession with numerology. The No. 22 fragrance, the second perfume release for Chanel, debuted in 1922; the popular handbag design Chanel 19 did so in 2019; and now, this new satchel bears its release year in its name, too. Chanel.com



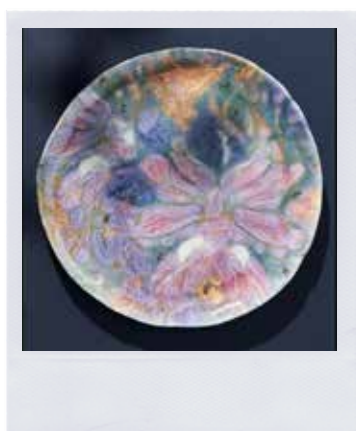
NOA'S PICK

"It's always a good time for tea. Canadian brand La Bonne Fille offers a unique Earl Grey (from \$18) that's a blend of rich, malty black tea enhanced with bergamot and delectably sweet, creamy notes." Labonnefilletea.com



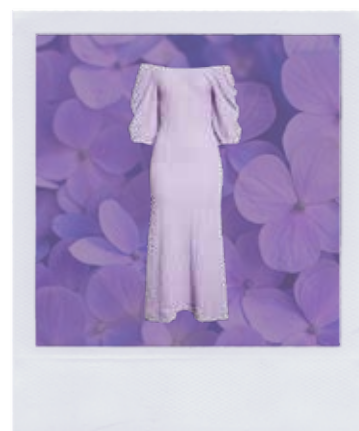
VICKI'S PICK

"Add a pastel touch to your look with MAC Powder Kiss eyeshadow in Such A Tulle (\$27), the perfect light periwinkle. The pressed powder can be worn as a pop of colour or an all-over lid shade." Maccosmetics.ca



MADISON'S PICK

"When looking to incorporate new colours into your home, I'm a fan of starting with small-but-impactful pieces. These whimsical stoneware plates (\$20) are sure to make an artistic statement." Anthropologie.com



LYNDI'S PICK

"With restrictions easing up, this Stine Goya Garance dress will be perfect for many upcoming occasions. It features a subtle textured fabric in the perfect Very Peri shade of the season." Int.stinegoya.com

London Calling

U.K.-based Trinny London is one of Europe's fastest-growing beauty brands

BY AILEEN LALOR



We don't know precisely how many beauty brands are launched every year but, if our heaving inboxes are anything to judge by, it's a lot. It takes nous, creativity and guts to dive into that market, and all that plus a bit of luck to come up swimming. Luckily, Trinny Woodall has those in abundance.

Woodall founded her direct-to-consumer makeup brand, Trinny London, in 2017. Now it's valued at around \$440M and sold in hundreds of countries. Why do customers love it? It's flexible and time-saving—products tend to be multi-purpose, such as lip and cheek colour or a tinted serum rammed full of skincare benefits. It's easy to select the things you like, thanks to the Match2Me online profiling tool and virtual makeup appointments. And the products are really, really good.

Woodall is probably best known in her native U.K. for fashion; for years she and Susannah Constantine hosted a makeover show, *What Not to Wear*, during which they would take women who'd lost confidence in their style and give them a new wardrobe and attitude. But beauty was her first love. "I had bad acne and was always on a quest to find things to cover it; I had a 10-year relationship with fake tan," she explains on a video call from London. "Even when I went on to work and do makeover shows, what I found with women around the world was that they felt makeup was as much an issue as clothing because they didn't know how to start with it or how to dial it down. I met so many women who maybe were wearing the makeup they had started to use when they felt the most sexually confident. Wind it on 20 years and they're still doing the same thing because that's their safe choice, but things have changed for them and perhaps they need something different."

Mixing up her own beauty products had long been a pastime for Woodall. "I could never find the right colours so I would mush things together and put them in pots," she says. Entrepreneurship was also a longstanding theme: her first venture, when she was 16, was inspired by Princess Diana's style. She created big hair bows and sold them to department store Harvey Nichols. However, Woodall says, "I would have a great passion for an idea and then things would peter out."

Her latest foray is into skincare. In February, the brand announced a new collection, starting with two Trinny London cleansers, *Be Your Best* and *Better Off*, both formulated with highly active ingredients and the former including a muslin cloth—with the promise of more to come. But beyond new launches, the thing that keeps Woodall going now is the knowledge she's helping women via her Trinny Tribe, a global community that began organically on social media. "They post pictures and compliment each other and it was a third-party thing, I didn't start it," says Woodall. "That's the epitome of what we are as a brand: no one should be excluded. We used to call it the invisible woman. I'm 58 and don't feel invisible but there are many women that do."

