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# VITA

# THE June Issue



## Inside *the* Issue

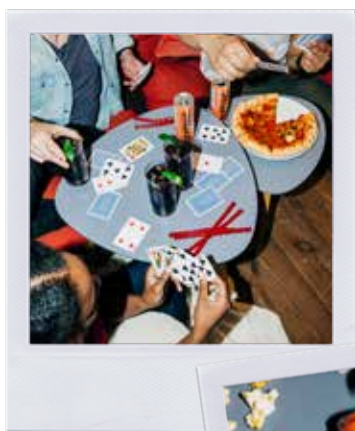
- STYLE Top tips to keep facial hair in check
- HEALTH The hype around green supplements
- BEAUTY The evolution of clean beauty
- FOOD Six new Lower Mainland eateries to try
- TRAVEL Family fun in Central Florida

# The Call

Celebrate summer  
with Backstreet Boys'  
AJ McLean

Everybody, get ready to rock your body! Atypique, the most cocktail mocktail, offering seven delicious ready-to-drink sips inspired by your favourite drinks—Margarita, Sangria, Mojito, Amaretto Sour, Spritz, Gin & Tonic and Rum & Cola—is teaming up with AJ McLean of the Backstreet Boys to host two epic dance parties in Toronto and Montreal this summer—and you could win a once-in-a-lifetime experience to join in the fun!

Atypique and AJ share a passion for living life to the fullest with the people you love most—whether you choose not to drink alcohol at all or just for an evening. That's why they've joined forces to throw the parties of the summer!



After trying Atypique for the first time last year, AJ fell in love with these Canadian ready-to-drink mocktails' great taste and look. With just 60 to 80 calories per can, Atypique allows you to get the most out of life, whether you're connecting with friends at a dinner party or dancing the night away. Now, he's bringing that love for the brand to Canada with a summer-long contest in partnership with Atypique.

Canadians from coast-to-coast are invited to hop online and visit [atypiquesummercontest.com](http://atypiquesummercontest.com) to enter the Atypique x AJ McLean Summer Contest, where they'll have the chance to win Atypique x AJ McLean prize packs all summer long—including the opportunity to dance the night away with AJ McLean in Montreal on July 9 or Toronto on July 11, with VIP access to the exclusive Atypique Summer Dance Party!

The dance party prize includes an all-expenses-paid trip and VIP access to the dance parties of the summer, including a fully stocked Atypique bar, an epic DJ and dance floor—and the winner will have an exclusive meet-and-greet with AJ! Plus, additional prizing will be awarded every week throughout the summer, including:

- » Signed Sneaker Prize Pack
- » Summer Concert-Ready Gift Pack
- » At-Home Dance-Party Gift Pack
- » Summer Gift Pack
- » Signed Wearable Gift Pack

Enter now for your chance to win one of these great prizes. The dance party winner will be selected on June 25, and other great prizes can be won up to September 24.

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

Atypique is available in 355ml can four-packs at major grocery retailers across Canada and on [Amazon.ca](http://Amazon.ca) for a suggested retail price of \$9.99.





Editor's DESK

## A Note From Noa

As I (impatiently) await summer, there's much to celebrate in June. Fathers, to start, and we're bringing you facial haircare tips and the best bottles of booze to gift to dad. It's also Pride Month, and our exclusive interview with MAC Canada's general manager reveals the brand's new partnerships and products to support the LGBTQIA+ community. This month, we're also asking whether those viral (on social media) green powders really live up to the health hype, how hair extensions and wigs are becoming more earth-friendly and what Canadian small businesses are doing to forge through a challenging retail landscape. Last but not least, new eateries to try throughout the Lower Mainland, and a family-fun itinerary for Central Florida.

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Need to scratch a retail itch? Check out Weekend Max Mara's new Metrotown store.

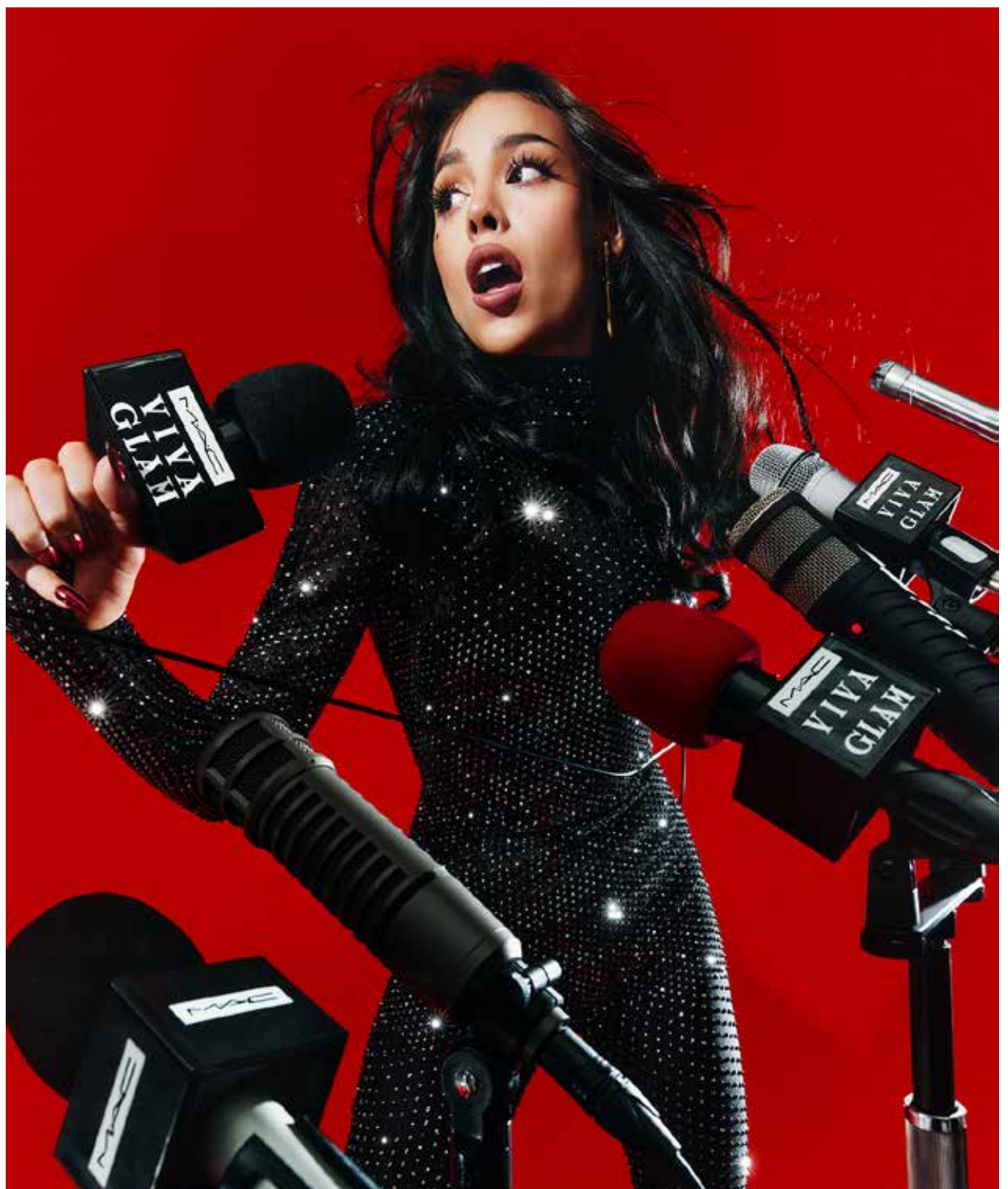
# LIP Service

### A celebrated lipstick celebrates three ground-break decades

BY EMILY MACCULLOCH & INGRIE WILLIAMS @T.ZONEBEAUTY

A true charitable game-changer, MAC Cosmetics originally began its Viva Glam initiative 30 years ago, setting the pace for what a beauty brand can do when it comes to giving back. "It was started in 1994 by MAC founders Frank Toskan and the late Frank Angelo, who saw the HIV/AIDS epidemic directly affecting their community," says Paola Vorlander, general manager, MAC Canada. They created the first Viva Glam lipstick, which donated all of its proceeds to organizations serving people impacted by HIV/AIDS, and an icon was born. Equally legendary, the buzz-worthy campaigns have featured the likes of RuPaul, Lady Gaga and Rihanna over the years. To celebrate the 30th anniversary, we asked Vorlander to share more highlights.

