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VITA



The *february* Issue

INSIDE *the* ISSUE

STYLE **Lingerie's latest trends are gorgeous and green**

FASHION **Après-ski fashion hits the slopes**

HEALTH **What your skin needs to know about winter's leading woe**

BEAUTY **A new way to press reset on your microbladed brows**

WINE **Canadian BIPOC women are leading the way in wine**



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Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

Happy New ... February? Without a January edition of VITA, it's my time to wish you a fabulous new year, and to include in this issue some start-of-the-year content, like our tarot reading below. We're also covering bra trends for 2023, après-ski fashion, Valentine's Day wine-and-food pairings, new skin and hair launches and a cutting-edge innovation to repair microblading gone wrong. For my editor's picks this month, I'm going with two pink selections. Smythe's DB Overcoat will most certainly be a staple in my closet for years to come, while this BCBG rose dress, snapped up from local secondhand and vintage shop Collective Will, is a sweet addition to my wardrobe.

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



PHOTOS: DARIUS BASHAR



Daniel Pillai

@QUEENDEETAROT

"Meeting your highness"—that's the motto of intuitive tarot reader and coach Daniel Pillai, a.k.a. Queen Dee Tarot. From in-depth readings to guided messages to advice from your angels, Toronto-based Queen Dee's services are designed to help empower you on a journey of self-love, self-care and self-discovery so that you can enjoy the plentiful bounty available to you as you choose what roads to walk down in life. Below, a look at what the cards have in store for us in 2023.

Overall Energies: Tower, Sun, 2 of Wands



Overall, 2023 will be a year that will bring further change—the type that will bring you closer to your happiness, inner desires and freedom. With the Tower card present, you're looking at continued rather than sudden, unexpected change; the next 12 months will allow an opportunity to practise learnings from 2022 through our actions and beliefs. The Sun and 2 of Wands both look at the bigger picture; stay focused on your goals, keeping the result in mind. A high-level-thinking approach will enable you to keep your eye on the prize rather than focus on the little things. Don't get bogged down in the details!

Love Energies: 9 of Wands, 9 of Pentacles, 10 of Pentacles



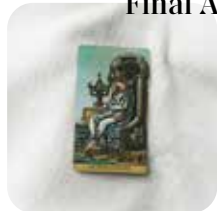
Two 9 cards assure us that 2023 will see the end of any negative energies when it comes to matters of the heart. The 9 of Wands is a card of resilience; any heartbreak is serving you well, and the pain is no longer as strong as it once was. You are learning from the past. This level of growth is bringing you to the 9 of Pentacles energy, of sovereignty, solitude and independence. The 10 of Pentacles is ultimate success and happiness and, since you're coming into the energy of the 9 of Pentacles in 2023, you're being assured by the universe that, through hard work, dedication, self-love and self-prioritization you will achieve everything you desire. You are the centre of the universe, and you are being told that throughout, all good things are possible. Believe this and you will soar.

Career Energies: 9 of Cups, 3 of Swords, Ace of Pentacles



There will initially be some struggle and hardships on the career front but, if you stay committed to your goals and find new avenues, entertain new ideas and work with new people, you'll get what you want. While the 3 of Swords is typically one of heartbreak and disappointment, the Ace of Pentacles coming right after is a wonderful affirmation that all disappointments and setbacks have a purpose to play in your journey and you will overcome them all. One of the biggest challenges you may face in 2023 is your commitment to what you want. If your goals are set from your ego, then you will feel more challenged than usual. Each goal and intention should be set from the heart and speak to your larger purpose in life, ensuring that you remain dedicated to the journey without any distractions.

Final Advice: Queen of Cups



One powerful card wraps up the outlook for 2023: stay true to your heart space. The biggest energetic and spiritual challenge we face is, often, the tension between our head (thoughts, ego) and heart (soul, true desire). By acknowledging how you feel, maintaining a mindset of gratitude and growth, and staying in tune with your emotions, you'll make choices that will fuel your overall purpose and ensure your happiness. ♡

THE MAKING OF THE February Issue

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Bra La-La

Among the latest lingerie trends: innerwear as outerwear and garments going green

BY ALEESHA HARRIS

The first bra, created in 1910, was the innovation of a then-19-year-old woman named Mary Phelps Jacobs. Incorporating two handkerchiefs affixed with some ribbon, the design served as the foundation for the modern bras worn today. In the 100-plus years since its creation, the design has evolved, with elements such as sizing, support and material the key areas of innovation. But, fuelled by customer feedback, comfort has been the primary consideration amid the pandemic years.

"People are prioritizing comfort more than ever, especially when it comes to undergarments," says Emily Scarlett, director of communications for the Toronto-headquartered brand Knix. Scarlett points to the company's recently launched Revolution Bra—an underwire-free design with stretchy cups that features a BeyondSmooth fabric designed to form to the body—as the brand's answer to the call for comfort in bras. "This bra was three years in the making, for an endless search for the smoothest fabric, and hundreds of hours of wear testing across all sizes," Scarlett says. "It is one of our biggest breakthroughs in bras."

Back in Vancouver, Norma Beaucage of La Jolie Madame agrees, saying, "Comfort is still definitely key; women are wanting bralettes and wire-free options that are pretty and colourful while also having the comfort factor, and are gravitating to buttery soft fabrics for everyday wired bras." Christine Morton, founder of the Vancouver-based boutique Christine Lingerie, says she's also noticed a sharp shift away from bras being purely elements of necessity as shoppers look for eye-catching designs that can become a part of their overall ensemble.

"Bras are more elegant and beautiful than they've ever been and they are being worn to be shown as an outerwear piece," Morton says. The innerwear-as-outerwear shift will be everywhere this spring, Marianne Cobb, the general manager at WonderBra Canada



"People are prioritizing comfort more than ever, especially when it comes to undergarments"



predicts, prompted by its appearance in several spring fashion runways collections. "Bra tops, lace bodysuits and visible layered innerwear are taking centre stage under spring sheer trends as seen on the runways from Tom Ford, Victoria Beckham, Prada and Versace," she says. "Lace and mesh continue to add that sense of beauty." However, Beaucage opines, "I think this is more of a high-fashion trend, it is not really translating into everyday attire for most women."

While runway trends can certainly signal upcoming availability of designs, Morton points to social media as one of the biggest motivators behind the movement to celebrate every aspect of one's body—including one's undergarments. "All the ads and social media posts you see reflect a wonderful array of bodies that celebrate the uniqueness and beauty of different women, and designers have embraced that," she says. "I believe it's our current culture with social media being a driving force for the fashion industry. People are posting everything and they're bold in their fashion choices. People are more comfortable with their own bodies, realizing the 'perfect body' is a myth. Let's celebrate our own uniqueness."

