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VITA



The March Issue

good JEANS
Baggy, high-waisted, loose, barrel-cut & wide-leg denim is *on trend* for **spring**

INSIDE *the* ISSUE

STYLE Very Peri Pantone's Colour *of the Year* packs a **Periwinkle punch**

FASHION **Trash to Treasure** A little TLC could be all it takes to give an *old designer bag* a brand-new life

SHOPPING **Multicultural Marketplace** *Canadian brand founders* draw upon their heritage to create meaningful products

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



MaxMara



Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

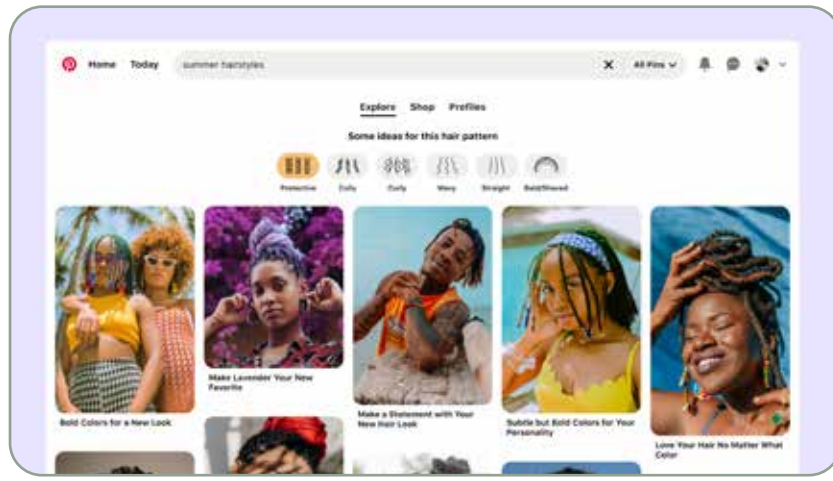
In my work, I'm lucky to try various skin treatments, including certain "celebrity loved" facials. With most, immediate results (read: glowy skin as I leave the premises) are a given. But just as many fail to deliver those truly coveted long-term changes. Jet Peel is so different, I feel compelled to share it with you. I experienced several sessions of this non-invasive procedure courtesy of two fantastic Vancouver providers: One Clinic MD and The Skin Girls. The treatment is used to combat things like signs of aging, dry skin and acne; unlike chemical peels, it's gentle enough for sensitive skin. During each one-hour treatment, pressurized streams of air penetrate into the deep layer of skin (the dermis) to deliver custom (chosen for your skin concerns) cleansers and serums with incredible efficacy. It's not your typical relaxing spa sesh, but it works a treat. Never before have I received compliments for days, even weeks, after the fact. "Your skin looks so bright, so refreshed; what did you do?" As I approach my 43rd birthday (tomorrow, for those reading this issue of VITA on March 4), these are welcome words. Needless to say, I'll be booking my next "flight" with Jet Peel soon.



Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Our featured influencer this month is **Kaya Marriott**, the Vancouver-based natural hair and lifestyle blogger behind *Comfy Girl With Curls*, who recently worked with Pinterest to launch a first-of-its-kind search tool, Hair Pattern, which empowers Pinners to search for hair inspiration across six hair patterns.

Kaya Marriott
@COMFYGIRLCURLS



search tool, created with BIPOC in mind. The feature works by empowering Pinners to search for hair inspiration across six hair patterns: protective, straight, wavy, curly, coily and bald/shaved. Once a Pinner selects the hair pattern they want inspiration for, they'll be served content that's most relevant to their style preference. You can try this out with search terms like "glam hair," "summer hairstyles," "wedding updos"—really anything! For me, this new search tool is a game-changer because it marks a major step forward for inclusivity in tech. It's how millions of people, including myself, can find hair inspiration that matches what they're looking for without needing to add in extra qualifiers like "Black hair" or "natural hair".

PHOTO: ANITA LEE



hopes that my tips and tricks might help someone else out. Now that my platform has expanded to more niches, that core goal remains the same. I just want to help others and see them succeed, whether that's in trying a new hairstyle, figuring out a routine that works for them, or learning how to create content themselves.

Describe your hair journey to date.

In a sense, my hair journey has come full circle. When I was young and naive to beauty standards, my hair was big and free. But, as a teen, I started getting self-conscious. While my mom worked hard to convince me my hair was beautiful, I still internalized the idea that it was unruly, unprofessional, undesirable. And so, because I couldn't get my hair to look like that of my peers or women in media, we began flat ironing it to make it

more "manageable". In Grade 12 I got my first-ever relaxer (meaning that I permanently straightened my hair with harsh chemicals). But when I couldn't afford to maintain relaxed hair in Vancouver, I started transitioning back to my natural texture by letting it grow out. It was a frustrating stage because I had never learned to properly care for my hair. But, thanks to Pinterest, I not only found resources to help me, but tonnes of inspiration that motivated me to keep going. Today, I feel I've returned to childhood-me. I accept and love my hair as an extension of myself. I'm unafraid to wear it big and free, and I don't tie my self-worth to how it looks.

How does Pinterest's new search tool work and in what ways do you think it's a game-changer?

Hair Pattern search is a first-of-its-kind

What sort of inspo do you gain from Pinterest on the regular?

I turn to Pinterest for everything—whether it's motivational, inspirational or practical. Hair-wise, I've been using the platform to find more out-of-the-box hairstyles; my latest obsession is bejewelled hair accessories. I also use Pinterest regularly for posing guidance because, for someone who's in front of the camera a lot, I never know what to do with my hands!

How are you styling your hair today?

Today, my hair is styled in what I think has become my signature look: a two-strand twist out. It's the first style I mastered when I went natural, and it's been my go-to ever since.

