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VITA

THE
November
Issue

CHRISTMAS
COUNTDOWN

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON'S
TOP FESTIVE ADVENTS

Inside *the* Issue

BEAUTY Non-invasive treatments for facial fitness

DESIGN How are paint “colours of the year” chosen?

TRAVEL Find out why Virginia Beach is a “shore thing”

WINE Warming wine and soup pairings for winter

Party Season

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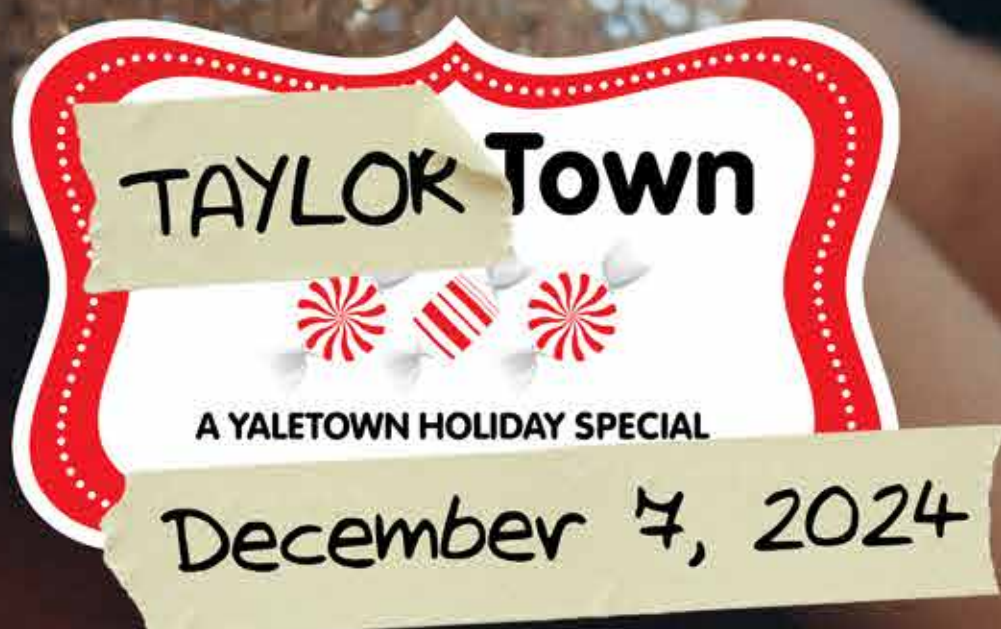
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YT
YALETOWN
WHERE NEXT BEGINS



Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

Whether we're ready for it or not, November marks the "official" start of the holiday season—and we're kicking things off with our annual 30 Days of Giveaways extravaganza. Not only are we giving you the chance to win incredible prizes every single day right up until Christmas, our participating brands and retailers will culminate in a festive guide that will supply dozens of unique gift ideas for everyone on your list. Be sure to follow along on Instagram, @vitadailymedia, starting mid-month for your chance(s) to win, and check out the 30 Days of Giveaways top gifts guide on our website, vitamagazine.com!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Alyssa Garrison

@RANDOMACTSOFPASTEL



Tell us about you. I started blogging 10-plus years ago and I've been a content creator, writer and social media consultant since. I created Random Acts of Pastel after graduating from journalism school and struggling to find my place in traditional publishing; from there I got into beauty writing. This led to brand partnerships on my own site and socials; I eventually signed with an agent and my career snowballed. These days I'm juggling managing my own brand, consulting with small-business clients on how to make social media work better for them and being a full-time mom to two girls.

Why Random Acts of Pastel? I was living in Toronto and the lack of colour was getting me down. Winter was bleak: a sea of commuters in black parkas wobbling through slush and ice. I've always strug-

gled with my mental health, and the best way I've found to combat that is to focus on beauty, to notice the extraordinary in the everyday, to "romanticize" your life. So I started to lean into colour in my décor, hair, wardrobe. I even had a short stint with street art, painting random objects pastel colours around the city; once, I painted a little pink hat on the top of a fire hydrant; whenever I walked past, it put a smile on my face (this remains the goal of everything I do). A lot has changed in my life but the brand mission remains: seeking out magic in the everyday, celebrating colour and letting fun lead.



You started as a single-mom-by-choice; can you speak to that? I was a content creator with a growing following for five years before I threw a massive curveball at my audience and started my journey to single motherhood by choice. It was a big change for my brand—to go from single girl sharing her life in the city to this new narrative. I lost a lot of followers who

were just not interested in my story anymore, but so many of those who stayed "grew up with me"—having families of their own or even starting their own journeys to single parenthood by choice.

How do you incorporate your daughters into your creative world? I feel incredibly lucky to have a career that works with my dedication to motherhood instead of against it. Because I had Summer on my own, I've been working since the day she was born, and she's always been a big part of what I do, coming along to events and posing for photos. These days if I'm



shooting a campaign she's not included in, she's very unimpressed, and she's often behind the camera helping me with video snippets or outfit photos; just like her mom, pink is her favourite colour! Penny is still so little, and because I had her with my husband, I was able to take some proper time off when she was born, so I'm not sure she'll feel as connected as her older sister does. But she has just started saying "cheese" and smiling whenever I have my camera out.

RAOP is about finding joy in everyday moments—what can others try in their own routine? You don't have to spend a lot of money or chase some big goal; it's all about the little things, about pausing to appreciate what you already have but might not always notice. A hot cup of tea in your favourite mug, a fresh flower cut from your garden, stopping to stare at a pastel sunset—these are my antidotes to getting ground down by the seemingly endless drudgery of life, and RAOP invites everyone to see life through rose-coloured glasses. If you need a place to get started, try adding a colourful scarf in your fave shade to your outfit tomorrow.

