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VITA

THE May Issue

Inside *the* Issue

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- TRAVEL How to do Las Vegas alone

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Mother's Day on West 4th Ave



Go ahead and spoil mom this year. Whether it's something for her closet, home, or body - you'll be able to find something she'll love on West 4th Ave. Also, don't forget to check out the many restaurants hosting Mother's Day brunch.



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Poppy Barley \$135



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from \$299



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WEST 4TH

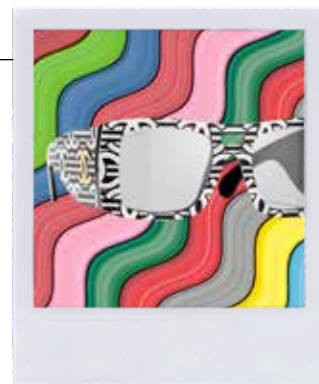


Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

This year, May 12 is Mother's Day but, really, isn't every day of every month a Mom Day? As a business-owning mother, I certainly think so—still, it's nice to celebrate moms and motherhood in a special issue of VITA. Our influencer spotlight, below, focuses on a new (and expanding) weekly newsletter created by my friend, Vancouver-based Erin Sousa, called The Mom Flow. I love how fresh and real the topics covered in her weekly "Friday Five" are—and, parent or not, I think you will, too. We've also got a mom on the cover; Claudia Schiffer, walking for Versace's SS24 collection, has three children. Plus, we're covering hearing loss, pearl accessories, hard-copy cookbooks and solo travel—all very mama-worthy topics. Enjoy!

Noa Nichol
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



MOM DAY GIFT PICK: A pair, any pair, of sunnies from Chanel's latest collection

THE MAKING OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

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The Mom Flow

Erin Sousa
@ERINCSOUSA

The Mom Flow is Erin Sousa's smart, funny and, most importantly, real weekly column on all things parenting. In her own words, The Mom Flow is "a place for working moms who love being a mom and also love being themselves. It's our safe space ... and no, you don't need to be a mom to enjoy the content! Because, while I'm a mom, the flow means also enjoying life outside of being a mom and knowing that it's OK to still be you—even if you're re-discovering who that is after having a baby."



Are there any personal experiences or stories shared on The Mom Flow that stand out to you regarding co-parenting?

I recently shared about our parenting styles differing and how I told him that I was set up as the "nag," which I didn't like. The next day he made a change that told me he heard me, and that meant the world.

What are your future plans for The Mom Flow?

In collaboration with VITA, Shangri-La Vancouver and Coast Restaurant, we are hosting our very first Mom Day event to kick off the month of Mother's Day

with our fave inspiring modern moms in the creator/influencer industry as I feel their influence in the space has so much weight for what a lot of moms see and feel. Mom Day is a term I coined for Mondays—the day of the week I use to set myself up for success at home and with my family, doing things like groceries, meal mapping, movement, etc., so I can take on the week as the best woman and mom I can be. I hope to expand these events within The Mom Flow community as time allows (we all know how busy it is to wear a lot of hats, and I want to enjoy things at the same time!). Stay tuned! ErinSousa.substack.com

Hi Erin! What motivated you to focus on real and raw topics in motherhood?

I am bombarded online with motherhood personas that are designed to simply sell more stuff. The Mom Flow is approached in a way of being a conduit or voice for the motherhood experience as it exists, as opposed to one that makes moms feel less than, and therefore pushing them to spend more in order to measure up. I feel it's really important for moms to enjoy the journey of motherhood; so often we get caught up in the comparison trap, with one-dimensional mom content subtly making us feel insecure. Also, I think to many motherhood feels more isolating and lonely than they anticipated, and that's a big reason why speaking true feelings out loud is so important in the motherhood space.

Could you share some of the key topics that The Mom Flow covers, especially those that are often overlooked or not commonly discussed?

It's so important to hear about the tough moments from other moms, and that's what I share a lot of—the duality of motherhood is often overlooked, and we see moms who have it all figured out, which can create insecurity and fixation on what we are not instead of enjoying motherhood in your own way. Some topics I've covered lately include my mom ick (playing with my daughter, and why it's not my fave), the moment my toddler told me she has no friends, co-parenting disagreements, only-child opinions, tantrums and so much more.

Mom guilt is a common struggle. How does The Mom Flow address this issue, and what advice do you offer to moms experiencing guilt?

As women, we always strive to be better and guilt is such a natural part of that, because we cannot be everything to everyone all at once. I am so mindful of mom guilt and think of a few things: my mom spent a lot less time with me because of work and I always felt loved and cared for, and as long as my daughter feels loved and cared for, that's all that matters. Guilt is a selfish emotion that is really all about self-importance, so I try to pep talk myself with this! Knowing you are enough as a mom is truly so important!

