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# VITA



# THE April Issue

## INSIDE *the* ISSUE

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**EARTH** How many reusable cups do you really need?

**WINE** Raise your glass to five earth-friendly wines

**TRAVEL** Belize is a haven for your next luxe adventure

FROM THE CLOUDS A RICH  
**AUTHENTIC TASTE**  
— OF —  
**COLOMBIA**

— **PREMIUM** —  
**RUM LIQUEUR**  
MADE FOR  
**COFFEE LOVERS**



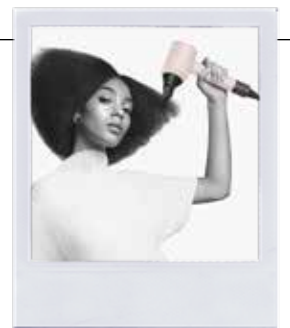


Editor's DESK

## A Note From Noa

Earth Day, as usual, lands on April 22, and we're shining a green spotlight on sustainability in this issue of *VITA*. Turn to page 4 for our piece about reusable items like water bottles and tote bags—when it comes to these kinds of products, is it possible to make and buy too much of a good thing? We're also investigating cases of fast-fashion companies seemingly stealing designs from small, independent brands, and rounding up five of our favourite earth-friendly wines. Plus, plenty more fashion, beauty, travel and dining news for you to enjoy as we head into spring.

*Noa Nichol* EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



**MOTHER'S DAY GIFT PICK:**  
Dyson's limited-edition ceramic pink and rose-gold colourway

# Style Life

## How one of Canada's best-dressed does it

BY LAUREN WALKER-LEE

Diving into the wardrobe of Lucy Yun reveals a collection of favourite pieces she'd never part with. The Vancouver-based art director and founder of Lucky Lucy Creative Inc. mixes her penchant for colour and prints with brands like Acne and Simone Rocha. With a lifelong passion for art, fashion and design, Yun's career trajectory took root at the head office of Chanel Korea before blossoming into roles spanning marketing, styling and visual merchandising—all of which have contributed to her personal style, which she describes as "eclectic, fun and dynamic with a blend of classic sophistication and avant-garde flair." Yun enjoys experimenting with bold patterns, textures, and silhouettes while maintaining a sense of elegance and refinement. The multi-faceted creative prioritizes quality, craftsmanship and versatility when choosing what to add to cart, often looking for pieces that resonate with her aesthetic and can seamlessly integrate into her existing wardrobe. Among her treasured possessions: the classic Acne Studios cashmere coat in salmon pink and the beloved Kimhekim Venus blazer with white pearl buttons; both hold sentimental value and are cherished parts of her style journey.



In terms of the actual shopping, Yun's approach mirrors her eclectic style. "I like to mix it up, opting for independent boutiques like Vancouver's Leisure Centre and thrift shops to discover unique pieces that speak to my personal style. I also appreciate online platforms like SSENSE that offer a wide selection of independent

and emerging designers along with sustainable brands."

Her Instagram-worthy wardrobe reveals a mix of staples and carefully curated statement pieces: a patchwork multi-coloured Roksanda coat; a puffy-sleeve baby pink coat from Simone Rocha; a bold statement white tulle button-up shirt

and a black tulle skirt from Comme des Garçons. "I am drawn to clothing that exudes confidence, creativity and individuality. I enjoy mixing and matching different styles and textures to create unexpected and compelling looks."

For Yun, the act of dressing is a creative process; she often draws inspiration from her mood, the occasion and the environment, and experimenting with different combinations to create looks that feel authentic and expressive. As in her work as an art director, her personal style is infused with innovation and storytelling. She says, "cultivating your own style is essential for expressing individuality, creativity and self-confidence. It allows you to present yourself authentically to the world and to create a visual language that reflects your personality, values and aspirations." ▼

## Snag Her Style

**JACQUEMUS** Black & White Les Sculptures "Les doubles sandales" Heeled Sandals, \$1,709, [Ssense.com](#)

**MARQUES ALMEIDA** Blue Belted Jeans, \$360, [Ssense.com](#)

**GANNI** Occasion Top Handle Knot Bag, \$245, [Ganni.com](#)

**SIMONE ROCHA** Pink Easy Tank Top, \$335, [Ssense.com](#)

**HERMÈS** Rouge Hermès Matte Lipstick Limited Edition in 47 Rouge Cinétique, \$99, [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

THE MAKING OF THE ONTARIO

## April Issue

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VITA X TMB COSMETIC SURGERY

# Chin Up

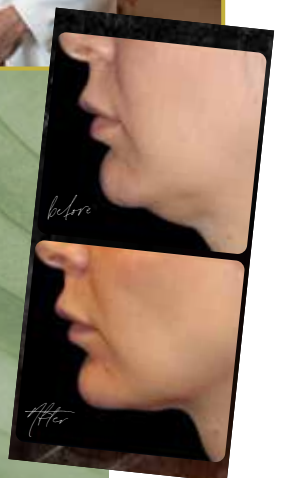
The future of double-chin treatments is here

There's a new and revolutionary double-chin treatment available to Canadians, and it's a "face-changer."