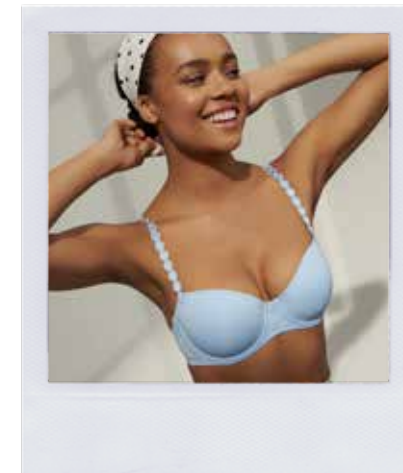
The emphasis on embracing one's unique shape is part of a long-overdue discussion around inclusivity in the industry, which has prompted many brands to re-examine their offerings through the broader lens of skin tone representation and sizing. "The lingerie industry has come a long way in a few short years, but there is still a way to go," Scarlett says of the improvements in these areas. "Currently, our lingerie bottoms range from a XS to a XXXXL, and our bras from a 30A to a 44H, but we're still working through our approach to be more inclusive when it comes to the intimates category."

With sustainability an increasing consideration for many Canadian consumers—49 per-cent of shoppers say they purchase from companies that are supportive of protecting the environment, according to a March 2021 Statista poll—the idea of going green has also entered the bra category. "Most companies are sourcing eco-grade fabrics and producing laces and fabrics with recycled fibres," says Beaucage. "There is also a shift with some companies to 100 per cent organic cotton for the lining of panties."

"Sustainability awareness keeps growing and consumers are more informed," confirms Cobb. "Women are looking for products made with sustainable materials such as recycled nylons and lace or plant-derived fabrics such as lyocell and organic cotton. They want brands and products that simultaneously work to reduce the negative environmental footprint while implementing a circular model for the fashion industry."

WonderBra has looked to meet that interest with its EcoPure collection, which marked the brand's first sustainably centred collection since its start in 1939. "It made its debut in the autumn of 2021 with the introduction of new styles made from recycled polyester fibres, preventing the nylon waste from otherwise heading to the landfill," she explains. "Today, the EcoPure collection continues to expand, with additional silhouettes every season as well as the transition of our existing bestsellers into sustainable fabrics."

Recycled lace and nylon have been incorporated into the brand's designs and a new seamless bra collection, set for release this spring, features two other ecological materials—Tencel from wood pulp and Refibra from pre- and post-consumer fabrics—according to Cobb. "Beyond product, we are implementing a growing number of sustainable solutions such as the use of recycled and recyclable packaging, weight reduction and reducing the use of water in our production facilities," she says of the company's efforts. "We are taking steps towards a better future for Canadian women, and our planet." ♡



Diane's Lingerie

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Essential bra fitting tips

We asked the team at Diane's Lingerie how to find the perfect bra size

- TRY DIFFERENT SIZES:** Every brand and style of bra fits differently, so it's common for each person to have more than just one bra size.
- BUY FOR THE BIGGER BREAST:** Both breasts are never exactly the same size. The bra you choose must always fit the fuller side and should be a style that creates balance on both sides.
- TAKE TIME TO SETTLE IN:** Positioning breast tissue into the cups is important to getting the fit right. Cups should contain all of the breast without any gaps or spills and the wire should never dig into breast tissue.
- FIND THE MIDDLE:** The bra band should sit directly in the middle of the back, parallel to where the bra is positioned in the front.
- FOCUS ON THE BAND:** The band provides 80 per-cent of the support for the bra; the straps only 20 per-cent. Firm comfort is the goal for fitting both band and straps.

Fashion Hits the Slopes

Winter style takes inspiration from functional skiwear, but with high-fashion elements that you can take off-piste, too

BY AILEEN LALOR

In summer, we all dressed like we were about to hit Central Court at Wimbledon. This season, we're switching to après ski-inspired gear that's for far more than simply shredding the gnar. It's a trend that's been gathering momentum for a while but now it's really—pardon our pun—snowballed.

Chanel was at the forefront of high-end ski and après-ski garb, having launched its Coco Neige collection in 2018. This year it incorporated brand elements like quilting and the classic interlocking C motif in snowboarding-inspired silhouettes.

Gucci has given ski-inspired refreshes to eyewear and signature handbag lines like the Horsebit 1955, Diana and GG Marmont. There are also puffer jackets, vests and a Colorblock GG jacquard down jacket that's straight out of an '80s ski movie—and fabulous. Most recently, Gucci introduced a curation of capsule collections by eight select designers, shaped explicitly and implicitly by the ski slopes. Street style meets snow in the limited-edition Vault Altitude range, which includes ready-to-wear, shoes, accessories, jewelry and home accessories available exclusively online. Our favourite from the offerings: punk-inspired crocheted accessories by Gui Rosa and freeze-worthy footwear by Moon Boot.

MCM's collection includes puffers in biodegradable nylon and padded boots in recycled nylon and calf leather. The standout is the Après-Ski Cubic Mono-gram Bomber Jacket, which is made from Econyl, an infinitely recyclable material created from waste. It has luxe touches like beading on the sleeves and white piping. Equally cool is the Après-Ski Intarsia Knit Logo Headband.

Several brands have continued or started new collaborations to bring together designer styling with sporty or outdoorsy technology. Michael Kors has joined with Ellesse for items like track pants, sweaters, jackets, merino mittens and bags, in the signature Ellesse orange-and-red palette. "I'm thrilled with the capsule of luxe, glamorous sportswear that we've collaborated on—it works perfectly whether you're at the ski lodge or hitting the city streets," said Kors in a press release.

If you want your après-ski to be pretty and practical, there's Canada Goose's collaboration with sustainable fashion brand Reformation. These parkas and reversible puffers and vests come in a variety of prints and are made from recycled materials. They also have all Canada Goose's performance elements—think hardy materials and water-repellent finishes. Even the reversible headscarf is made from durable, water-repellent Ripstop fabric.

Last year, the fashion world went wild over New York brand Telfar's collab with Canadian outerwear label Moose Knuckles, so now it's back. Expect statement-making items like metallic quilted pants and a bomber, trimmed with fox fur. There's also a hardy, weather-proof version of Telfar's famous Puff Shopper. To finish the look (at a more affordable price point) there's Aldo's Alta boot. It has some of the aesthetic elements of ski footwear, but is really a practical winter boot—ultra-light, with waterproofing, ultra-grip and an extra-thick warm lining. V



GUCCI



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ALDO



Après Skin

The combo of icy cold weather and bright sunshine can do a number on your skin—the cold and wind dry you out while the UV rays are stronger at higher altitudes. Start your morning with a clean face. For oily, use a gentle product like CeraVe Gentle Foaming Cleanser. Dry or sensitive skin? You may not want to cleanse at all in the morning; spray on a toner like Dermalogica Hyaluronic Ceramide Mist and follow with a hydrating serum, like Regimen Wave Serum. Top with new Biossance Squalane + Vitamin C Rose Moisturizer to fight pollution and add extra sun protection, with squalane for moisture. Finish with sunscreen—SkinCeuticals Physical Fusion UV Defense Sunscreen SPF 50 has a hint of a tint to even out your tone and contains only mineral UV filters—great for sensitive skin. Prefer the no-makeup effect? Avène's Aqua Fluid Sun Protection SPF 50 is ultra-lightweight and also good for reactive complexions. Finish with a lip balm that has sun protection, like Ava Isa Sun Whip, with zinc oxide for UV filtering and a touch of colour.