On the newest spokespeople, Kim Petras and Danna Paola: "We're so excited to partner with two of music's biggest stars at the moment to usher in the next chapter of Viva Glam, which has always made it a priority to collaborate with artists with strong points of view to help elevate our mission," she says. "Kim perfectly embodies the essence of MAC Viva Glam. Not only can she rock a red lip, she's committed to using her global platform to advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community and our partners, like the Trevor Project. We're also happy to have Danna as part of the campaign, who truly brings the glam and is deeply passionate about women's equality and using her voice to support underserved communities around the globe."



On how the initiative has evolved over the years: "MAC is proud to celebrate [the history] of Viva Glam with an expanded charitable scope that reflects the challenges we face as a global community today," explains Vorlander. "Our expanded mission is now centred around driving equality for everyone while continuing our longstanding support for people impacted by HIV/AIDS. We give back to organizations across the following pillars: sexual equality, gender equality, racial equality and environmental equality."

On what's new for the iconic lipstick: "Viva Glam lipsticks recently got an upgrade through MACximal's new silky matte-caring formula and with new names to better align with our expanded mission," she says. The new lineup includes: Viva Heart (formerly Viva Glam I), the original vibrant blue-red; Viva Planet (formerly Viva Glam II), a shimmering muted pink-beige; Viva Empowered (formerly Viva Glam III), a brown plum hue; and Viva Equality, a brand-new warm neutral shade that, Vorlander says, "looks great on everyone." V

#### VIVA GLAM AT A GLANCE

**US\$525 million+** raised over the last three decades

**19 million people** helped globally each year

**1 new universally flattering lipstick shade** marks this milestone year: MAC Viva Equality, \$33, [Maccosmetics.ca](http://Maccosmetics.ca)

THE MAKING OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

## June Issue

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# Face the Facts

With the men's grooming industry going through a renaissance, there's no reason to put up with a dry, itchy beard. Here's how to keep facial hair in check, according to the experts

BY ANDRÉANNE DION

Love it or hate it, facial hair is having a moment. On the red carpet we've seen everything from sleek stubble to scruffier styles, carefully groomed to I-woke-up-like-this laissez-faire. "I often compare facial hair to makeup for men," says Toronto-based content creator Ashkan Hobian. "It has the power to change someone's face dramatically."

Like hair, a beard can be a confidence booster. It can also become deeply tangled in someone's identity and hold a lot of emotions. "Whenever I have to be clean-shaven, I feel like I've lost a part of myself," Hobian, who has been sporting a combination of mustache and stubble regularly for over six years, says. And, in the same way a "breakup haircut" ushers in a new beginning, growing out facial hair can mark a major life change.

When he left the army after 14 years of service, Kevin Leboeuf was excited to grow a beard for the first time. "It was horrible—it was itchy and dry and flaky," he recalls. Determined to keep his "freedom beard," Leboeuf and his wife founded Educated Beards—an all-natural line of grooming products crafted to tackle the plethora of skin issues that can arise when growing and shaving facial hair.

Over the past few years, Leboeuf has noticed a significant increase in his customer base, which spans all ages and facial-hair styles. The one thing all his clients have in common? They're interested in shaking up their beard-care routine to look and feel their best. And it's not just the homegrown Fredericton brand that's feeling the love—the grooming industry is booming. By 2028, it's estimated that it will be worth US\$115 billion, up from \$80 billion in 2022. Education around skincare ingredients and cosmetic treatments on social media and beyond has contributed to a shift in how men approach grooming, with more focus on the skin beneath the beard, says Dr. Bimpe Ayeni, a plastic surgeon in Newmarket and founder of skincare brand Blair & Jack.

As Leboeuf experienced, growing a beard can be an irritating experience—pun intended. A good grooming regime helps avoid the itch—and it all starts with getting the basics of shaving down pat. Celebrity barber Vince Garcia, Dior Sauvage's grooming ambassador, recommends leaving it to the pros whenever possible, as most people struggle with keeping lines sharp and straight when shaving. A barber can also help figure out the most flattering style and length for your face shape. "However, it's important to be able to upkeep and maintain your beard at home between appointments," Garcia says. "You never know what can come up."

At home, it's a good idea to ditch the convenience of a disposable five-blade razor in favour of an old-school, single-blade safety razor. "It allows you to adjust how [aggressive your shave is]," explains Leboeuf. To prevent irritation, shave in the direction of the hair growth using a slick soap or foam, and avoid going over the same spot twice. For upkeep, Hobian swears by the Philips OneBlade styler. "It comes with an adjustable comb so you can get the exact results you're after."

Next, invest a little bit of time and money into skincare. If you want to grow a healthy beard, caring for the skin underneath is crucial. "You have to manage the two together," says Dr. Ayeni. "The foundation has to be there for anything to grow." A simple three-step routine to cleanse, hydrate and gently exfoliate is effective and easy to incorporate into your day.

"Taking care of your beard is very much like taking care of your scalp," notes Hobian. To avoid a cycle of sebum build-up, dryness and irritation, it's important to wash the hair, as well as the skin. The hair on your face typically is coarser than on your head, meaning it can be a challenge to get to the skin beneath. Using a hydrating face or beard wash, part the hair every centimeter or so and lather up, making sure it reaches the skin. Ideally, this should be done every day, especially if you hit the gym.

And as tempting as it is, Leboeuf warns against using shampoo to cleanse your beard. "Your scalp produces a lot more natural oils than your face does. If you strip away all that oil from your beard and skin, it causes breakage, split ends—and it gets really itchy."

Once the skin is clean, it's time to hydrate. This is where beard oil comes in, though Leboeuf says it's a misnomer. "It's not for your beard itself, but for the skin—it replenishes the oils lost during washing." Educated Beards' own pow-



ASHKAN HOBIAN



DR. BIMPE AYENI



VINCE GARCIA



erhouse hydrator is packed with jojoba, argan, sweet almond and grapeseed oils, leaving the skin soothed and the hair stronger, healthier and softer. Garcia loves the Dior Sauvage serum to keep skin hydrated all day without leaving residue in coarse facial hair. For those with longer beards, a balm is a good way to provide extra moisture and control fly-aways.

Many men who grow beards—and those who prefer a clean-shaven style—get painful bumps when they shave, particularly on their neck. Those with coarse, curly hair are especially prone to this type of irritation, which happens when a follicle gets trapped underneath the skin and curls on itself. To solve this all-too-common issue, which her own husband experienced, Dr. Ayeni developed Blair & Jack's bestselling Anti-Bump Treatment, a formula made with azelaic acid to soothe and prevent inflammation.

A boar bristle brush also comes in handy and works double duty. Not only does it help distribute oil evenly throughout the beard and break up any moisturizer clumps or residue, it also plays a role in exfoliating the skin and preventing painful ingrown hairs. The bristles get rid of dead skin cells, which can "promote hair growth and also allows skin to absorb more oil," says Leboeuf. Used daily, it also trains the hair to grow downward to prevent a bushy-looking beard down the road (just remember to clean and dry the brush often). For longer beards, a comb is essential to untangle knots. Start from the bottom and work your way up to avoid splitting hairs.