Created by medical and aesthetic equipment manufacturer BTL, the procedure, called EMFACE® submentum, has been brought to Canada and is now available in Toronto thanks to TMB Cosmetic Surgery. This leading clinic for luxury aesthetic beauty treatments and cosmetic surgery is headed up by Dr. Trevor Born—one of North America's top plastic surgeons, who has garnered a global reputation for his high-tech, meticulous and skilled approach to cosmetic treatments.

"At TMB Cosmetic Surgery, we pride ourselves on being early movers in bringing excellent technology to the Canadian market," says Dr. Born, who is well-known for bringing cutting-edge solutions to his clinic. "Patients are looking for effective, impactful options that are non-invasive and require no-downtime. The EMFACE® submentum applicators are a perfect technology to address facial sculpting by way of minimizing the appearance of a double chin."

Harnessing the power of special, patented technology for facial muscle toning and double-chin fat reduction, EMFACE® submentum applicators represent an innovation that's poised to finally address the challenges of treating the double-chin area. Designed to prioritize patient comfort and ease, the applicators offer a needle-free and bruise-free solution with zero recovery time. In fact, EMFACE® is the only non-invasive procedure that targets the dermal and subdermal layers of the



skin as well as reducing excess fat for better contour, while toning and strengthening the supporting muscles. Translation? Addressing skin, fat and now, for the first time, muscle, means that patients will experience a firmer and more enhanced appearance of the chin area.

"Increasingly, my clients are seeking treatments that provide real results with limited downtime," explains Dr. Born.

"Being able to offer this innovation from BTL, which addresses all causes of double-chin concerns like never before, is going to be a game-changer. The treatment works by targeting every layer of the skin to reduce a double chin, providing exceptional results in record time. Paired with other treatments, I believe this will revolutionize the way we look at treating facial aging in the future." He adds.

More information about the double chin treatment with EMFACE® can be found at [btl.aesthetics.com/en\\_ca](#). To book a treatment with Dr. Born, visit TMB Cosmetic Surgery at [tmbcosmeticsurgery.com](#). Be sure to follow TMB and Dr. Born on Instagram, as they work to bring more new innovations in aesthetics and cosmetics surgeries to Canada: [@trevorbornmd](#) and [@tmbcosmeticsurgery](#).

# Totes Awesome?

Can you really save the world, one tote bag or reusable cup at a time?

BY AILEEN LALOR

When the “Stanley Cup” craze arrived, we heaved a heavy sigh. This again? We’ve seen the Hydro Flasks, S’wells and Corkcicles come and go and, to all external eyes, it seemed like this was the same new same old. But then we read around a little more and realized one key part of their appeal: their collectability. “They aren’t that great,” Caroline Moss, the founder and host of podcast *Gee Thanks, Just Bought It*, told Vox writer Alex Abad-Santos. “But they are pretty. And that’s all trends really seek: is this thing moderately useful, and does it look good?”

Hold up though: isn’t one of the purposes of a reusable water cup that it should be, you know, reused, thus eliminating waste? Likewise the Trader Joe mini tote bags that went viral a minute ago. So surely this over-consumption is in direct contravention of the products’ purpose?

Yes, of course, but it’s even more complicated than that. “With some items we’re choosing that we think are sustainable, sometimes there may be some kind of hidden trade-off,” says Dr. Katherine White, a professor specializing in sustainability and consumer insights at UBC. “So maybe your tote bag is recycled or made of bamboo, which is a sustainable attribute, but the company or brand producing it isn’t highlighting all its attributes, such as where it was sourced from, how it got to where it is now and the chemicals, energy and work that went into producing it.”

There’s also our usage of products. “With the plastic bag ban, something that happened in the U.K. is that people started using reusable bags as though they were disposable—you forget your bag, you buy another one,” Dr. White says. “There are more materials, energy and chemicals going into that—so that’s worse than just having the disposable one.”



LAMBERT



And, she says, there’s also a psychological phenomenon known as the “licensing effect,” where you did something good like using your reusable cup instead of buying a disposable one, so you feel “licensed” to do something less sustainable later. “It’s like a reward for previous ethical or moral behaviour, where you let yourself off the hook,” she explains.

That said, perfection can be the enemy of the good. “If you’re vegan but wear leather boots it can be perceived that you’re worse than someone who isn’t vegan at all. This kind of attitude is a problem,” says Dr. White.

They aren’t that great ...  
but they are pretty. And that’s all  
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moderately useful, and  
does it look good?