Après ski, sunscreens can be tricky to remove, so get a decent cleanser, like Consonant Skin+Care Makeup Removing Cleansing Oil, which will take off everything without a residue. Use your Ceramide Mist again and follow with IT Cosmetics Overnight Serum, which has three antioxidants to help repair any damage done by sun exposure. Finish with your Biossance moisturizer and slug with Vaseline if you like. Then slather your lips in Fenty Plush Puddin' Intensive Recovery Lip Mask, which has hydrating ingredients like coconut and castor oils and pomegranate and jojoba oil complex.

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New Noshes

Where to wine and dine locally this month

BY KATIE NANTON

SALMON N' BANNOCK ON THE FLY

Since 2019 Vancouver's only Indigenous-owned restaurant has been operating out of an intimate West Broadway location, serving fresh fare made from traditional ingredients like game meat, berries and wild fish. Now, Salmon n' Bannock has spread its wings and opened a second eatery at the Vancouver International Airport, located on the unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The cuisine at this, North America's first Indigenous airport restaurant, is imbued with rich taste and legacy—and it's delicious. Don't miss the signature bannock (we loved it as a "taco" topped with vegetarian chili), custardy Ojibwe wild rice pudding studded with dried cranberries, or the Feel the Beet power salad packed with fresh veg and wild candied salmon, tossed with a spicy maple vinaigrette. About to miss your flight? Grab a chunk of candied salmon with bannock that will have you wishing you took two. *Vancouver International Airport, Richmond, 604-370-3239. Salmonandbannock.net*



LUNCH BAR BY KAFKA'S

Nothing says "February food" like big, hot bowls of soup, nourishing chili and rich stews made fresh. Oh, and grilled cheese sandwiches—naturally. Lunch Bar by Kafka's knows the comfort-food recipe for success. Open since November, find the pop-up lunch spot in Kafka's West Hastings location, featuring a made-in-house selection of stews (there's always a veg and a meat option), big sandwiches and healthy glory bowls—just don't snooze on your faves, cause they might not be around for long. If you spy it on the menu, get the beef chili topped with shredded mozza, sour cream and cornbread crumble (there's a veg-an option, too). Recent soups included warming winter veg and hearty beef bourguignon, and sandwiches served on fresh-baked sourdough (vegan meatball sub, anyone?). *151 W. Hastings. Kafkascoffee.ca*

NOVELLA COFFEE BAR

From the culinary minds behind award-winning Published on Main and Bar Susu, and the caffeinated geniuses at House of Funk Brewing, comes Novella—and Main Street has never had a coffee shop quite like this. It's magnetically cool with seating aplenty (cosy couches, chill high-tops, a dining area) and music that makes you wanna linger. The food? Elevated and inventive. Feel like a gruyere French omelet with a mug of burdock-and-ginger healing broth? Done. Craving a twist on your morning cup of yogurt? The French-inspired yogurt bavaois with sea buckthorn and hemp seeds is eye-catching and antioxidant-rich. A sleeper hit is the savoury steel-cut oats with mushrooms and a poached egg and, snack-wise, we recommend the devilishly good ham-and-cheese croissants made by ButterBoom Bakery, and the baked-in-house cookies. Currently open Monday to Friday, we're waiting for weekend brunch and a prix fixe dinner menu to be offered, along with the opening of the next-door micro-grocery featuring fresh bread and goods by local foodie brands. *2650 Main St., 604-428-6711. Novellacoffeebar.com*



TO LIVE FOR BAKERY & CAFE

After 12 years of running her successful bakery (and stocking 150-plus cafés and shops with her baked goods) owner, founder, and animal rights advocate Erin Ireland has at long last opened a brick-and-mortar bakeshop. Independently owned and sleek as can be, To Live For on Nanaimo Street oozes joie de vivre; the light-filled, 18-seat-space has a window that gives visitors a peek at the cake-decorating team, plus there is a little play area for kiddos. But the pièce de résistance is the pastry case. Try everything, and take note: it's all plant-based. The "sausage" roll is a savoury must-have; the butter-less croissant is flaky as can be; the cake pops are a dream come true; and the dense palmier will transport you to Paris. There's also vegan soft-serve ice cream, fresh sourdough bread, stunning cakes, and a full menu of espresso-based drinks. There are countless reasons to check out To Live For, but if you need even more, the bakery also donates partial proceeds to animal rights organizations and charities on a monthly basis. *1508 Nanaimo St., 604-690-2720. Tolivefor.ca*

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Sexy Feasts

For Valentine's Day, pair these dishes, each featuring an aphrodisiac ingredient, with the perfect bottle of wine

BY NOA NICHOL



Prosciutto and *artichoke* flatbread with Rodney Strong Cabernet Sauvignon—rich with dark cherry, plum and baking spices accompanied by black pepper notes, crushed violet and cassis.



Asparagus, ricotta, egg pizza with Mission Hill Jagged Rock Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc-Semillon. Packed with citrus and drive, this bottle is textural and vibrant.



Homemade chocolate *truffles* with CedarCreek Estate Winery Organic Pinot Noir—earthy, with notes of blueberry and dark cherry.



Figs stuffed with gorgonzola, honey and crispy guanciale with CedarCreek Estate Winery Organic Riesling. An exciting balance between acidity and residual sugar, it offers notes of citrus fruits, peaches and white flowers.



Oyster shooters with lemon, black caviar and sour cream with Lanson Black Label Brut, offering subtle toasty and honey notes, and a joyful stream of fine bubbles.



Red *chili* bowls with Red Barn Silent Partner Cabernet Franc. Taste red and black cherry, mixed berry jam, plum and prune notes in this bottle.



Watermelon, feta and mint salad with Liquidity Reserve Chardonnay; peach crumble, honeysuckle blossoms, and tangelo oil spritz with toasty warm vanilla and cantaloupe.



Chocolate-covered strawberries with a Dillon's My Sweet Valentine Cocktail: two ounces Dillon's Dry Gin 7 (or Unfiltered Gin 22), a half ounce Dillon's Niagara Grenadine and a half ounce fresh lemon juice, one egg white (or an ounce aquafaba), three dashes Dillon's Rhubarb Bitters and dehydrated raspberries, for garnish. Add the gin, grenadine, lemon juice, egg white and bitters to a cocktail shaker and dry shake for 10-15 seconds. Add ice and shake for another 15 seconds. Strain your cocktail into a chilled coupe glass. Garnish.