Whatever your go-to beard style, a little TLC goes a long way. "When you look good, you feel good," Dr. Ayeni says. V



## 14 Facial Hair Finds

Educated Beards Peppermint Cedarwood Beard Oil  
\$33, [Educatedbeards.com](https://www.educatedbeards.com)

ClarinsMen Shave + Beard Oil  
\$36, [Clarins.ca](https://www.clarins.ca)

Dior Sauvage The Serum  
\$125, [Holtrenfrew.com](https://www.holtrenfrew.com)

Aēsop Moroccan Neroli Shaving Serum  
\$53, [Aesop.com](https://www.aesop.com)

Blair & Jack Anti-Bump Treatment  
\$45, [Blairandjack.com](https://www.blairandjack.com)

Manscaped Beard Shampoo Hydrating Cleanser  
\$20, [Ca.manscaped.com](https://www.manscaped.com)

Jack Black Deep Dive Glycolic Facial Cleanser  
\$31, [Getjackblack.ca](https://www.getjackblack.ca)

Shea Moisture Men Maracuja Oil & Shea Butter Full Beard Detangler  
\$14, [Shoppersdrugmart.ca](https://www.shoppersdrugmart.ca)

Bath & Body Works Beard & Scruff Cream  
\$16.50, [Bathandbodyworks.ca](https://www.bathandbodyworks.ca)

L'Occitane Homme Cade Multi-Grooming Balm  
\$36, [L'occitane.com](https://www.loccitane.com)

Acqua di Parma Barbieri Soft Shaving Cream  
\$125, [Ssense.com](https://www.ssense.com)

Philips OneBlade 360 Beard Styler  
\$50, [Philips.ca](https://www.philips.ca)

Henson Shaving Henson ALI3-M Safety Razor  
\$90, [Hensonshaving.com](https://www.hensonshaving.com)

Groom Boar Bristle Beard Brush  
\$35, [Thegrooindustry.com](https://www.thegrooindustry.com)



# Green Goods

Do you really need to take a daily powder supplement to be healthy?

BY AILEEN LALOR

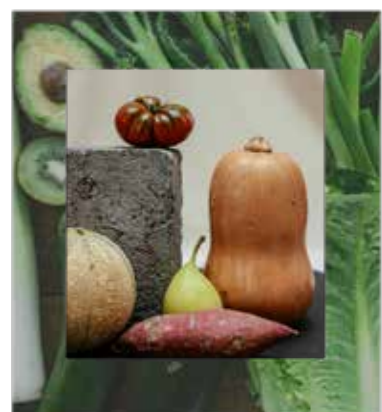
Have you been tempted by those Instagram ads for green powders that are dissolved in water and claim to improve gut health, immunity, energy levels and balance your moods? Who wouldn't? It sounds incredible—too good to be true, in fact. Our gut feeling when we heard about these was that they were bollocks—and pricy bollocks at that, coming in at about US\$80 a month.

So we called our favourite dietitian to get the powdery scoop. Gerry Kasten is a lecturer in food, nutrition and health at the University of British Columbia, has led the boards of directors of Dietitians of Canada and the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation and has no time for nonsense. The TL;DR: we were right to be skeptical.

"In my view, it's a bunch of hooley," he says after exploring the website of one very well-known greens maker. Much of the published research on these supplements is on a simulated human microbiome, looking only at intestinal microbes. "Any research they've done with humans has been extremely small—35 people or so—and is based around testimonials," says Kasten. "Testimonials and endorsements are easy to get because people feel better when they think they're doing something good for themselves."

But what of the ingredients? Inclusion of stuff like superfoods (an uncontrolled term—i.e., anyone can claim anything is one) and digestive enzymes were immediate red flags. "Your body makes digestive enzymes for free," Kasten says. "The digestive enzymes you consume in these supplements will be digested as proteins by our own pancreatic enzymes. The inclusion of these is a message that says your body can't do enough—but our bodies are a miracle."

Kasten says that, often, supplement manufacturers will argue that their products contain amounts of nutrients that our bodies simply can't get from food—but that's not necessarily a good thing. "This whole discourse is pervasive," he says. "It says that food doesn't have enough nutrition. Yes—because you're giving people these huge doses of vitamins that your body doesn't need. My general critique of supplements is that they only have what manufacturers put in them, whereas food has everything that nature puts in it and nature's better than anything human beings could make."



Are there people in Canada suffering from ill health today because of a lack of nutrition? Sure, says Kasten, but that's not going to be solved by these supplements. "There are deficiency diseases like osteoporosis and anemia that come from lack of calcium and iron, or possibly things like pernicious anemia—vitamin B12 deficiency—and it's recommended that older people take that because they become worse at absorbing it. But all those recommendations are there in our dietary guidance, so if you eat a diverse and tasty diet, you're likely to meet nutrient needs."

Could green powders actually cause us harm? Unlikely. "For the average person, fill your boots. And you will feel better because that's the way placebo effect works," says Kasten. Essentially, it's up to you if you think it's worth US\$80 a month ... which brings us to another point. "If it's so wonderful, it's only available to people with a reasonable level of affluence. It's not accessible for the people who are most likely to be deficient in their diets because of food insecurity."

"The same thing that has always been true is still true—in order to be healthy, we need to eat healthy food, be active in a way that brings us joy, feel good about ourselves, and do some nature of spiritual development," Kasten says. Add to that: learning to cook. "Eighty dollars a month is a fair amount of food that you could buy yourself. Many Canadians use their vegetable drawers as pre-compost. If they would actually use what's in there ... boy, I wish people would do that." v

VITA X GO! SOLUTIONS

## Build a Bowl for Your Cat

Tips from Go! Solutions Nutrition Manager Natalie Williams

Ditch the pour-and-go; building a bowl is trending among pet parents because, just like people, our fur friends deserve options! Mixing and matching formats and flavours will not only keep mealtime interesting for your cat, it can also help address common health ailments like hairball and urinary control. Building a gourmet, nutritionally balanced bowl is the perfect way to elevate your pet's mealtime.

First, ensure you know the difference between a complete and balanced meal versus supplemental options. The former includes all the nutrients a cat needs to be fed as their sole source of nutrition. Whether your kitty prefers the dry crunch of kibble, a splash of wet food or a combo, Go! Solutions offers options to provide an enhanced dining experience while addressing your cat's specific needs or dietary requirements. Keep things nutritionally balanced by reading the feeding guidelines on the back of your pet's food packaging.



Ready to rock-and-bowl? Here's how to build a bowl for your cat in three easy steps:

1. Start with a high-quality dry food as the base—and remember, the majority of calories should come from a complete and balanced food. For example, to help manage hairballs and support your cat's urinary tract health, you might start with new Go! Solutions Hairball Control + Urinary Care Chicken Recipe with Grains kibble, with fibre-rich miscanthus grass and psyllium husk.
2. Add hydration and variety with some wet food, and follow the 10% rule: when feeding treats, toppers or other non-complete and balanced foods, try and limit those to make up no more than 10% of a pet's daily calorie intake. The extra moisture and flavour from a wet food addition is sure to keep your cat happy and hydrated.
3. Take your cat's bowl to the next level with a food topper. Go! Solutions Booster Recipes for Cats offers a nutritional "boost" to your kitty's meals with functional ingredients like extra fibre to support digestive health and antioxidant-rich fruits for immune health support.