It’s far better to look for manageable goals. “You can go veggie five days a week,” she says. “Some people find it daunting to think of riding their bike to work every day, but more people would start if it was three days a week.” And she suggests focusing your efforts in three areas: transportation (how you get to work or school and how many flights you take); food (moving toward a more plant-based diet and reducing red meat) and how you heat and cool your home (alternative sources such as heat pumps).

And then we all need to think about whether we need to tickle our consumerist interests—buying secondhand instead of new, sharing products with neighbours instead of having our own or just buying stuff we don’t need because of the trend cycle. “It is getting more fashionable to be sustainable,” she says. “There is an increasing culture where it’s OK or even trendy and socially approved of to go thrifting, so doing that and talking about it so it becomes a social norm is good.”

And what of your Stanley Cup? “In a best-case scenario, most things that are reusable, it’s about how it gets used,” says Dr. White. “If you used it once or twice and get into that consumer cycle of buying more, that’s a problem. But if you use it long enough, it eventually becomes the more sustainable choice.” V

# Blink Big

Should you add a lash or brow serum to your beauty routine? Three experts weigh in

BY FARAH KHAN

Fluttering lashes and full brows: more than just beauty aspirations, they're now the focal point of a burgeoning trend that's ignited a rise in eyelash and eyebrow serums meant to take your finest hairs to new lengths.

"As people seek more non-invasive options, brow and lash serums offer a way to achieve fuller, healthier-looking eyebrows and lashes without resorting to extensions, false strip-lashes or 'drawn-on brows,'" says Lexi Miles Corrin, founder and CEO of Waxon, a laser and wax bar that offers eyebrow and eyelash services. Plus, she adds, as more people start to see visible results, share their experiences and educate themselves, the trend is further gaining momentum. "Consumers are now more informed and curious about products that can contribute to achieving a youthful and defined appearance due to social media and beauty influencers."

But it's not all (Tik) talk. Recent advancements in cosmetic formulations have yielded potent ingredients that claim to promote fuller lashes and brows. Across the board, these products purport to enhance follicle growth and promote fuller, healthier hair. But the ingredients themselves can vary, meaning not every serum is created equal.

"Key ingredients may include vitamins such as biotin and panthenol, antioxidants and peptides, or castor oil," says Nicole Karajovic, a licensed aesthetician at Waxon. "There are also prescription-strength prostaglandin-based products that have increased risk of side effects."

Olaplex, for one, has created a peptide complex technology for its Lashbond Building Serum, which has a blend of potent peptides, hyaluronic acid and biotin to promote healthy-looking and fuller lashes. According to the brand's chief scientist, Lavinia Popescu, "[It] supports the natural lash growth cycle



and maintains an optimal environment to support the look of longer, thicker, stronger and fuller lashes." She adds that both the hyaluronic acid and biotin promote nourished lashes and reduce the appearance and feel of dry, brittle hairs. Olaplex's new Browbond Building Serum includes similar tech to support the natural growth cycle and brow retention for the look of fuller, denser more youthful eyebrows—in as little as four weeks. Bonus: the product is said to also contain an innovative peptide to help reduce the appearance of new greys.

How fast do they work? It's a common misconception that the results will be instant and permanent. "In order to see results, lash and brow serums have to be a part of your self-care ritual," Popescu says. Corrin agrees: "Consistent and regular use of these serums is typically recommended to achieve optimal results over several weeks or months before noticeable improvements in length and thickness become apparent. This means that daily use will be the most beneficial to target sparse brows or barely-there brows and lashes."

By adding the serums to your routines and being consistent, you will see gradual results. However, genetics, lifestyle, health and usage will play a role in how well they work. "Some may assume that using a growth serum will lead to unlimited growth, whereas they are geared to support the natural growth cycles and promote healthier hair, within the genetic limitations of the individual," Karajovic explains.

Despite the variables, Popescu says these serums are a great option for most consumers who want longer, thicker, and healthier looking lashes and brows. "It is a ... solution ... over other options like extensions or false eye lashes due to their natural ingredients and long-term results." V

VITA X MONAT + MARC ANTHONY + OPI

# 3 Spring Beauty Staples

Stock up on these seasonal must-haves for warmer-weather-winning skin, hair and nails



## MONAT SKINCARE MAKEUP

This vitamin E, niacinamide and peptide-powered makeup collection from global beauty brand Monat features a range of products for the lips, eyes, cheeks and skin. The weightless formulas instantly moisturize and nourish the skin while adding a healthy glow, which help to create the perfect dewy look for the season.

## MARC ANTHONY STRICTLY CURLS HAIR & SCALP 5-IN-1 REFRESHER

This 5-in-1 Refresher is made to neutralize scalp odour, reduce frizz, redefine curls, rehydrate and refresh the scalp. It's formulated with shea butter and avocado oil to hydrate and defrizz, making it ideal for unpredictable spring weather. The 5-in-1 Refresher is also perfect for those looking to embrace their natural hair by using salon-quality products. Strictly Curls Hair & Scalp 5-in-1 Refresher is available at Shoppers Drug Mart, Walmart Canada and other retailers nationwide.