What's one pastel trend you'd love to see make a comeback? Pastel hair forever! Dyeing my hair has been a mainstay in my content ... so much so that pink eventually started to feel like my "natural colour" (and honestly still does). Pastel shades are low commitment and usually fade quickly, so it's an easy and fun way to change up your look for a few weeks.

What's your personal style mantra? I'd rather be overdressed than underdressed, which is probably why I chose a career that includes putting outfits together and sharing them online, even when I've got nowhere to go.

If you could sprinkle pastel magic, what would it look like? I'd partner with a paint company and do something BIG, like a series of pastel storefronts or a pastel alley in East Van. If I've learned anything over my career it's that if you build it colourful, they will come! Adding some pastel magic to a business or neighbourhood is a great way to boost foot traffic and shift perception. V

THE MAKING OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

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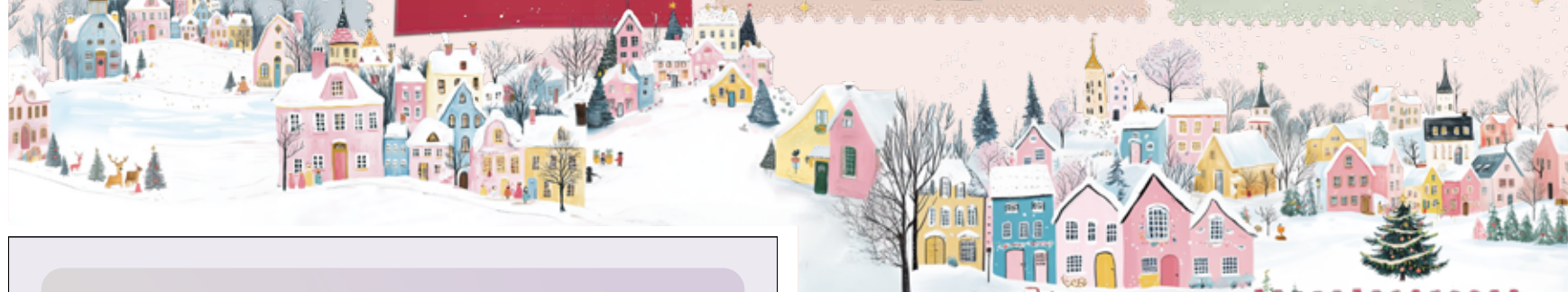


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Calendar COUNTDOWN

Take advantage of these festive adverts

BY CHRISTINA ARMANIOUS



THE MOM FLOW

BY ERIN SOUSA

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MINICHIELLO

1. LEATHEROLOGY TWELVE DAYS OF LEATHEROLOGY, \$625 Twelve exquisite mini Italian leather goods in assorted colours to suit every style preference. Many can also be personalized, making it an uber-luxe gift. Leatherology.com

2. CLARINS 24-DAY ADVENT CALENDAR, \$175 Five curated routines for face, body and makeup, all designed to enhance skin radiance through December and beyond. Clarins.ca

3. SISLEY PARIS ADVENT CALENDAR, \$1,035 Each compartment, designed in collab with British artist Fee Greening to capture the essence of Paris, is filled with luxe skincare, makeup, fragrance and hair products. Sisley-paris.com

4. REVOLVE BEAUTY ADVENT CALENDAR, \$205 Twenty-seven viral, best-selling beauty and skincare products, featuring a selection of full-sized items. Revolve.com

5. STERLING FOREVER 24 DAYS OF JEWELRY, \$966 Featured on past Oprah's Favourite Things lists, this includes 24 stylish earrings. Sterlingforever.com

6. COMPARTÉS GARDEN CHOCOLATE TASTING CALENDAR, \$152 Each limited-edition gourmet chocolate is crafted with ripe ingredients from California's lush orchards, featuring unique notes like raspberry rose and lavender honey. Compertes.com

7. IN GOOD TASTE RED, WHITE & ROSÉ WINE ADVENT, \$175 Sip your way through December with 24 bottles featuring a mix of red, white and rosé wines sourced from Italy, Spain, South Africa, Argentina, Australia and California. Ingoodtaste.com

8. JO MALONE LIMITED-EDITION ADVENT CALENDAR, \$675 Twenty-five scented surprises, including seasonal colognes, miniature candles and bath and body favourites. Jomalone.ca

9. SAJE WELL WISHES ADVENT CALENDAR, \$121 Back by popular demand after selling out in record time last year, this features fan-fave essentials and new surprises, including an ornament diffuser and all-new Peppermint Twist products. Saje.ca

10. BURT'S BEES 12 DAYS OF JOY, \$35 A fun mix of holiday-inspired and classic flavours of the brand's beeswax lip balms. Amazon.com

11. KANEL SAPIÒ ADVENT CALENDAR, \$69 Twelve expertly curated spice and salt blends, each paired with 24 unique recipes for a true flavour adventure. Presented in elegant glass jars with cork stoppers, the set also includes a handmade brass spoon. Kanel.com

12. VOSGES HAUT-CHOCOLAT/NORDIC FOREST CHALET CHOCOLATE CALENDAR, \$448 Premium chocolates and gourmet treats, including blood orange truffles and world-famous Italian nougat. The final drawer, brimming with festive confections, makes Christmas morning even more special. Vosgeschocolate.com

13. MISSOMA JEWELRY ADVENT CALENDAR, FROM \$710 Back and better than ever with three new editions: gold, silver and solid gold. Featuring best-sellers, stacking staples and layering must-haves. Missoma.com

