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VITA



The *SUMMER* Issue

INSIDE *the* ISSUE

LIFESTYLE **Five Canadian *content creators* who are walking *the walk***

FASHION **Coastal Cowgirl may be the *hottest microtrend* of summer**

BEAUTY **Are beauty products making our waterways *less safe*?**

TRAVEL **Making Miami *luxury* accessible to all**

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Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

Summertime, and the reading is easy! Open this issue of VITA and discover the season's hottest fashion trend (hint: it'll have you saying, giddy up!), find out how to experience Miami luxury on a budget, and learn about Vancouver's latest and greatest restaurant openings. We also introduce you to five Canadian content creators who are using their platforms to affect change, and investigate how some beauty products may be harming our precious waterways. My top natural-beauty pick for summer? Everyday Skin's shimmering body oils, available on Etsy and, in Vancouver, at Collective Will. Enjoy!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Influenced

These social media stars aren't just TikToking the talk, they're actually walking the walk

BY JENNIFER COX & NOA NICHOL

Who are some of the most influential Canadian influencers? They're the ones who commit to a certain cause and do so with passion and fervour, creating social content that can actually create social change. Whether it's being more eco-conscious about food and fashion choices, standing up for gender equality or bringing awareness to Indigenous life, we found five creators who are dedicating their digital and real lives to making big changes.

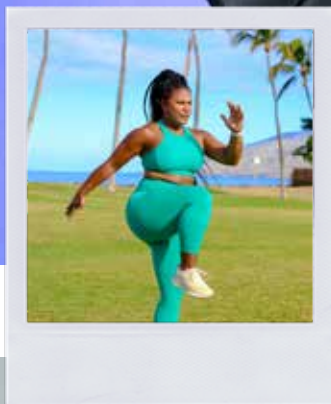
Jennifer Pistor (@jenpistor) is a full-time stay-at-home mom and part-time slow-fashion writer. "My mission is to introduce people to slow fashion. I want to show that there is another way to have style that doesn't involve ever-changing trends, over-consumption and harming people and the planet. I participated in over-consumption of fashion for decades. Once I educated myself on the harm the industry has created, I knew this was an important message to share."

Pistor is inspired by other slow-fashion posters advocating for change and using their voices and influence to encourage people to do more than just "buy this thing". "Two people who come to mind are Venetia La Manna (@venetialamanna) and Aja Barber (@ajabarber); Aja is a slow-fashion educator, influencer and author, and her book, *Consumed*, is a must for anyone wanting to learn about what's really happening in fashion and how it intersects with climate change, consumerism and colonialism. Venetia is a fair-fashion campaigner, podcast host, co-founder of @rememberwhomadethem and a slow-fashion advocate, and she works with organizations ... to bring awareness and change to the crimes of fast fashion with a focus on their effect on the Global South."

With these and other role models in mind, Pistor creates original social content around secondhand shopping, shopping her own closet and styling clothing she's owned for years in new and different ways. She recommends and champions brands that, too, contribute to the slow-fashion movement, and educates her following around the atrocities of wasteful fast fashion. "Once you learn that our shopping is directly hurting our planet, contributing to climate change and supporting the mistreatment and exploitation of garment workers, who are mostly women of colour, it's hard to not want to make changes."

Kelsey Ellis (@healthy_with_kelsey) is a registered holistic nutritionist and certified personal trainer who helps people move with joy, build self-acceptance and take the shame out of their wellness game. Her mission for the past few years has been to "deconstruct conventional wellness practices and teach clients how to heal the body physically, mentally and emotionally through self-nurturing practices like joyful movement and intuitive eating. I believe that as a society we have reached a point where we recognize that the systems of suppression and oppression under the guise of wellness are no longer working for us and we need to relearn our instinctual ability to self-trust and use our own internal guidance as a way to navigate our health. I help people take back their personal autonomy around their body and wellness."

To that end, Ellis says that diets and rigid exercise programs that were considered the "gold standard" of healthful living up until this point are "now being recognized as one of the leading causes of eating disorders, which have the second-highest mortality among all mental illnesses. My goal is to tackle this issue along with weight stigma and racism, which also are rampant in the health and wellness sector, by advocating for all bodies to be considered valid and receive equal treatment by fitness and health professionals alike. I use my social media platforms to educate,



inspire and empower individuals to redefine what being healthy looks like. To educate my audience on the dangers of dieting, inspire them to choose exercise as a form of self-care, not self-punishment and share stories of diverse bodies—including my own—overcoming the challenges of a world that has up until recently, largely centred on white, thin women in fitness. I share vulnerable stories of my own challenges and triumphs to help others who are in similar circumstances feel seen and validated and offer a range of wellness services and resources that are accessible at different price points, including my YouTube channel which provides free body-positive workouts under 30 minutes."