## OPI XPRESS/ON PRESS ON NAILS

OPI has launched a new artificial nail, OPI xPRESS/ON, offering professional quality shades, artistry and innovative effects available anytime, anywhere. With OPI xPRESS/ON, iconic colour, trendsetting designs and a flawless gel-like salon manicure are right at your fingertips—just xPRESS, set, go! Each OPI xPRESS/ON set includes 30 professional-quality nails, super-hold glue, a cuticle tool and a file. To apply, use the quick and easy four-step process: fit, shape, prep and xPress. OPI xPRESS/ON offers 14 days of gel-like manicure wear for \$18.99 (iconic shades), \$19.99 (salon effects and longer lengths) and \$21.99 (professional nail art) at Shoppers Drug Mart.

# Fashion *Victims*

Is imitation flattery—or is it theft?

BY JILL VON SPRECKEN

In the spring of 2023, textile artist Alexandria Masse discovered that one of her designs, an elaborately crocheted dragon hat, had been copied by retailers Shein, AliExpress and Etsy—just to name a few. “That piece went super viral,” she says of the dragon hat, which is based on the logo of her grandparents’ restaurant. “Having a piece that’s so personal to me be taken out of context, and then used in Chinese factories. It’s very, very bizarre to see.”

Masse’s story is all too familiar. “It’s almost a rite of passage at this point,” she says. Retailers such as Shein—who face a laundry list of copyright complaints—are accused of making plagiarism part of their business model. Even large-scale retailers like Levi Strauss and H&M have called out the e-commerce juggernaut for copyright and trademark infringements—but many more examples exist on the small-scale designer end of the spectrum.

“The bottom line is it’s cheaper to just steal designs than to employ designers to create new items,” says Sara Biegel Evans, student at Peter A. Allard School of Law. “For a system of law that’s supposed to encourage innovation and protect the people who are doing the innovating, copyright and intellectual property as a whole has really failed fashion designers.”

It’s no coincidence that these transgressions play out more often in the fashion world. “Fashion itself is generally seen as a useful item, and therefore not capable of copyright like straight fashion design,” says Jon Festinger, lawyer and adjunct professor at the Peter A. Allard School of Law. In other words, because clothing is considered a necessity, it isn’t as protected by copyright laws.

Rosie Mangiarotti, founder and CEO of Perkies, had her own experience with a big brand’s imitation game. Her company creates sticky bras, including the Perkies Nips: Nipple Enhancers. The stick-on bra with molded erect nipples, is a response to the #freethenip cultural trend, but was also created with breast cancer survivors in mind. “I can’t say I was the sole inventor of it,” says Mangiarotti. “But I think I’m one of the first ones to bring it in as a real pop-culture-slash-mastectomy-product.”

A year and a half after Perkies Nips launched, Kim Kardashian’s company Skims came out with a strikingly similar product: the Ultimate Nipple Bra. “At first I was so rattled by it,” she says. “This is so scary. Skims’ marketing budget blows the Perkies marketing budget out of the water.” But after a few conversations with friends and family members, her perspective shifted. “Everyone was like, you’re being knocked off by a Kardashian. Could you have any more product validation than that?”



DESIGNER  
ALEXANDRIA MASSE



ROSIE MANGIAROTTI,  
FOUNDER AND CEO OF PERKIES



FROM ALEXANDRIA MASSE'S MOTH COLLECTION  
PHOTO: RAFE AYUB



DESIGNER  
ALEXANDRIA MASSE



But for smaller independent designers, even a clear copy of a unique design raises a weighty value proposition. “Access to justice is not easy if you are a small designer. It’s a fairly expensive proposition to hire lawyers, go through examination for discovery, go through trial, possibly go through appeals. And so that certainly can dissuade litigation,” says Festinger.

Rather than the law courts, the court of public opinion is often where designers turn to raise awareness and fight back against copycats. “Very often smaller designers or creators, if they feel they’ve been unjustly treated by others, they will usually find a lot of empathy and sympathy on social media,” Festinger says. “And the larger company will have to defend itself because it will get called out.”

In Masse’s case, she responded with a YouTube video—pink pom-pom microphone in hand—rating each of the knock-offs (and there are many) on a scale of one to 10. “It’s really sad that it’s so normal now, and I think by talking about it, by laughing at it, by pointing out, ‘Hey, this really isn’t good,’” she says of the video. “Artists are just trying to make sure people are aware of it.”

Mangiarotti took a similar tack, turning to social media with a LinkedIn post that highlighted her hopes and fears surrounding the copycat bra. “I think it’s important to lean into it ... you know, do a positive LinkedIn post. Be a beacon of inspiration to these smaller brands who have also been knocked off,” she says. “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. There’s no way around it, and the only thing you can control is your mindset.”