Cold Comfort

What all skin tones need to know about winter's leading skin woe

BY INGRIE WILLIAMS
& EMILY MACCULLOCH
@T.ZONEBEAUTY

Eczema (a.k.a. atopic dermatitis) is a chronic inflammatory skin condition that's characterized by dry, itchy patches. While redness has historically been flagged as another key marker, inflammation can present itself differently in various skin tones—something actress and entrepreneur Tia Mowry discovered firsthand. Indeed, “[Eczema] tends to be more of a purple or ash-grey colour in darker skin tones, making the diagnosis more challenging,” says Dr. Sonya Abdulla, a dermatologist at Dermatology on Bloor in Toronto. This lesser-known fact prompted Aveeno to launch their #SkinVisibility campaign to raise awareness among Canadians about the underdiagnosis, care and treatment of eczema in people of colour. We caught up with Mowry, who has partnered with the brand, to hear her struggles and triumphs dealing with eczema in the public eye.

When did you first start noticing your eczema?

I had gone undiagnosed for years. As a child my mom, who herself experienced undiagnosed symptoms into adulthood, thought I had sunspots because my eczema is triggered by bad weather. I would get flare-ups of round circles or dry spots that were itchy and scaly. As I aged, I started getting small, itchy, and painful bumps on my hands.

How did you eventually get diagnosed?

I went to a Black doctor who quickly identified my skin issues as eczema and she referred me to a dermatologist. Once I got diagnosed, I was hyper-aware that neither I, nor my mother, had the proper resources or tools to find diagnosis easily.



What made you want to partner with Aveeno?

What I love about working with Aveeno is that there is now awareness of how eczema presents on BIPOC people. I was able to get my children diagnosed and treated for their eczema relatively easily, which was not my experience at all.

How have you learned to treat flare-ups?

Being proactive has really helped me. Once you find the right products and are diligent about your routine, dealing with eczema becomes a lot easier. When I continuously use my routine, I don't suffer with itchy skin as much and my flare-ups are less frequent and more manageable.

What beauty rituals soothe your eczema-prone skin?

The Aveeno Eczema Care Itch Relief Balm and Ultra-Calming Nourishing Night Cream are amazing. To hold moisture in my skin as I sleep, I use the night cream on my hands, legs and feet before bed. [Aveeno.ca](https://www.aveeno.ca)

Dos From a Derm

Dr. Abdulla shares her need-to-know tips to curb irritation.

- 1 Opt for short showers over baths using warm water and a non-soap cleanser. When you exit the shower, apply prescription medication on hot spots and use moisturizer on your face and body.
- 2 Avoid fragrance in products and laundry detergents and keep skincare simple. Patients with eczema often need to limit exfoliation and the use of vitamin C, retinol, AHA and BHA.
- 3 To reduce flare-ups, skincare with oats and glycerin will minimize itchiness and strengthen your skin barrier, however eczema in darker skin tones will also often experience hyperpigmentation. Daily SPF use is important as well.

VITA X SHEAMOISTURE

Good Beauty

The latest innovations from SheaMoisture are good for hair, people and the planet. We spoke with Canada brand manager Maureen Kitheka to learn more

What does SheaMoisture's motto, "Committed to serving those who have been underserved," mean?

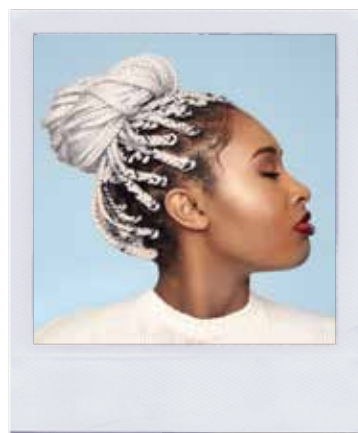
SheaMoisture's vision is to champion equity to achieve equality in the pursuit of true freedom for the Black community. As a Black-founded and, now, Black-led brand, SheaMoisture has been committed to overserving the Black community that has been underserved for years. We do this by providing nourishing, no-compromise beauty and through our purpose-driven business model that reinforces our unwavering commitment to empower and invest in the Black community by democratizing entrepreneurship to help close the racial wealth gap.

With Shea butter a core ingredient, how does the brand ensure fair and equitable, not to mention supportive, acquisition practices?

Our core ingredients, Shea butter and virgin coconut oils, are sourced from women's cooperatives in Ghana and Burkina Faso and, through our supplier, The Savannah Fruits Company, we are fortifying long-term partnerships in West Africa. This supports women's co-operatives to create lasting generational wealth and positive community outcomes. We also pay fair-trade premiums for certified raw ingredients from women's co-operatives, buy handcrafted processed Shea butter (not just the raw nuts) to provide year-round income for women beyond the seasonal Shea nut collection, and buy organic ingredients to protect the environment and workers' health. Organic raw ingredients also command a 15 to 20 per cent premium.

What about the brand's community and social work closer to home?

In 2021, we launched the Salon Relief Fund in Canada, which provided financial grants to salon owners during a time when salons, especially those owned, led and operated by the



Black community in Canada, faced some of the most challenging times in recent years. In 2022, we launched the SheaMoisture Dream Fund to help unlock entrepreneurs' dreams by providing access to resources to address common barriers such as lack of access to capital, educational opportunities and mentorship. That year, we gave financial grants (\$50,000 in total) to Black business owners and provided entrepreneurial education. In 2023, we are expanding our programs and grants under the Dream Fund to continue

with the work we've started in the Black Entrepreneurship space, so stay tuned for more news on this.

SheaMoisture's latest launches in Canada use innovative haircare formulas made specifically for high- and low-porosity hair. What does porosity refer to?

Porosity is the term used to describe how well moisture flows through hair, and how it is retained in the hair. High-porosity strands are prone to breakage as they can't seem to hold onto essential

moisture, and low-porosity strands are prone to build-up and are sensitive to added protein as they can't seem to absorb moisture. We are launching two collections, offering solutions for either unique hair porosity. For high-porosity strands, we've got you covered with our moisture replenishing shampoo and hair masque—weightless hydration formulas blended with mongongo and jojoba oils, aloe vera and fair-trade Shea butter to replenish dry and damaged strands. For low-porosity strands, we've also got you covered with our hydrating shampoo, hydrating conditioner and a hydrating leave-in detangler. The lightweight formula, blended with grapeseed, tea tree and sunflower oils and fair-trade Shea butter, replenishes essential moisture. It moisturizes without surface build-up and leaves hair smooth with a healthy shine.

Do you have any advice around best regimes when it comes to different porosity hair types?

Take the time to understand what your porosity is by either doing the hair porosity test at home, and/or talking to a professional stylist about it. Then, ensure you are using the right products for your unique porosity.

There are also new SheaMoisture styling gels available?

SheaMoisture's two new hair styling gels—Jamaican Black Castor Oil + Flaxseed Strong Hold Styling Gel and Coconut And Hibiscus + Flaxseed Defining Styling Gel—provide lasting hold, shine and nourishment without any dryness, crunch or flaking. This collection features a non-alcohol-based formulation for a healthy look and feel, taming flyaways and adding strong hold to your defined styles. Apply a small amount to wet hair. Style as needed; a little goes a long way. Style as desired. Perfect for achieving twist-out, braid-out or wash-'n-go styles. [Sheamoisture.com/ca/en](https://www.sheamoisture.com/ca/en)

Brow Out

Regretting that microblading procedure? Now there's a way to press reset on your brows—and erase other tattoos, too

BY AILEEN LALOR

When TV host and producer Fiona Forbes posted on social media about having the UNDO procedure—a special tattoo-removal type of treatment—on her microbladed brows, she received an atmospheric river of messages. “My DMs were on fire!” she says. “I did not realize there are so many women out there that are like me—that had regrets about having microblading in the early years.”