Woodall believes her brand is a natural graduation for women who have outgrown Glossier; her target market is aged 35 to 70, though she has many customers both older and younger. "We talk to women in a very real way. We don't pretend to be someone else—be a movie star, filter your face," she says. "I don't want to be told how to be someone else, I want to be me."



And how does she suggest other women get that confidence in their own appearance? "If you're menopausal, think about the sugar in your life because it can aggravate and age your skin more quickly," she says. "If you have clothes and you don't know how to wear them, separate your clothes onto two rails: what you wear when you feel confident and what you wear when you're vegging out. Then make sure you only keep the clothes that you feel good in, even if no one else will see you. Old tired jogging pants? Chuck them out."

When it comes to makeup, she suggests starting with brows, and never forgetting blusher because it brings joy to your face; in fact, her overall message is about making sure the way you look brings you joy. "It's about giving women refined choices in makeup that is easy to apply, in flattering colours that will suit the skin, hair and eyes," she says. "There is joy in rediscovering or discovering for the first time how life-changing the right makeup can be." Trinnylondon.com



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More Than Skin Deep

Understanding collagen—the key to healthy skin, joints and bones

BY SHERI RADFORD

It's not your imagination: you have been hearing more about collagen lately. But what is it? Should you be taking it? How? We aim to clear up some of the confusion.

"Most people don't know that, without collagen, we wouldn't be able to form bones, cartilage or skin," says biochemist Jean-Yves Leroux, president and co-CEO of Medelys, a Quebec company that makes natural health products. "There are 28 types of collagens in our bodies, each with various functions. Overall, their role is structural, mechanical and responsible for making our systems, organs and tissues run smoothly."

Andrea Pierce-Ghafoor trained as a dietician, and now works as director of insights and innovation at Genuine Health. She says of collagen, "It's the most abundant protein in your entire body." It's found in skin, muscles, tendons, cartilage, bones, organs, teeth, and nails. Among the reasons everyone needs collagen, she lists: "to build up your joints, to increase elasticity of your skin and your hair and your nails. We're continuing to find new reasons why it's so important."

So far, so good. But there is a downside—for anyone over age 20, at least. According to Jenna Mangan, a certified nutritional practitioner at CanPrev Natural Health Products, "Somewhere around our mid-20s our bodies break down collagen faster than we make it. Specifically for women, this catabolic process increases around the menopause age, which is usually where we detect more signs of collagen loss." She pinpoints the commonly blamed culprits: "sun damage, poor diet, nutrition, stress, overexercise—but it really comes down to the chronological, inevitable aging process."

As collagen production slows, skin starts to sag, muscles ache, gastrointestinal issues occur, muscle mass decreases and tendons and ligaments stiffen. Certain foods can help—think bone broth, chicken, and fish with the skin left on. But most experts agree: it's practically impossible to get enough collagen through diet alone, which is where supplements come in.

"When you look at the collagen out there, most of the time it has been hydrolyzed into peptides, and that makes it more bioavailable," Mangan explains. "A lot of research has been done on the size of the peptides, [looking at] their interaction to the receptors on our cells for triggering collagen synthesis at different areas in the body." In other words, different peptide sizes target different areas of concern, such as joint cartilage tissue or the skin's fibroblast cells.

Some studies demonstrate that collagen peptides ranging from two to five kilodaltons (kDa), stimulate different cells of our connective tissue (fibroblasts, chondrocytes, osteoblasts and tendon cells, or tenocytes) to influence more collagen production within our skin and muscle, at our joints, bones, tendons, and ligaments. According to Mangan, it's common to see both marine and bovine peptides in small kilodalton sizes for better targeting fibroblasts cells at the skin, helping to reduce visible wrinkles and aging lines.

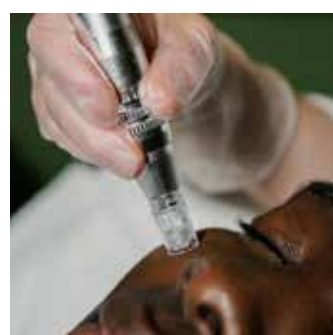
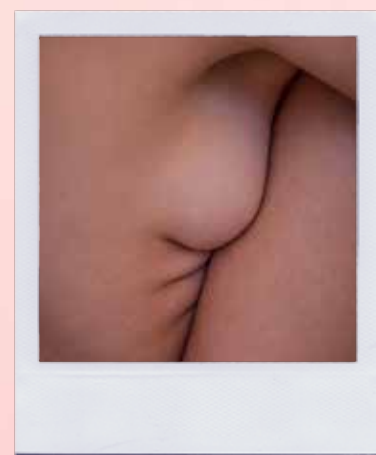
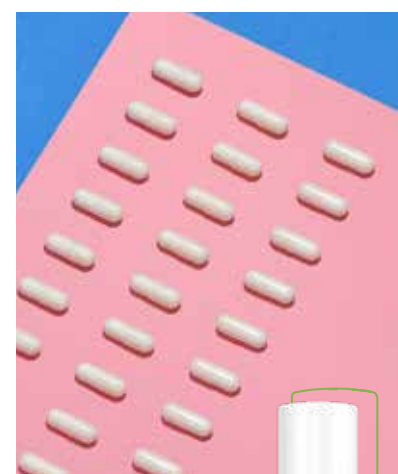
Consider, too, the fact that these collagen supplements come from different sources. "Typically, collagen peptides are extracted from bovine [cow], porcine [pig] or marine [fish] sources," she says. "Unless you have an allergy to one of these or choose not to eat it for some reason, any of these sources is a great choice, since the peptide sequences are very similar."