14. CHARLOTTE TILBURY'S BEAUTY TREASURE CHEST OF LOVE, \$297 Each day features a jewel-handled drawer revealing one of the brand's award-winning products. Charlottetilbury.com

15. VOLUSPA 12-DAY CANDLE ADVENT CALENDAR, \$119 Twelve clean-burning seasonal candles, perfect for adding a warm and festive glow to your home during the holidays. Sephora.com

16. PENHALIGON'S BAKER'S BOX OF DELIGHTS, \$755 Twenty-four celebrated signature fragrances, including the TikTok-viral Halfeti perfume. Penhaligons.com



Work it Out

Not quite ready for a facelift? Try one of two non-invasive treatments that move the muscles of the face, delivering visible results—with zero downtime

BY SHERI RADFORD

Seventy-two-year-old Gisele Rasmussen looks at least 15 years younger than her age. She founded Facial Fitness in Vancouver in 1992, specializing in microcurrent toning facials. The clinic's medical-grade equipment uses a powerful low-grade electrical current to tone the facial muscles—Rasmussen likens it to a gym workout for the face—which results in better blood flow, more collagen production and increased cellular activity. The lively septuagenarian recently added LED red light therapy for the face and neck to the end of the microcurrent treatments.

"The LED is just magic. I'm astonished at the results," she says. "All those beautiful toned muscles that you have, suddenly you've got this tight skin on top. Within six treatments, you can look 10 years younger." Rasmussen explains that muscles toned by microcurrent form the perfect foundation for other cosmetic treatments, from Botox to fillers to peels, and she describes the LED red light therapy as "the icing on the cake."

Most of her clients do their treatments every three or four weeks, though some fountain-of-youth seekers come in as often as every second week. No matter how frequent the treatment, there's no downtime and the results always look natural and healthy, Rasmussen says. "I want it to look natural. I don't want it to look fake."

EmFace is another non-surgical rejuvenation procedure that works the facial muscles, and it's exploding in popularity. "EmFace is an energy-based treatment that is really one of a kind because it is the first to target the lifting facial muscles," says Dr. Shannon Humphrey, medical director at Humphrey & Belezny Cosmetic Dermatology in Vancouver. Humphrey is also a clinical associate professor at the University of British Columbia.

EmFace combines high-intensity facial electrical stimulation with targeted radiofrequency energy to tone the facial muscles while also increasing the skin's production of collagen and elastin. "It's kind of like a bootcamp for the lifting facial muscles," Humphrey says. "We get lifting but also skin-quality improvement."

And, somewhat miraculously, EmFace takes just 20 minutes per area, it isn't painful, no downtime is required and it can easily be combined with other treatments such as microneedling. Clients do a series of four EmFace sessions anywhere from two days to two weeks apart, then come in twice a year for maintenance sessions. "This has been a real game changer in our practice," Humphrey says. "Patients love the ease of the treatment experience. They love the multimodal outcomes, so both lifting and skin-quality improvements, and they love the natural-looking outcomes."

Dr. Trevor Born agrees with all the acclaim for EmFace. The founder of



TMB Cosmetic Surgery in Toronto, Born aims for a natural look for his clients. He praises the results that EmFace achieves in terms of smoothing out fine lines and improving the skin's texture and vasculature, though he cautions that individuals with "a lot of sun damage, a lot of fine wrinkles, a lot of volume loss in the face" might not achieve stellar results. "It's not a do-everything device," Born says. "This is really a technology that's meant for people who aren't quite ready for a facelift but want a little bit of change." Other devices currently on the market promise to deliver similar results, but Born points out that "they all compare themselves to EmFace, which is really the gold standard."

Humphrey concurs that other non-invasive surgical procedures simply can't compete with EmFace. "There are actually no other ones that target the lifting facial muscles," she says. "So I think in that way, EmFace is relatively standalone." And surgery belongs in a completely separate category. Humphrey explains, "A surgical intervention like a facelift may involve repositioning facial muscles along with other tissues, but it's really in quite a different category of treatment in terms of patient experience, degree of improvement, cost, etc."

As for treatments that an individual might try at home, nothing can compare to EmFace or a microcurrent toning facial. Humphrey and Born both cite the lack of randomized trials and clinical studies to back up claims made by home-equipment makers. Rasmussen notes that some of her clients have had limited success using LED red light therapy at home, but they're mostly in their 40s and trying to extend the time between clinical treatments—home treatments are simply no replacement for the clinic.

Rasmussen says with a laugh, "If you're in your 50s or 60s, you need the big guns." V

"This is really a technology that's meant for people who aren't quite ready for a facelift but want a little bit of change"

VITA X WALMART

5 Affordable Gift Ideas for Kids of All Ages from Walmart Canada

With the holiday season just around the corner, you're likely starting to brainstorm gifts for all the kids in your life. Get inspired and become the ultimate elf with cool gifts at affordable prices from Walmart Canada. This year, the gifts are bigger and better than ever, inspiring creativity, fun and playfulness. Discover five of our favourites for kids of all ages, and let the holiday magic begin! [Walmart.ca](#)



1. BARBIE MINI BARBIELAND DREAM HOUSE, \$42.97 Mini Barbieland is a place to imagine big and dream in mini! Built with tiny cuteness and a big surprise, this playset includes a mini DreamHouse doll house, two vehicles and five mini Barbie dolls. The small-scale DreamHouse comes with unboxing fun that reveals one of the mini Barbie dolls and a randomized pet and pet accessory. When it's time for a mini adventure, kids have the Dream Plane and SUV to take for a spin!