THE MAKING OF THE March Issue

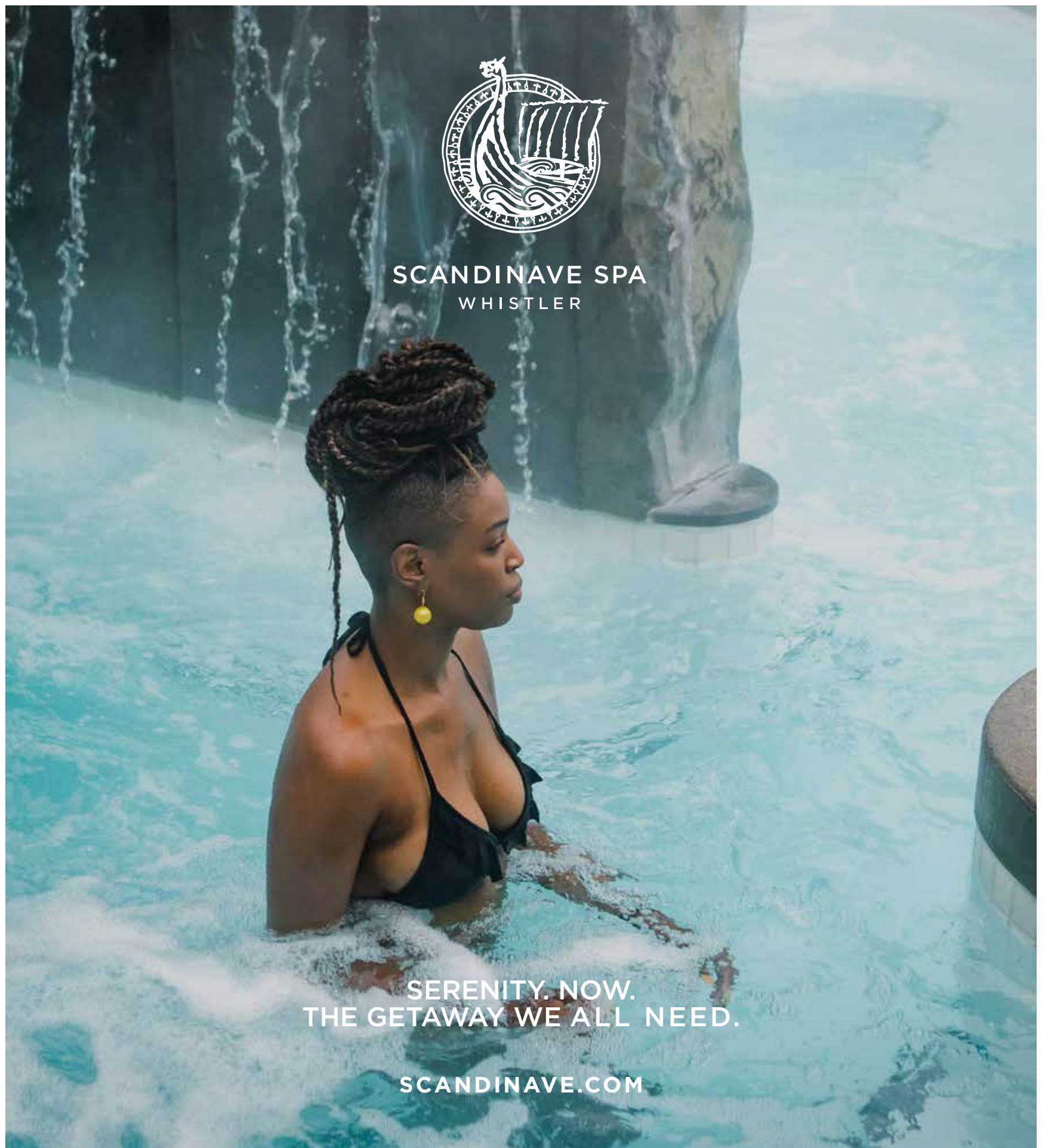
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very peri

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



1. MINICHELLO EARRINGS, \$1,625 These tanzanite and diamond drop earrings are pearl shaped and periwinkle perfect. Minichellojewellers.com

2. WEEKEND MAX MARA SWEATER, \$595 Pure cashmere, pure weekenders vibes. Ca.maxmara.com

3. AMINA MUADDI SLIDE SANDAL, \$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 Millenia 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. Newly launched Canadian brand La Bonne Fille offers a unique Earl Grey (from S18) that's a blend of rich, malty black tea enhanced with bergamot and delectably sweet, creamy notes. Wonderful paired with milk and sweeteners, it's also special enough to be served au naturel."

Labonnefilletea.com



VICKI'S PICK

"Add a pastel touch to your look with the MAC Powder Kiss soft matte eyeshadow in Such A Tulle (S27), the perfect light periwinkle. The pressed powder can be worn as a pop of colour or an all-over lid shade, while the creamy finish makes it easy to blend. I love that it's also non-creasing and water-resistant!"

Maccosmetics.ca



MADISON'S PICK

"When looking to incorporate new colours into the palette of your home, I'm a fan of starting with small-but-impactful pieces. These whimsical (Monet-esque) stoneware plates (S20) are sure to make an artistic statement set beneath your favourite candle, as a bedside jewelry tray and of course, when entertaining." Anthropologie.com



LYNDI'S PICK

"With restrictions on events 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 and an elasticated neckline so that it can be worn off shoulder or as a boat neck."

Int.stinegoya.com

It's All in the Jeans

Denim trends for spring are breaking the skinny barrier

BY SHERI RADFORD

“Skinny jeans are dead, dead in the water.” That’s according to personal stylist Michelle Addison, who also offers personal shopping and wardrobe editing. She rattles off the styles that are on trend right now: “Baggy jeans that are a little high-waisted, loose jeans, barrel-cut jeans, wide-leg denim.”

Overall the move is toward “bigger, baggier pants with a crop top,” Addison says. For those who don’t feel comfortable wearing a cropped tee or short sweater, she recommends tucking in a shirt and perhaps adding a belt, to avoid looking bulky or boxy. As for footwear, she suggests “wider shoes or chunkier boots, or even chunky loafers.”

Not only do these wider-legged jeans look good, they feel great, too. “When we move into the straight-leg denim and a little bit of a higher waist, and it’s a little bit more forgiving, we will have a hard time going back and putting those skin-tight skinny jeans on,” she says.

Addison acknowledges that some shoppers may feel nervous about abandoning the familiar (read: skinny) and trying something looser, “because they can feel like, ‘Oh, I’m wearing my dad’s pants.’” She offers a solution: “Always get the jean tailored to your own body.”

Stacy Gerritse, marketing director for Mavi, agrees that “wider silhouettes and higher rises” are hot for spring 2022. “They are very reminiscent of styles that were popular in the ‘90s,” she says. “We’re seeing a lot of crop tops paired with these really voluminous silhouettes.” She mentions a few other noteworthy trends this spring: shackets (denim shirt jackets), utility onesies and the denim-on-denim look. (Yes, really, the Canadian tuxedo is on trend.) But, she cautions, the goal is not to hop on the fast-fashion train. “I think we’re all a lot more careful about how much we’re consuming, so we’re buying better-quality pieces that we feel have a longer relevancy.”

Balancing fashion with longevity and comfort is also a major concern for Elizabeth Davey, director of product for Duer. “Women’s fashion historically moves faster than men’s, and the challenge with that is meeting the demand for relevant styling while integrating performance attributes and comfort,” she says. “Our newest styles, like the Girlfriend and the Wide Leg, are designed to be worn for a number of seasons and to be malleable enough to rotate into any outfit.”

And don’t expect these wider styles to disappear any time soon. According to Nico Antonopoulos, brand manager of Yoga Jeans, “Wider legs have taken over the denim world.” She says, “What is fun is that now, women have more choices in terms of fit and can really dress according to their body shape.” Her prediction for the rest of the year? “I do believe that wide legs will continue into summer. The key is to either make them long in a lighter fabric or make them cropped.”