CanPrev's collagen peptides are mostly bovine-derived. "Since we're as concerned as you are about what goes into your body, our sources are pasture-raised, grass-fed and GMO-free," says Mangan. "We obtain these peptides by finely breaking down whole protein collagen fibres into very small amino acid chains. These short chains are further sifted and isolated into different bioactive peptides. CanPrev's collagen peptides are characterized not only by their small size and precise sequencing but by excellent cold-water solubility. They dissolve well in any beverage while remaining highly bioavailable and easily absorbed."

Besides powder, collagen supplements also come in liquid or pill form. The key is to find one that works for your lifestyle,



"Typically, collagen peptides are extracted from bovine [cow], porcine [pig] or marine [fish] sources. Unless you have an allergy to one of these or choose not to eat it for some reason, any of these sources is a great choice, since the peptide sequences are very similar"



therapy to stimulate collagen production, resulting in skin that looks and feels rejuvenated. Other ways to give your body's natural collagen a little help include topical formulations such as Graydon's Fullmoon Serum. It includes African mahogany bark extract, which has been shown to enhance collagen production.

Leroux, ever the biochemist, clarifies how collagen applied externally differs from that taken internally: "When applied topically, it will stimulate localized collagen production but is more limited since peptides and amino acids don't enter the skin as efficiently as in the gut."

Much is yet to be learned about collagen. Mangan says, "There's lots of emerging research out there on wound healing, digestive disturbances and even Alzheimer's disease, which is quite fascinating." One thing the scientists do seem to agree on, though, is that collagen is the closest thing we've found (so far) to a fountain of youth. Collagen.ca

Hot & Cold

Sauna culture and cold exposures are next on the wellness frontier

BY LAUREN WALKER-LEE

Health and wellness are having a bit of a re-brand, and their PR people are doing a great job. Self-care hashtags dominate our social feeds and (perhaps accelerated by the pandemic?) people have reclaimed their need for balance and well-being. Mindfulness practices, breathwork, holistic modalities and the most tailored of digital fitness options have been on a steep and steady incline for the past few years—not to mention celery juice and slugging trending on TikTok.

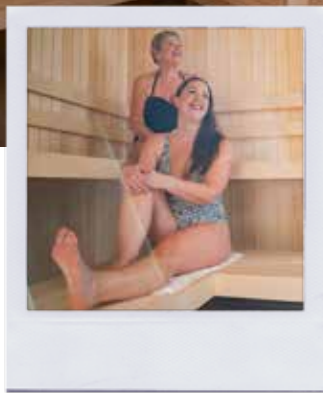
Certainly, wellness and its adjacent industries are growing fast, answering the demand of an equally growing (and curious) community; things once reserved for celebs or simply seen as “hippie dippy” are entering the mainstream of our wellness consciousness, and where and how we spend our time is getting a total makeover. Case in point: Nordic sauna rituals, with a focus on a hot-cold-relax-repeat ritual, are coming in hot, and to a city near you, with no less than three new openings of such facilities across the country in recent months, including Ritual Nordic Spa in downtown Victoria, B.C. According to Ritual founder Marci Hotsenpiller, the opportunity to create a unique urban sauna experience where none existed was a no-brainer—and a personal matter.

“I started doing cold plunges in the ocean but missed the heat of a sauna nearby to go with it,” Hotsenpiller says. “I also knew a lot of women in Victoria who would drive hours just to visit a day spa with a steam room and a pool. The lightbulb went on when I heard about smaller, modern, urban sauna houses and bathhouses being built in cities like Venice Beach, Portland, Brooklyn and even Calgary. I also noticed how quickly people were getting into cold plunge as a recovery practice for sports or dance. It went from being freaky—standing in the ocean or a bucket of ice water—to being an accepted thing. So, designing a modern space that had hot saunas, a cold plunge, a steam room, massage and a café became my mission.”