**Remember:** when building a custom bowl, an oversupply of calories can happen, so it's always important to follow the feeding guidelines on your cat's food packaging to ensure you're supporting their ideal weight. The variety of pet food options on the market can be overwhelming; when in doubt, or if you have any questions about changing up your pet's diet, reach out to your vet, who can guide you through the best steps for feeding your pet. Learn more at [go-solutions.com/en-ca](http://go-solutions.com/en-ca).

# Hair Today

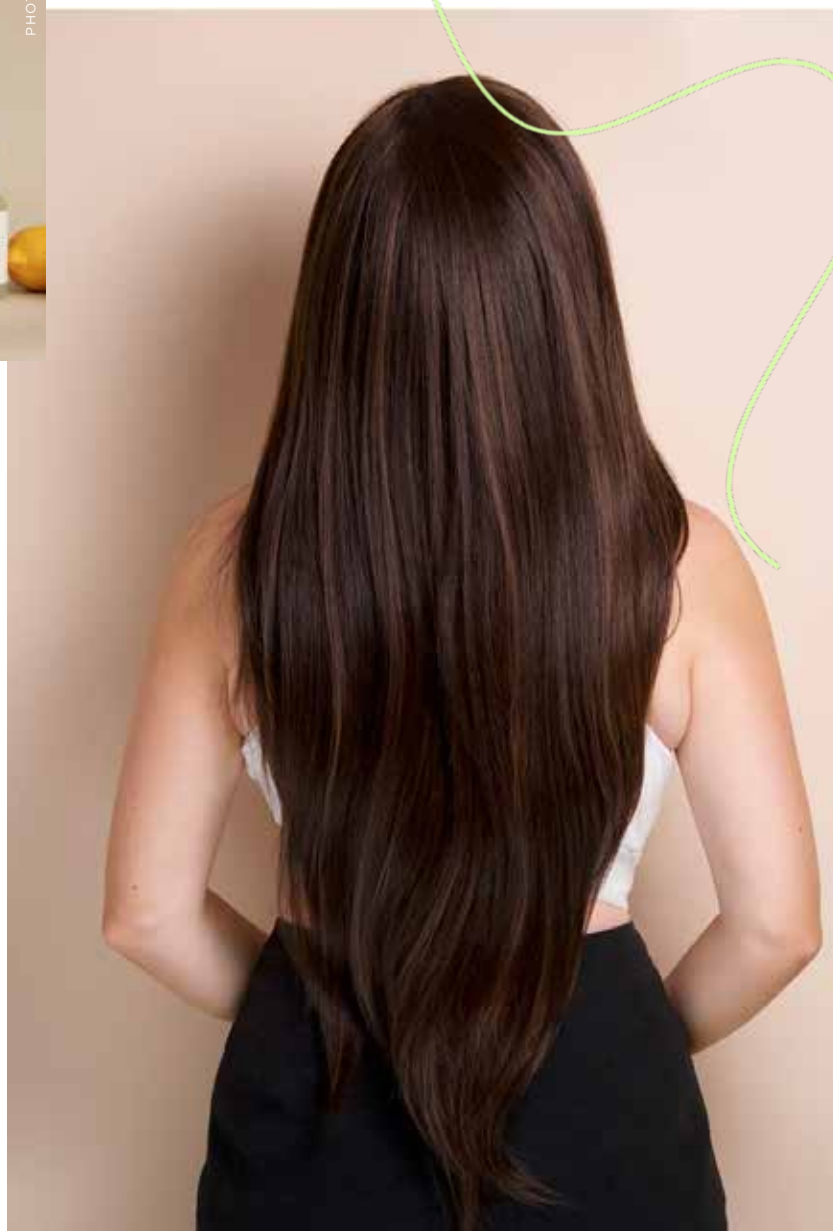
From extensions to clip-ins to closures, locks have come a long way

BY VIVIAN CHUNG



PHOTO: LIZ ROSA

“I’ve noticed a lot of people are *choosing* wigs and extensions that not only look *super* realistic but are *also* kinder to the planet”



It’s been an under-the-radar health and sustainability issue: synthetic hair extensions, including clip-ins, wefts and closures, crafted from plastic fibres such as polyester, acrylic and nylon, have long been favoured by wearers to express personal style and address hair-related issues but, despite their relatively affordable prices, these extensions and wigs often come with drawbacks. Aside from a shorter lifespan and sensitivity to heat styling and colouring treatments, little breathability and harsh chemicals used in processing these hair pieces make synthetic hair extensions uncomfortable to wear. Not to mention, synthetic hair extensions contribute to environmental challenges.

“In the last couple of years, I’ve noticed a lot of people are choosing wigs and extensions that not only look super realistic but are also kinder to the planet,” says Kate Ross, a hair specialist with Irresistible Me. “I think social media and a bigger conversation around taking care of our world are big reasons why we’re seeing this change.”

As awareness grows, brands are now focusing on creating extensions that are not only remarkably realistic and customizable but also environmentally friendly to address consumer concerns. “The move toward more sustainable but realistic-looking fake hair options is fuelled by the advancements in technology and materials, which have made it possible to create products that meet these criteria,” says Ross about vegan fibre wigs that are crafted from synthetic materials sourced from plants or recycled plastics, offering a more sustainable alternative to human hair without sacrificing quality.

Irresistible Me, in New York, offers a line of Japanese vegan fibre wigs and ponytails; in Missouri, another brand, Re-bundle, developed Braidbetter in 2021—a creative line of braids crafted from extracted banana fibres. Hypoallergenic and an ideal option for those who generally experience scalp irritation, Braidbetter braids are also fully biodegradable and compostable after use. “[But] if you’re looking for a high-quality option that will last longer and you don’t mind spending a bit more, Remy is the way to go,” explains Ross of the type of extensions that are increasingly garnering attention for their natural appearance and longevity.

“Remy hair is considered to be the highest grade of human hair, and is collected from a single source with the cuticles intact, which means that all hair strands from root to tip are in the same direction,” explains Sara Rose, co-founder of Harloc, a Vancouver business that specializes in tape-ins, clip-ins and ponytail extensions crafted from Remy Slavic hair. Processed in a specific way to maintain its cuticle alignment, this prevents the hair from tangling, giving it a smooth, shiny appearance for a more natural look and feel.

## FINE FINDS

• BOUTIQUE •



CLOTHING GIFTS SHOES ACCESSORIES

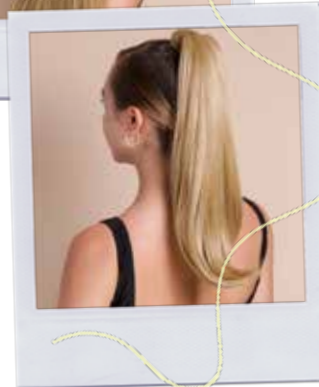
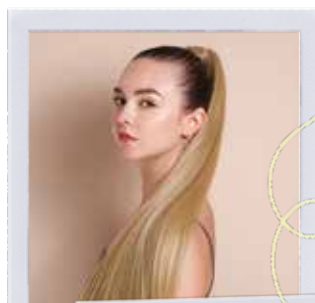
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PHOTO: LIZ ROSA



Despite the higher price of Remy hair compared with vegan fibre alternatives, Rose says that price alone doesn’t accurately reflect a business’ commitment to sustainability. While harloc, for instance, prioritizes sustainable and ethical practices by sourcing hair from willing donors in communities throughout Central and Eastern Europe, offering fair-trade prices, conducting factory site visits to ensure compliance with standards and collaborating with a local company to develop eco-friendly packaging, Rose emphasizes the importance of consumers conducting their own research on a business’ practices and seeking transparency before making a purchase.