Forbes had plucked her brows to oblivion in her teens, turning them from Brooke Shields-style bushy brows to “little McDonald’s arches.” She jumped at the chance to have her brows microbladed 10 or so years ago, when the procedure—a semipermanent eyebrow tattoo—was fairly new. Subsequently, she had the brows touched up periodically by different practitioners using different types of pigment. “After five or six years, they started to turn blue and red in some spots,” she says. “I’m the kind of person, I just want to wake up and not put on makeup some days, but I would have to always cover the brows up and then I would kind of have half makeup on so then I would have to do the whole thing.”

Brow colour wasn’t the issue for Noa Nichol, *VITA*’s editor, it was a lack of refinement in their appearance. “Rather than individual strokes that mimic individual hairs, I ended up with two ‘blocks’ for eyebrows,” she explains. In many cases, there’s nothing intrinsically wrong with the tattooing, but people change their hair colour and want their brows to match.

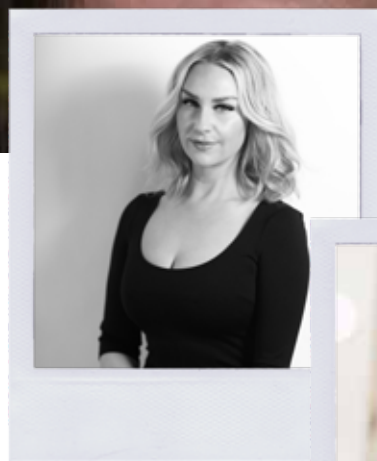
It is possible to have laser tattoo removal—though Brianna Errelat, founder of Be Brow Studio in Vancouver, says it’s a painful and time-consuming option, requiring many sessions. “It also is not an option for some skins and doesn’t work on all pigments and inks,” she says. Instead, she uses UNDO when her clients want to press reset on dodgy eyebrows or other permanent makeup, and even that lower-back tattoo you got in college and have regretted ever since. Only experts in tattooing or permanent makeup can train and be certified in the procedure. “When Bri got in touch with me and said she was certified to do UNDO, I was like, ‘Start the car!’” says Forbes.

How it works: “We apply a special serum called deracination serum that kind of wakes up the pigment in the tattoo—it’s made with all-natural ingredients,” says Errelat. “It contains hyaluronic acid to hydrate, but the main ingredient is bentonite, which pulls pigment out of skin.” After applying the serum, she uses a tattoo machine to open the skin. “Then I kind of use a buffing motion to take the pigment out, going back over the tattoo. It works on any permanent makeup like brows, eyeliner and lips, and body tattoos as well,” she says.

How painful is it? Forbes says it was about as painful as the original microblading, while Nichol found it slightly more painful. “It was more like, ‘Can you stop for a sec, can I take a breath,’ that level,” says Forbes. “Bri did three passes on each brow and I don’t think I could have handled another.” Errelat will apply numbing cream beforehand and you can take Tylenol, though not Advil. “Everyone experiences different levels of pain—we all have a different tolerance,” she says. “It will also be more painful if you have your period—the same as for waxing or lasers. But this is far less painful than something like a laser tattoo removal or a Fractal laser treatment.”

One session of the removal itself lasts only about 20 minutes. The deracination serum is then left on for an additional 25 minutes or so, and then Errelat will apply a lifting clay mask and a microcurrent sheet mask, though you can skip the masks if you want to cut your visit time. “What’s cool is you are able to see the pigment coming out of skin—I always show the client the gauze pad with the colour on it after,” Errelat says. After the procedure, Forbes says she had a stinging feeling for a while, but it was minor, “like when you skin your knee.” The eyebrow skin does scab, and it may look dark because it’s tinted with pigment. “It usually lasts a week or maximum 10 days and you can’t wear makeup,” Errelat says. “Don’t sweat: that is major. A lot of my clients are women who work out a lot and I tell them they need to skip the gym or the spin class. It’s just one week!”

How many sessions you need depends on how old your tattoo is. With



older ones, the pigment is closer to the top of the skin so you might only need to visit Errelat twice. With newer ones or if a tattooist has gone too deep with the ink, you might require four sessions, with a minimum of four weeks between them. You also might not want or need complete removal but rather to gently fade what you have.

Afterwards, you can stay au naturel or, around four weeks later, get your new brows. Errelat is a fan of nanoblading, which is done with a machine rather than freehand and allows for finer strokes and more detail, for an even more natural experience. Whatever you choose, you need to be sure of your practitioner. “Make sure they give you proper information before your UNDO procedure and that they have the proper certification,” Errelat says. “The risks of this are the same of anything where you are opening the skin—infection and scarring. They need to give you the proper information about aftercare because if you don’t take care of the area it will not heal as well.”

Nichol isn’t quite sure what she’ll do next, but after two sessions of UNDO she already prefers how her brows look. “My goal is to remove these and have them redone, immediately,” she says. “I have very sparse natural brows and I don’t really like the skinny look. Big and fluffy or classic and timeless, I’m still unsure ... but I would like to be able to discern individual brow hairs.”

Forbes just wants her original, never-plucked brows back. “I don’t think my actual brows will be full enough to have a proper shape [after the procedure is finished] and so I may go for nanoblading,” she says. “The thing I’m going to bring to Bri when I do it is the last photo of myself before I discovered tweezers. That will be my inspiration photo. Of course the easiest thing would have been to listen to my mother and not pluck them in the first place, but now I can go back to what I was born with. I’m so excited. When I had that first treatment and it healed and the blue was gone, I phoned Bri screaming. It was the best Christmas gift to open. It’s really a game-changer.” ▽



Brow Buddies



Looking for at-home, temporary options to up your brow game? Forbes says the only thing that covered her blue tones was Anastasia Beverly Hills Dipbrow and Fluffy and Fuller Brow Kit. If you’re feeling steady-of-hand and want a microbladed look, Pupa’s new Brow Liner has an ultra-fine tip and comes in three shades. For people who have fairly fulsome brows and just want them to be tamed and boosted a little, there is Benefit’s Fluff Up Brow Wax, which is lightweight and gives texture and hold. For a spot of colour with your taming, try the brand’s Gimme Brow+ Tinted Volumizing Eyebrow Gel, which has microfibrils to boost brows, is longlasting and water-resistant, and comes in 10 hues.

Elephant in Paris

From down-home beginnings to a massive acquisition and a City of Light pop-up—Texas beauty brand Drunk Elephant is going places and changing faces

BY NOA NICHOL

Last October, *VITA* joined journalists and influencers from around the world in Paris (France—the good one) to celebrate American-based brand Drunk Elephant. Back in 2019, the beauty maker, founded by Tiffany Masterson seven years prior, was acquired by Shiseido Group for \$845 million USD, in a move Masterson said would allow her to “act more quickly to ... attain sustainability across the brand; get to the markets who have been requesting the products; [and] share our philosophy in a louder way, spreading awareness so that we can hopefully help more people reconnect with their skin all over the world.”