Co-parenting can be challenging. How does The Mom Flow provide support and insights for mothers navigating co-parenting dynamics?

Co-parenting is something my husband and I struggle with often. We are in-our-40s parents (of a toddler) with unique dynamics, in the way that I am the main breadwinner and he takes more time off for childcare. I've struggled with this as has he, and we work on checking in with each other. I know one thing for sure: our marriage will always come first as it is the basis for how we parent, and we work hard at always communicating what's on our minds.

How would you describe The Mom Flow to someone who is new to the platform?

The Mom Flow is a community that creates conversation around what it's like to take on modern motherhood. With plenty of content out there geared toward one type of mom, The Mom Flow takes on conversations we don't see happening in the space. It's for all kinds of moms: business-owner moms, moms to one, moms who love being a mom, but also love being themselves. Moms who aren't sure who they are yet! New moms, stay-at-home moms and even the mom-curious! I like to say the quiet part out loud. It's not just about everything in relation to being a mom, but rather a POV as someone who has a lens that motherhood has created.

How do you ensure authenticity and relatability in the content you provide?

Authenticity is so important to me. We often see mom content rolled into jokes or tropes as a way to hide true feelings around the motherhood experience, for fear of judgement from others. Motherhood is often critiqued and I have always taken so much strength from content that tells it like it really is, which is what people love about The Mom Flow.

VITA X GLENDALOUGH

A Rose Fizz for mom



The perfect Mother's Day brunch sip? For us, it's a refreshing cocktail made with Glendalough Wild Rose Gin—a fresh, rose-petal gin that was first made to honour head distiller Ciaran "Rowdy" Rooney's mother Rose, at his little brother's wedding. Rose had recently passed away, and this was his way to have her there in spirit.

Carefully tended flowers from her rose garden are vapour distilled with wild roses and plants from the mountains around the distillery to make this an intensely floral gin. After distilling, the gin is then further infused with even more roses to deepen the flavours and give it its lovely pink hue. Glendaloughdistillery.com

Rose & Raspberry Fizz

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 oz Glendalough Wild Rose Gin
0.5 oz raspberry syrup
0.5 oz lemon juice
0.5 oz Aperol
1.5 oz soda water

DIRECTIONS

Shake all ingredients (except soda) in a shaker with ice. Strain into a highball glass and add the soda. Garnish with a raspberry and a freshly torn sprig of mint.

Lend an Ear

Younger demographics are changing the conversation about hearing loss—and we're listening