The motivation was similar for Eric Harkonen, whose Vettä Nordic Spa arrived to the highlands of Horseshoe Valley in early 2022, not far from the Ontario outpost of the famous Scandinave Spa. Harkonen, who has a passion for Finland, his Finnish heritage and the Finnish experience, says, “I realized people need this in our society, that recharging, rejuvenating, connection. And being that there was only one other Nordic spa in Ontario at that time, I was intrigued. It’s an amazing opportunity, and it’s so needed, especially since Covid.”

The traditional Nordic sauna ritual involves a circuit of hot and cold followed by rest. At Scandinave, with four Canadian locations, the experience of the rejuvenating Scandinavian baths is bolstered with various options for your own ritual, including a eucalyptus steam, Finnish wood-burning or dry sauna, cold plunge and Nordic waterfalls, and ending with relaxation by a fire pit or solarium. “The cycle of hot-cold-relax is proven to both energize and rest the body, while actively promoting the release of endorphins, also known as the wellbeing hormones,” explains Michelle Leroux, sales and marketing manager at Scandinave Whistler. “A cycle of hot-cold-relax soothes tired muscles, eliminate toxins and helps to improve circulation.”

While the use of heat for moments of Zen and elimination of toxins is the part most of us are familiar with, taking the plunge into icy cold water is the activity that is capturing attention, and testing our sensory limits. Equipped with myriad health benefits, exposing the body to extreme cold temperatures is said to promote better sleep, increase metab-



olism, reduce inflammation and test mental strength, connecting body and mind (just ask Iceman Wim Hof, whose method of breathing and cold therapy has gone viral).

Toronto’s latest wellness must-do, Othership, presents itself as a vessel for such transformation, inviting us to “explore our extra-sensory faculties through the practicality and potency of the elements”—read, the fire of sauna to untangle stress and discover a deep body and brain link, and the water of the ice bath to drop in. Through a practice to enhance focus and harness the power of breath, Othership co-founder Myles Farmer wants his guests to achieve a state of flow and deep connection amongst the uncomfortable, as well as offer a social alternative to going to a bar Friday night. To that end, two-hour evening social sessions where the music gets turned up, and friends new and old can mingle in the custom 50 person sauna are on offer. “Getting out of your comfort zone, getting off your phone and into the freezing ice water bath for a two-minute plunge, with new friends breathing along with you” is the transformative experience they speak of.

Leroux agrees that, beyond the obvious physical benefits, sauna culture helps to prioritize self-care in a more social and cerebral way. “I think we will see more people embrace regular massage and prioritize time spent disconnecting from their always connected digital lives for their mental wellbeing,” she says.

“Because [Scandinave] combines a silent experience that is tech free we are addressing mental wellness as well as physical wellness. The constant ‘on’ state that we live in as well as the barrage of news and information leads me to believe that practices that allow people to tune out of external chatter and tune into their inner selves through silence, meditation and breathwork will become more and more mainstream.”

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Short on spa time?

Sweating out toxins with an infrared sauna session (usually 45 minutes) might be a good fit if you are short on time and not necessarily interested in the full-circuit hydrotherapy experience but crave the heat. If the idea of cold plunging or wild swimming isn't for you, but cold exposure has grasped your interest, well, anyone can take the first step with their own cold shower. As well, a quick cold burst of cryotherapy (at -165 C) might do the trick. “Cryotherapy has the convenience factor going for it; it’s a three-minute process, you don’t have to bring anything, don’t have to do anything special to prepare and, after your session, you just warm right up so you can continue your day with a reset and recharged mind and body,” says Jay Dhaliwal, owner of Vital Cryotherapy Toronto. “For anyone who wants to improve their health but doesn’t feel like they have any more time or mental space to spare, it’s a great option.” Vitalcryotherapytoronto.ca

Hot Shops

Toronto's latest and greatest retailers



PHOTOS: PATRICK BILAR

SMYTHE

What began as a goal to perfect the woman's blazer has turned into a global brand of suiting, dresses and separates available in 250 doors worldwide—and now Smythe has a store all its own. On a perfect strip in Summerhill, the boutique is a vision of soothing colours and materials boasting locally made furniture and fixtures and includes the introduction of SmytheHouse—a new collection of archetypal silhouettes reimagined in season-less hues and fabrics. The label is also celebrating its new flagship with the launch of its first fragrance and interior perfume—a captivating scent of tailored wood and feminine notes. **1116 Yonge St., 647-352-9737. Shopsmythe.ca** LAUREN WALKER-LEE



FABLE

Shopping for your dreamy tablecape just got easier. Conceived in Vancouver and made mainly in Portugal, Fable has opened its first outpost in Toronto, adjacent to Aesop in Trinity Bellwoods. The brand's collections of sustainably crafted tableware are thoughtfully considered, with colours that seamlessly interchange and complement your home—think creamy hues of dove grey, speckled white and blush. The aesthetically pleasing organic shapes of Fable's stoneware, coupled with beautiful Belgian linens, two-tone flatware and sophisticated glassware, sets the stage to entertain and make memories around your table—and Pinterest-perfect posting. **878 Queen St. W., 437-291-2099. Fablehome.com** LAUREN WALKER-LEE