2. FISHER PRICE INTERLOCKING BLOCKS PUZZLE, \$29.97 Watch kids stack, sort and build fun designs with this colourful puzzle, made with FSC-certified wood from well-managed forests. Nineteen shape blocks give kids the chance to stack in free-play or sort into the tray, which features guidelines to help create an interlocking design. As kids play, they'll be exercising their hand-eye coordination, creativity and problem-solving skills.

3. MEGA POKÉMON BUILDING TOY KIT, \$79.99 Start their Pokémon journey with three beloved buildable characters: Pikachu, Eevee and Piplup. Ideal for ages eight and up, these building toys help develop creativity and problem-solving skills.

4. LEGO CREATOR 3 IN 1 TROPICAL UKULELE INSTRUMENT TOY, \$39.86 Kids can build, play and display three beach-themed models in playset. A great gift idea for girls and boys aged eight and up, it features a ukulele on a beach scene stand, with colourful flowers and grass. The instrument toy can be detached from the stand and has four plastic strings that vibrate when strummed.

5. BITZEE DISNEY INTERACTIVE TOY WITH 30 CHARACTERS INSIDE, \$44.97 Explore the world of Disney like never before with Bitzee Disney! Bitzee Disney characters respond to swipes, tilts and taps with cute sounds and reactions at every interaction. Inside the Bitzee pod, collect 30 iconic characters and experience classic, Pixar and new Disney friends, all in one place!

Current Affairs

The pros say over-the-counter microcurrent devices can't compare to in-clinic treatments; still, the following are available to those who want to try-it-at-home:

NUFACE TRINITY

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ZIOTEK MICROCURRENT FACIAL DEVICE

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Social Anxiety

Dependency on social media has left small businesses in a precarious position

BY JILL VON SPRECKEN

On May 3, Vancouver-based business owner Randa Salloum woke up and went to post to her company's Instagram account—as per usual. But when she tried to log in, she found the account, with around 8,000 followers, had been suspended. She clicked the “appeal” button, but was immediately logged out with no further access. It was the beginning of a 52-day struggle to not only reinstate the account, but to even get a meaningful response from Meta, the app's parent company.

“It was scary to say the least, because everything that you have built is just gone at the blink of an eye,” she says. “You have no way of getting it back, and even if you can, you don't know what you're going to have to do to get it back.”

Salloum's consignment shop, Collective Will, depends heavily on Instagram for marketing purposes. “It's pretty critical, because we're on the 14th floor of a locked building,” she says. “Because the store is not street front, and there's a reason for that, we rely exclusively on social media to get the word out. ... We post to Instagram extremely consistently, posting every single day, showing new arrivals.”

It's a reminder that these platforms have all the power—to decide what happens to users' accounts, posts and information. Not to mention their future on any given platform. But despite the risks, most small business owners invest significant resources in social media—around 77 per cent connect with customers there, according to Forbes Advisor. “At the end of the day we've created this community and promotional piece that is Instagram, and I still do

have to use it if I want to see business growth,” says Salloum.

Marketing experts can explain this precarious position. Rebecca Coleman, a marketer and instructor of social media marketing at the British Columbia Institute of Technology, says that social media platforms are referred to as “borrowed media.” She adds, “because the content you create on the platform is yours, you own it. But the platform itself, you do not own, so you are subject to the whims of the [terms of service] and the algorithm.”

The duality of depending on something you ultimately can't control isn't lost on Alice Whittick. She is the owner-operator of The Sequel Sale, a shoppable Instagram account and website devoted to high-end resale. She sees the platform—where much of her business happens—as a double-edged sword. “I appreciate that social media has offered us something really incredible for free. [An] absolutely, insanely powerful tool for connecting with each other and for doing things,” she says. “But in that attempt to monetize it and dominate the world, it's weird now.”

Courtney Watkins, owner of luxury resale business Mine & Yours, has an idea of just how weird things can get. Like Salloum, the Mine & Yours Instagram account was shut down suddenly. Not just once, but three times. Each time with no warning, and little to no explanation from Meta. The first time was in 2021, with 50,000 followers in the middle of Black Friday and Cyber Monday—the store's busiest time. After six months of no response, Mine & Yours



MINE & YOURS



COLLECTIVE WILL

“At the end of the day we've created this community and promotional piece that is Instagram, and I still do have to use it if I want to see business growth”



COLLECTIVE WILL



MINE & YOURS

brought the situation to the press, and the account was reinstated the next day. But in 2023 it happened again, twice, prompting Watkins to send a letter to Meta's press team. The letter pointed out a glaring truth: that larger retailers seem unaffected by suspensions. “Meta risks alienating an essential segment of its user base and stifling entrepreneurial growth, especially from female entrepreneurs, founders and owners,” the letter reads. In the end, the letter had little effect, and Watkins needed to engage a lawyer in order to have the account reinstated.

Both Salloum and Watkins note the lack of empathy and genuine help from customer support. Instead, they found themselves in an endless loop. “We had to appeal to Meta to see if the team there could reinstate the account,” says Watkins via email. “But they don't actually respond or give you any contact information for who you need to reach out to.” Salloum agrees: “I definitely learned that Meta does not want you to contact them,” she says.

On the flip side are social media's obvious benefits as a marketing or promotional tool. “I'm an operation of one person, and I do it this way so that I can keep really low overhead,” says Whittick. “I'm trying to figure out a way where the buyer and the seller get more in their pocket.” At Mine & Yours, Watkins credits Instagram with much of the company's growth, and around 20 per cent of sales. “Though unfortunately sometimes we would like to boycott Instagram, it's one of our biggest driver of sales,” she says.