BY JILL VON SPRECKEN

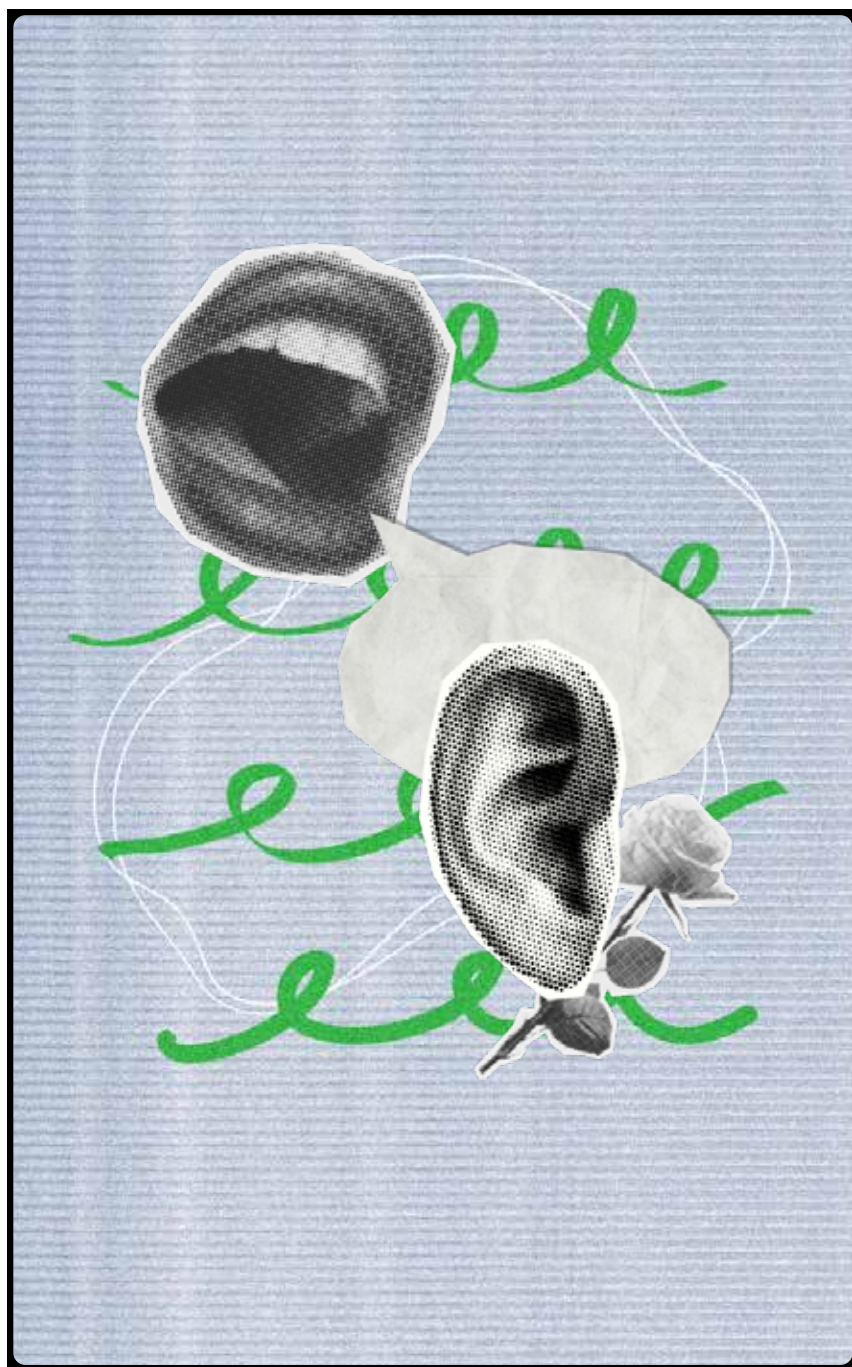
As a teen, Matthew Kowalchuk, a Vancouver writer and director, saw a counsellor about his hearing. "I convinced her everything was fine," he says. "That was a crossroads ... where it might have been different. But she had her own perceptions."

Kowalchuk lost his hearing at 14—an event compounded by a recent move to a new city and school, where he was living with his mom for the first time since he was a child. "If I had been in the same school as the year before, I think something different would have happened. Because teachers would have noticed a change," he says. "I wouldn't have just been the new kid at the back of the class." As it was, months passed before his hearing loss was finally diagnosed.

His story is unique, but he's not alone. The world is getting louder and, as the din increases, so do the instances of noise-induced hearing loss. The World Health Organization cautions that a billion young people are at risk of hearing loss due to unsafe listening practices—just one of many reasons a person of any age can have their hearing impacted. Yet stigma surrounding hearing loss in people on the younger end of the spectrum persists.

Part of the trouble is it's difficult to tell when you have it—a problem compounded in younger demographics, since it's often not screened until later years, if at all. That was the case for Dawn Mills, a hairstylist working in the Vancouver film industry. She was in her late 30s when she first got hearing aids. "Sometimes you just don't realize, because it's kind of a gradual thing. But then, after a while, people are like, you have the TV on really loud, and you're saying 'What?' a lot. And then you know that's probably a time when you should go."

Danielle Lafleur, an audiologist at Neil Squire Hearing Solutions and PhD student at UBC, knows that perceptions around hearing loss keep younger people from coming to her office for testing.



"People postpone ... coming into our office because of the stigma. A lot of that is a fear of aging," she says. "A hearing aid just makes it a little more real. But knowing that hearing aids aren't only for an older population ... might help break that down."

Primary physicians also have their own biases, and are often a patient's first point of contact. "Health providers might not consider hearing loss as a potential problem for a younger patient," says Lafleur. "They might see hearing loss as primarily an older problem as well."

There are drawbacks, beyond the obvious, to leaving hearing loss undiagnosed. And although withdrawal is somewhat normal at 14—"I just kind of hid in my bedroom and put on my Walkman," says Kowalchuk—it's tough to manage as a working, socializing adult.

Alicia Haque, a photographer and content creator with more than 33K followers on Instagram, experienced that first-hand. Diagnosed with hearing loss at 29, she now wears a hearing aid daily. "I'd slowly altered my life to accommodate my hearing over the years," she says, via email. "I stopped going to yoga classes, which are typically very quiet. I watched TV with subtitles. I would only take video calls with headphones." And those are just a few examples, she says, of how she'd rearranged her life.

After years of struggling, she finally went for a test, where her hearing loss was confirmed. She notes: "You rarely see hearing loss talked about in the context of young people and I felt embarrassed and alone. However, I've since learned that hearing loss can occur at any age for various reasons, but the stigma and lack of awareness prevents young people from getting tested."