MOSCOT

N.Y.C. eyewear brand Moscot has opened its first Canadian outpost in Yorkville. Shop the brand's bold-rimmed opticals and sunglasses along with cool-yet-classic shapes taken from the archives while you check out the tchotchkes and vintage family artifacts that fill the Cumberland corner space. **153 Cumberland Ave., 437-837-1201. Ca.moscot.com** LAUREN WALKER-LEE



Leah Alexandra Jewelry Spark Studio



After a wildly successful pop-up in September of last year, Leah Alexandra Jewelry, home of the Spark Studio, has opened up a permanent shop in the lobby of the Shangri-La Hotel Toronto.

Leah Belford, the owner and face behind the ever-so-popular brand, began her journey in the world of jewelry design in 2006 and hasn't looked back. Known for her layerable and versatile pieces, Belford travels the globe to source genuine gemstones including diamond, emerald and sapphire—with each stone being carefully selected to ensure high-quality colour, cut and clarity.

Since growing her business, Belford's created the Spark Studio, where customers can choose from a selection of solid yellow gold, white gold and sterling-silver chains to have a bracelet custom-fit and permanently welded on the wrist with a delicate flash of a micro laser. Talk about the ultimate friendship bracelet!

These custom pieces, however, aren't exclusively limited to best friends, and are becoming increasingly popular amongst a variety of demographics. "We've started seeing more and more couples coming in together. I've never seen a man come in and resist it. I've even had three generations come in at a time," says Belford, who has sparked customers from the age of two years old all the way up to 100. These permanent bracelets have quickly become a fun and intimate bonding experience, bringing people together to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and more.

If permanence makes you hesitant about the Spark Studio experience, the bracelets can be made with a clasp for easy removal. If choose to go ahead and have the bracelet sparked on, but need it removed in the future (for an MRI for example), the chains can easily be clipped at the jump ring, and sparked back on free of charge! And for all you out there with the travel bug, worry not—the bracelets are perfectly fine going through airport security. (The LAJ team has tried-and-tested it so you don't have to!)

Finally, Belford's new Toronto shop not only offers the designer's signature welded bracelets, but also her full collection, with pieces available in gold vermeil, gold fill, solid gold and sterling silver, featuring an array of gemstones. Get your spark on! **188 University Ave. (inside the lobby of the Shangri-La Hotel), 647-995-5324. Leahalexandra.com**

The Porter

Set in the Roaring Twenties, CBC's newest series with BET+ is not only visually stunning, but also making big strides in Black storytelling. We think it's about time, don't you?

BY AMANDA NUNES

The *Porter* takes place in St. Antoine, Montreal, once known as the Harlem of the North.

The show explores how Black railway workers joined together to form the first Black union, but goes so much deeper than that. Porters were exclusively Black men who worked on the sleeping cars on trains. This was one of the few jobs that Black men were able to get, and the position was a respected one and a source of pride in the community.

Created by CBC and BET+, this original series has a Black-led creative team and some serious Canadian star power. *The Porter* features strong female leads, each with their own unique story. We chatted with two of the Canadian actresses, Mouna Traoré and Olunike Adeliyi, about their roles.

Traoré plays Marlene, a nurse who is part of the newly formed Black Cross Nurses—educated women who would teach the community about health care, support mothers during childbirth and more. “We have yet to hear the story of Black Canadian communities like St. Antoine, to hear about organizations that they created and also the society and culture that was unique to Black Canadians, not only in Montreal but throughout Canada,” she explains. “This is the first representation that I’ve seen of the many facets of Black Canadians and their contributions to Canadian society as a whole.”

Adeliyi, who plays Miss Queenie, agrees. “A lot of Canadian history isn’t widely known. I study African studies and African American studies. And all I want to do is to study Black Canadian studies, but it’s not available. For some reason, it’s not understood that Black Canadians have been a part of the fabric and building of Canada.” Her character, she adds, is a crime boss inspired by the real-life Numbers Queen of Harlem. Queenie has a few tricks up her sleeve, including speaking several languages