Besides excellent weather, outstanding Eiffel Tower selfie ops and the best coffee and croissants (we even learned how to make the latter in a private baking class), our group was treated to product education, a bumping party at the brand's vibrant House of Drunk pop-up and a sit-down with Masterson to learn about the story behind Drunk Elephant's unique name, its ingredient ethos and skin-smoothie methodology, and its past, present and future, beauty and business wise. Here's what we discovered.

In 2012, Masterson was a stay-at-home mom selling a single, simple beauty bar out of her home in Houston, Texas. When people pegged her as a skin pro, they began asking for advice. “People would call me and say, ‘My skin is breaking out all of a sudden.’ I asked what they were using and they would send me their products ... and I started studying ingredient decks, just as a consumer ... and noticing ... what role does each ingredient play?”

Through this research, she determined that many ingredients—and, in particular, a half-dozen she dubbed the suspicious six—were included in products not to aid the skin, but to preserve, stabilize, colour or add fragrance to the product itself. “Why are we putting ingredients in a product that's for the product to look or feel a certain way?” she told our group. “We want our skin to look and feel a certain way naturally [through] ingredients that are compatible with skin—and forget about the rest.” That, coupled with her belief that “your skin knows what to do if you let it,” was the impetus behind Drunk Elephant—a name Masterson chose based on a tale that elephants who've consumed fruit that's fallen from marula trees get “drunk” from the fermentation (they don't, but marula oil, high in antioxidants and omegas, is one of her favourite skin ingredients).

A decade and many products—including Beste No. 9 Jelly Cleanser, Framboos Glycolic Night Serum, C-Firma Fresh Day Serum, Protini Polypeptide Cream, Virgin Marula Luxury Facial Oil, C-Tango Vitamin C Eye Cream, B-Hydra Intensive Hydration Serum with Hyaluronic Acid, Wonderwild Miracle Butter, F-Balm Electrolyte Waterfacial Mask, A-Gloe Retinol Oil and the cult-fave Sukari Babyfacial AHA + BHA Mask—later, ingredients remain Masterson's passion. From new acids to retinol, ceramides and peptides, she's constantly working to upgrade old Drunk Elephant offerings and make them even better for people's skin. “Azelaic acid is so exciting. Vitamin C, ascorbic acid is so exciting. We've recently discovered, with mixing C-Firma Fresh, that, when you mix it yourself in an already enclosed container, it never touches the air. I think it's the only vitamin C on the market that never touches the air because you're activating it on your own. It lasts a full year ... after you mix it, which is a breakthrough.”

While formulations are always kept top of mind, Masterson is also a master marketer—and it shows in her brightly hued packaging. “At the time, in beauty, in makeup, there was a lot of colour and whimsy. But in skincare there was none,” she explained. “I'm a hard worker, but I don't take myself very seriously. I think this brand says that. It's very much a let's have fun, let's not take ourselves very seriously [concept]. Serious dermatologist formulations, but at the same time fun and approachable, non-intimidating, and easy to digest and understand.”

She's also adamant about providing skincare for all—to have entire families all reaching for Drunk Elephant products. “It's a brand that's geared toward anybody with skin. Anybody with skin. Babies, teenage boys, men, grandmothers, grandfathers, women,



EVENT PHOTOS: MATTHEW OLIVER - VICTOR MALECOT



husbands, teenage girls. Everybody.” Along with that, the offerings are widely available, online and at mass beauty retailers like Sephora and, recently, Shoppers Drug Mart. For those wishing to try Drunk Elephant for the first time, Masterson recommends starting with The Littles, which includes six products that make up “the whole routine. Morning, night.” And, thanks to a DIY smoothie process, which allows you to mix any Drunk Elephant products together (besides the sunscreen), she hopes to make lifelong users out of them.

“We have the smoothie concept of mixing the products together because they're all bioavailable. All of them are low-molecular-weight ingredients [so they] can be mixed together on a palm of your hand,” she explained. “The idea is to put the consumer in control. I don't like to tell the consumer what to do. I like them to figure it out for themselves because it's their skin. When they feel in control, they're making the choices. I'm not telling them. They get to run freely through the line and the philosophy and it's fun to be able to decide yourself that, ‘I'm going to mix the A-Gloe with the C-Firma and the Protini and D-Bronzi. That's what I'm doing today, and that's my concoction that nobody else in the world probably has on today.’ They come up with the idea. People love when they figure something out. There's a sense of ownership and they're invested in it. And it's very fun. It makes it fun.”

Her go-to smoothie? A morning concoction of C-Firma Fresh, A-Gloe and B-Hydra. She's also the master mixer at home, advising her teenage son to combine A-Passioni and marula oil for his post-football breakouts. And while she's “not supposed to talk about products” she's making or launching, she said that she's committed to keeping the line “a tight assortment of cleansers, moisturizers, sunscreens, exfoliants, treatment serums [that] stay within the Drunk Elephant philosophy, have it be very affordable and ensure the products last a really long time.”

And what of sustainability? When Masterson first made the announcement on social media that she'd been acquired by Shiseido Group, critics were quick to slam her for “selling out” on the grassroots and green front. But, according to Masterson, that's not the case. “Drunk Elephant and Shiseido Americas are fully aligned in our mission to become more sustainable. In fact, sustainability remains a top priority for us, for our parent company Shiseido, and its brands. As always, Drunk Elephant is strongly committed to the continued development and introduction of sustainable solutions including more recyclable packaging.” Refillables, she added, are coming soon for some products, so look out for that.

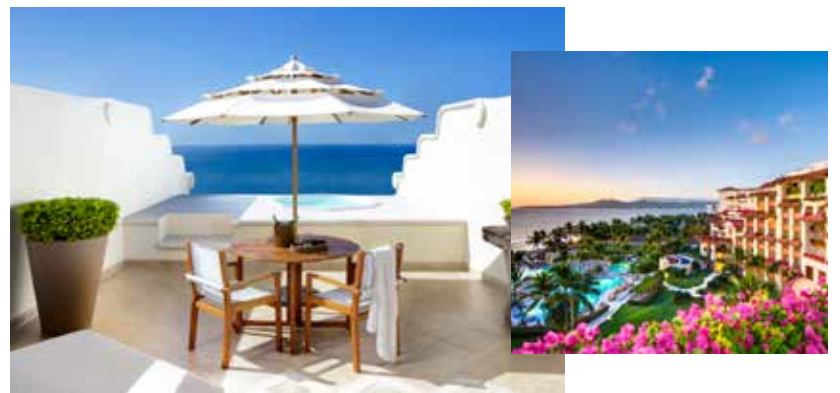
In the meantime, “It's business as usual for me,” she said, adding that “Shiseido has allowed us to continue being who we are. I am still very involved in the brand's creative direction and product development. I can continue doing what I love and have built an amazing team around me to help us expand globally and deliver the products to even more markets who have been asking for them. I'm so grateful for their partnership and for all that's to come.”