As for feeling heard, and effecting change, Ellis says, "I think my message is heard loud and clear. My DMs are filled with people saying that they feel seen and resonate with my content."

Myles Sexton (@mylesssexton) is an advocate for HIV and AIDS, as well as for social change around gender constructs. Despite this mission, Sexton says teaching people about the importance of diversity and inclusion has also been a real challenge. "If it wasn't for the BLM movement that happened, I don't think we would be having many of the conversations happening today. This movement has helped many marginalized communities find a louder voice." Sexton, however,

has been making huge strides in changing common-yet-incorrect perceptions around everything from folks living with HIV and AIDS to the importance of using people's preferred pronouns to the simple joy of being free, whoever you are, to wear a fabulous gown and strut down a red carpet.

Erin Ireland (@erinieland as well as @toliveforbakery) started her career as a food and restaurant journalist. When she learned more about where her food came from and the impact her choices were having on the world, animals and her own health, she decided to become part of the solution. "My life's mission is to spread the word about how amazing, delicious and satisfying plant-based living can be. I never would have imagined that animal-free food could be so easy and filling. Many of today's plant-based alternatives are cleverly made with beans or soy, which are winners in my books," she says.

In November 2022, Ireland expanded her 12-year-old wholesale bakery into its own brick-and-mortar bakery and café in East Vancouver, where she and her team are able to create a lot of the foods they hope will convince people that a plant-based diet can be mind-blowing and delicious. Among her role models? Activists who are years her junior, like Genesis Butler (@genesisbutler_), a 16-year-old dedicated to raising awareness about animal rights' issues and climate change.

Shayla Oulette Stonechild's (@shayla0h and @matriarch.movement) goal is to help unlock Indigenous youth and women's full potential through facilitating wellness workshops that combine Indigenous values (respect, reciprocity, relationship based) with yogic philosophy. "A lot of this is done through the non-profit online platform and podcast, *Matriarch Movement*, which is dedicated to amplifying Indigenous voices and providing wellness workshops to Indigenous youth and BIPOC women across Canada. Our conversations are around sustainability, multi- and inter-generational healing, our communities and the concept of Indigenous futurism, which is radically imagining a new future that encompasses and highlights Indigenous voices and values throughout every industry and beyond."

One commonality amongst these influencers is that many have endured burnouts at some point in their personal or professional lives. Pistor says social media puts a certain amount on pressure on her: "When I feel like I'm getting anxious and posting just to post and not because I have anything meaningful to say or share, it comes across. More is more with social media, but I don't think it's a healthy life balance." Ireland feels as though time constraints create challenges in her everyday life. "Balancing time has been tough. When content crosses over into real life, it can be hard to 'turn off', and this can be really disruptive when trying to be present with my family. But I'm getting better at separating the two." Ellis says, "Protecting my mental health is most important, and when I give myself permission to step back from posting, it often reignites my creativity and passion."

Stonechild fell victim to overextending herself and faced a burnout of her own. "Last year I had done over 30 campaigns and there is a lot of prep, shooting and producing of campaigns that go on behind the scenes that you don't see on social media. Also, if I am working with a teaching from Nehiyaw and/or Métis culture, I seek out the guidance from an elder and/or knowledge keeper to make sure I'm giving it what it deserves and correctly. So what takes 60 seconds to watch on IG may have taken me a couple weeks of getting it done. Which would be my next challenge: taking on a lot of projects and then having the bandwidth to do them all to my best ability. This year, I am being more decisive with what I say yes to." ♡

THE MAKING OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

Summer Issue

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NOA NICHOL
CREATIVE DIRECTOR MADISON HOPE
SOCIAL MEDIA ELIN MOLENAAR
TIKTOK & VIDEO LESLIE ROSSI
SPECIAL EVENTS LYNDI BARRETT
PROOFREADER KATIE NANTON

CONTRIBUTORS
JENNIFER COX, ALEESHA HARRIS,
AILEEN LALOR, KATIE NANTON
COVER COURTESY OF DIOR
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@VITADAILY.CA f VITADAILY.CA @VITADAILYVAN ✉ NOA@VITAMINDAILY.COM