Whether you go with synthetic, vegan fibre or Remy hair extensions and wigs, wearers can help keep them out of the landfill for longer by properly taking care of them to maximize their shelf life. “To maintain vegan fibre wigs and extensions, avoid high heat and harsh chemicals. Use gentle, wig-safe products for washing and detangling, and store them properly when not in use to prevent tangling and damage,” advises Ross. For human hair options, wash and condition with sulphate-free products and avoid excessive heat styling. Store them properly and always detangle from the ends up to avoid breakage.

At the end of their lifespan, seek ways to repurpose hair extensions to minimize the chances of them ending up in landfills. Businesses like Harloc collaborate with Green Circle Salons, which collects hair extensions and wigs and turns them into mats to soak up oil spills. Hair today, gone, sustainably, tomorrow. ♡



# Cleaning up

Fifteen years or so after the term “clean beauty” emerged, brands are making it clearer, broader and more ambitious BY AILEEN LALOR

# Clean

Clean beauty is believed to have sprung from California’s “clean living” movement, and early brands like REN Clean Skincare, Tata Harper and Beautycounter began to emerge in the noughties. The initial goal was eliminating ingredients that were commonly used in beauty products and that were believed to be harmful to health. “Beautycounter, as the creator and leader of the clean beauty movement, recognized two critical things when we launched,” says its founder and CEO, Gregg Renfrew. “The industry wasn’t moving fast enough to put safer, health protective options on the market and that creating a world where all beauty is clean beauty would require stronger oversight and regulation of the industry.”

Barb Stegemann, founder of Halifax-based 7 Virtues, which makes clean perfumes, says that when she started her company in 2010, there wasn’t really a name for what they did. “I just knew that people were coming up to us, saying that we were the only perfume they could wear—that people who felt like they were reacting to other scents could wear ours.”

In the early days, “clean” beauty was “essentially a small group of forward-looking brands that drew a line in the sand and said ‘no more’ to formulating with specific toxic ingredients like hormone disrupting phthalates and cancer-causing formaldehyde,” Renfrew says. However, there was never a definition of “clean.” So as time went on, things became murkier. “More and more brands started to claim they were ‘clean’ to capitalize on increasing consumer demand and gain greater market share—and the honest truth is that we’re now in a space mixed with authenticity and greenwashing,” Renfrew says.

How do the OG brands navigate that space and demonstrate their integrity to customers? How do new ones figure out how to set out their stall? And how do they collectively push things forward to make things ever better for everyone?

One key move within the industry is that “clean” has come to mean something more than “not formulated with potentially harmful ingredients.” Many brands are using the word to also encompass sustainable sourcing and packaging, social responsibility, ethical treatment of people, and transparency. One way in which these can be validated is via B Corp certification—a status that Beautycounter and 7 Virtues both have. “It was a year-and-a-half journey, and we learned a lot,” says Stegemann. “But is it so hard to get? I don’t think so! If a family-run company in Nova Scotia can do it, it’s a lack of will. It starts with having that frame of mind where you want to do the right thing. We have that thinking, so of course we became the first fragrance company at Sephora to be B Corp certified, because we are consistently trying to do good things.”

Omy Laboratories co-founder Rachelle Séguin says that B Corp status was on her mind when she and Andrea Gomez conceived the brand—and she agrees with Stegemann that it doesn’t have to be too difficult to achieve. “We didn’t have to put some things in place to get the certification—it was already there.”

She believes that while it will become increasingly important, there’s still some consumer education needed. “It’s much easier for consumers to say, ‘OK, this is certified vegan’ because it just means one thing, but in the case of B Corp, it means so many things at once that people need help to understand what value it brings,” she says. “But I think it will grow because consumers are learning more about what they want in terms of value, and they have more expectations—they don’t just want a vegan company or a company that doesn’t test on animals; they want everything at once.”

In her business she attempts to stay ahead of what’s happening, banning ingredients that aren’t on some companies’ or customers’ radars yet, and staying ahead of future legislation. One of her forward-looking ideas is personalization—her brand allows its customers to choose ingredients that target their skin needs to a base formula for day cream, night cream and serum. Not only do you get a more effective skincare product but you get the tools for a lifelong skincare system, so you’re less wasteful because you’re not throwing out unused products. A study conducted in 2014 by Vaseline said that



women waste an average of 5,846 beauty products in their lifetimes—over \$300,000 worth—and use only 10% of the things they buy. So personalization can be a solution to that overconsumption.

“We can’t imagine one person sticking to exactly the same formula for all their life,” Séguin says. “With personalization it brings that edge off, you can still evolve the product—if after two months you don’t want to have the scent of cucumber, you can just switch and choose the unscented or the mango.” All the brand’s refills fit into the same packaging, so you can, for example, choose a serum instead of a moisturizer for the summer if that’s all your skin needs. It also can make products more affordable (that it’s only available for the wealthy has always been a major criticism levelled against the clean beauty industry).

Personalization is a key tenet of Vancouver-based Obakki’s new skincare range, which includes facial oils that can be added to your own moisturizer or the brand’s lotions and body butters, as well as soaps, bath oils and scrubs. And like many of the brands in this space, the range sprang from an authentic need to do good, rather than a business case.

“I think honestly with us it’s about staying true to our own morals and values as a company, not trying to launch a cosmetic brand with layers or find loopholes that haven’t been founded in beauty,” says founder Treana Peake. Obakki is a lifestyle brand that seeks to provide a platform for artisans around the world to sell their wares and in doing so, support themselves, their families and their communities—in this case, by using ingredients like shea butter and cold-pressed oils of prickly pear, baobab and balanites in its natural skincare range. “We’re putting everything through a development lens—people first, at the time,” Peake says. “I’ve never gone in [to a community] and said, ‘Let’s do this, I think this will help you, let’s try this idea from my western world!’” To that end, she ensures that suppliers also have a local way of selling ingredients that they produce, so they’re not entirely dependent on producing for the vagaries of an overseas market.

What happens next for clean beauty? Peake is committed to developing Obakki’s beauty products only in a sustainable and thoughtful way. “I want to do it right because I’m representing women co-ops,” she says. “There’s opportunity to grow but not all at once—it’s about being conscious of that as well. It’s important to be a respectful business partner and have respectful growth.”

Renfrew hopes that other brands will follow Beautycounter’s MO of testing, rather than banning, explaining: “We knew banning ingredients was the easy part. Actually screening those that do enter your products, safety testing, responsible sourcing and sustainable packaging, now that’s the real work.” She also spies a big opportunity for perfume. “I expect consumer demand for clean fragrances to really take off in 2024,” she says. “Very few brands are marketing clean fragrances, which makes sense when you consider the fragrance industry’s long history of secrecy and safety problems, yet fragrances make up over 25 per cent of the prestige beauty market.” To that end, the brand has just announced its first scents—a set of five EDPs. She also believes that consumers will continue to put pressure on brands to do better in terms of packaging—for example, with programs like Pact Collective (an initiative to encourage recycling that she helped kick off in 2018).

**“We will see some giants fall and clean indie brands becoming legacy”**

Stegemann sees big opportunities in perfume too, as well as just the general rise of clean. “It’s really a given now—a lot of people expect you to be clean as a baseline,” she says. “We will see some giants fall and clean indie brands becoming legacy. The landscape is changing and I think it’s good. It leads to a better community, better mental health, people flourishing, and people feeling good about their life choices.”