Addison, too, is thinking ahead to warmer and warmer weather. “These types of jeans look great with sandals because most of the straight-leg denim is a bit cropped, so we can see a lot of the ankle,” she says. “A sandal with a slight heel looks even better.”

Citizens of Humanity, Levi’s, Gap, Reformation, AG, Naked & Famous, G. Label, R13, Paige, Mother, Frame—pretty much any brand you can think of is stocking a huge range of denim styles right now, including straight legs, flares, dad jeans, crops and balloon cuts. If you’re ready to test out the wide-legged world, the boyfriend or girlfriend fits at Mavi are a good place to start. Gerritse describes them as “sort of like a baby step into these wider fits.”

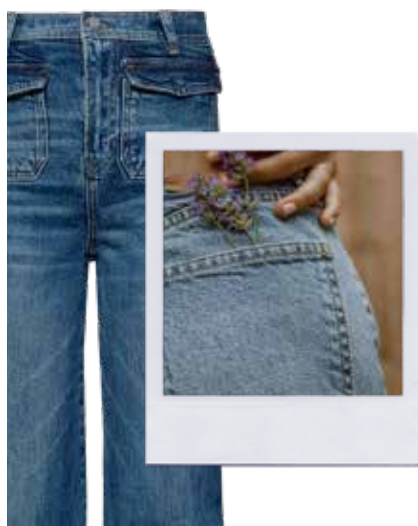


Addison also has advice for nervous newcomers: “Lots and lots of brands will have different types of wide denim, so don’t get discouraged if you try one wide-leg denim on and it looks terrible. There’s going to be a certain style that will fit your body.” She also recommends scouring vintage stores for treasures from the 1990s. “And even if they aren’t exactly right for you, you can always alter them to be great.”

Of course there is one other option. Addison says, “If you love your skinny jeans, and you want to keep wearing them, feel free. You don’t have to follow this fashion trend, and you don’t have to be like everybody else, at all.”



“Women have more choices in terms of *fit* and can really dress according to *their body shape*”



Hot Shop: DUER



Duer has opened in Kits, with 3-D installations of eucalyptus, recycled plastic and wood chips (a nod to the brand’s use of natural fibre-rich materials) and a full range of performance pants (plus other apparel). Duer grew from a gap that athleisure couldn’t fill, creating clothing for anything you want to do in a day, from hiking to the office and out to dinner. Its no-sweat, weightless- and all-weather-edition bottoms are testament to the idea that, with fewer, more-versatile items in your closet, you can get dressed, out the door and on with the important things. All are available to try on and, eventually, be put to the test, once the brand’s product-testing performance playground is installed. 1757 W. 4th Ave., 604-336-1341. Duer.ca NOA NICHOL

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Bags to Treasure

A little TLC could be all it takes to give an old designer bag a brand-new life

BY ALEESHA HARRIS

Designer handbags are the largest sales sector of the booming pre-loved luxury economy. Recent statistics put the market share at approximately 40 per cent, compared with other categories like clothing, shoes and watches.

"We've seen a massive increase in clients shopping for vintage pieces, specifically bags," Courtney Watkins, owner of the Vancouver-based luxury resale boutique Mine & Yours, says.

Purchasing a preloved piece lowers the financial barrier of entry into the luxury accessories market, while also providing luxury consumers with the ability to offload their no-longer-loved items in favour of purchasing something new.

"As buyers, we can make multiple clients happy even if their items have a bit of wear by providing them with either store credit or money to buy something new from us and to give their items a new home," Watkins says. "From a sustainability point of view, we can achieve a circular economy. We keep the lifecycle of the item going by giving it a new home and we stop the vicious fast-fashion cycle from taking place by encouraging consumers to buy second-hand items with us."

While some designer consignment and resale boutiques look to sell only items in very good, excellent or pristine condition, Mine & Yours offers handbags that also fall into the good and fair condition categories.

"Mine & Yours offers a range of pre-loved pieces in different conditions to allow consumers to get their hands on vintage or collector's items that they otherwise would not be able to find," Watkins explains. "By offering an item that is pre-loved or with some wear we can make pricing more attainable for consumers."

A good example of condition rating standards exists on California resale company Fashionphile's website, which offers descriptions of items ranging from giftable—in new condition with all original packaging and retail tags—to flawed, which is described as "generally nice condition overall but with a major defect." Fair condition items are those that feature concerns such as "well scuffed edges or significant scratches."

The overall condition of a handbag is reflected in its resale price; more pre-loved often means a lower price. But just how far gone is too far gone? According to Watkins, there is no right answer to that question. What might be too used for one shopper is perfect for another—especially if they opt for restoration.

"Some great pieces at Mine & Yours could be dream items with the right amount of tender love and care," Watkins says. "Don't be afraid of getting pieces repaired, tailored or dry cleaned. Luxury resale is like a treasure hunt and often there's a diamond in the rough that just needs a little bit of vision and extra love."

Julie Sumner is very well versed in the art of handbag refurbishment. As the operations manager and director of Luxe Bag Spa, the restoration division of the Calgary-based company Luxe Du Jour, Sumner oversees all aspects of the refurbishment process, from first quotes to final restoration. With a background in fine arts, she has a mastery of paints and colour matching. At Luxe Bag Spa, Sumner sees handbags in virtually every stage of repair, and disrepair, applying her practical knowledge of art to each designer piece in need of some love.

"We do colour matching, so we can either do full colour restoration, which is a thin layer of paint to keep the bag's integrity," she says. "We do re-gold plating, corner touch-ups, exterior and interior cleaning."

There are some things that they can't do, though. Repairs of lining materials and replacement of hardware must be sent directly to the handbag brands,



PICTURED: COURTNEY WATKINS OF MINE & YOURS

Sumner says. Exterior and hardware scratches can prove impossible to remove completely and, due to its delicate nature, she also won't work with suede. Sumner advises owners of Hermès bags to think twice before sending their precious pieces to a third-party spa like Luxe Bag Spa versus dealing directly with the French brand so as not to void the item's warranty. "We still do get them in, but it's something that we always disclose," she says.

The restoration process begins with an online quote submission detailing the handbag's overall wear and tear, along with photos of its condition and problem areas. Sumner and her team then examine the submissions and reply with a restoration plan and quote. Prices vary between the age of the bag and the severity.

"I would say that the most common quote that I do is for \$220, which could include a corner touch-up and a deep clean," Sumner says. "That's typically the price that I start at." She points to full-colour restoration and corner touch-ups as the most common services done at Luxe Bag Spa. A full colour restoration typically costs around \$200 to \$500, depending on the brand.

Luxe Bag Spa also offers a suite of care products for people to complete small touch-ups at home, including a black pen in gloss or matte finish, a leather moisturizing cream and a patina cleaner for Louis Vuitton vachetta leather. If they have questions, Sumner advises customers to send photos to her before they try to do anything on their own. "Then I can either offer them a spa service, or I can offer them one of our products. If it's, say, a black Chanel bag with a scuff on the corner, they would be able to fix that on their own. We are able to guide them through that, as well. We also have lots of tutorials on our Instagram for corner touch-ups."