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Saddle-Up Style

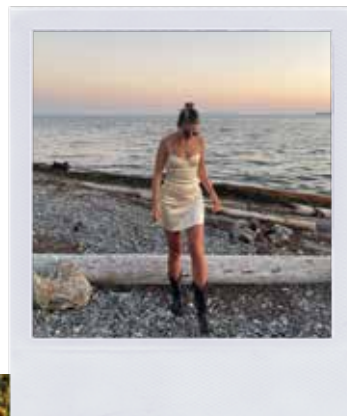
BY ALEESHA HARRIS

Coastal cowgirl may be the hottest microtrend of summer

The #coastalcowgirlaesthetic boasts more than 18.8 million views on TikTok, and the new coastal cowgirl trend is described by Holt Renfrew fashion director Joseph Tang as a mix of “Californian ease and nonchalant attitude paired back with a Western-inspired aesthetic. It’s perfect for the summer months.” While many microtrends are, by definition, short-lived one-offs, the timelessness of essential Western wear like cowboy boots and straw hats, along with lived-in denim, lends a universal appeal to this fashion moment. “The coastal cowgirl trend is easily adaptable and appeals to all ages and body types,” Tang remarks on its universality.

But the indisputable anchor of this social media-fuelled fashion moment is the footwear. Regardless of the fit or finish, whether new or vintage, a classic cowboy boot shape ensures the coastal cowgirl moment translates from online to IRL. Says Tang, “The Western-inspired boot is a staple for this look ... whether it is a modern take on a cowboy boot or a more rugged ankle boot done in suede or distressed leather. The boot is a must to achieve this look.”

Boot options abound at Western wear stores; for a more fashion-y take, Tang recommends options from brands like Ganni, Khaite and Toral. Or, go local. Vancouver-based influencer and entrepreneur Tessa Lindsay Garcia’s boot brand, Mija, offers a Vaquero Boot—a classic cowboy design she refers to as one “everyone could wear ... multiple ways. The easiest way to style them at first would be just with a simple T-shirt dress. One of my favourite looks ... is wearing them with a longer dress, midi or maxi length so the boots just peek out. Also, tucked into some mom jeans is a look I love.” While the search for a new supplier has forced some stock issues for the sold-out style, Garcia



hopes to have the boot back in soon with expanded colour options.

Boots secured, Tang recommends pairing them with distressed, relaxed-fit jeans or shorts for a seasonal spin. For those eager to view runway examples of the coastal cowgirl trend, Tang points to spring 2023 collections from Miu Miu, Acne Studios and Chloe. As long as it’s denim, anything goes.

“What I like about the trend is that it’s a study of contrasts: utilitarian, Western-inspired essentials combined with an elevated-yet-relaxed beachy vibe,” Jill Guenza, Levi’s global VP of women’s design, says. “My favourite iterations of this style are pared back and contrast crisp elements with lived-in denim. For example, black frayed denim 501 mid-high shorts with an oversized white button-down shirt like our Nola ... worn open over a cropped tank and a cowboy boot-inspired mule.”

The trend, she says, resonates well with the brand in both origin—and desire for authenticity. “Levi’s history is intertwined with the rise of the Wild West. There’s an authentic connection between denim and ranching that’s rooted in functionality and purpose. Trends tend to feel most compelling when there’s a visible degree of authenticity that’s been pushed and pulled and permuted into something new.”

Coastal cowgirl also presents the perfect opportunity to lean into the denim-on-denim trend that continues to live on this summer. “[It’s] a great opportunity to mix denim pieces together ... that have similar shades of blue and, keeping the cowgirl references subtle, will elevate the look and prevent it from going too costume-y.”

To complete your ensemble, Tang’s instinct is to lean in to eye-catching accessories—a mixture of metal tones and “statement beads” ranging from precious pearl strands to colourful acrylic-material novelty pieces are perfect for adding interest to the dressed-down look. “This trend is all about clashing traditional codes of dressing and making it feel authentic to the wearer.” Cowboy hat, optional. v

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Five-Step Fashion



1. The perfect amount of flirty meets easy breezy, Aritzia’s tiered Sunday Best Martine Dress (\$98) is primed to be worn on repeat this summer. Available in a selection of shades, we’re partial to the white version, which hits the Prairie vibe perfectly.