A decade or two ago, it was larger fashion houses that looked to safeguard their designs—cue logomania, where articles of clothing became splashed with trademarkable logos. But then fast fashion arrived and changed everything. “Fast fashion companies, which became increasingly large, started using the designs and imitating smaller designers,” Festinger says. “We should be protecting smaller designers perhaps better than we are.”

When approached for comment, a Shein spokesperson said, “Shein respects designers and artists, and the intellectual property rights of others. We take all claims of infringement seriously ... If a violation is confirmed, Shein takes appropriate action.” They added, “We continue to invest and improve our process to detect and prevent violations.” The spokesperson also highlighted the Shein X Incubator Program, which supports aspiring designers as they launch their own collections.

But Biegel Evans points to larger systemic gaps in protection. “There’s a really poignant quote ... that everyone requires clothes, but only women require fashion. So fashion is feminine, and because of that, has been discredited and is unimportant and frivolous,” she says. “The people who are making the most profit are all men. But the people who are doing all the work are women.”

Festinger explains it this way: “If you look at the conglomerates that form the fashion business, on the business side ... you’re basically going to find men. If you look at the design side, you’re going to find a lot of diversity and a lot of women,” he says. “I have a hard time not identifying on a macro level sexism as having something to do with the dynamics here.”

Of course, the people hired to make clothing also lack protections. What really bothers Masse is the price her designs are being sold for by fast fashion retailers. “Crochet takes so much time and work to do. It can’t be replicated by a machine, it can only be done by hand,” she says. “If you’re selling it for 20 bucks ... that means somebody’s not being paid fairly. I think the most frustrating part is that my work is being used to take advantage of people who unethically produce them.” V

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PLEASE ENJOY RESPONSIBLY.

# Check Inn

Four Toronto hotels are stepping up their stay games with new spa, dining and room features

## HILTON TORONTO

Get “prêt” to experience a taste of Parisian flair right in the very heart of Toronto. Frenchy, an elevated-yet-approachable bar and brasserie in the lobby of the newly renovated Hilton Toronto, is the new heartbeat of the property. Décor-wise, deep banquettes and armchairs elevate comfort, creating spaces for celebratory gatherings or hushed conversations. Throughout, a palette of deep burgundy hues, wood, marble and florals encourages a sense of elegance. The stately private dining room showcases Frenchy’s wine collection in lacquered wall cabinets, offering the perfect setting for meetings, tastings and special occasions. As day shifts to night, soft ambient lighting bathes the space in a gentle glow. Don’t overlook the chic, European-inspired lobby bar and lounge, centred around a sweeping oval-shaped bar wrapped in rich-high-gloss red tambour panelling and topped with a sculptural brass gantry; indeed, Frenchy is setting a new standard for the quintessential lobby bar experience in Toronto, making it the go-to destination for a spontaneous rendezvous and buzzy chatter. Sip on precisely made signature cocktails (the Frenchy 75 infuses the gin, Champagne and a lemon concoction with a red hibiscus syrup in a blush-pink glass; the Frou-Frou is an indulgent spin on the espresso Martini with a rich pistachio flavour) and an array of European wines while grazing on bar snacks such as crispy olives, escargot vol-au-vent, truffle brie gougères and croque monsieur sliders. Restaurant side, the menu at Frenchy is full of flavour. Lunchtime meetings with colleagues or friends are elevated with an extensive salad and sandwich selection to accompany the delectable starters and mains. The robust dinner menu boasts French staples; start with delicacies ranging from oysters and escargots to truffle-baked brie and foie gras mousse, before indulging in



PHOTO: ALEX LUKEY PHOTOGRAPHY

a selection of mouthwatering mains like the bouillabaisse, côte de boeuf for two, gnocchi Parisienne and duck confit cassoulet. Frenchy’s signature “Avec Frites” section (also available at lunch) has reimagined the classic steak frites to include all your favourites ... because frites shouldn’t be reserved just for steak! Plus, watch for special programming and live entertainment throughout the week. Ooh la la! **145 Richmond St. W., 416-860-6800. Frenchytoronto.com**

NOA NICHOL

## ST. REGIS TORONTO

Staying at the St. Regis Toronto really makes you feel like royalty, from super-plush suites to a 13-layer chocolate cake called The King’s Cake to a glam nightly Champagne sabering at the luxe Astor Lounge. Recently, the hotel has added several offerings that make it even more fit for a queen. The Royal Brunch Menu at the on-site Louix Louis restaurant lets you indulge in seven decadent sharing dishes including smoked salmon and waffles, Wagyu short-rib Benedict topped with Kaluga caviar, duck hash with seared foie gras, French Toast bites and more. After you take your meal, relax at The Spa at The St. Regis Toronto with a Brazilian lymphatic drainage massage; rooted in South American wellness traditions, this kingly treatment offers a holistic approach to detoxification, promoting both physical and mental well-being. **325 Bay St., 416-306-5800. Marriott.com**

NOA NICHOL



PHOTO: PAULA WILSON

## VITA X BENQ



## Tech-Activated Eye Care

Did you know that eye care-safe technology can help reduce the risk of Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches and eye pain? BenQ, one of North America’s leading monitor brands, is the first monitor manufacturer to prioritize eye health. Since 2010, the BenQ team has studied vision, monitor usage and behaviour, and how one’s surrounding environment can impact computer viewing and eye health. Knowing the growing importance of eye care, the team developed and designed their innovative Eye-CareU technology to add comfort, safety and quality to their monitors. BenQ’s exclusive eye-care technologies reduce eye fatigue for user’s comfort, enhance productivity and workplace safety during extended use.