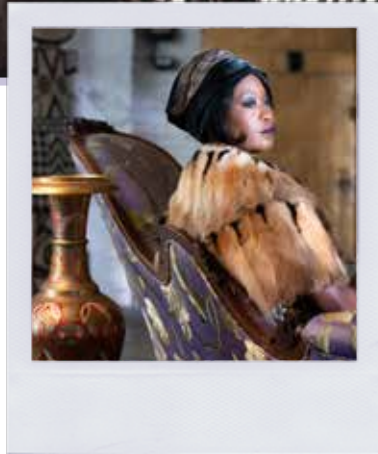


PHOTO: S. TOWNLEY



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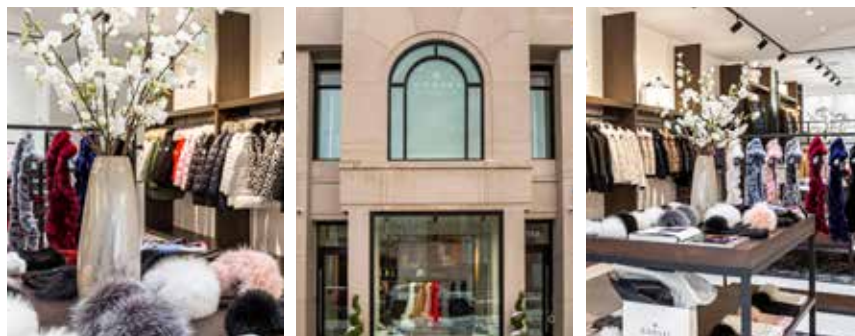
and being an accomplished pianist. Mysterious and ruthless, she is creating her queendom by any means necessary.

“Black women have always been the boss of their empire. So why not on screen?” Playing a character with multiple skills was a challenge that Adeliyi was up for. She finds similarities in their personalities: “We share a lot of bold conviction and we definitely know how to speak our mind. We know how to take up space, especially for injustices. We both work for the good of the community.”

Lucy is another pivotal character in *The Porter*. She’s a dancer and performer with big dreams. Although talented, she is passed over for leading roles in favour of dancers with a lighter skin tone. Colourism isn’t often spoken about in the entertainment or beauty world but, unfortunately, remains an issue today. In fact, it’s something that Traoré has experienced firsthand, both on set and in real life. “I have been told I’m too hard to light, and I’ve been told that I would be more attractive if my skin wasn’t so dark. None of which is true! I’m so grateful that *The Porter* tackles the issue of colourism. It’s frustrating that it still plays such a significant factor in our society.

“Accepting the beauty of my blackness and developing a sense of self-love and my own standard of beauty is essential to my survival in this industry and the world,” she adds. Catch *The Porter* on CBC and CBC Gem. v

HOT SHOPS CONTINUED



GORSKI

Climb in your car, buckle your seat belt, jump on the 401 and head east to Montreal, where Gorski has just opened up shop. The luxury outerwear brand’s stunning new flagship, on Greene Avenue in Westmount, is a testament to the label’s Quebecois heritage and its decades-long dedication to elevating Montreal as a global fashion centre. Peruse Gorski’s range of small-batch-made, hand-cut and meticulously sewn après-ski down jackets, parkas, vests and reversibles, wool and cashmere outerwear pieces, cool-weather accessories like headbands, pom-pom beanies, infinity scarves and evening capes, and, coming soon, elevated home décor. Shop, also, new spring styles, including a range of cool motorcycle jackets we’re currently lusting after. Founded in 1984 by Leonard Gorski and his wife, Karin, we love that Gorski has maintained a commitment to designing, creating and distributing natural and ethically sourced wares, and to using biodegradable materials like cashmere, wool, down, leather and furs for its clothing. The brand collaborates closely with like-minded partners and leaders in animal welfare, traceability and sustainability and remains at the forefront of fair-trade and labour practices. For all your seasonal style adventures, Gorski is most certainly worth the drive. **1355 Av. Greene, Westmount, QC, 877-282-2728. Ca.gorskimontreal.com** NOA NICHOL

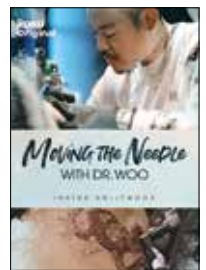
The Watch List

Wondering what’s on (the tube, that is) this month? Tune into this watch-worthy list of original content from Roku, Canada’s #1 streaming platform, and take the guesswork out of channel surfing.



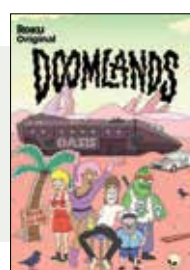
MAPLEWORTH MURDERS: Why would a small town have so many murders? Follow Abigail Mapleworth, a murder-mystery writer that is investigating homicides in this town. The series won an Emmy for Outstanding Actor in a Short Form Comedy or Drama Series.

MOVING THE NEEDLE WITH DR. WOO: Dr. Woo is LA’s most desired tattoo artist. He has inked his legacy in more than half of Hollywood’s A-List celebrities with his unique single-needle designs.



RENO 911! DEFUNDED: The Emmy-winning TV series is back! Budget cuts won’t stop these deputy sheriffs from proving there’s no one worse at their jobs than them.