After dealing with the fallout of suspended accounts—which Watkins estimates has cost her business \$100,000 or more—Salloum and Watkins are making some changes to how they engage with social media platforms. That means diversifying advertising spends by removing a few eggs from the basket that is IG. “We not only make use of Instagram to sell, but we use Google Ads, email marketing, Pinterest, TikTok, Little Red Book and customer service tools to reach our community,” says Watkins.

In the end, Salloum took a risk to get the Collective Will account reinstated. After weeks of no response, she reported a violation on her shop's own account—the backup she'd created when the original was suspended. She had a hunch this would capture Meta's attention. “Clearly they take [intellectual property] violations very seriously,” she says. It worked. Within hours, she was talking to a real person. Then, armed with information, she was able to untangle the initial report—made in error from a brand protection agency—and have the account reinstated.

It was fifty-two days of stress and questioning whether her business would survive. After all that, the sense of relief to have her original Instagram account back in her control was overwhelming: “I just started crying,” she says. ▽

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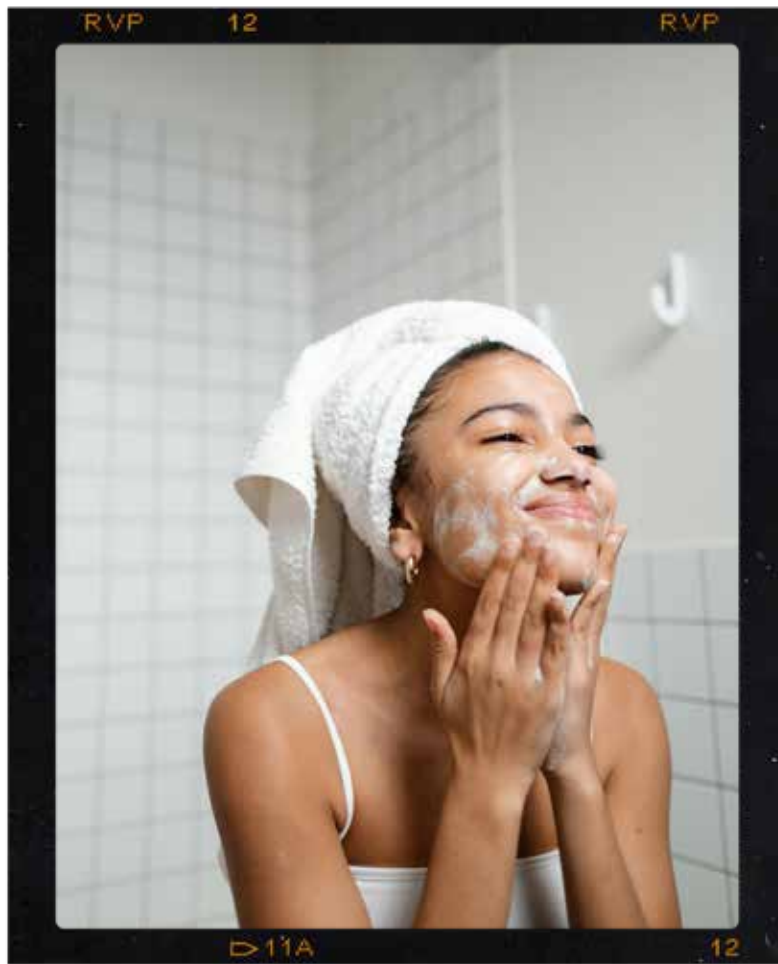
Experts weigh in on how to embrace the latest skincare trend

BY VIVIAN CHUNG

With the skiminalism—or skin minimalism—trend taking over, many of us are ditching our cluttered skincare shelves in favour of a more streamlined routine. Loved for their convenience, cost-effectiveness and ability to pack multiple benefits into one neat formula to keep our skin happy and healthy, this back-to-basics approach has launched multifunctional skincare products into the spotlight. Sure, you might think fewer products mean your skin will take a hit, but the key is finding a few high-performing multitasking products that really deliver.

For those with jam-packed schedules, multifunctional products are a game-changer, reducing the number of steps in your skincare routine. This means you're more likely to stick with it, and over time, see better long-term results. "This not only makes the skincare process more convenient but also minimizes the risk of skin irritation from applying multiple products," explains Dr. Hannah Kopelman, host of the popular podcast Derm Club, which explores dermatological conditions with leading experts. "Additionally, the compatibility of ingredients is ensured, reducing the likelihood of negative interactions that could potentially harm the skin barrier."

Because different skin types have different needs and sensitivities to various ingredients, understanding yours is key to getting the most out of multifunctional skincare products while minimizing any negative effects. "Dry skin types tend to have a lack of natural oils, such as ceramides, and as a result may be more prone to irritation," says Dr. Christina Han, a board-certified dermatologist and medical director at XYON Health, Inc. "A more normal or oily complexion harbours a skin barrier with a 'natural moisturizer' in place and may better tolerate products that can be inherently irritating, like retinols, AHAs and BHAs."



"Because multifunctional products by definition contain more than one active ingredient in targeting common issues in the skin, they can offer a lot of benefits as many individuals may have more than one concern with their skin"

Similarly, vitamin C, praised for its antioxidant and skin-brightening properties, can sometimes lead to irritation, especially when combined with AHAs, BHAs and retinols, as Han points out. For a gentler approach, Sahajan's Nourish Crème Riche gives you that glow from within while deeply hydrating the skin. The cream's star ingredients are Triphala, a traditional Ayurvedic herbal blend made from three fruits packing 20 times the vitamin C of an orange, and coconut oil, which leaves you with soft and supple skin. "Because multifunctional products by definition contain more than one active ingredient in targeting common issues in the skin, they can offer a lot of benefits as many individuals may have more than one concern with their skin," says Han about embracing this simplified approach to skincare. V



Since multifunctional products are often packed with more than one active ingredient, it's essential to monitor your skin's response, no matter your skin type. Start slow and gradually increase usage, and make sure to use a moisturizer to help counteract any irritation, especially on the lower half of your face. "The upper half of the face often has better tolerability due to a higher density of oil glands," explains Han.