Even with the correct diagnosis, there are barriers to care. The cost, for one, is substantial. "From my initial research, I learned that the price range spanned from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for a set of hearing aids," says Haque. "It's a very closed industry in this regard, and you only get an accurate price once you sit down with an audiologist." Her own ITE (in-the-ear) hearing aid cost \$6,000 and has a three-to-five-year lifespan. "Over the course of my lifetime I could end up spending \$50,000-plus on hearing aids," she says.

"That's definitely one of the biggest barriers for the younger generation, who may not have had that time to accumulate those funds or that wealth that is associated with this investment," says Lafleur. However, she explains, there's a flipside. "Untreated hearing loss, so hearing loss without hearing aids or any other management, can result in an annual loss of household income of about \$24,000 per year." Plus, she says, "People with hearing loss also experience increased medical costs." She gives the example of a client who struggled with addiction until his hearing loss was diagnosed.

Then there's day-to-day interactions. A recurring hurdle are exchanges with strangers, or others who don't understand or may not consider hearing impairment as a reason for communication difficulties. "Don't bother with her, she can't hear," says Mills, who has experienced this. "Or, go talk to somebody else because it's faster."

Kowalchuk relayed a situation at a theatre when he asked to sit near the front, explaining he was hard of hearing. "They were like, 'Well, you should learn to adapt.' And I'm like, 'This is me adapting,'" he says. "I certainly don't want to go through the whole back-and-forth process of them not understanding, not getting it, and me having to defend myself for saying, can you accommodate me? Most of my life, I have accommodated the hearing world."

"Approaching people from a place of compassion and understanding rather than judgment or presumption is so important," says Haque. "If you notice someone is asking you to repeat yourself, or they aren't acknowledging your communication, consider hearing impairment as a possible reason, even if they're young."

We're not there yet, but attitudes are changing—as is the tech. "One thing I'm seeing is that some younger people are liking the technology," says Lafleur. "A lot of them are Bluetooth compatible. They connect to your phone. There's some that are completely in your ear ... you can wear your typical AirPods, whatever you want, over the hearing aids. Hopefully that increase in tech is interesting to some of the younger demographics."

"I do use it as an anecdote when people come in and they're worried about something in their ears: everyone's got something in their ears nowadays," she adds, pulling out her own AirPods. "I've got these in all day." V

VITA X RAW SUGAR LIVING

Spring Beauty Refresh



From cosmetics to clothes, the winter-to-spring transition brings many changes to our lives—but what about shifting our hair- and body-care rituals? As we move out of cold, dry weather into hot, humid days, both hair and skin encounter new challenges of humidity and sun exposure. Humidity can make hair feel greasier, which for finer strands may mean a struggle with volume and, for thicker hair, may mean a need to tame the frizz. Increased sun exposure can lead to dull, dry and faded hair. Raw Sugar Living, known for clean hair, body and personal-care products made with organic extracts and good-for-you ingredients free of parabens, sulfates and silicone, recently arrived in Canada. Just in time for a spring refresh, here are six of their new hair and body products that we're loving:

Volume Revive Shampoo (\$20.99) is an ultra-refreshing and rejuvenating shampoo infused with white tea and strawberry extracts plus antioxidants and hyaluronic acid to protect from sun damage, lock in moisture and revitalize hair.

Volume Revive Conditioner (\$20.99) is a lush formula that coats your hair and scalp with nutrients to nourish, rejuvenate and condition without weighing hair down. Clean ingredients, ceramides and a protein complex mean this hair enhancer promotes strength and elasticity and lifts strands for max volume.

Endless Hair Glow Perfecting Dry Oil (\$18.49) gives instant brilliance. This light-weight yet enriching elixir with nourishing apricot and hair-strengthening argan oil helps lock in nutrients, smooth split ends and add perfect radiance to lackluster hair.

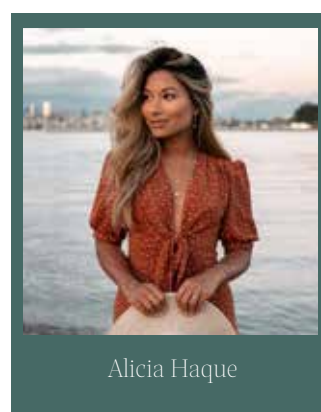
Simply Body Wash For Sensitive Skin Beach Rose + Coconut + Shea (\$16.49) is allergy tested and formulated specifically for sensitive skin. It's a nutrient-rich and gentle formula infused with rosehip oil, coconut milk and shea to give a moisturizing and ultra-nourishing skin refresh.