### Here’s how it works:

- Brightness Intelligence+ is a feature that detects screen content and environmental lighting, adjusting display brightness and colour temperature.
- Brightness Intelligence is a sensor that detects ambient light as well as the brightness and contrast of screen content. It adapts brightness and enhances dark areas on the display without overexposing in bright regions.
- Flicker-free is a technology certified by international TÜV Rheinland, which eliminates flicker.
- Low Blue Light is a technology that filters harmful blue light.
- Low Blue Light+ is a technology that filters out the shorter, higher energy blue-violet radiation.

### ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

- M-Book Mode: Dedicated to minimizing the visual differences between the monitor and the connected MacBook series product.
- Coding Mode: Devised to make every color pop out for easy readability and coding efficiency.

Learn more at [benq.com/en-ca/monitor/software/eye-careu.html](http://benq.com/en-ca/monitor/software/eye-careu.html)



## BISHA HOTEL

Attention Swifties: your “Wildest Dreams” are set to come true as Bisha Hotel Toronto prepares for Taylor Swift’s arrival in November with the debut of The Taylor, a deluxe one-bedroom suite that’s anything but a “Blank Space.” Among the room’s perks: album visuals, friendship bracelets, a curated playlist of Swift songs and a comp bottle of Prosecco. Plus, it’s just minutes away from Rogers Centre, where Swift will perform her Eras Tour. “All You Had to Do Was Stay,” so what are you waiting for?! **80 Blue Jays Way, 844-275-1726. Bishahotel-toronto.com**

SAMANTHA VECCHIARELLI



PHOTO: GILLIAN JACKSON

## HOTEL X TORONTO

Ever dream of indulging in a hotel spa treatment without leaving the comfort of your own room? Well, Hotel X Toronto is now offering Guerlain Spa services in-suite to all checked-in guests. Choose from sensorial facials, body treatments and massages—signature brand offerings perfected in France. Our Radiance Facial paired deep cleansing with an exclusive 10-minute Guerlain facial massage and mask. The result: a fresh, clear and radiant complexion, without any need to recall a ladies’ room locker code. **111 Princes’ Blvd., 1-855-943-9300. Hotelx-toronto.com**

NOA NICHOL



# Belizean Bliss

Elevated amenities and world-class snorkeling and diving make this Central American country a haven for your next luxe adventure

BY LISE BOULLARD

## SAIL + SLEEP

With the first sip of our coconut rum, nutmeg and pineapple cocktail, and the first waft of warm Belizean breeze washing over us as our Fountaine Pajot Saona 47 yacht glided away from the Belize City boat launch, we knew this would be a trip unlike any other. Operated by Belize Sailing Vacations, Tranquilo features five private cabins and multiple opportunities for lounging, making it the ultimate escape for families, friends or couples to recharge and reconnect. On our two-night trip, two crew kept us moving gracefully through our lounge-snorkel-swim-eat-sleep-repeat schedule, ensuring smooth sailing on all fronts. After fun-filled days, we had some of the best sleep of our lives to the sound of lapping waves, and we won't soon forget waking up to the view of the ocean horizon, then walking upstairs for a rum pancake, papaya and strawberry breakfast overlooking the sparkling sea.

[Belizesailingvacations.com](http://Belizesailingvacations.com)



## EXPLORE

Covering 296 kilometres along the Mesoamerican Reef, the Belize Barrier Reef system is home to more than 500 fish species and one of the world's top diving and snorkeling destinations. On our two snorkeling excursions with Belize Sailing Vacations, we swam in turquoise waters alongside a kaleidoscope of angelfish, blue tang, parrot fish, barracudas, Caribbean rays, Southern stingrays and brain coral. Later, we got a birds' eye view of that same spot from six hundred feet up while flying over the famed Blue Hole—a 124-metre-deep sinkhole believed to have been formed during the last ice age—in our Tropic Air Cessna.