2. Add a dose of cowgirl attitude to all your fits this summer with Dingo 1969 Women’s Primrose Leather Cowgirl Boots (\$180 at Lammles.com). The leather style features floral embroidery and a sleek, retro-inspired pointed toe, and the lower-height boot shaft means these will work for many calf sizes.

3. Nothing dresses up a rugged-yet-relaxed look quite like a piece of gold. A slightly oversized hoop earring like Mejuri’s Dome Hoops (\$88) elevate an overall look without breaking the bank.

4. For a fresh-faced home-on-the-range look, give your lips a hit of hydration and a kiss of shine with Rhode’s Peptide Lip Treatment (\$24), which has shea butter and peptides to hydrate and plump.

5. Paris meets Prairies with a Dior Diorodeo Large Brim Hat (\$1,400). The style features an almost-houndstooth effect, along with a stylish grosgrain band for added style points.

Troubled Waters

BY AILEEN LALOR

How might beauty products be making our waterways less safe?

When beauty brands talk about clean beauty, it's mostly in the context of what the products we apply might do to our skin; the theory is certain ingredients might be absorbed into our bloodstreams and cause hormonal issues and even cancer. What's less discussed is the issue of runoff—what happens when the remnants of all those products go down the drain.

It's something that preoccupies Maria Wodzinska, co-founder of Toronto-based Stoic Beauty, and her business partner, Dr. Jolanta Wodzinska, who is her mother and a PhD chemist. "For most of her career she worked in the pharmaceutical industry where anything that shows the potential for harm is cut off at the legs," Maria explains. "I started doing some skincare development and my mother got curious. She looked into the data around biodegradability and accumulation and found that in the beauty industry, this is very under-researched and poorly regulated—that products at scale were going into water systems."

How concerned should we be about that? "While we have knowledge gaps in the extent of the contamination and environmental harm chemicals present, we know enough to know there is a problem," says Jennifer Lee, chief impact officer at Beautycounter. "Take PFAS as a recent headline chemical. These chemicals are highly persistent and ubiquitous to the environment and not only can pose harm to human health, emerging research points to their potential ecological toxicity."

Lee explains there are many variables that go into how much of different chemicals might be found in the environment: how much of them and how often they're released, how effectively water treatment plants can remove substances and how quickly they degrade in the environment, for example. One substance that we know is accumulating in the environment is plastic.



"The plastic problem is pervasive and it's not just plastic going to landfill, it's the credit cards worth of plastic we consume every week"



why silicones are on our 'no' list, as they are often used for slick and matte textures, but biodegradability is an issue."

Eliminating potentially harmful ingredients means brands also have to approach formulation in an especially creative way. "When it comes to preservatives, we think about hurdle testing, which means that instead of hitting microbes hard with a formaldehyde we create multiple hurdles, like the pH is unfriendly and the viscosity are unfriendly," says Maria. "Those kinds of heavy-duty ingredients are really not necessary."

Beyond formulation, eliminating or reducing plastic usage is important. "A major choice for us was to avoid plastic tubes for our product—even though they would be cheaper and easier to manufacture with—instead choosing 100 per cent recycled and recyclable aluminium tubes," Jenkins says. "New research is constantly emerging, but already the data is clear: the plastic problem is pervasive and it's not just plastic going to landfill, it's the credit card's worth of plastic we consume every week."

How can you feel confident that the beauty products you are using will be safe for waterways—as well as other items like household-cleaning products? It's not something companies can be certified for. You may be safer buying from brands that label themselves "clean," though that's not the case for everyone. Companies should be transparent about what's in their products; Stoic, Beautycounter and Everist all have extremely detailed information on their websites. You can also reach out to businesses to find out how they're thinking about water. But, ultimately, experts believe there needs to be better government regulation and oversight in order to protect our precious water. "By 2050, water will become the most valuable commodity on earth," says Maria. "So I think it's time to start raising this alarm." ▼



"Microplastics ... have been found in 100 per cent of humans surveyed, according to recent research reported by *National Geographic*," says Jayme Jenkins, co-founder of Everist, which makes water-free body and hair products. "The exact implication of this is unknown, but it's not expected to be good." Then there are ingredients like triclosan (an antimicrobial) that is toxic to some algae and fish, and oxybenzone, a sunscreen ingredient that is highly damaging to coral.