The *Gorgeous* Inconsequence of Time

World-class wellness and laid-back Zen make Mexico's Riviera Nayarit the perennial pick for those looking to unplug and unwind

BY LARA CERONI

Need a breather? Just minutes north of Puerto Vallarta, Riviera Nayarit is Mexico's newest escape. Promising 200 miles of secluded island shores, virgin beaches and hippie coastal towns, what's making the Pacific side of the country gain thrust over its Caribbean counterpart is not the landscapes and hang-loose vibes, but its attention to visitors finding their way to better wellness. I've come to cool my own jets on a sea-and-sand sojourn to the region, armed with an itinerary that's full of spa pampering and surf tides while staying low on schedules and stress. The goal: to leave sun-kissed, relaxed and recharged. Will a few days suffice? I'm about to find out.



SPIRIT SANCTUARY IN PUERTO VALLARTA

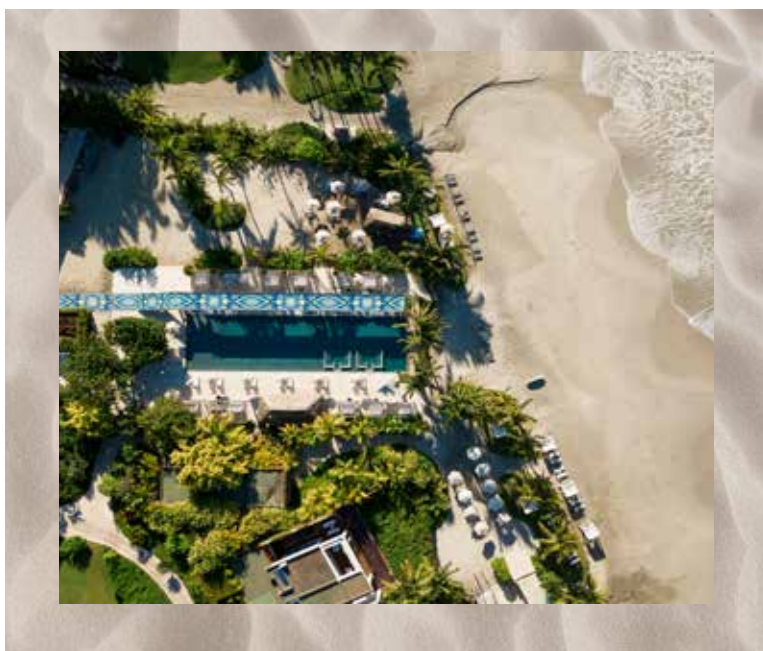
Health, harmony and well-being are the essential elements of the Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit, where everything is streamlined toward serenity. From the coastal views on the edge of Mexico's Banderas Bay to its infinity pools and luxury spa, the resort wants to rid you of your worries and, given my arrival is met with a flute of Veuve and a delicate neck massage, I quickly see just how committed they are to it.

Staying in one of their Wellness Suites, I meet my own butler, who quickly goes to task personalizing every wellness element in my space: I decide on my aromatherapy (myrrh), organic soaps (grapefruit) and morning delivery of antioxidant juice and vegan snacks. Re-energized by a rain shower infused with vitamin C, I grab my in-suite yoga mat and dumbbells for a session with the hotel's trainer at my private open-air terrace, where I do push-ups and planks while looking at the waves and diving pelicans below.

My reward for the sweat (besides a cold *cerveza*) comes through with a

three-hour treatment at the spa. Inspired by the healing arts of the Huichol culture, I start on my Water Journey, where my spa valet slicks me up head-to-toe in aloe vera before she moves me gently back-and-forth from eucalyptus steam and sauna, then washes me off via a stinging-yet-deeply-satisfying multi-jet pressure shower. Body tingling, I glide into the treatment room where I'm invited to make my own *mole* exfoliating cream for my scrub and facial in a traditional *metate*, into which I fill cocoa, almonds and chilies, all while she whispers affirmations about forgetting my stress and my life because, at this moment, I'm the most important person in the room.

I drift in and out of consciousness until I open my eyes in a lounge chair by the lagoon. Hands appear with a chlorophyll martini and grapes rolled in sesame while a soft pillow of aromatic seeds is wrapped around my neck. What day is it? What's my name again? I forget both as I float out of the spa with smooth, hydrated skin carrying the subtle aroma of chocolate for the remainder of the night. Vallarta.grandvelas.com



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SEA SALT & SURF BREAKS IN SAYULITA

Plunging off the Sierra Madre mountains, the one-time dormant fishing town on Mexico's rainforested Pacific coast of Sayulita is a tableau vivant of arrestingly fit surfers and long-haired dreamers carving their path, and their waves, in a heady state of Pollyanna. The bohemia hits you almost as strongly as the tequila—but I allow myself to be taken away by it. Soon, I'm rolling just as smoothly as the tide. I take languid turns through the village's colourful boutiques weathered by the sun and salty winds, stop to bargain with indigenous Huichol people while they set out their beaded jewelry, and pop in and out of hippy-chic bars that mix Mexican country culture with a



touch of Pacific surf.

While my coming to self could very well be found at the bottom of a margarita glass, I instead take my wellness to task in the depths of an ocean. Sayulita's beach breaks have long made this Mecca territory, where the sport of surfing isn't just a pastime but a religion. I surrender my footing (and my sanity along with it) to move into the wild domain of the local packs rollicking in froth while I'm trying to chill my fear. Time has no grip, so it feels deliciously dangerous to let the day wash over like this before late afternoon signals me out with a peach sky and a waiting plate of just-caught tuna tostadas: both offering my body all the restorative power it needs after being pummeled by swells and spindrift.

BEACH BUMMING IN PUNTA DE MITA

Nature grounds me and, given the coastal town of Punta de Mita is nuzzled within a 1,500-acre private peninsula with 10 kilometres of virgin Pacific coast beaches, rolling green hills, and endless turquoise seas, it feels very on-brand. The sanctuary-inspired community is a natural destination to rejuvenate (ask the Kardashians and a particular Goop guru), and I choose to decompress at the luxe W Punta de Mita.