While she's happy to help people tackle small handbag glow-ups, Sumner strongly cautions against doing full-on restorations at home armed solely with the help of a YouTube tutorial video: "It could look simple even from the videos that we post. But, at the end of the day, I have a background in art. I have a whole bunch of eyes looking at the bag in order to make sure it's good to go before it goes out. We have all the products that are suitable—I think is the biggest thing. And they're not cheap products. I think it is hard for people to grasp that, though. We are in a sustainable culture. We're also in a DIY culture. But, it could really bring down the value of your bag."

A "simple" DIY at home could end up costing thousands of dollars, Sumner cautions. But, with the proper care and refurbishment, she is confident people will see preloved pieces in a whole new light—whether it's an old favourite or a new-to-you piece. "We're able to make you fall in love with your bag again," she says. V

A Tale of Two Bags



I've been in a bit of a closet-cleaning craze in recent months, weeding out the things that no longer spark sartorial joy. After a particularly productive purge, I took my no-longer-loved pieces down to Mine & Yours designer resale store on Davie Street in Yaletown. Opting for store credit instead of a cash payout, I was able to acquire Dior Diorissimo Tote in exchange for the value of my goods. Complete with its original dust bag and cards, the 2013 bag was in very good used condition, with only some corner wear and a pen mark on the front, along with some light discoloration on the handles. It was a prime candidate for light refurbishment. I submitted images for a quote through Luxe Bag Spa and was advised that the bag was likely going to require some repainting to get rid of the ink stain. I shipped the bag, along with a well-loved Prada tote, off to the Calgary-based business, and received it back within a week's time. The finished result proved to freshen up the bag's colour, rendering it the perfect pop-of-colour accessory for spring. A.H.

Multicultural Marketplace

Each of these Canadian brands draws upon its founder's heritage to create meaningful products

BY SHERI RADFORD

1. CHEEKBONE BEAUTY

After struggling with alcoholism for years, Jenn Harper finally got sober in 2014. A few months later, the Niagara, Ontario, resident had a life-changing dream about Indigenous girls covered with lip gloss. "I woke up that night, and I grabbed my laptop and just started writing," she recalls.

What she wrote eventually became the business plan for a beauty brand focused on charitable endeavours to help Indigenous people. "The idea of success within Indigenous communities is never about what people attain for themselves, but about what they're giving back to community," she says.

Harper honoured her Anishinaabe roots by basing Cheekbone Beauty on the seven grandfather teachings, which form the foundation of an Indigenous way of life: humility, bravery, honesty, wisdom, truth, respect, love. And because Indigenous people are what Harper calls "the OGs of sustainability," the brand's lipsticks, eyeshadows, bronzers and more all have environmentally friendly ingredients and come in reusable, biodegradable packaging. Harper calls it "the Indigenous way, which means being really transparent about how we create everything." Cheekbonebeauty.com

2. TAFUI

"Running around in the grass with no shoes on" in a yard full of trees bearing pomegranates, bananas and coconuts—that's how Tafui describes her childhood in Jamaica. "There was this automatic love for nature," says the artist, who goes by one name. Her affinity for the environment continued when she moved to Ottawa, near Gatineau Park: "It gave me a new appreciation for trees and air quality and seeing how close we really are to the life source."

Tafui now lives in Vancouver, and her paintings continue to explore nature and the interconnectedness of all people. "As a Jamaican, we have a motto, 'Out of many, one people,'" she says. "How can we come together even though we might differ on so many other things? How can we come to a common ground and move together in a positive way?" Her eponymous brand turns her bold paintings into prints, pillows and pouches, for people who "love art but don't necessarily have \$2,000 to spend on a piece." Shoptafui.com

3. ONQUATA

Lara Sioui has more business sense, while her mother, Lise, is more artistic. This makes the duo perfect business partners—most of the time, anyway. "We don't have a filter," Sioui says with a laugh.

The two draw upon matriarchal traditions in their Wendat heritage to craft gorgeous hand-painted paddles in Wendake, an Indigenous territory in Quebec. Sioui says, "It's special for us and for everybody because it helps the community." With their timeless feel, the wooden paddles fit seamlessly into any modern décor. The company name, Onquata, is Sioui's first name in Wendat. She explains, "It means, 'comes from winter,' because I was born in December."

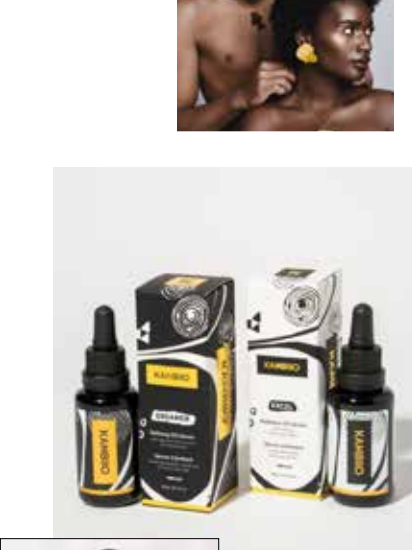
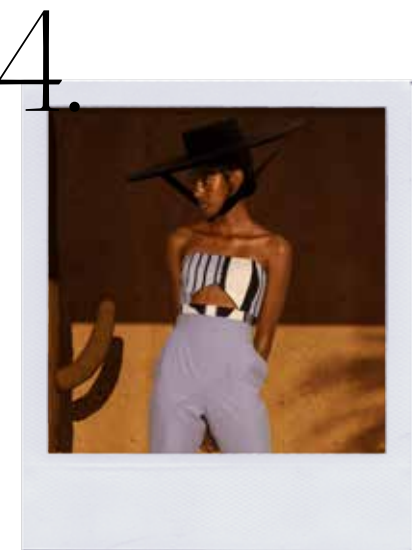
In the future, the mother-daughter pair hopes to expand beyond paddles and sell moccasins, earrings and more. Plus, they plan to open a store and a workshop where others in their community can pursue their art. Onquata.com

4. ISRAELLA KOBLA

Born and raised in England, Emefa Kuadey lived in Ghana for a couple of years as a teen before moving to Canada to study engineering at university. But after starting work as an engineer, she found herself watching the clock all too often. So she moved to Toronto and enrolled in fashion school.

Now her brand, Israella Kobla (the name combines her middle name with her late brother's middle name), creates luxurious, timeless, made-to-order garments. "I really focus on the quality and the longevity of both the designs and the actual pieces," she says. "I'm still engineering—it's just a different outlet."