Beyond the immediate effects there are also impacts further down the line. "Persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic chemicals, or PBTs, are a particularly worrisome category of chemicals for downstream effects," says Lee. "These chemicals persist in the environment; they do not readily break down. They bioaccumulate, meaning they build up in us and other living organisms faster than our bodies can remove them, and they are toxic." Lee points out that PBTs have a disproportionate effect on some Indigenous communities because their diets are contaminated.

How do brands go about eliminating ingredients that might harm the environment? They typically take an "if in doubt, leave it out" approach and eschew ingredients derived from petroleum. "We avoid synthetic fragrances, colourants, silicones, parabens and so on, and choose organic ingredients where possible," says Jenkins. Dr. Wodzinska says that at Stoic she uses the same approach as she took in the pharmaceutical industry to analyze risk/benefit ratio. "When talking about cosmetics, in my opinion, all ingredients that are used primarily to improve sensorial properties offer little benefit, hence any doubt as to their impact on human health or the environment would be a reason for me to eliminate them until the debate is resolved. This is, for example,



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Bling on a Budget

Beyond the yachts, supercars and mega-mansions, Miami luxury is truly accessible to all

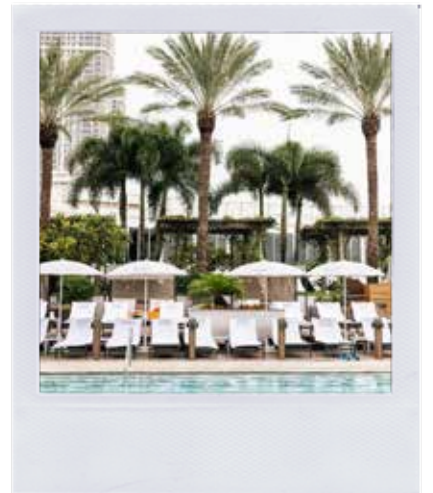
BY NOA NICHOL

FLY FOR LESS

Less time, and potentially less dime. Air Canada's new thrice-weekly service from Vancouver International Airport direct to Miami International Airport, which includes the only non-stop flights connecting YVR and MIA, means you won't have to book or pay for two flights. The Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft is comfortable, with both business and economy class seats (some of the latter are "preferred," with extra legroom). Plus, an upgraded inflight entertainment system and access to power ports at every seat, so you can simultaneously wind down and charge up before hitting the ground. Aircanada.com

STAY FOR A STEAL

During Miami Hotel Months, from June to September, you'll find discounted stays, resort credits and even comp meals at inns throughout the city, so you can truly rest easy. We checked into two participating properties, beginning with Eden Roc Miami Beach—the third-largest (and arguably most iconic) hotel in the area, which sits on 16 acres of true oceanfront, so sand and surf are literally steps from your suite. In fact, each of Eden Roc's 600-plus well-appointed



rooms boasts an ocean-view deck (these are said to be the biggest among Miami Beach hotel balconies, and will be "decked out" with new patio furniture in the coming year), so you can enjoy the sea 24-7. Another restful option is located in Miami's Coconut Grove district; Mayfair House Hotel & Garden was recently named to *Condé Nast's* 2023 Hot List and, with a lush, tropical courtyard (listen for live music) and gorgeous rooms done up in jewel tones, we fully understand why. We loved the surprise soaker tub next to the bed (there's a shower in the bathroom, as well), along with thoughtful touches like a welcome note in the antique typewriter on the desk. Plus, the surrounding shopping area, rife with boutiques and eateries, can't be beat. Edenrochotelmiami.com | Mayfairhousemiami.com

VITA X DOORDASH

Dash & Dine



When it comes to seasonal eats, there's just one food-delivery service you'll want knocking on your door this summer. From barbecue to burgers, DoorDash delivers top dishes from favourite local restaurants right to your door. Easily sign up and order food online or in-app for \$0 delivery fees on your first order! Or, for just \$9.99 a month, DoorDash's subscription service, DashPass, gives you unlimited access to thousands of the best local and national restaurants, with \$0 delivery fees plus "membership" perks, so it's easy to enjoy your fave meals and support local restaurants—like the three standouts below—all summer long.

Barcelos is a family restaurant specializing in a combination of fast hot grilled chicken meals, sandwiches and salads, plus specific recipes focusing on Portuguese cuisine. Using the finest quality ingredients,

Barcelos' chickens are marinated for 24 hours and then flame grilled to absolute perfection.