Body Butter in Pineapple + Maqui Berry + Coconut (\$20.99), with vitamin E and aloe vera, melts into dehydrated skin, leaving it soft, revitalized and restored.

Simply Deo Beach Rose + Aloe (\$13.99) sees magnesium, arrowroot, coconut oil and zinc come together in proprietary odour protection technology to quickly cover and neutralize odour naturally. With zero aluminum, baking soda, sulfates and parabens, this smooth-glide deodorant is packaged in biodegradable paper and post-consumer recycled plastic—good for your skin, and the planet.

Available in-store and online exclusively at Shoppers Drug Mart locations across Canada. Shop.shoppersdrugmart.ca

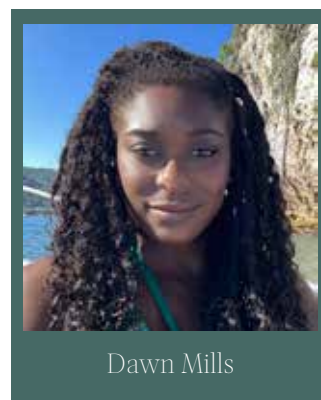
"Hearing loss can occur at any age for various reasons, but the stigma and lack of awareness prevents young people from getting tested"



Alicia Haque



Matthew Kowalchuk



Dawn Mills

Mother of Pearl

The surprise return of some of your grandmother's favourite accessories

BY ALEESHA HARRIS

The idea that what's old becomes, at some point, new again isn't exactly revolutionary. You can practically hear the collective sigh of each generation as they see their long-forgotten fashions trotted out a decade or so later by brands eager to repackage them for the younger set. Fashion is, after all, cyclical, with silhouettes, hues and styles going from 'it' to 'out' and back again. The same-same-but-different approach is also applied to accessories. And pearls are an interesting example of this.

The first recorded use of the mollusc-made gemstones—natural pearls are made by sea oysters or freshwater mussels as a protective response to irritants—for jewelry dates back to 2300 BC in ancient China. A mainstay in adornments since then, the popularity of pearls has been punctuated by pop-culture appearances. Audrey Hepburn's iconic necklace in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*; Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel's long "ropes" of pearls worn layered over casual shirts; Marilyn Monroe's simple string from Mikimoto; and, more recently, Harry Styles, whose necklace underscores the gender neutrality of pearl jewelry.

"Fashion trends come and go, but pearls are versatile and will always bring style to whatever you wear," says Amber Hsu, founder of Barebone Jewelry. "These gems are as individual and special as those who adore them. Not just for women, pearls transcend traditional boundaries into men's fashion, gender-neutral fashion and gender-fluid fashion, and are loved by generations."

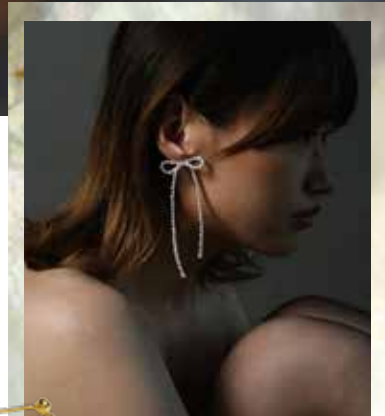
"Pearls have been trending for many years and I think that shows just how timeless they are," agrees Kara Yoo, founder of the namesake jewelry brand. "They keep coming back." A costuming chameleon of sorts, working with a variety of personal styles "from subtle to maximalist," according to Yoo, the latest pearl designs are ushering in a fresh take on the timeless accessory option. Hsu reflects that, while "you can never go wrong" with a classic freshwater pearl necklace, more modern designs include "a single pearl on a gold-plated ring or a stretch ring encircled with mini pearls, [as] these add textures and chic details."

"Not only do they evoke a sense of understated elegance, but they transcend age, gender and personal style," adds Justine Lançon, chief creative officer, Mejuri. "There's something for everyone." In fact, pearls are proving so popular with shoppers that, this spring, Mejuri unveiled a line devoted to the gemstones. The Pearl Power pushes pearls past simple strands into innovative accessory territory. "We are always looking at the re-contextualisation of the pearl, and how to make it modern and exciting," she says of the capsule, which includes a pearl station necklace and delightful drop earrings.

Pandora also put pearls at the centre of one of its latest launches, which sees freshwater pearls remixed with strands of sterling-silver and gold-plated metal beads, irregular chains and more. A timeless addition to one's jewelry collection (and therefore, a worthwhile investment), pearls are also positioned as a more sustainable option among gemstones.