Kuadey realizes that most people equate African fashion with bright prints, but there's actually "a lot of diversity in the brands that come from African roots." Her goal is nothing short of revolutionary. "I want to change the perception people have of products that are made in Ghana or made in Africa," she says. "The reaction that people have to 'made in Italy' or 'made in France,' I want you to have that same kind of visceral response to 'made in Ghana.'" Israellakobla.com



5. KALI WORKS

Neither Alex Dingiria nor Lindy Mokgweetsi has a background in fashion design, but that didn't stop the couple from launching what has become Canada's premier pan-African boutique brand.

"Kali Works started as a response to our experiences as African and Black immigrants in Vancouver," says Dingiria. He hails from Kenya, while Mokgweetsi is from Botswana. "We were missing some of those aesthetics or clothing items that speak to us in a realer sense. And as you may know, it can be hard to find that kind of thing in Vancouver."

At first they brought over items from markets in Africa, then began commissioning pieces, and now design their own tees, sweaters, jackets and more in their new-ish home of Montreal. Dingiria says Kali is "a Swahili word that means something that's hot, something that's spicy, something that's cool," and Works is a nod to the collaborative effort that's key to how the company operates. Kaliworks.com

6. KAMBIIO

Born in Nigeria, Maryann Okoro moved to Ireland when her mother was working there, and later moved to Canada for her husband's job. Okoro struggled to find work in Saskatoon in her field of pharmaceutical science and drug quality assurance. After taking a few skincare courses, she started contemplating launching her own skincare brand.

Using African ingredients simply made sense to her, because of both the connection to her roots and the efficacy of the ingredients. "Africa is blessed with a lot of nature's wonders. And you see that a lot of these ingredients have been used for generations and generations," she says.

For her company name Okoro chose Kambio, which comes from the word Kambiri in her Nigerian dialect. She explains that it means "to come alive"—especially apt considering Kambio's skincare products focus on radiance and vitality. Kambio.com

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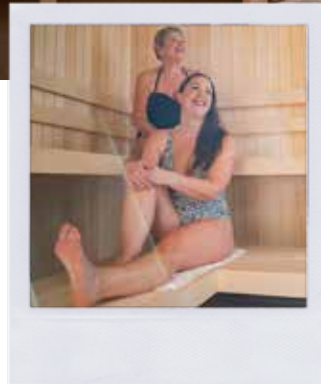
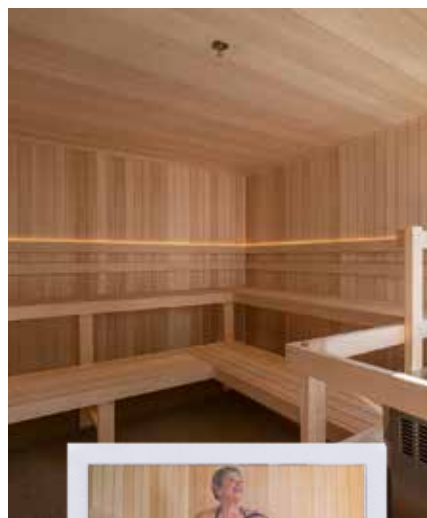
Sauna culture and cold exposures are next on the wellness frontier

BY LAUREN WALKER-LEE

Health and wellness are having a bit of 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 from everyday individuals to total devotees; 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.”

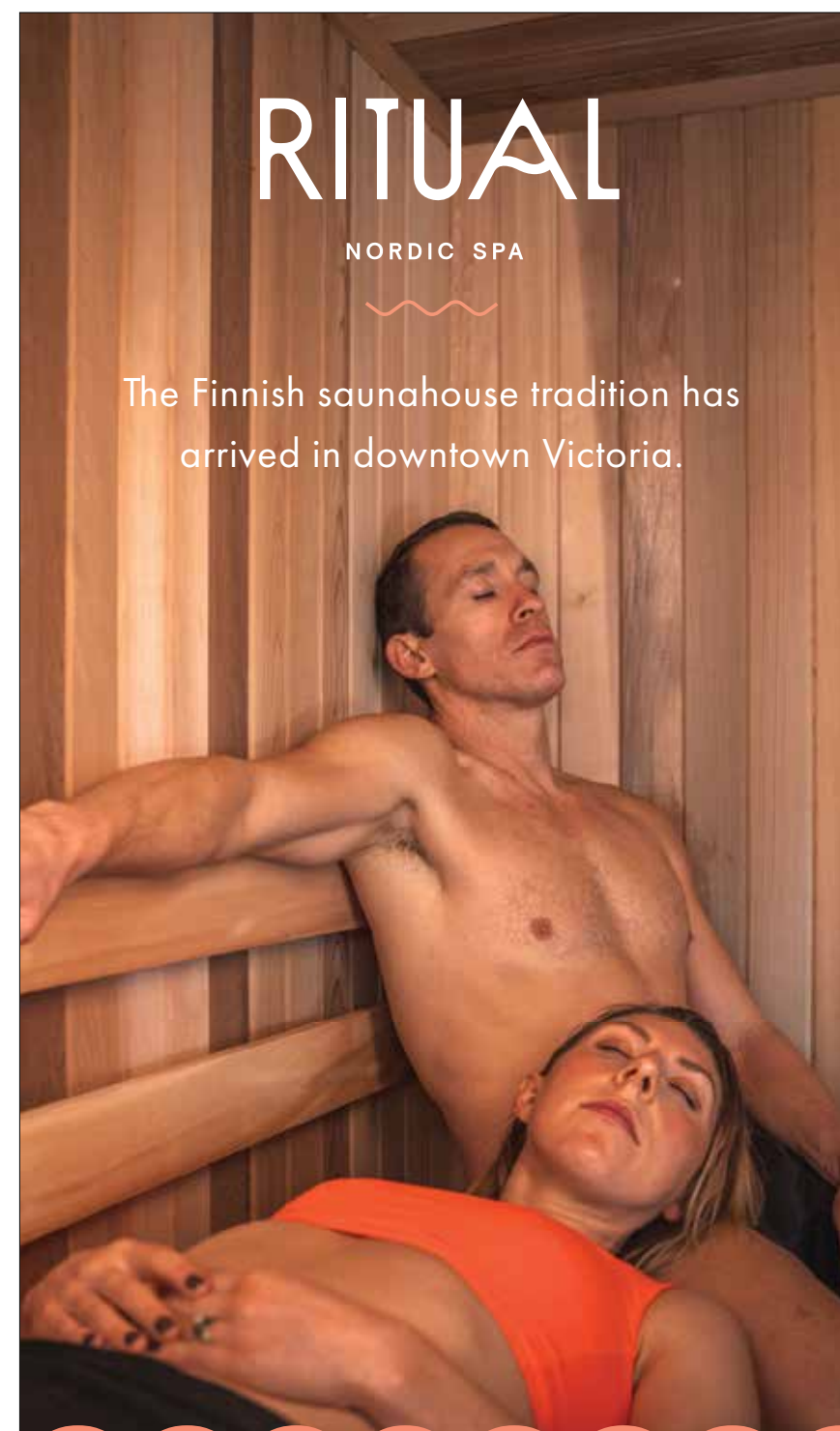
The traditional Nordic sauna ritual involves a circuit of hot and cold followed by rest. At Scandinave, with four Canadian locations, the experience of the rejuvenating Scandinavian baths is bolstered with various options for your own ritual, including a eucalyptus steam, Finnish wood-burning or dry 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 are familiar with, taking the plunge into icy cold water is the activity that’s 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 metabolism, 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.”