Pacific Poke was started by two BFFs, Michael and Dong, after they had their first taste of poke—a traditional Hawaiian fish dish—on a trip to California. Now, chef-inspired bowls showcase products and ingredients that are found close to home, while a build-your-own model allows ultimate customization for those who know what they want.

Railtown Cafe has been serving healthy and delicious food since the summer of 2012. The menu offers heaping portions of comfort food prepared from scratch daily by a talented team of classically trained cooks—think artisan bread loaves, soups, pastries, made-to-order gourmet sandwiches and build-your-own salads, along with house-made ice cream by the jar. Doordash.com

DINING DEALS

For more than 20 years, Miami Spice Restaurant Months (August and September) has showcased the very best of this town's tantalizing cuisine. The program features three-course meals, prepped by world-class chefs, at prices that are truly appetizing—following, a few of our favourites. Ocean Social at Eden Roc has tapped the talents of chef Tristen Epps, a former executive chef under Marcus Samuelsson whose menu riffs playfully on the idea of "surf and turf". The updated News Cafe is a landmark of South Beach (Gianni Versace used to come here for his daily paper) with a novel newsprint menu offering all-day breakfast items like café con leche French toast and piña colada pancakes. Mila Rooftop Restaurant is a *Michelin Guide* hot spot, with Asian and Mediterranean-inspired dishes that are meant to be shared, and



LEKU

fire dancers for fun. Leku, at the Rubell Museum, brings Northern Spain to Miami; from the menu, the ooey-goey Basque cheesecake is not to be missed. Glass & Vine, with pretty outdoor seating, has a new Israeli chef, who is bringing tastes of his home country to Coconut Grove. And, for Italian fare, both Sofia in the Design District and Fiola in Coral Gables won our tastebuds over with their handmade pastas.

PHOTO: BRANDON BARRE



PHOTO: ROBIN HILL

SEE FOR FREE

Or nearly free, thanks to such initiatives as Miami Attraction & Museum Months, Miami Entertainment Months and Miami Arts, Culture & Heritage Months. Miami has a fascinating history, and an equally enticing present. Art and culture can be found at every turn, and local galleries, exhibits and tours are available to show you the ins and outs. Check out art deco architecture (including the famous Versace Mansion) during an immersive walk around Miami Beach's historic district, via the Miami Design Preservation League; or, take a look at stylish-and-functional outdoor public art (not to mention, top-shelf designer

duds) throughout the Design District by accessing a free guided tour. Among the city's can't-miss museums and galleries: Artehouse for a playful Pantone experience; Frost Science Museum for level upon level of sea life, space, dinos and more; Pérez Art Museum to walk through both Yayoi Kusama's kaleidoscopic Love is Calling infinity mirror room and Leandro Erlich's mind-bending hair salon, classroom and laundry room; the Rubell for one of the finest private art collections we've seen (including two more Kusama infinity rooms to try); and, across the street, Superblue, where a trippy and touching time awaits.

BEAUTY BARGAIN

No need to drop a bundle on beauty. During Miami Spa Months (July and August), top spas in this health-conscious city put together amazing offers (up to half off) on their top treatments. At Eden Roc's massive (22,000-square-foot) Esencia Wellness Spa, we enjoyed a 50-minute Ignite Your Senses full-body Swedish massage—soothing and indulgent, it left us feeling soothed and relaxed, mind, body and spirit. Esenciawellnessspa.com

MIAMIANDBEACHES.COM/DEALS

New Noshes

Where and what to eat this summer



MED GRILL & BAR

At first glance you may think Davie Street has a new shawarma place—but Med is so much more. This is contemporary Mediterranean dining with flair, stellar cocktails named after Greek gods, an interior design that could be mistaken for Greece in an instant, plus a sneaky disco ball on the ceiling for when the lights go down on weekend nights and DJs spin into the evening. Try the spinach-and-feta-filled Spanakopita coil topped with the fresh, flavourful herb salad and minted tzatziki, the Keftedes Scotch egg with ouzo-spiced pork and beef, and solid mains like grilled lamb chops and pan-roasted steelhead. If you're a fan of smoked Castelvetrano olives, order the Finally a Good Greek Salad, which is dotted with their unexpected rich flavour. And don't skip out on sides to share: shrimp souvlaki skewers, lemon potatoes, calamari and garlic parm fries. No matter your order at Med Grill & Bar, a fun night awaits—there's even a 20-seat patio for some classic Davie Street people-watching with a Zeus cocktail in hand (Bombay gin, apricot liqueur, lemon, plum syrup, basil, Greek yogurt and soda). And, if you're planning to hit English Bay with some takeout, Med Grill has you covered with next-level handheld pita wraps. **1157 Davie St., 604-649-3033. Medgrillbar.com** KATIE NANTON