That said, those dealing with specific skin concerns like acne or rosacea may need more specialized products because the concentration of active ingredients in a multifunctional product might be lower to accommodate multiple functions. To maximize the benefits of multifunctional skincare products, it's important to understand which ingredients work well together and which combinations to avoid, based on your skin type. "While retinols with AHAs are commonly used to reduce fine lines, dullness and pigmentation, its exfoliative properties can be too overstripping for those with more sensitive or drier skin types," says Han. Pairing them with a moisturizer or using such products less frequently may reduce this risk.



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Colour Me Good

Design experts share an inside look at the business of colour trends and the *must-have* hues for 2025

BY ALISON MCGILL

It's that time of the year again—and we're not talking about the holiday season. Rather, winter is when the world falls in love with fresh palettes of colour that signify a shift in aesthetic for the year ahead. The most highly anticipated of these—Pantone's Color of the Year—will drop on December 5, marking 25 years of the program, first introduced by the colour authority to set the mood for the new millennium.

"Our first selection was PANTONE 15-4020 Cerulean, a cool blue hue that has long been associated with the soothing effects of the sky and sea," says Laurie Pressman, VP of the Pantone Color Institute. "The year 1999 was a time of great expectations and excitement, but there was also this huge fear factor happening as some prognosticators directly predicted [disasters] ranging from giant computer meltdowns to the destruction of civilization. Choosing Cerulean offered an antidote to the stress of the time and highlighted the relationship between colour and culture."

Since that first introduction, the Pantone Color of the Year has become an anticipated announcement for the world's style elites. Pressman says the Pantone selection process takes almost two years and includes a great many conversations between up to 20 key members of the Pantone Color Institute Team.

"Areas we look to for influence include the entertainment industry and films in production, travelling art collections and new artists, fashion, all areas of design and popular travel destinations," she shares. "Other considerations are new lifestyles, playstyles, socio-economic conditions, new technologies, materials, textures and effects that impact colour, social media platforms and sporting events." (Phew!)



BENJAMIN MOORE, ASHWOOD MOSS



BENJAMIN MOORE, CINNAMON SLATE

Keeping in step with Pantone, the introduction of annual hero shades has become a mainstay for many paint and décor brands. Benjamin Moore colour expert Sharon Grech says though the company has been creating colour trend reports for 60-plus years, those were initially only shared with design professionals. As interest in colour and design trends grew, Benjamin Moore brought trend information to consumers in the early 2000s and, in 2010, launched its first Colour of the Year. For 2025, the shade Cinnamon Slate is the brand's cool-meets-cozy select—a tone Grech believes perfectly embodies the current love of muted shades, but with a strong punch of pigment.

"Quietly colourful hues are in the forefront right now," she explains. "The tones that felt most relevant are those with a softer quality, which led us to zone in on soft plums, browns and greens, those beautiful 'in-between' hues with their unique undertones that make them adaptable and easy to personalize in a space."

Grech loves the idea of going all in with Cinnamon Slate as a bedroom colour, but also using it in public spaces like hallways and living rooms. Because it has a nuanced vibe, it gives a subtle presence and works well in small spaces, too. Colour drenching is another beautiful way to use trending tones, and is a technique universally loved by designers.

"Colour drenching is focused on embracing a single hue for an entire room—walls, furniture and décor—to create a cohesive space," explains Kristen Gear, lead design and colour specialist for BeautiTone paint and home products. "For 2025, Midnight Flora is BeautiTone's Colour of the Year—a shade that's a unique blend of red and blue with a lot of depth to it, which is quite captivating and sparks curiosity and imagination. When used for colour drenching, it creates a moody and immersive environment and makes spaces bold and warm in a very bespoke way."

Gear says the choice of such a statement shade is reflective of research done by the BeautiTone team, which revealed Canadians want to explore colour on a deeper, emotional level. People want to add fun to their space and take risks with the hues they choose to decorate with.

The recommendation of on-trend colours lends guidance and expertise—and this is exactly why Sherwin-Williams has expanded its annual star shade recommendation to an entire palette. The 2025 Color Capsule of the Year lineup features nine striking tones ranging from warm brown (Grounded) to deep blue grey (Rain Cloud), saturated yellow (Chartreuse) and soft plummy pink (Maive Finery). Susan Wadden, director of colour marketing for the brand, loves this year's curated capsule because it offers something for everyone: "I don't believe any colour is easier than another to incorporate into existing design schemes, because it really depends on what's already happening in someone's home. The capsule can be used as a guide for decorating entire spaces or, on a micro level, choose impactful décor details like florals, art or pillows."

Given the fact there are multiple expert colour forecasts for 2025—each of them dramatically different from each other—is there a right or wrong way to decorate? Louis Duncan-He, president of and creative director of Louis Duncan-He Designs in Calgary, says the design process should always be a fluid one and you should only choose elements that feel authentic to you, regardless of what's trending.