RITUAL

NORDIC SPA

The Finnish saunahouse tradition has arrived in downtown Victoria.

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MASSAGE | PRIVATE SUITES | CAFÉ

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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

Serums 101

What serums are for, and how to use them

BY AILEEN LALOR

Remember when you just washed your face, slapped on moisturizer and went about your day? Perhaps swiped a little toner after the cleanser because the lady at The Bay told you to? That's all changed because of serum, now considered a mainstay of the beauty regimen, and the beauty industry. Search Sephora's site for it and you'll find 650-plus options—more than cleanser, sunscreen or face moisturizer. It's pretty impressive for a product that didn't exist until the 1980s.

"Back then everyone was so concerned with moisturizing and hydrating and no one was interesting in repairing," explains Jason Hadikin, field executive training manager, Estée Lauder, Western Canada. "It was Estée Lauder that started to talk about repair and moisture together, back in 1982, and that's when she introduced Night Repair [now Advanced Night Repair, or ANR]. It gave people such great results that the floodgates opened up and every other brand started following suit."

Night Repair, the first skincare to use hyaluronic acid, was designed as a concentrated product to target visible signs of aging. It was lighter in consistency and more easily absorbed than moisturizer. That's essentially the definition of a serum, still. As Kevin Truong, Sephora's national beauty educator, explains, "With a typically thinner texture than moisturizer and packed with active ingredients, serums play an important role ... by penetrating the skin's surface to deliver optimal benefits. I'd consider a serum as a daily treatment ... applied after your cleanser and sealed in by your moisturizer."

ANR is now in its fifth incarnation, and Estée Lauder has another six serums in its roster. And there are hundreds of options from other brands jostling for your attention. So how do you choose one? "First determine what is important to you. Is it discoloration, dullness, fine lines or acne? Once you determine your priority it will be easier to pick your serum," advises Truong.

But I have multiple concerns and want to address them all at once! "You have to be ingredient savvy," says Acacia Slingerland, beauty manager at Shoppers Drug Mart in Sechelt. "Finding a serum that contains the right actives to treat multiple concerns is key. Serums can be layered, but whatever you apply first will penetrate deepest, and it's important to know which active ingredients shouldn't be applied at the same time."

Ingredients to look out for include retinol—an all-round anti-ager—and vitamin C, which offers some protection against UV rays when applied in the morning, is an antioxidant, can help boost collagen production and can treat hyperpigmentation. Other ingredients common in serums include peptides (they're supposed to fight wrinkles), alpha-, beta- and poly-hydroxy acids that exfoliate, clarify and give you glow, antioxidants including CoQ10, vitamin E (along with C, it counteracts environmental and sun damage) and humectants, like hyaluronic acid or glycerin, that help skin hold on to moisture.

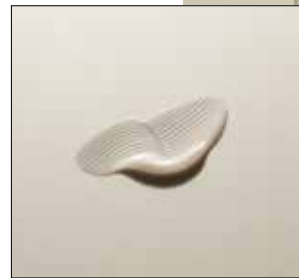
If you want to address multi problems, do you need many serums? Perhaps; brands like The Ordinary and The Inkey List offer low-priced options with high concentrations of ingredients specifically designed to be layered if you like. But the majority of serums these days are formulated with multiple concerns in mind so you don't have to double or triple up.

There are also products that can be categorized as "pre-serums," including ANR, Lancôme's Genifique, Shiseido's Ultimune and Sulwhasoo's First Care Activating Serum. All deliver benefits on their own but are also designed to repair skin so it generally functions better. That means if you apply a second serum over the top, it will be more effective. On the other side of things, serum foundations add skincare ingredients to your makeup.

Should you be worried about reactions to serums because they're more concentrated than other products? We can react to almost anything, points out Dr. Mark Lupin, medical director of Cosmedica Laser Centre in Victoria. "There is likely less chance of reaction to a medical-grade serum than to an over-the-counter serum, as there tends to be less additives and only the essential ingredients in [the former]." A SkinCeuticals fan, he recommends applying any new product, including serums, on a small area of the forearm twice a day for three days, to help gauge tolerance and sensitivity. "It is still possible to develop reaction to skincare products even after prolonged use," he says.

If you're still perplexed, ask your dermatologist or a beauty adviser in stores that offer multiple brands. Both Shoppers and Sephora also offer online services so you can live chat with experts and get tips and product recommendations.

Now you've found your serum(s), how can you tell if they're working? You need to give it three weeks, says Hadikin. "You



"Once you determine your priority it will be easier to pick your serum"



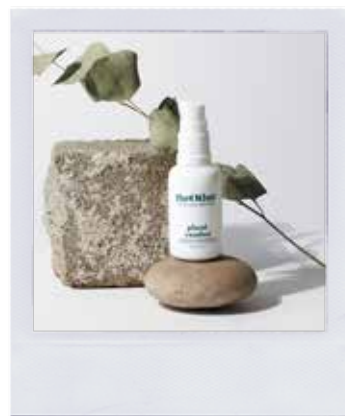
should notice that your skin feels more hydrated and bouncier. People often don't give serum the time it needs; it's just like if you're taking medication, you need to have it in your system for a few weeks."

If you've used a product for a while and want to check its effectiveness, Truong says to "listen" to your skin, by tracking results (taking photos if necessary) against what you wanted to achieve in the first place. And if you feel like it's no longer working, it may still be worth persevering. "That serum has gotten your skin from point A to point B and you may lose all that progress if you stop using it," he explains. "However, there may be times when you notice different concerns, perhaps as your skin matures, or simply because your skin requires additional help to improve its appearance. If this is the case, re-evaluate your skincare routine and change your serum to address your current wants and needs." At specific times of life such as pregnancy your skin needs might change (hello, unexpected adult acne) and you may also want to hold off on certain ingredients like retinol.