Day 1 I'm feeling ambitious, so I head to Studio Fit—a fully stacked fitness studio with jungle views—to rev my appetite for lunch at the property's Chevreria bar, which is a converted 1950s Chevrolet truck that serves ceviche and craft cocktails seaside. But, by Day 2, I've already perfected the art of doing nothing. Spending hours in my white-linen cabana on the private beach, I become certifiably obsessed with the sinewy locals waiting for their perfect sets in an ocean pounding with six-foot barrels; in the afternoon I steal away to



Wet Too—an "adults-only playground" where I synchronize my swim laps in a glass infinity pool to the low thrum of house beats coming from a DJ stand nearby. I'm this close to posting #blessed on Instagram but decide to shut off the phone and work on staying mindful. I feel lighter, clear-headed, almost intoxicated. Like I have taken a big hit of oxygen. Mexico, you get me. And I'll be coming back soon. Marriott.com

3 BIPOC Women Changing Wine

Meet Beverly Crandon,
Nabilah Rawji and
Chanile Vines

BY NATALIE PREDDIE

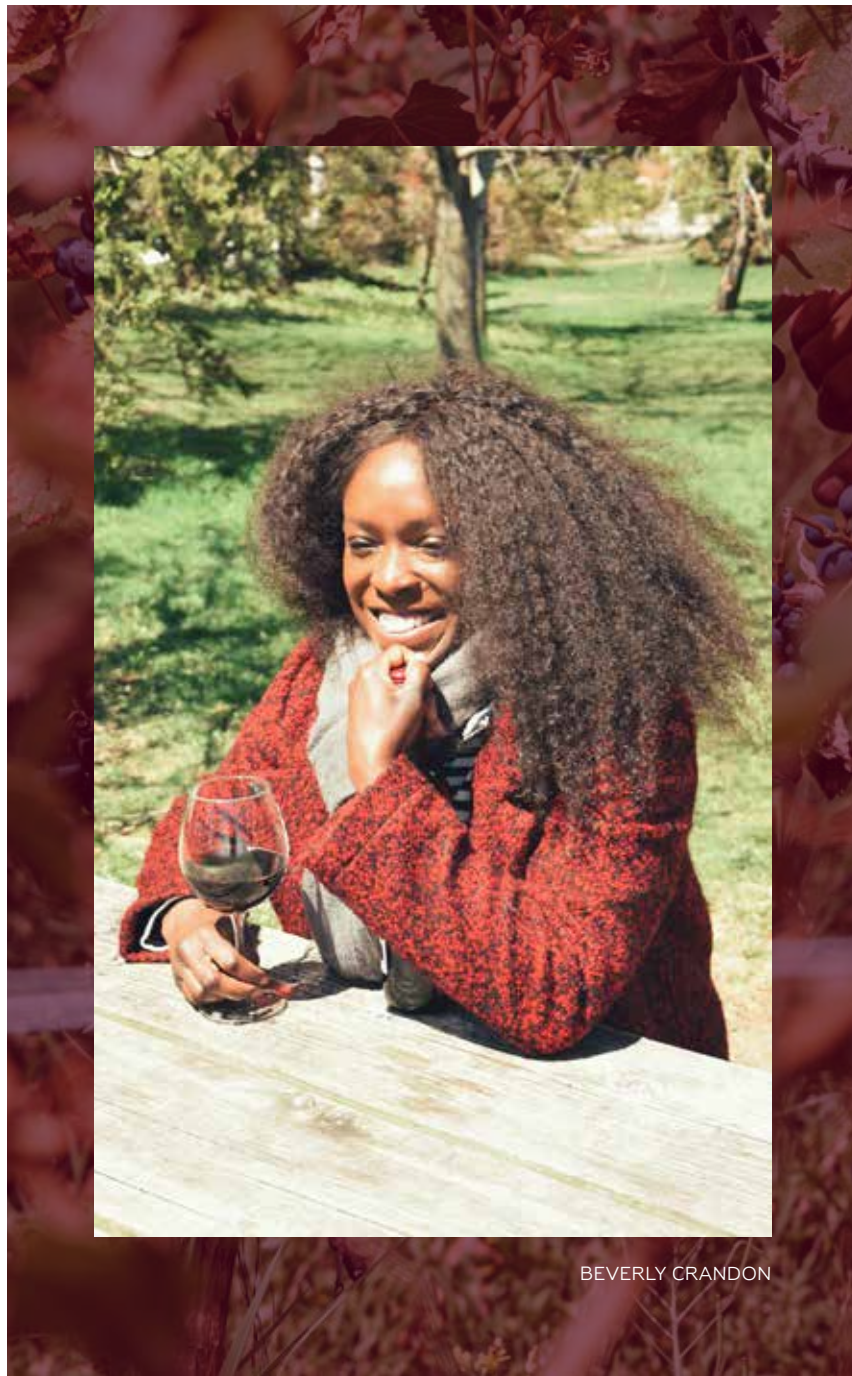
It's no secret that the Canadian wine industry is lacking diversity. Years of white men as the primary makers, buyers and so-called experts have created an intimidating and near-impenetrable business. There are many reasons behind the current state of the industry: colonialism, racism, the patriarchy. But, in 2023, a lack of acknowledgement and drastic change within the industry is a combination of laziness and conscious ignorance.

Luckily, a few individuals and organizations are demanding difference, focused on creating a wine experience that accurately reflects the multifaceted Canadian consumer. Here are three women working to identify and celebrate diversity in the wine industry, making wine a more inclusive and accessible space for everyone.

First up, Beverly Crandon, a current CMS-certified sommelier, wine lover and founder of Spice Food & Wine Group in Ontario. Crandon is dispelling divisive myths on how we consume wine by pairing them with international cuisines and exploring the diversity in these relationships. Last year, she launched Spring Into Spice, an outdoor festival that brings together winemakers and dishes from around the world.

Throughout her wine education, Crandon noticed other students of colour in class but, as time went on, representation dwindled. Determined to see more people that looked like herself in the industry, she began volunteering for organizations that provided scholarships and mentorship support for BIPOC individuals entering the wine industry.

In fact, Crandon started her career as an international operations director for Fortune 500 tech companies before expanding to the world of traditional media, always with a strong focus on product development and strategy. With this experience, she effectively combined her love of wine with wine education,



BEVERLY CRANDON

broadening wine appreciation in those not previously considered the "traditional" wine consumer or professional. She lives by her statement that "wine should be inclusive and, through that, approachable. No one should be denied the pleasures of vino!"

Next, Chanile Vines, founder of Vine-splay, a Toronto-based wine club and importing firm with more than 3,000 members. She is former president of the Ontario Wine Society's Toronto chapter and a founding member of Vinequity, an organization that has created a public directory of all BIPOC individuals in the Canadian wine industry while also providing education, financial support and opportunity. A dementia researcher and wine entrepreneur, Vines uses her extensive education to understand people and their intimate connections to wine. Through her company and volunteer work, she provides an enriching space for businesses and people to grow, connect and have fun, using wine as the catalyst.

Finally, Nabilah Rawji, an advanced sommelier accredited through the Court of Master Sommeliers (CMS). She was most recently one of only four Canadians, and the only woman of colour, to achieve the CMS Advanced designation, and this year will be participating in the first-ever Women's Sommelier Symposium. Rawji has led the wine programs for esteemed outposts like Shangri-La, Terroni and Oliver & Bonacini, and is a founding member of Vinequity, mentoring up-and-coming BIPOC members of the wine industry while providing advocacy and resources. Her constant ability to break barriers and lead by example is inspiring young BIPOC women in wine around the world. Her current wine goal: to create accessible lists that "enable people to experience the classic wines of the world while leaving room for an adventure into lesser-charted territories." v



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