"With my clients, I encourage them to use colour trends to inspire them about the way they look at their spaces and light a spark to push them outside of what they would typically do," he says. "In my business, we work to understand the building blocks of who someone is and then determine if we can bring a certain trend into their world. The most important thing to me is that design must always align with who you are as a person and match your DNA." ✓

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS COLOUR CAPSULE OF THE YEAR, 2025



BENJAMIN MOORE, CHOWNING TAN



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The Fresh Sheet

Where and what to eat this month

BY NOA NICHOL

WINTERLUST

Ready to go dome? The ultimate enchanted dining experience has made a magical return to H Tasting Lounge at The Westin Bayshore. On now through mid-March, you can indulge in a unique culinary experience inside a private, alpine-inspired dome with breathtaking views of the North Shore mountains and Coal Harbour. Winterlust's signature translucent domes, set on HTL's waterfront patio, provide a cosy-yet-glam escape from the winter chill. Adorned with seasonal evergreens and luxe Alpine-themed accents, the domes offer an intimate atmosphere for groups of up to six, complete with heaters and personal sound systems. As for the food, HTL's culinary team has crafted a menu that's as enchanting as the setting. Highlights: a rich chili-caramel pork belly with togarashi sesame-cashew crunch and a certified Angus beef tomahawk served with red wine jus and five-spice roasted root vegetables. For seafood lovers, the chilled tower and West Coast boil are nothing short of showstoppers, featuring Dungeness crab, poached prawns, mussels and more. Dessert die-hards will be delighted by indulgences like HTL's decadent chocolate cake and pistachio and candied-orange tiramisu. Reservations are required for this dome-dining experience. Htastinglounge.com/winterlust



PHOTOS: LEILA KWOK



JANEVCA

We're all fired up about the opening of Janevca Kitchen & Lounge on Vancouver Island. Nestled in the beautifully restored Rosemead House in Esquimalt, this wood-fired eatery is the latest project from chef Andrea Alridge (Osteria Savio Volpe and CinCin Ristorante, plus Top Chef Canada). Order Alridge's own childhood favourites, inspired by her Filipino heritage, like the scallop crudo with pyongyang sauce and the wood-grilled bone-in pork chop with pickapeppa sauce. The vegetarian mafaldine pasta with locally sourced mushrooms is also excellent. For dessert, the peach

melba is served on perfectly lovely plates from the historic Savoy Hotel in London. Indeed, much attention has been paid to the decorative details: the restaurant's stunning interiors reflect the historic charm of Rosemead House, a heritage building built in 1906. With post-and-beam architecture, original millwork and fireplaces, the space perfectly blends history with modern luxury. Live-edge tables and antique furniture handpicked by owner Lenny Moy complete the ambiance, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for diners. Definitely worth the ferry ride. Janevca.ca

OMBRÉ

Tofino just got tastier thanks to Ombré, a stunning new restaurant that seamlessly blends modern design with the natural beauty of its surroundings. Located in the heart of our favourite picturesque coastal town, Ombré is more than just a dining establishment—it's an experience. Designed by Azurean Sculpture + Architecture, the restaurant's ambiance is a reflection of refined coastal living, with a soft palette inspired by sunsets and carefully crafted custom furniture that evokes the calming essence of the Pacific Northwest. Inside, Ombré boasts seating for 70 guests, including an intimate chef's table and a communal Harvest Table that's perfect for larger gatherings. You can also enjoy the coastal air on two outdoor patios—ideal vantage points to catch Tofino's iconic sunsets. On the food side, Ombré's culinary offerings, spearheaded by executive chef David Provençal, puts an emphasis on Mediterranean-inspired shareable plates that showcase the bounty of the Pacific Northwest. Some notable bites: the buckwheat madeleine with foie parfait and raspberry; the Wagyu steak tartare with cured egg yolk and herring; and the sumptuous Sugo di Carne with spelt gnocchetti, meat ragu, sherry vinegar and parm. And don't forget to feast your eyes on the handpicked art, including a striking yellow cedar carving by Coast Salish artist Doug Horne Jr. that pays homage to the region's cultural roots. Ombrerestaurant.com



PHOTO: KAMIL BIALOUS



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Shore Thing

BY CHRISTINA
ARMANIOUS

Virginia Beach: when you hear its name, you might assume it's just another seaside getaway—but you'd be mistaken. There's so much more to this place than its shoreline; in fact, its moniker barely scratches the sandy surface, and its rich connection to history makes it a must-visit destination.

As one of Virginia's most populous cities, where Chesapeake Bay meets the

Atlantic Ocean, Virginia Beach boasts 35 miles of idyllic sandy beaches, a thriving culinary and craft beer scene and diverse arts and entertainment (our accidental detour at the 1990s R&B group Color Me Badd concert while trying to find the beach is a testament to this). It's the perfect place for any type of traveller—or for someone who enjoys a little bit of everything. Visitvirginiabeach.com



SPY Whether you stay there or not, fans of *The Great Gatsby* will feel right at home at the Historic Cavalier Hotel, where F. Scott Fitzgerald is said to have found inspiration for his book during a stay in 1927. This luxe landmark offers everything from an on-site distillery to a full-service spa, a lavish indoor pool, an exclusive beach club and farm-to-table dining—along with weekly live enter-

tainment for guests and visitors. And, if you're into ghost stories, the Cavalier offers tours that explore its spooky history, including haunted elevators, phantom phone calls from the sixth floor, sightings of a little girl and her cat and the ghost of American magnate Adolph Coors. Speaking of sips, try the Ghost Cat espresso cocktail at on-site Becca Restaurant & Garden. Cavalierresortvb.com



STAY It's only when you step into one of the many hotels along the strip—like Hyatt House Virginia Beach—that you truly grasp the vastness of the ocean and the stunning beauty of Virginia Beach. From our room, 20 stories high, it felt like we were hovering over the edge of the Atlantic, with breathtaking views from the balcony of dolphins bobbing in and out of the waves in the morning and illuminated cruise ships gliding by at night. Hyatt.com



Bowled Over

Perfect winter wine *and* soup pairings

No need to stew: when it comes to elevating your soup experience, the right wine can transform a simple dish into a gourmet delight. Here are some warming pairings featuring distinct wines to complement a variety of soups this winter.