And what about price? Will an expensive serum always be better than an affordable one? Slingerland says no, it's really all about the ingredients. But Hadikin opines there is some benefit in spending a little more. "The biggest thing is that you pay more for the technology and ingredients that deliver the fastest results possible," he explains. "It's that and also the sensorial experience and the look of it. I have all my designer serums on display! That's a lot of why people spend more—that little point of luxury." ▽

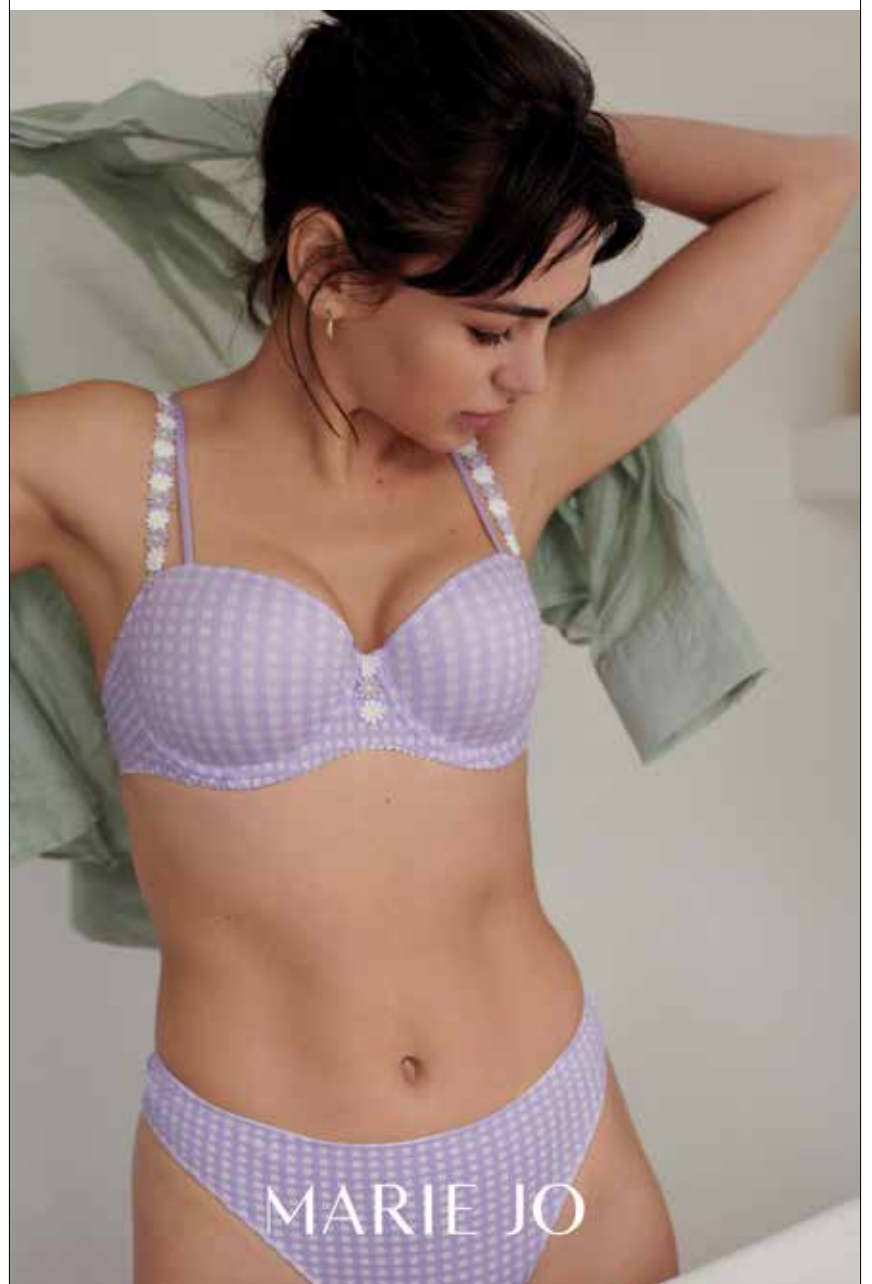
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Purple Pour

These full-bodied wines were born in the purple

BY JANET HELOU



Pantone releases its Colour of the Year annually, inspiring a plethora of products paying tribute to the newly crowned hue. This year, the shade in question, Very Peri, a blue-purple of sorts, can, too, be applied to wine. When it comes to colour, wine is often categorized as existing in one of three bins: red, white or rosé. In truth, a multitude of shades exist on a spectrum, from the palest straw of a light-bodied vino verde to the inky depths of a malbec from Cahors, to yellows and reds with hints of green, blue and brown.

So where does the purple tone come from (or salmon, or garnet, or gold, or copper)? Aside from artificially coloured wines (sacrilege!), the colour and intensity of a wine derives from several notable factors. Grape varietal is a relatively easy place to start; Beaujolais Nouveau made with gamay grapes as well as Valpolicella tend to make pale, purple wines, while medium-purple wines can be made with malbec and syrah. At the deep end (of wines, not the U.K. rock band), pinotage, zinfandel and cabernet sauvignon can

pack a dark-purple punch.

Curiously, red wines with higher acidity tend to have more red-based hues, whereas wines with lower acidity are “bluer,” and, given that wines with higher acidity are better suited to aging, it’s no surprise that you won’t see too many positively purple examples of older vintages. The colour of wine also evolves with age as pigments oxidize; often, a bright-purple colour indicates a youthful wine and, as it ages, it transitions into ruby, then garnet, then tawny brown. The saturation of the colour, sometimes known as opacity or intensity, is largely due to the thickness of the grape skin and the nature and length of skin contact with the juice during winemaking.

While all of this paints a pretty picture, the question remains: which big, bold red to choose, and what to pair it with? The endless selection of grape varietals and styles makes it impossible to give any blanket guidance here, so best to gather a few friends (and a few of the bottles below) and taste your way to your favourite. V



LOST PEAK 2019 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, COLUMBIA VALLEY, WASHINGTON

The bold, expressive flavours of this Columbia Valley Cab are like a great dessert course: black cherry, plum, chocolate and coffee. But the soft tannins make it an excellent pairing partner to a stewy beef bourguignon or a charcuterie platter.



BERINGER KNIGHTS VALLEY 2019 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, NAPA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

This richly coloured full-bodied Cali cab has structure, depth and elegance; without a doubt cellar-worthy but, if you simply can’t wait, highly drinkable now. Complex layers of wild bramble berry fruit, wild violets and notes of cocoa powder, dark chocolate, graphite and tobacco spice would be a sensational partner to a roast rack of lamb or cheese-stuffed portobello mushrooms.



CHECKMATE ARTISANAL WINERY 2017 BLACK ROOK MERLOT, OLIVER-OSOYOOS, B.C.

In chess, the rook can move only forward, backward, left or right at any time; this Black Rook, however, is anything but linear. Rich with dark fruits, cassis, anise, bramble fruit and coffee, the savoury tannins would “play” well with steak and garlic mushrooms, and red-fruit sauces.



ARBOLEDA 2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, ACONCAGUA VALLEY, CHILE

This beauty shows a bright ruby-red colour with violet shimmers, and a palate that’s dominated by raspberries, black-currant, sweet spice and tobacco, with a subtle savoury note. Duck breast with red wine sauce and a glass of Arboleda? Dream pairing.



CEDARCREEK ESTATE WINERY 2019 PINOT NOIR, KELOWNA, B.C.