THIS JOKA: Nothing brings people together like a good laugh. The prince of comedy, Will Smith brings top-of-the-line seasoned comedians, as well as rookies, to showcase their stand-up new material. Accompanied by some special appearances by George Wallace, Demi Adejuyigbe and Shawn Wasabi, you’ll be able to listen to expert commentary and discover what lies behind a good joke.



DOOMLANDS: A new adult animated comedy series produced by the Canadian company, Look Mom! Productions. The Oasis is anything but what it sounds like. In the middle of a hellish wasteland, the legendary Danny Doom and his friend, Lhandi, fight to survive, all they have to is not kill each other.

Roku

Stay caught up on all your favourite streaming services and get access to Live TV, Roku Originals, and tons of free content. Roku has a lineup of products that are simple to use and easy to love. Learn more at Roku.ca.

Braving the Elements

A wander in the wild inspires an innovative new Canadian whisky

BY JANET HELOU

Armed with nothing but a backpack and unbounded curiosity, master blender Andres Faustinel set off into the rugged B.C. wilderness of the Monashee Mountains looking for a way to connect Bearface Whisky to the wild, the terror, the elements and a sense of place. He was successful in finding inspiration, but in an unlikely place—a rare and highly prized mushroom known as the matsutake or pine mushroom. And then, after more than two years of experimental development, Bearface Matsutake edition was born.

The exploration part of this tale, though, is not a rare or uncommon theme at Bearface; the brand has been exploring the frontiers of the Canadian whisky landscape for years, experimenting with the lesser-known “one-eleven” rule unique to Canada that allows the use of one part non-whisky spirit, wine or sherry to every 10 parts of Canadian whisky. This rule is traditionally hush-hush among distillers, but Bearface decided to bring it into the light and celebrate it—as in its Oaxaca Series, which blends in one part agave espadin mezcal from maestro mezcalero Pedro Hernández.

The company has also explored impressively unique ageing techniques in its Bearface Triple Oak, by using three different oak casks—American, French and Hungarian—and “elementally ageing” them in a repurposed shipping container in the B.C. wild, harnessing the harsh weather into the casks where extreme temperature and humidity ranges amplify the interaction of wood and whisky for a richer, smoother flavour (cool, we know!).

Now, the new Matsutake edition marks the launch of the Bearface Wilderness Series—and it’s the first, we hope, of many more beautiful bottles to come.



Its identity is derived from the natural beauty and ruggedness of Canada; this is a drink to be enjoyed around a roaring fire, in a cottage or cabin, mountain- or lake-side, with whisky-loving friends. The process begins with the most challenging step: foraging for the rare mushroom in the forest, around October, and most often in areas ravaged by fires. Once collected and cleaned, the fungi are infused into premium single-grain whisky, introducing not just their flavour but also the moisture in them that holds the essence of the woods from which they came. The whisky is then aged in three different styles of sherry casks and, as previously described, elementally aged to extract and marry the nuanced nutty, sweet-fruit elements of the sherry casks with the earthy, savoury character of the foraged mushrooms. Make no mistake, this is not a “mushroom whisky,” but a complex and layered Canadian whisky first and foremost, made all the better by the umami depth and cinnamon-spice elements of the matsutake mushroom.

Certainly, the entire process of this whisky release has been steeped in trial and error but, according to a Spanish proverb that has guided Faustinel, “You need to get lost to find yourself.” Each Bearface limited release is intended for a one-time launch only, and each bottle (priced at \$50) is numbered for a uniquely Canadian experience. The Bearface Matsutake release is now available at the LCBO, and Faustinel is already tinkering with the next limited Wilderness Series issue. While the inspiration for what’s coming next is anyone’s guess, it’s safe to say it will push the boundaries of an industry heavily steeped in tradition, and push Canada closer to the forefront of whisky innovation. Bearfacewhisky.com



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Shroom Beauty

BY JENNIFER COX

Mushrooms are delicious to eat—and, clearly, drink—but did you know that they can work wonders for your skin, as well? Fungi are full of antioxidants, which can help repair skin cells and balance pH levels to restore elasticity and firmness. Mushrooms can even help with certain skin conditions, like eczema. If you want to add some mushroom power to your skincare routine, here are some fun-*gi* products (sorry, we could resist!).



1. Youth To The People's Adaptogen Soothe + Hydrate Activated (\$55, sold through Sephora) is an ultra-fine, all-day mist that hydrates and soothes skin pre- and post-make-up. It contains antioxidant-rich adaptogens and an activated pentapeptide (both of which are found in mushrooms) to combat dry or dull skin.

2. Three Ships' Dew Drops (\$45) gives your skin a boost of hydration thanks to tremella mushrooms, which provide a natural source of hyaluronic acid that replenishes moisture deep in the skin. This serum also contains kakadu plum, which is packed with one hundred times more vitamin C than oranges, to brighten and plump up the skin.