"The sustainability aspect is also big," says Yoo. "Pearl farming is lower impact than gemstone mining. We're always on the lookout for vintage pearls, too, which is another source of inspiration for us." When done under ecologically mindful practices regarding water quality and pollution, pearl farming is billed as creating less pollution and fewer carbon emissions than gemstone mining, according to industry insiders. This interest in naturality also spills over into the designs themselves, with many shoppers gravitating to pearls with more natural formations and organic shapes such as organic baroque and Keshi pearls.

Hsu adds, "The cultivation of pearls is organic and typically involves minimal environmental disruption. Pearl farming can have positive effects on marine eco-



systems by providing habitats for other marine life and improving water quality."

"We're seeing this with diamonds and gemstones, too, where customers are more interested in the natural formation of stones, and stones that tell more of a story," says Yoo, pointing to interesting shapes of pearls (like stars and hearts) as an appealing evolution of the gemstone. For a recent capsule release, her brand created a "hidden" pearl stud earring and ring where the pearl is "nestled" within rather than being the centrepiece of the creation, a play on the "quiet luxury aesthetic," according to Yoo. Perhaps the most charming among her pearl offerings are the petite rice pearl strings, shaped into beautiful bows, which adorn earrings and necklaces for a whimsical take on the TikTok-popular Soft Girl aesthetic.

Pearls aren't the only accessories to make it back into the 'it' category this season. Brooches—yes the time-tested lapel decoration sported in recent years more by septuagenarians than the style set—have returned. "From viral design hacks on TikTok to major designers showing us how to elevate a classic style, the brooch was a natural progression in us reviving older sensations," says Randa Salloum of vintage shop Collective Will. "Schiaparelli has showcased larger-than-life creations that dazzle, so it was only a matter of time before it was introduced on a smaller scale to the masses. We're seeing bedazzled flowers to solid-gold cats."

While a blazer lapel or a hat band, as seen at brands like Gucci, are still appropriate places to pin a brooch in 2024, Salloum points to more inventive styling options, as well. "Mix and match your brooches to cover buttons down a shirt, add them on a bag, cluster them on your baggy denim, above the top button on a shirt, or the middle of a tie. Of course, there is always my favourite way: discovering bug-shaped brooches and placing them on your shoulder or chest for a bit of a lively look." V



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Pearl Protection Plan

A timeless jewelry investment, pearl pieces also require some precious treatment. Yoo offers five tips to keep your natural pearls looking like new:

- Remove your pearl jewelry before putting on lotion or perfume.
- Store them separately from other jewelry so they don't get scratched.
- Do not use an ultrasonic machine, chemicals or abrasives to clean your pearls as it will damage and dull them.
- Do not wear your pearls in the shower or swimming.
- To clean pearls, use mild soap, lukewarm water and a soft cloth if they are heavily soiled. Otherwise, clean them with a soft cloth often to prevent skin oils and dirt from accumulating.

The Joy of Cookbooks

No, online recipes have not edged out hard-copy cookbooks

BY FARAH KHAN

In a world where meal inspo is just a click away, and AI will happily whip up a recipe for you in seconds, it's easy to wonder: are hard-copy cookbooks still sizzling? The answer may surprise you.

Despite the shift toward online recipes, cookbook sales have seen growth over the years—particularly during the pandemic, which boosted sales by 16 per cent in the first year. Cookbooks have adapted to changes in consumer preferences and themes, covering everything from veganism to single-pot dishes to ethnic cuisines. For example, vegan cookbook sales increased 125 per cent from 2019 to 2020. Publishers and authors are tapping into evolving tastes to continue growing the cookbook market in Canada.

Unlike the process of sifting through food blogs (we hit “jump to recipe” every single time), physical cookbooks still have a way of bringing trusted, tried-and-tested recipes to the kitchen—recipes that can be passed down through generations. Plus, when it's too easy to constantly be looking at a screen, a cookbook provides an escape from digital overload. Chihoe Ho, category manager of cooking at Indigo, says cookbooks have evolved beyond mere books to sentimental keepsakes you can share with others and revisit in (and on) your own time.

“There is something about a physical book that is so special, especially when it comes to cooking,” he says, nostalgically. “[We find that] customers love to collect, mark up and cook from cookbooks in a way that almost becomes ritualistic.”

Not only that, the process of writing and publishing cookbooks ensures high-quality recipes that tend to be easier to follow (with fewer errors and mishaps), particularly when it comes international cuisines and unique cooking techniques—both of which are growing as diverse authors emerge.



“More and more we are seeing diverse voices and cuisines come to the forefront,” Ho confirms. “These collections of recipes [compiled] in cookbooks are put together with a strong perspective—and a story that you might otherwise miss with a one-off recipe that you find online.”