LOCAL PUBLIC EATERY

You may have dined at Local's Kits, Gastown or even Kamloops locations, so why are we writing about the fourth B.C. opening, in Vancouver's up-and-coming River District? Well, because it's just that good. A public water feature in front is fun for the kids in summer, while the patio (first come first served) wraps around two sides of the restaurant. While the space is stunning, inside and out, it's really the food that will wow you; order specialty cocktails in cool colours, like the Blue Crush topped with gummy candies or the orange Mango Bubble Tea with Earl Grey tea-infused gin, mango popping boba, or one of 16 ice-cold beers on tap. From the food menu, start with the beet hummus that's fresh with

mint, the pinche beef tacos that are slow-cooked to perfection or the shrimp dumplings, which come with six to share. For your main meal, the BBQ rice bowl comes with a saucy fried egg, while the wagyu hot dog, wrapped in bacon and topped with avocado crema, is a star (get it with the most perfect onion rings we've ever tried on the side). Finish with a highly addictive peanut butter chocolate cup for dessert—so good, it's the only sweet option offered. Before you leave, troop up to the "secret" second-storey Trophy Room, where you can ask staff to make you an Old Fashioned, featuring a designer ice cube by Kodama Ice Co. Smooth. **8558 River District Crossing, 236-317-6910. Localpubliceatery.com** NOA NICHOL

STREET HAWKER

Be warned: the lineup from shoe-box-sized Street Hawker usually spills out onto the street. But it only makes for mouthwatering viewing while you wait your turn, as patio-goers eat multi-patty smashburgers dripping with sauce and sip bright-purple and orange milkshakes blended with ube (purple yam) and mango. From the team behind beloved Potluck Hawker Eatery on Cambie Street comes a must-try East-meets-West experience that is, quite simply, as fun as it is tasty. It all starts with the branding (a *Street Fighter*-style video-game vibe) and continues through to the '90s hip-hop playlist inside. When your turn comes, go for the Krapow Attack (krapow means basil in Thai), with your choice of one to three patties dressed with crispy basil, snake beans, black pepper sauce, goey American cheese and jade goddess sauce. Then, why not get the Chick-Malay sando, filled with a double-fried chicken breast, coconut ranch and nasi sambal lemak—a spicy Malaysian chili-garlic condiment. For vegetarians, the Wannabe smash is made with an Impossible Burger. The crinkle-cut fries are worth ordering if only as a vehicle for all the housemade sauces: the sweet mala caramel, vegan truffle chili, and creamy Hawker sauce really stand out from the pack. Bonus: Hawker uses high-quality ingredients, which is more than most smashburger spots in town can say. The never-frozen beef is from Two Rivers, the free-run chicken is from Farmcrest in Salmon Arm, and the buns are famously super-soft Martin's potato rolls. **3088 Main St., 236-427-2519. Streethawker.ca** KATIE NANTON