This pinot noir is 100 per cent wild fermented in small vessels, both steel and concrete. The result is fruit-meets-savoury: blackberries, raspberries, mushrooms and cooking herbs that dance in a long, structured finish. A lovely partner to salmon or other fatty fish, or a simple Margherita pizza.



OSOYOOS LAROSE 2017 LE GRAND VIN, OKANAGAN VALLEY, B.C.

Le Grand Vin is Osoyoos Larose’s flagship Bordeaux-style blend; ripe cassis, dark berries, violet, savoury herb and toasty oak spice make for a balanced, structured and elegant sip. Highly age-worthy and positively perfect with filet mignon and strong cheeses like gorgonzola.



TERRAZAS DE LOS ANDES 2018 MALBEC RESERVA, MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

A beautifully structured, high-altitude malbec sourced from the Luján de Cuyo and Uco Valley of Mendoza. Fresh acidity and ripe tannins are supported by a plush, fruit-forward palate. A knock-out when paired with roasted herbed chicken or savoury mushroom-stuffed peppers.



LE VIEUX PIN 2019 ÉQUINOXE SYRAH, OLIVER, B.C.

This one is for wine lovers who are more inclined toward the new-world exuberance and fruit-forward quality of big wines. Intriguing notes of violets, black pepper and a touch of baking spices and, with age, black olives and earthiness. Brilliant with New York steak or marinated tempeh with mushroom and peppercorn gravy.



BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU

Often considered a delightfully unserious wine, Beaujolais Nouveau is made with gamay grapes using carbonic maceration which results in a purple-pink wine with very bright, fresh-fruit character of cherry, strawberry, kirsch, bubble gum and banana notes. It’s released the same year as its harvest, every third Thursday in November, and intended for immediate drinking, so this one is best served chilled and swilled back without a care.

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MINICHIELLO JEWELLERS

The evolution of a 1958-founded stand into a multi-generational family jewelry business with a loyal (and celebrity-studded) client list can largely be credited to Fred Minichiello's charisma and charm.

"He loved meeting new people, making people happy and was as social as they come," says Deena Minichiello, adding that her dad's interest in fashion and music, his connections to Italy and a growing trend of layers upon layers of gold necklaces soon led him to source and sell high-quality and fashionable jewelry pieces and to move into Minichiello's first boutique on the corner of Robson and Granville.

"He wanted to be, and in most senses was, the go-to for all Italian gold jewelry pieces, from necklaces to medallions, earrings and rings. There are stories often told about ... the long lineups of customers down the hallway waiting to buy the latest in gold chains," recalls Deena, who is now Minichiello's vice-president and creative director, working alongside her mother, Sharon, and brother-in-law, Daniel.

Fred's unwavering commitment to his customers is a legacy that remains at Minichiello, which now operates out of a glittering showroom in the Rogers Building on Granville Street, as well as internationally online. And, these days, the business specializes not just in gold, but also in diamonds, custom engagement rings and gemstone jewelry. According to Deena, input from herself, her mom and, at one point, her sister Crestina, added a fresh perspective on fashion and design to the collections Minichiello carried.

"Having three females—his wife and two daughters—who love everything to do with fashion and design at Fred's side enabled Minichiello's to always stay on top of and ahead of the trends in jewelry and design, making sure each collection was current, timeless and what women would actually want to wear," she says. "The quality of our jewelry pieces is also something that we never compromise on and something that Fred always prided himself on. After all, it is our family name on every piece of jewelry, so we really have to stand behind it and be proud of each and every one."

Sixty years in business has made for



PHOTOS: ERIN SOUSA

a plethora of memories and milestones for Minichiello, including being a part of Michael Bublé's engagement to Luisana Lopilato. "To be mentioned on TV and in fashion magazines and newspapers for designing the engagement ring was just surreal and incredible," Deena says, adding that Sonny and Cher, Alan Thicke, Loni Anderson, Carl Weathers, Jillian Harris and others have also been among Minichiello's star clientele. But, she says, being a small part of some of the most momentous occasions in any client's life, celebrity or not, is really what makes being in the jewelry business worth it.

Today, Minichiello is proud to be Vancouver's trusted expert when it comes to delivering fine craftsmanship and quality service, offering both men and women's engagement and wedding rings, as well as diamond and gemstone jewelry for those memorable and cherished events. Says Deena, "There's a lot of options out there. But we're different. We're family-owned and operated with six decades of helping generations find the right statement for the perfect moment. We provide unparalleled service alongside an elegant and timeless collection of loose diamonds, gemstones and jewelry that you'll keep in your family, the way we've kept it in our family."

In honour of Fred, and with hopes to see their own children take over the business

one day, Deena and the Minichiello team have their sights set firmly on the future. Short term, she's delighted to welcome spring and summer styles to her offerings, including fancy-shape diamonds in engagement and anniversary ring designs and the ever-growing yellow-gold trend. "Chunky necklaces and bracelets will be a something we will see a lot of this year as well as the complete opposite end of the spectrum, which includes dainty, feminine and sparkly jewelry," she adds. "It's all about self-expression and individuality."

Longer term (and looking to the next 60 years), Deena says Minichiello's online presence will continue to expand, with more information, products and unique user experiences. "We hope to make purchasing jewellery from anywhere in the world an experience filled with trust, ease and comfortability," she says. Additionally, the brand will continue to evolve with some exciting changes coming in 2022.

"You can always expect us to be ahead of and on top of the latest in jewelry design, and really focusing on our client relationships and what they have come to expect from us," Deena says. "And, hopefully, the third generation of Minichiello's will eventually continue the business to keep their grandfather's tradition and legacy alive." #405 - 470 Granville St., 604-685-4439. Minichiellojewellers.com NOA NICHOL

HERSCHEL SUPPLY CO.

Vancouver's own travel lifestyle brand, Herschel, has opened a flagship on Robson. Founded by brothers Lyndon and Jamie Cormack in 2009, Herschel has quickly become one of the most recognizable apparel brands globally. No matter where you might be in the world, chances are you'll spot a Herschel label. In store, concrete floors and contemporary furniture and fixtures are juxtaposed by bright displays to showcase a wide variety of gear, from signature backpacks to luggage and apparel. IG-worthy details are scattered throughout: checkered rugs add pops of colour and a digital sidewalk installation shoots motion video back into the space. Stay tuned for hosted events including artist-in-residence programs, workshops, speaker series and more. Meantime, peruse the gallery wall at the back of the space to gain a sense of what inspires team Herschel: a selection of favourite books, vintage items and art pieces have been carefully curated to be shared with customers. There's also a reading nook with a variety of magazines and books on music, film, photography and, of course, travel. 1080 Robson St., 604-336-7271. Herschel.ca LYNDI BARRETT



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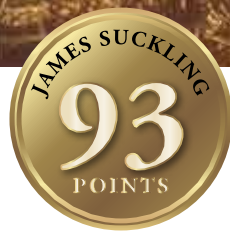


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