VITA X WALMART

## In the Bag

Things to pack for your upcoming cabin getaway

With the warm weather here, cabin season has officially kicked off! Many are making their way up to their summer homes to enjoy a bit of fun with family and friends by the ocean, and whether you’re grabbing a ferry or journeying to the countryside via car, bus or train, you’re often working with an overnight bag that’s tight on space. Without having to compromise on style, pack all your trendy basics and must-haves with brands like Time and Tru and George, all available at Walmart, in-store and online. [Walmart.ca](https://www.walmart.ca)



**1. GEORGE WOMEN'S FLUTTER SLEEVE DRESS (\$25):** Crafted from crinkled fabric, this dress is perfect for a variety of occasions. It features a flattering deep V-neckline, cute flutter sleeves, a smocked back, a gathered front detail, a front cut-out, an A-line cut and a ruffled hem. Pair it with pumps for a sophisticated look or dress it down with sneakers or sandals for a more casual vibe.

**2. TIME AND TRU WOMEN'S SHOULDER BAG (\$39):** This bucket bag will carry all your essentials with the toss-it-in ease but in a more tidy, chic package. This can be used as a casual everyday bag, a daily commute to work or as cottage getaway bag. It comes with an attachable crossbody strap for a more casual look, but we also love the wrapped handle.

**3. GEORGE WOMEN'S LINEN BLEND TANK (\$10):** Stay cool and stylish all summer long with this linen-blend tank. Made of soft and comfortable jersey knit, it's perfect for hot days. It features a scoop neckline, thick straps, a sleeveless design and a curved hem.

**4. GEORGE WOMEN'S STRAIGHT SHORT (\$16):** Get that trendy denim vibe with these denim shorts, featuring belt loops for a cute accent, a button and zipper fly closure, a five-pocket design and distressed details for a cool touch. These versatile shorts pair perfectly with casual tees, making them the go-to for summer outings and beach days.

**5. TIME AND TRU WOMEN'S QUEEN SANDALS (\$19):** Elevate warm-weather style with these trendy sandals, featuring a faux-leather upper and a rubber outsole for durability. With an open toe, slip-on style and buckled ankle strap, they offer both comfort and convenience. The memory foam insole also ensures all-day cushioning, while the square toe adds a touch of breezy sophistication.

# The Fresh Sheet

Vancouver's latest and greatest drinking and dining spots

BY KATIE NANTON

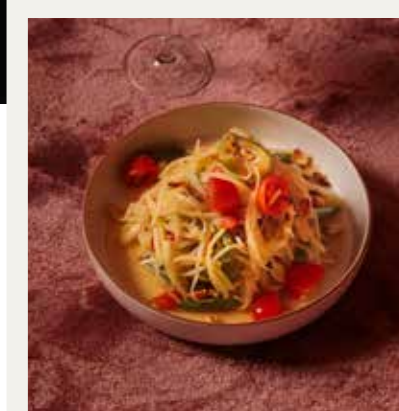


## LOCANDA DELL'ORSO

A new Italian restaurant has risen from the ashes of Autostrada's downtown location. The name means Inn of the Bear in Italian, and the room itself "felt like home" as soon as restaurant director Ianna Vazquez set foot in the space; it became even more so when the interiors were revamped with bright splashes of crimson and modernist art on the walls featuring Italian liquors. The cocktail menu is rife with Italian classics—Aperol Spritz, Milano Sour or Campari Shakerato, anyone?—and the menu is no different. Head chef Marquella Uhrig, previously of Savio Volpe, whips up handmade chicken and beef agnolotti, dripping in a thick rosemary-red wine jus (we licked our plate), and rich bison ragu pappardelle with juniper and sage, as well as seasonal risottos and B.C. halibut with swiss chard and beans, served in rustic parchment paper. For dessert, try the citrusy served-warm olive oil cake with crema pasticceria (Italian custard cream) and marcona almonds. **350 W. Pender St., 604-336-3151. Locandadellorso.com**



PHOTOS: MARK YAMMINE



## MEO

Cocktails, snacks and sultry "love motel" vibes are the order of the day at Chinatown's hottest new bar, Meo. Step off the street into an alternate universe of plush reds and pinks with a larger-than-life painting of a fluffy white cat on one wall, a vintage jukebox set up against another and lavish drapery and booths throughout. Trust Tannis Ling, owner of Bao Bei and co-owner of Michelin-starred Kissa Tanto (located above Meo) to open a showstopper of a cocktail lounge; she operates all three with award-winning chefs Joël Watanabe and Alain Chow. When envisioning the space, Ling was inspired by a Greg Girard photo highlighting Hong

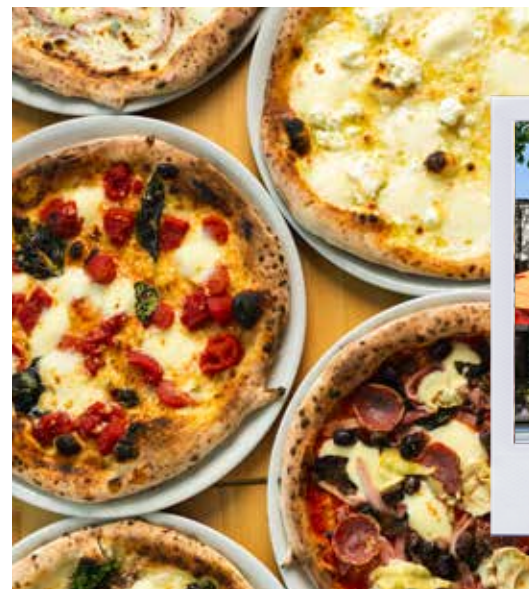
Kong in the '70s and '80s; from there, Meo's design took on a chic love-motel aura—and we're here for it. The drinks menu highlights sweet and savoury fruits and vegetables in unique ways: order a spicy margarita based on how hot you like it (ghost pepper, anyone?), a matcha highball with house-made tonka bean soda, matcha, gin and banana milk, or a cold-tea style punch of the week for the table served in a teapot. Small-plate must-orders include the green papaya salad and doubles, a Trinidad-inspired curried chickpea dish with banana raita and tamarind chutney. **265 E. Pender St., 604-559-6181. Meochinatown.com**

## MONARCH BURGER

Remember the Dirty Burger from iconic East Van watering hole Campagnolo Upstairs? We do, and when the resto shuttered in 2020 our hearts broke. Now, chef Robert Belcham's bringing the recipe back, in a laid-back 500-square-foot restaurant on Main Street connected to Uncle Abe's bar. The burgers at Monarch are a bite of pure nostalgia: house-ground, specially seasoned 66 Acres beef, freshly baked buns (Belcham's recipe), crisp pickles (his mom's recipe) and American cheese. They're messy, delicious and as classic as it gets; as Belcham says, "It's a simple burger, not a stunt burger." Also order the spicy loaded poutine with Little Qualicum Cheeseworks curds and Rosie's BBQ & Smokehouse pulled pork, and the excellent homemade veggie mushroom burger—also Belcham's recipe. We loved the simplified, seven-item menu and how the lettuce-and-tomato toppings were packed separately on all to-go orders so nothing got soggy en route to our park picnic. **3034 Main St. Monarchonmain.com**

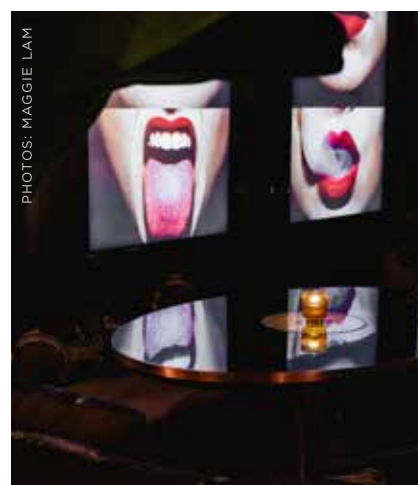


PHOTOS: LEILA KWOK



## VIA TEVERE MAIN STREET

When a new pizza spot opens, we're chomping at the bit to check it out. News of a new Via Tevere on Main Street, however, was in a league all its own (they are, after all, one of only two Lower Mainland pizzerias to hold a membership with the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana). We love the back patio and take-out window at the original Victoria Drive location, and the new Tevere has special touches of its own, like a bustling streetside patio to people-watch and select vegan pizza pies. The backstory: this new location opens up where plant-based Grano Pizzeria used to be (and Don't Argue before that), so a few of its menu favorites, like the super-spicy Bee Sting with cashew mozza-rella and plant-based pepperoni, are on offer here. Our go-to 'za at Tevere has always been the Tricolore with walnut pesto, fior di latte and San Marzano tomato—thankfully available at this location, too. **3240 Main St., 604-876-5408. Viateverepizzeria.com**