Murielle Banackissa is the author of *Savoring*, a vegan recipe cookbook, who draws inspiration from her connections to the Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Russia and Montreal. As someone who loves to dive deep into the cooking process, Banackissa says a cookbook adds unique value that's different from online food content: it allows the cook to be more present in the process, whereas with Internet recipes, there are distractions to pull you in different directions.

“Whenever I choose to browse cookbooks, I find myself being a lot more conscious about reading the intro pages as well as the headnotes to try and have a clearer picture of the themes ... what flavours or textures I will be recreating through the recipes featured, and if the recipes are special in any way to the author,” she says.

Indeed, many retro and modern cookbooks offer personal touches, enabling cooks to be intentional with their culinary adventures and granting them access to exclusive recipes. “I think that, through my cookbook, not only will my community be able to discover new recipes that I have never shared before, but they will also be able to get a better understanding of my story, what brought me to where I am today, what inspires me, what are my food philosophies,” Banackissa says.

Blogger-turned-cookbook-author Carleigh Bodrug is the author of *PlantYou: Scrappy Cooking*, with 140-plus zero-waste plant-based recipes. Interestingly, with an Instagram following of nearly 5 million followers, she found that creating a cookbook established a more meaningful connection with her audience. And, personally, she says that making notes, marking and using a cookbook in a tactile manner gives you a chance to mindfully make dishes and meals, adding even more value to the overall experience.

VITA X WALMART CANADA

Spring Patio Refresh

Refresh up your outdoor living spaces this spring with an assortment of trendy and affordable items from Walmart Canada, your one-stop-shop for functional, stylish and quality products, including home décor, tableware and patio furniture at low prices, available both in-store and online. This year, enhance your outdoor living space with natural materials and tropical patterns. Explore brands such as Hometrends, Mainstays and Better Homes & Gardens, available only at Walmart and [Walmart.ca](https://www.walmart.ca).



Better Homes & Gardens Lola Patio Outdoor Cuddle Chair & Ottoman – Tan (\$448): The epitome of relaxation and style for your outdoor oasis. Crafted with durability in mind, this handwoven wicker set features heavy-duty, rust-resistant, e-coated and powder-coated steel frames that ensure years of reliable use.

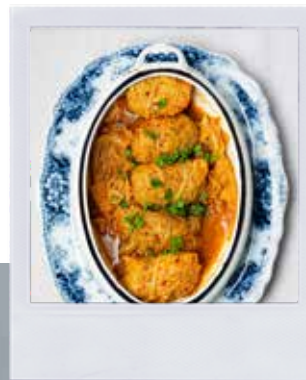
Hometrends Large Waves Toss Cushion (\$12.98): Add a splash of colour and comfort to your outdoor living space with this water-repellent, UV-treated cushion. It's so easy to find the perfect combination to make your patio, porch or pergola pop.

Hometrends Linear Border Indoor Outdoor Patio Rug (\$78): This premium flatweave area rug is great for any indoor and outdoor space, adding a touch of fashion to your home. Its versatility allows you to add style to your dining room, living room, sun room, solarium or outdoor patio.

Hometrends Tala 5-Piece Patio Sectional Set (Now \$698): Crafted with handwoven, all-weather resin wicker, this set offers timeless elegance that can withstand the harshest elements. The UV-resistant solution-dyed cushions made from 50% recycled polyester provide plush comfort that won't fade under the sun. This set is meticulously designed for comfort, durability and style, transforming your patio into a haven of relaxation

Hometrends Patio Bar Cart (\$298): Complete your outdoor entertaining space with this grey patio bar cart. Its stylish, all-weather design features 93% recycled resin faux wood, as well as wheels to easily move around to wherever you need it most.

Mainstays Patio Tray Top Side Table (\$29.98): The perfect place to enjoy a sun-soaked cup of coffee! The all-weather design features a heavy-duty, rust-resistant steel frame and tabletop—all durably crafted to stand up to plenty of sunny days spent outside. The removable tabletop makes it convenient to serve food and beverages from, and for storing away when it's not in use. It's the ideal size for smaller outdoor living spaces.



“With my first cookbook, *PlantYou*, I was shocked to see just how many people cook out of the book over my blog or social channels,” Bodrug says. “I think there's something about having a book in front of you in your kitchen that people prefer to a phone or tablet. I've had many people share that the book has influenced their health and eating habits because it makes [things] simpler.”

She takes particular pride in her visual index, which highlights commonly wasted foods and shows readers recipes where the ingredients can be used, emphasizing the distinct benefits of using a cookbook. “I don't believe I could replicate something like this in a blog or social platform, and it's really handy at an arm's length in your kitchen when you think, ‘What can I do with this?’”