[Amigosdivebelize.com](http://Amigosdivebelize.com) / [Tropicair.com](http://Tropicair.com)



## STAY

With 38 beach houses set amidst white sand and swaying palms along 1.6 kilometres of Southern Belizean coastline, Naia Resort and Spa is a quintessential Caribbean paradise. The property is a 20-minute drive from the village of Placencia, but with complimentary bicycle rentals, sunrise yoga classes, a beachside pool and seaside hammocks, you may not feel the need to leave. The vibe is laid back, but the resort's architecture and interior design is elevated, as evidenced by modern contemporary beach houses featuring French doors, high ceilings and natural wood craftsmanship. We felt like princesses taking a dip in our front deck plunge pool then sauntering over to our outdoor garden shower to rinse off before heading over to Naia Spa.

[Naiaresortandspa.com](http://Naiaresortandspa.com)

## SPA

The Naia Spa experience begins the moment you set foot on the path through a lush jungle forest across bridges and quiet streams to arrive at the spa reception. Pre-treatment, we sat in one of the outdoor lounge's hanging rattan chairs, admiring the surroundings while sipping orange-infused ice water. After the masseuse soothed our sore muscles with locally sourced ginger and ylang ylang essential oils during our 90-minute Native Healing massage, we blissed out even more in the spa's oasis-style pool.



**SAVOUR** Featuring fresh-caught seafood, fragrant coconut and sun-ripened tropical fruit, Belizean cuisine is an ode to its local bounty. On our first night aboard Tranquilo, we celebrated with a meal of delicately flavoured coconut curry fish stew with coconut rice, followed by (you guessed it) coconut chocolate cakes drizzled with chocolate sauce. The next day, on our Taste of Caye Caulker food tour, everyone in our group raved about the addictively good crushed plantain tostones at Salty's Restaurant and Beach Bar, topped with fresh local shrimp, guacamole and pico de gallo. At our last dinner in Placencia, the rich flakiness of Rumfish y Vino's coffee-encrusted red snapper, served with tangy lime and cilantro rice was an exhilarating ending to an incredible trip.

[Rumfishyvino.com](http://Rumfishyvino.com) / [Enjoybelizetoday.com](http://Enjoybelizetoday.com)

# Spring Sips

With patio weather (*nearly*) upon us, spring sipping is on our minds. Below, drinks to salut the season

BY NOA NICHOL

## 1. DILLON'S VODKA RTDS

There's a small-batch distillery in the heart of Ontario's Niagara wine country crafting unique spirits using local and seasonal ingredients; just call it "grain-to-glass". Dillon's Small Batch Distillers offers a collection of spirits, including vodkas, gins, rye whisky, absinthe, liqueur-style gins, peach and plum schnapps, prepared bottled cocktails and a line of cocktail bitters. For spring, we love their new vodka cocktails in a can, in flavours like Blueberry Peach & A Twist Of Lemon, Apricot & A Touch Of Ginger and Raspberry, Lemon & A Hint Of Lavender (your best bet is to grab the handy variety pack). "We've spent a decade answering the question of how to drink our spirits—canned cocktails are an easy solution," says founder Geoff Dillon. "They're an easy way to have a balanced cocktail in a simple can." [Dillons.ca](http://Dillons.ca)

## 2. DILLON'S DRY GIN 7

Also from Dillon's, this perfect-for-cocktails traditional dry-style gin is made with 100 per cent Canadian rye and vapour distilled through seven botanicals, including juniper, as well as through oak for a slight sweetness. Developed with top bartenders, the result is a smooth sophisticated "London-er" that's perfect for a classic G&T and a jolly joy to the dry martini—or, mix up a spring-y Basil Gin Gimlet by muddling five basil leaves and a half ounce fresh lime juice in a cocktail shaker, then adding two ounces Dillon's Dry Gin 7, a half ounce simple syrup, three dashes Dillon's Lime Bitters and ice. Shake for 10 to 15 seconds, strain into a chilled coupe glass and garnish with a basil leaf and a fresh lime wheel. [Dillons.ca](http://Dillons.ca)

## 3. BEARFACE CANADIAN WHISKY RTDS

Wildly refreshing premixed cans of Bearface have been created to bring you a taste of the wilderness—without leaving your backyard. Easy-drinking and full of flavour, every pre-mixed cocktail



is bursting with real refreshment and an uncompromising Bearface elementally aged Canadian whisky taste. Wildly Refreshing Whisky, Ginger & A Hint Of Lime is clear, effervescent and light, perfectly balanced between whisky and ginger with a tart citrus bite. Always serve chilled, and please, remember to recycle these cans; if you are out in the great outdoors, leave the wilderness as unspoiled as you found it. [Bearfacewhisky.com](http://Bearfacewhisky.com)

## 4. 2 HOOTS HARD ICED TEA

Here's a beverage brand that looked at the world's iced tea and saw that it deserved better: bolder, fresher and juicier, with some attitude. In other words, it needed people to give a hoot about it. And then another. So, 2 Hoots got to brewing, combining sustainably sourced tea with hand-picked, cold-pressed lemons. The result: big flavour and bold taste in every single can of Original, Zero Sugar and Half & Half. You're welcome. [2hootshardtea.com](http://2hootshardtea.com)