PHOTOS: MAGGIE LAM

## PROPHECY IN HOTEL GEORGIA

Like entering an underground lair, the expansive bar space under the Rosewood Hotel Georgia has always had a secretive, historic, special feel (remember speakeasy-style Prohibition?). Its newest iteration, Prophecy, embodies past-meets-future elegance with dramatic, vintage-inspired interiors and digital artwork. The storytelling continues to the cocktail program, developed by heavy-hitting bev director Jeff Savage (Botanist Bar) and bar manager Nicole Cote (AnnaLena, Published on Main) and inspired by writers, poets, musicians and artists. Pick your palate's fave theme—spiritous, refreshing, herbaceous, lush—and gaze over the beautifully designed menu; our instincts led us to the lively Snow Falling on Cedars, inspired by the eponymous book, and mixed with vodka, Douglas Fir gin, hoja santa, Gyokuro, lime and egg white. Elevated share plates abound—oysters, caviar, truffle fries, prawns—but, if you're feeling flush (it's a cool \$100) get the A5 Wagyu Katsu Sando on butter brioche with katsu sauce and kewpie mayo. **801 W. Georgia St., 604-336-3383. Prophecybar.com**



PHOTOS: IAN LANTERMAN

## OSTERIA ELIO VOLPE

For months, anticipation ran high for Osteria Savio Volpe's "close cousin" to open up—Elio's Instagram teased its vibe as a warm breeze blowing from Italy's seafaring south. True to form, it's larger, airier and slightly more casual than Savio, with a buzzy open kitchen and ample seating options from booth to bar high-top to table. Highlights include rigatoni cacio e pepe, which packed a buttery, spicy punch with 10-year cheddar and roasted jalapeno, and enormous grilled jumbo prawns with blistered caper vinaigrette—a "wow" dish. The pizzas sliding

out of the on-site oven are crispy and super-thin-crust, so if that's your type it could be for you; we preferred ordering a large selection of pastas in half-sizes for more variety on the table. We're already looking forward to heading back for a lazy, decadent summertime weekend brunch to try the warm baked ricotta with honey, hazelnuts and local Liberty sourdough bread, lobster alla benedictina with fried potatoes and hollandaise, and the meatball breakfast sandwich with a sunny-side up egg—followed by a large, Italian-style nap. **540 W. 17th Ave., 236-471-9564. Eliovolpe.com**



# Small Businesses, Big Hearts

These ethically minded Canadian companies are forging their way through a challenging retail landscape

BY SHERI RADFORD

On the day that I announced my launch, two other slow-fashion brands announced the closures of their businesses," says Miranda Sam, founder of Shortlisted, a new Vancouver company that makes timeless, versatile clothing designed to fit individuals under 5'4". "I'm just watching the industry crumble around me, and it's really devastating."

When Sam decided to start her company, she knew it would be expensive to have everything made in Canada, but one specific cost shocked her: labels. She learned that getting a small quantity produced here would cost \$5 each. "Five dollars for one label!" she exclaims. "That's not including our size label. That's not including our wash label. That is for the brand label."

In Canada, ethically producing consumer goods comes with a high price tag on everything from materials to design to shipping. And the very nature of responsible consumption emphasizes acquiring just a few long-lasting items instead of many disposable pieces, which doesn't exactly lead to big sales for small companies. "I don't want to sell you on something that you're going to ditch in a season or two," Sam says. "I really want to last in someone's closet for 10 years."

The co-founders of Lumberjill Apparel, Krista King and Meagan Ryan, have also spent much time pondering mindful consumerism. "Let's look at what we have. Let's look at what we need. How can we use this, season over season?" says King. The pair's Edmonton company produces clothing that combines the stylishness women want with the comfort, functionality and durability more commonly associated with men's clothing—with as little waste as possible during production.

"There is no waste on our Rundle Wrap. There is a cut-out piece, and the cut-out becomes a scrunchie," King says. "Or mittens," Ryan adds.

One frequent challenge they face is shoppers who balk at waiting six to eight weeks for their purchase to arrive. King explains that using presales helps them avoid the cost—both financial and environmental—of overproduction. She says, "I think our job is to help educate people that it's OK to wait for your item."



Everlayer, which is based in Winnipeg, sells blankets, throws and towels that are crafted in Europe from the most luxurious natural, sustainable fabrics. "We want to get away from disposable consumption," he says. "We know the market size for our kind of product is small."

Also small is the talent pool in Canada. Agarwal points out that when it comes to finding "really good people with experience on the luxe and fashion side of the business," Canada has a tiny workforce compared to the United States.

And those are far from the only challenges that small businesses face here. The dearth of factories and sewers in Canada, the prohibitively large production runs required to unlock discounts, the high cost of extending size offerings to be inclusive, the difficulties securing low-interest bank loans, the relatively high taxes—the list goes on. But none of these entrepreneurs are tempted to give up. Agarwal feels excited to leave disposable fashion behind during what he calls the "last innings" of his career. McCullagh and her husband have spent so many years working on Whistle & Flute that they can't imagine doing anything else. Sam wants to make Shortlisted a success so she can demonstrate to her daughters that hard work pays off.

And Lumberjill's King and Ryan are savouring building the company—and the lives—of their dreams. "We're reverse engineering, like, here's what we want our lifestyle to look like," Ryan says. "I think if we show up authentically, and we can show that we are enthusiastic and we love what we do and we're proud of the products that we put out there, it's going to resonate with people." ✓



## La Jolie Madame LINGERIE

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Miranda McCullagh expresses a similar concern about how Amazon has taught customers to expect free next-day shipping, which small businesses simply can't offer. "It's actually crazy that it costs more for us to ship within Canada than it does for us to ship to the U.S.," she says. Her Victoria-based company, Whistle & Flute, uses organic fabrics to make gender-neutral kids' clothing adorned with happy designs—think cheerful clouds, smiling sushi and grinning gnomes.

But the reality behind the adorable outfits is less sanguine. McCullagh describes working long hours, which throws work-life balance off-kilter; changes in Instagram's algorithms, which make it hard for followers to see the brand's posts; and how rampant inflation has hurt her shoppers. "I think it's harder for people now, with inflation, to be able to justify spending \$30 on a T-shirt when they can go to Old Navy and get one for \$5."

Sanjay Agarwal also worries about how to find buyers prepared to pay a premium for timeless, high-quality goods that are ethically produced. His new company,



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# Funshine State

Seeking a good time for the whole clan? In Central Florida, family fun is in no short supply

BY NOA NICHOL

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

Central Florida's Polk County, between Orlando and Tampa, is the Sunshine State's "sweetest spot"—close to top attractions, but far from the crowds. The major must-do here is the LEGOLAND Florida Resort. The resort hotel is a LEGO wonderland, with the colourful toy bricks everywhere (and we mean everywhere: on the walls, in designated areas on the floor and on activity tables). Parents will appreciate the family-friendly suites, with bunk beds in a separate-but-connected space; kids will love details like a whoopee cushion simulator (with realistic sound), disco-dance elevators and an in-room LEGO treasure hunt. The resort also includes restaurants, pools and daily activities to keep everyone LEGO-ccupied. A short stroll away, LEGOLAND is sprawling, with themed areas (we loved Fun Town and Pirates' Cove best), imagination stations, rides, fair games, food and more. Hot tip: keep your face-painting receipt and get touch-ups free all day long. Don't forget to visit the new Peppa Pig Theme Park, where you can tour Peppa's house and ride Daddy Pig's roller coaster—look out for "muddy puddles"!