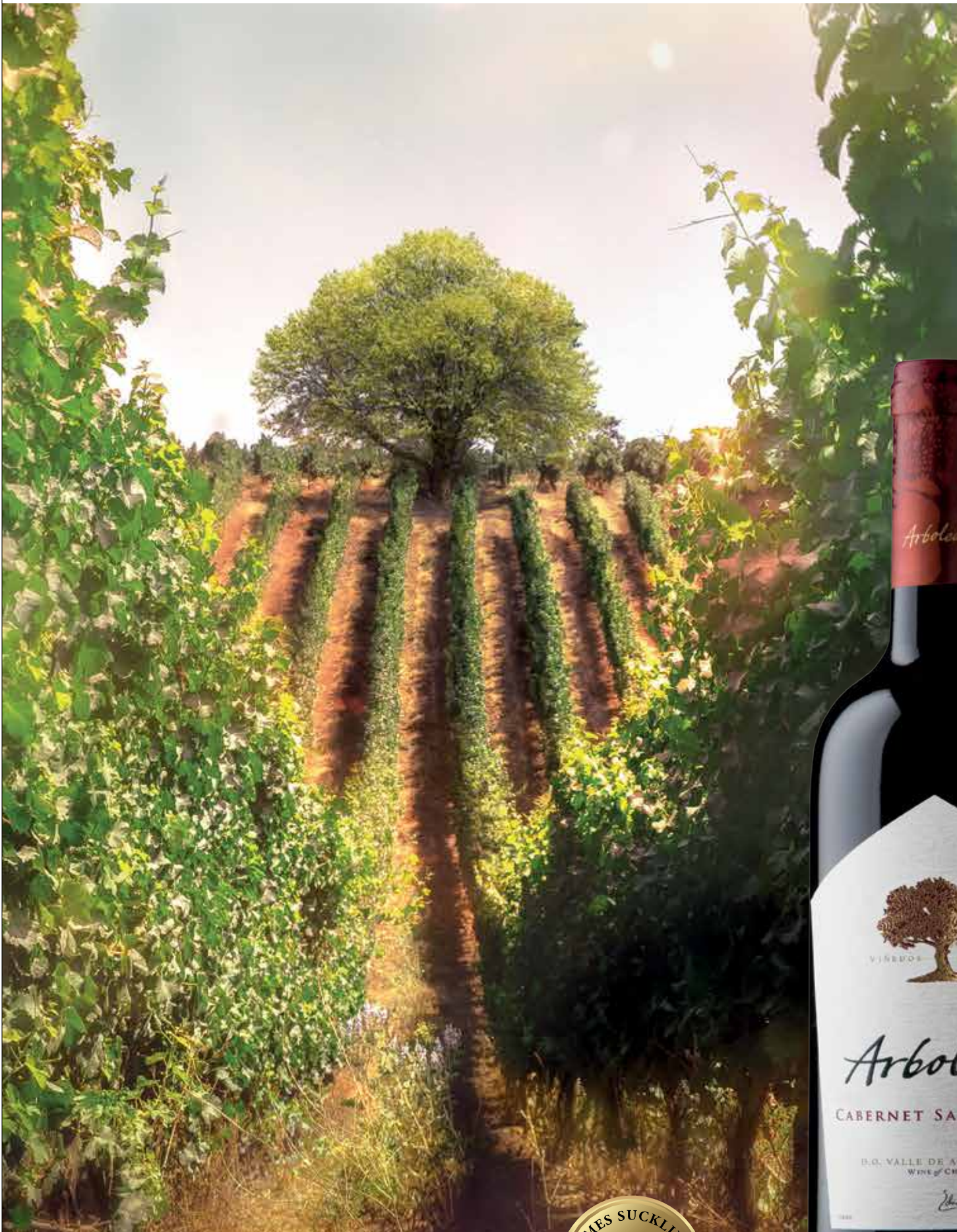
3. Pressed Serum from Blithe (\$39) is a hybrid multipurpose facial cream that combines hydrating serum and face moisturizer in one product. The formula reduces fine lines and wrinkles, improves skin elasticity and contains 56 per cent chaga mushroom extracts: Siberians call it the “mushroom of immortality” because of its high volume of nutrition and antioxidants that soothe the skin.

4. Chasin' Rabbits' Magic Beauty Shroom (\$33) is formulated with 100 per cent snow fungus extract, which is rich in beta-glucans and plant collagen. This vegan essence infuses skin with moisture and antioxidants, while vitamin D kick-starts cell growth and healing of damaged skin to fortify the skin barrier.

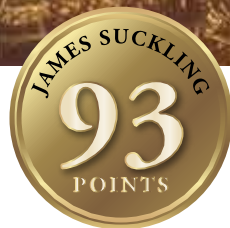


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