Louis Latour 2020 This elegant Chardonnay offers bright acidity and notes of green apple and citrus. Pair it with a cream of asparagus soup; the wine's crispness beautifully cuts through the creaminess, enhancing the fresh flavours of the asparagus while adding a refreshing finish. Louislatour.com

Brumont Chateau Montus 2016 Known for its depth and complexity, this Madiran is a fantastic match for lentil soup. The wine's earthy notes complement the lentils' richness, while its robust structure stands up to the dish's spices, making each sip a delightful accompaniment. Brumont.fr

Mission Hill Reserve 2022 Pinot Gris This refreshing white wine, with hints of pear and stone fruit, pairs wonderfully with classic chicken noodle soup. The wine's light body and bright acidity bring out the delicate flavours of the chicken and herbs, providing a harmonious balance. Missionhillwinery.com

St Hubert's The Stag Paso Robles For heartier fare, this robust Cabernet Sauvignon, with its dark fruit and spicy undertones, is perfect with beef barley stew. The wine's tannins meld beautifully with the rich, meaty broth, while its bold flavours enhance the umami of the beef, creating a satisfying and warming combination. Sthuberts.com.au

Road 13 Select Harvest 2020 GSM This Grenache-Syrah-Mourvèdre blend offers ripe berry notes and a touch of spice, making it an excellent choice for tomato basil soup. The wine's fruitiness complements the acidity of the tomatoes, while its subtle spice enhances the aromatic basil, creating a beautiful bowl. Road13vineyards.com

SALUT Seeing a historic site is one thing, but being fully immersed in it is an entirely different experience—and that's exactly the feeling you get in Virginia Beach. The city is home to several Navy bases, including Naval Air Station Oceana, which opens its doors to the public during the annual NAS Oceana Air Show, and Naval Station Norfolk, the world's largest naval base. One of the most thrilling aspects of being near these naval installations is witnessing fighter jets soaring through the sky in true *Top Gun* fashion—their powerful engines creating a roar that you can feel as much as you hear. Another historical gem located on an active military base is the Cape Henry Lighthouses at Fort Story, which you can climb to catch panoramic views. Nearby, see the site where English settlers first landed in North America in 1607 and erected a wooden cross. Today, a granite cross stands in its place.



SCENE The ViBe Creative District feels like stepping into a colourful cartoon; artists have transformed roads, sidewalks, poles and walls into a vibrant community canvas. Find lively events, art initiatives, unique boutiques and farmers' markets here, as well as Three Ships Coffee Roasters, serving java sweetened with local produce like Pungo apples, pumpkins and sweet potatoes.

SOJOURN If you're seeking outdoor adventures, Virginia Beach offers far more than just its sandy stretches. Captain Erik Moore's boat tours guide visitors through the "green sea," home to more than 20 globally rare or threatened species and around 60 plant species with similar conservation status. For another unforgettable adventure, Rudee Tours offers a 90-minute boat cruise to spot bottlenose dolphins up close as they leap from the water and bob in and out—sightings are guaranteed March through October, or your ride is free. And, if you're planning a visit in 2025, watch for Atlantic Park, the new man-made surf park by Virginia Beach native Pharrell Williams.



SAVOUR Virginia Beach is also a dining destination, with local seafood and farm-to-table highlighted on many menus. Becca Restaurant & Garden at the Cavalier Hotel is garden-to-table, sourcing produce from the surrounding garden for dishes like she-crab soup, popovers with sweet butter, raw oysters and bourbon mole-based rockfish. For a casual bite, Back Bay Market and Deli offers mouthwatering sandwiches (Turkey on Cran tastes like a warm holiday hug) and unique drinks like vanilla cream soda, which will redefine your pop experi-

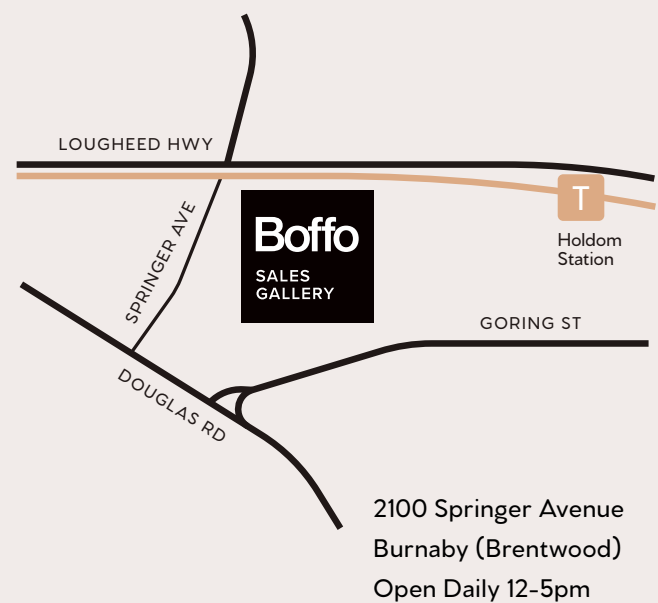
ence. For fresh fish, Tautog's, in a charming Victorian beach cottage, serves ginger teriyaki-glazed salmon, crab nachos and the classic Orange Crush: a refreshing mix of vodka, orange liqueur, soda and freshly squeezed orange juice. Stylish Love Song restaurant focuses on shareable dishes like Iberico chorizo, chicken liver mousse, local puppy drum fish and an unforgettable olive oil cake. And, of course, while in Virginia Beach, don't forget to sample the local saltwater taffy and the famous Virginia peanuts for a true taste of the area. **V**

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