Once you're LEGO-ed out, access activities that bring you closer to nature—and others that are educational in nature. Living Water Cruises offers tours of the famous Winter Haven Chain of Lakes. Visit several lakes, spotting alligators, otters, Blue Herons, Anhingas, White Ibis and more along the way, and learn the history of the famous Cypress Gardens (LEGOLAND's current site) while cruising by the old bridge where the southern belles once stood in times long past. A 45-minute drive away, in Lakeland, Bonnet Springs Park is a breathtaking urban oasis—a reclaimed train yard that's blossoming with beauty and art. There are slides and swings and colourful things that twirl and whirl all around the park, along with a nature centre, tree house and butterfly house. Stop by the on-site Florida Children's Museum, featuring a pint-size play city (complete with a grocery store, fire station restaurant and vet), a music-making gallery and a 100-foot climbable alligator, Blinky. [Visitcentralflorida.org](http://Visitcentralflorida.org)



## ORLANDO

Thanks to a certain mouse, Orlando will forever be synonymous with Disney. Consider, however, the many other amusements, activities and attractions the area has to offer. First, check into the Grove Resort & Water Park Orlando, boasting huge family suites (ours had three beds and three baths, a kitchen and laundry) and Surfari Water Park—free for guests, with a surf simulator, dual water slides and a lazy river. In the evening, ICON Park, 40 minutes away by car, is a 20-acre, open-air entertainment destination with restaurants, funky bars, boutique shops and can't-miss attractions, all anchored by The Orlando Eye—a jaw-dropping observation wheel that stands 400 feet in the air. Then, prepare to have your world turned upside down (literally) at the Museum of Illusions—a gravity-defying attraction with jaw-dropping, walkthrough exhibits that invite you to step outside the laws of nature.

Orlando is also home to the Orlando Science Center, and it's really not hard to see why this is one of America's top hands-on science centers, where learning is always fun. Even mom and dad got a kick out of the exhibits, racing a recumbent bike against an upright model (mom, on the former, won), practising landing a spacecraft on the moon, and helping our daughter write, prop-make and act in her own mini movie. Hungry? Down the street, staff at Black Rooster Taqueria have got Mexican food down to a science, squeezing their avocados not once but twice daily to ensure their guacamole is perfect (and it is). Then, switch from science to art at the Morse Museum, which houses the world's most comprehensive collection of the works of Louis Comfort Tiffany. Colourful and light-filled exhibits include Tiffany jewelry, pottery, paintings, art glass, windows, lamps and a gorgeous, elaborate chapel interior created for the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. End the day on another "light" note with an Epic Paddle Adventure guided Night Glow tour of Lake Ivanhoe. Hop into a clear kayak and let multicoloured LED lights reveal the enchanting underwater world below, all set against the sparkling Orlando cityscape. [Visitorlando.com](http://Visitorlando.com)



## KISSIMMEE

Want a home base that feels like home—but more luxe? Magic Village Yards is a collection of villas (ours was huge, with three large bedrooms, four bathrooms (one for each of us, plus an extra!), a full kitchen, washer/dryer, an outdoor barbecue and patio), with an on-site restaurant and pool for guests' use. With Walt Disney World Resort and Universal Studios Florida just minutes away, it's the perfect place from which to explore the area. We kicked off our family leg of our family trip by taking in a first-of-its-kind creative collaboration between Cirque du Soleil and Disney. Drawn to Life is a love letter to the art of Disney Animation—a live acrobatic journey where the stage is transformed into a giant animator's desk. Arrive early with the kiddos, and they could (like ours did) be part of the pre-show! After a standing ovation, take an evening stroll through Disney Springs; clustered around dreamy blue-green springs and a shimmering lake, this collection of boutiques, celeb-chef eateries and attractions (bowling, balloon rides) appeals to all ages. Cap off the night with dinner at Summer House on the Lake at Disney Springs, where the Cookie Bar is famous for fresh-baked, oversized cookies like Fudge Bomb, Crispy Rice Chocolate Chip and Birthday Cake.

For something completely different, a Spirit of the Swamp airboat tour sets you gliding through a beautiful natural paradise of swamps and marshes that are home to stunning birds and critters of all kinds; keep a keen eye out for alligators! Another unique must-do: dinner and a show courtesy of Medieval Times, which will take you back to the 11th century for feasting (fair warning: no cutlery) and an epic medieval tournament, with horses, knights, falcons and a queen.

Finally, it's time for what some consider the main attraction. Walt Disney World Resort—the size, in acres, of San Francisco—includes four theme parks; we opted for the classic Magic Kingdom experience, complete with teacups, flying Dumbos, a midday parade and fireworks. Universal Studios also includes multiple parks and, with express access, we skipped virtually every line and happily screamed our way through many thrilling rides; some drenched us, some made our heads spin (figuratively speaking) and some just messed up our hair. All, like Central Florida itself, are fun, fun, family fun. [Experiencekissimmee.com](http://Experiencekissimmee.com)

## The Perfect Drink for Every Dad

Because when it comes to a bottle for Father's Day, one size doesn't fit all

### OUTDOORSY DAD

Bearface Whisky, made in "bear country," is born of the Canadian wilderness, making it the perfect gift for the outdoorsy dad. Bearface Triple Oak is a single-grain Canadian whisky matured for a minimum of four years in three different casks, to create a palate similar to bourbon. [Bearfacewhisky.com](http://Bearfacewhisky.com)

### PREPPY DAD

Deep, plum-coloured Beringer 2020 Knights Valley Cabernet Sauvignon showcases a gorgeous Bordeaux-varietal blend, with sandy, fine-grained tannins and a plush, velvety-rich mouthfeel. Built to age and develop further complexity over time, it never goes out of style—just like dad. [Beringer.com](http://Beringer.com)

### CORPORATE DAD

The Dalmore 12 is an outstanding single-malt whisky matured in American white oak ex-bourbon casks and finessed in rare and aged oloroso sherry casks. The time and attention taken to cultivate this exceptional drink is a worthy gift for a hard-working dad. [Thedalmore.com](http://Thedalmore.com)

### PROFESSOR DAD

Dillon's Dry Gin 7, made with 100 per cent Canadian rye, was developed with top bartenders and is traditionally vapour distilled through seven botanicals and "graduated" through oak for a slight sweetness. [Dillons.ca](http://Dillons.ca)

### VACATION DAD

Marchesi Antinori Pian delle Vigne 2017 offers notes of ripe red fruit and hints of plums and dates; its bouquet is completed by sensations of Mediterranean herbs, floral aromas of violets, a hint of spicy ginger and hot pepper chocolate. It's like an exotic vacation for dad, bottled. [Antinori.it/en](http://Antinori.it/en)

### RETIRED DAD

Mission Hill Terroir Collection Border Vista Vineyard 2022 Rosé is bursting with flavours of ripe, red berries, watermelon and grapefruit, complemented by subtle notes of spice. Complex and textural, with a bright finish, it's definitely reminiscent of dad's post-working life. [Missionhillwinery.com](http://Missionhillwinery.com)

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