Summer Wine-tineraries

Delicious drink destinations and DIYs

BY NOA NICHOL

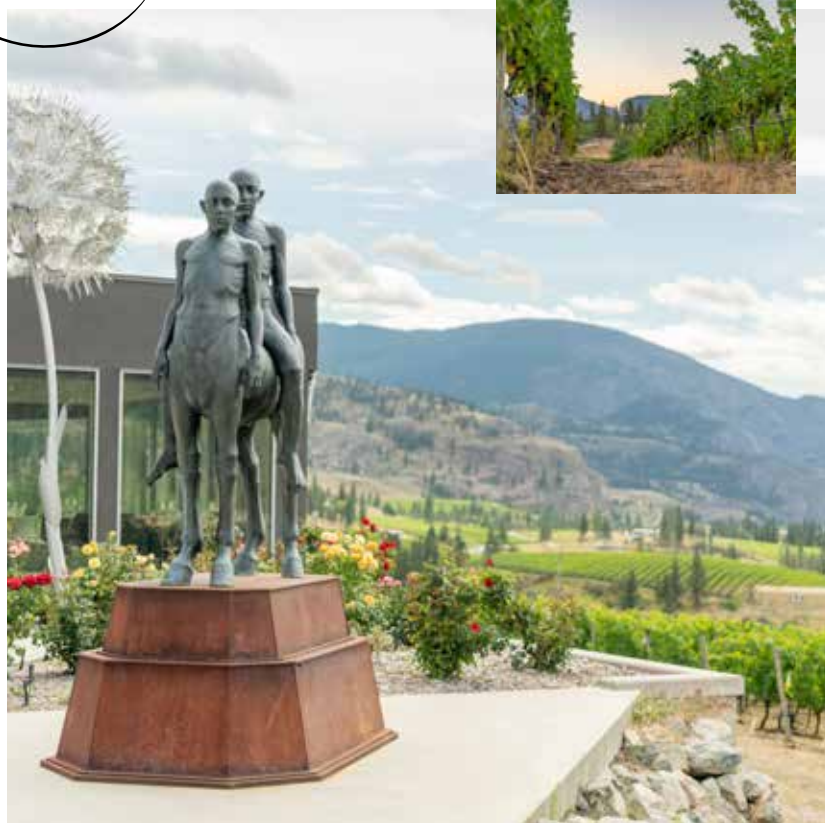
Are your travel plans for the next couple of months still up in the air? Allow us to help. Whether you're up for a road (or plane) trip to visit a spectacular winery, or would rather hang out on your own porch or patio, drink in hand, here are some thirst-quenching suggestions to add to your summer to-do list.

Escape to wine country

Wherever you are in Canada, a trip to B.C.'s Okanagan wine-growing region will not disappoint. Several vineyards in the area offer special sessions—like Oliver-based CheckMate Winery's The Scholar's Mate experience. For \$40 per guest, enjoy a guided, educational, seated tasting of four award-winning CheckMate Chardonnays and Merlots, in the winery's stunning lounge. Nearby, Red Barn at Jagged Rock's The Ride tasting experience (\$35 per person) takes you on a private tour of the winery's production area followed by an exploration of four wines in the barn, surrounded by lush vines, with each sip challenging convention. A third tasting, at Liquidity in Okanagan Falls, is dubbed The Art of Food and Wine for a good reason; for \$45 per person, experience four in-season bite-sized canapés prepared by the in-house chefs and paired perfectly with a flight of stunning wines.

Savour summer at home

Don't feel like straying far from your own patio this summer? That's perfectly fine—so long as you have friends, plenty of good food, and the right drinks to pair it with, close at hand. One of our favourite pairings comes courtesy of Mission Hill Family Estate's chef Patrick Gayler, who feels the winery's Perpetua Chardonnay, with pretty aromatics of white peach, nougat, baking spice and lime zest, goes perfectly with a summer-y



strawberry, rhubarb and wild rose curd. For a drink that's very summer fireside friendly, Bearface seven-year-old Triple Oak Canadian whisky makes a mean mule: just pour two ounces over chunky rocks, top up with ginger beer and add a cinnamon stick. Serve in a camping mug. Don't feel like cooking, or cocktail mixing? Crack open a can of Dillon's ready-to-drink Strawberry, Rhubarb & A Zest of Lime Gin Cocktail, with handcrafted gin, strawberry, rhubarb, lime and a big splash of soda. Not too sweet, it won double gold at the 2023 San Francisco World Spirits Competition—and is sure to make your summer a winner, too! **V**



Strawberry, Rhubarb & Wild Rose Curd

300 g rhubarb, washed and sliced
150 g strawberries, washed and sliced
1 lemon, juiced
2 eggs + 2 egg yolks
1 cup white sugar
50 g cold butter, cubed
10 wild rose blossoms

DIRECTIONS

Add rose petals to sugar. Massage thoroughly by hand to bruise and release the aroma of the flower petals before mixing this all with the fruit. Add lemon juice and stir thoroughly. Allow to sit for an hour or so at room temperature. Once it has rested, you can whisk in the eggs and yolks and cook on a double boiler until it begins to thicken. You can now turn off the heat and continue to whisk for a few more minutes as the residual heat in the double boiler will continue to cook the curd. Once the curd is thickened, remove the bowl from the double boiler and whisk in knobs of butter until smooth and glossy.

Chill overnight in the fridge and serve with vanilla ice cream or shortbread or angel food cake and enjoy!



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