In today's digital age, getting a chance to explore outside of the “box” that is your laptop, tablet or phone, is important. Think about your childhood, when you were more present and mindful with your hobbies—well, the same goes for cooking. By embracing physical cookbooks, you have the chance to reconnect with the intentionality of food-making, allowing for a more enriching culinary experience. ✓

Single City

Whether you're a mom who needs some me time or just looking for a great solo travel destination, Las Vegas offers tonnes of fun for one

BY NOA NICHOL

TUCK YOURSELF IN

Staying on the Strip solo can be intimidating—luckily, the newest property along Las Vegas Boulevard makes it much less so. Fontainebleau is one of the most beautiful (and best-smelling) resorts we have ever stayed in; this refurbished “blue” tower boasts a casino, 20 restaurants, a dozen bars and lounges, a full-service spa, seven outdoor pools, a fitness centre, daily housekeeping, valet parking, 24-hour room service, two cafés and more. At 67 storeys, it offers nearly 3,650 decadent guest rooms decorated in soft-blue hues, with dreamy bedding and button-controlled lighting and drapes; a clear view of the Sphere from our window made us feel less lonely, especially when it displayed a cute emoji face. Something fun to look for: Fontainebleau's signature bowtie, a nod to Morris Lapidus, the dapper architect of the Miami Beach property. You'll spot the sweet shape everywhere, from the floor tiles to the chandeliers to the croissants in the coffee shops. Fontainebleaulasvegas.com



TABLE FOR ONE

Dining alone isn't daring—it's delicious! Begin with breakfast sans leaving the resort; at French-inspired La Fontaine try the soufflé pancakes, stacked high and topped with lemon curd, berries and thyme whip, or a Le Royal benedict, with smoked salmon and lemon Hollandaise on an Everything Brioche. There for brunch? The opulent service features extensive champagne pairing. Lunchtime calls for a stroll up the Strip to the Paris Las Vegas' The Bedford by Martha Stewart—a replica of Martha's 1925 farmhouse with culinary inspiration drawn from her legendary gardens—serves up Big Martha's Pierogis with potato filling and brown butter, and a flower-shaped upside-down lemon meringue pie that's almost too pretty to eat (almost). Alternately, Washing Potato, back at Fontainebleau, does dim sum differently, with thoughtful bites that promise to ignite your imagination. Finally, consider dinnertime done and dusted with options for all types of eaters; Komodo, also at Fontainebleau, does sushi really, really well, and can even accommodate vegetarians. For a true vegan meal, book a table for one at Crossroads Kitchen, and order anything you want, including calamari and tagliatelle Bolognese, without fear of meat.



TREAT YOURSELF

No solo trip would be complete without a little me—read, spa—time. Start at Qua Baths & Spa at Caesars Palace; the 100-minute Mojave Rain treatment opens with a sage smudging to set a sacred space, welcome in positive energy and send your intentions out. Relax as detoxifying and balancing essential oils are cascaded along your back and feet. Then, allow your Qua artisan to soothe away any remaining tension with a harmonizing Las Vegas massage and balancing energy work. At Fontainebleau, a Celestial Waters Passport to the

spectacular Lapis Spa lets you enjoy the profound benefits of contrast therapy—moving between heat and cold—while exploring vitality pools, snow and star showers, steam rooms, and more at your own pace. Do not miss the group event that happens in the Aufguss Sauna—one of the largest in the United States—at regular intervals throughout the day; this social-wellness experience incorporates sauna, aromatherapy steam and a theatrical presentation of towel movements choreographed with music and lights. Visitlasvegas.com

TAKE YOURSELF OUT

Kick up some dust off-roading through the beautiful Lake Mead Recreational Area in a Ford Bronco, courtesy of Buck'n Bronco Offroad Adventures + Outfitters. These versatile vehicles seat multiple passengers but need only one driver: you. Then, leave the Vegas desert far behind (and below) as you take off at Illuminarium Las Vegas at AREA15, where *Space: A Journey To The Moon & Beyond*, will take you on an extraordinary journey across the galaxy. Fly

through a technicolor nebula, walk the surface of the moon, see Saturn's rings up close and weave through an asteroid belt thanks to high-tech animation systems and 360 cinematic immersive screens. Finally, head back to the hub of the city to take in a show—or two. We saw stand-up at the L.A. Comedy Club at the STRAT, Cirque du Soleil's humorous *Mad Apple* production, and *Awakening*, the dazzling spectacle set in one of the most technologically immersive theaters ever designed at Wynn Las Vegas.

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