## 5. WHITE CLAW

Blended with real fruit juice, White Claw is making waves in Canada by introducing the brand's first tequila-based drink along with a vodka-based version. The new collection upholds White Claw's commitment to better-for-you beverages, containing 100 calories, 1 gram sugar and 5 per cent alc./vol. Perfect for the patio, White Claw Tequila Smash features authentic Mexican tequila with refreshing real fruit juice in four seasonally delicious flavour pairings: Lime Prickly Pear, Pineapple Passion Fruit, Mango Paloma and Strawberry Guava (available in an eight-pack Variety Pack). White Claw Vodka Smash is crafted with White Claw Vodka and blended with real fruit juice in four new flavour combinations: Peach Raspberry, Cranberry Wild Cherry, Watermelon Mint, and Pineapple Tangerine (also available in an eight-can variety pack). [Ca.whiteclaw.com](http://Ca.whiteclaw.com)

# 5 Earth-Friendly Wines

When it comes to good sipping, sustainability is key

BY NOA NICHOL

## BODEGA GARZÓN

This boutique winery in the idyllic countryside of Uruguay is the first sustainable winery outside North America to comply with requirements set by the United States Green Building Council and the first in the world to earn LEED certification for its entire facility. The 205,000-square-foot winery boasts a sustainable design that enables the process of gravity winemaking, and Bodega Garzón optimizes energy efficiency with insulating green roofs—which also develop a biodiverse environment and facilitate rainwater harvesting and reuse, plus a high-efficiency HVAC with heat recovery. The modern winery is producing wines celebrated by critics and establishing itself as a world-renowned destination furthering sustainability, wine culture and tourism in Uruguay. [Bodegagarzon.com](http://Bodegagarzon.com)



Bodega Garzón



Santa Julia



Tierra Rica

## DREAMING TREE

The environment is incredibly important to musician Dave Matthews' Dreaming Tree Wines. The grapes are grown sustainably, promoting efficient water use, soil management and habitat preservation. The packaging is eco-friendly, featuring a lighter bottle, 100 per cent recycled paper label and a cork without foil, reducing carbon emissions. Plus, in collab with The Nature Conservancy, the brand plants a tree for each Cabernet Sauvignon or Crush Red Blend bottle sold. Dreaming Tree Wines has planted over 365,000 trees and donated \$2,000,000 to environmental causes thus far. [Dreamingtrewines.com](http://Dreamingtrewines.com)

## SANTA JULIA

In Argentina, Santa Julia Wines stands at the forefront of sustainability, integrating eco-friendly practices throughout the wine-



Tormaresca Wines

making journey. In the vineyards, they prioritize organic farming (read: no synthetic pesticides and herbicides) and embracing cover crops for soil enrichment. Precision irrigation minimizes water usage while solar panels power the winery, reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources. Waste reduction is achieved through composting grape remnants and utilizing recycled materials in packaging. Fair wages, community engagement and education initiatives for employees underline their social responsibility. Partnering with local suppliers ensures a smaller carbon footprint in transportation. Santa Julia's commitment to sustainability is evident in each pour—a testament to a holistic, environmentally conscious approach to winemaking. [Santajulia.com.ar](http://Santajulia.com.ar)

## TIERRA RICA

From Chile, Tierra Rica sustainable wine stands as a beacon of environmental and social consciousness. In the vineyards, the use of natural predators and cover crops promotes biodiversity, enriching the soil without resorting to synthetic chemicals. The winery harnesses solar power extensively, while rainwater harvesting systems supplement water needs sustainably. Packaging is crafted from recycled materials, reducing the ecological footprint. Tierra Rica actively engages in community programs, providing education and healthcare support for its workforce. This brand exemplifies a meticulous fusion of sustainable viticulture and community well-being, crafting wines that embody responsible practices from vine to bottle.

## TORMARESCA WINES

This Italian estate under the Antinori umbrella champions sustainability with a focus on eco-conscious viticulture and winemaking. Embracing organic and biodynamic practices, they prioritize soil health, biodiversity and natural pest control. Tormaresca employs innovative water-management systems, ensuring efficient irrigation in their vineyards while minimizing water usage. Solar power and energy-efficient technologies are integral to their cellars, reducing the winery's carbon footprint. Waste-reduction initiatives, from recycling to composting, underline their commitment to environmental stewardship. Tormaresca Wines epitomizes a holistic approach to sustainability, harmonizing traditional winemaking with cutting-edge eco-friendly practices for a flourishing future. [Tormaresca.it](http://Tormaresca.it)

Enjoy Responsibly

this little piggy goes to market ~~xxxx~~ New Zealand

this little piggy stays home

this little piggy has roast ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxx~~ beef carbon zero certification

this little piggy had none

this little piggy goes wee ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxx~~ wee wee down a treat

new



**squealing pig** new zealand

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