

Lifestyle content you care about from Vitamagazine.com

VITA



*The
Holiday
Issue*

Inside *the* Issue

HOLIDAYS Gorgeous golden gifts for a gilded season

BEAUTY Three ways to get holiday party-ready in a flash

FASHION Let AI help you spot a designer-brand fake

TRAVEL There's no better time to slow things down in Vienna

WINE Our favourite festive wines and spirits

PETS Social media's coolest cats are living a life of adventure

Gifted With Warmth

Discover the perfect gifts at UNIQLO this season! Embrace cozy warmth with stylish, comfy layers that elevate any winter wardrobe. Whether it's a soft sweater or a chic bottom, these thoughtful picks will bring joy this season.



\$129.90
Cashmere Crew Neck Sweater

Colour selection may vary for each store. Please visit uniqlo.ca or the full colour selection.

Available in over 30 colours*, our 100% cashmere sweaters will bring you warmth and comfort all winter long. Their luxurious feel makes them the perfect gift to give to someone you cherish or for yourself.



\$49.90
Merino Crew Neck Cardigan

Extra-fine merino wool cardigan, machine washable, with a timeless cut that pairs with any outfit.

\$59.90
Pleated Wide Pants

These elegant, wide-leg pants combine comfort and style, featuring a flattering high waist and sophisticated drape.



\$59.90
Soufflé Yarn Crew Neck Sweater
Soufflé Yarn V Neck Short Cardigan



Soufflé Yarn V Neck Short Cardigan
A soft, non-itchy cardigan with a relaxed fit, perfect for layering during the chilly months.

Soufflé Yarn Crew Neck Sweater
Sumptuously soft and non-itchy, our soft soufflé yarn feels as light as air. Hand washable, shape to dry after washing.



\$39.90
Washable Knit Ribbed Pants
Elevate your casual wardrobe with these comfortable knit pants, offering a relaxed fit and a stylish, non-restrictive design.

\$49.90
Washable Knit Ribbed Polo Sweater

Soft and non-itchy, this washable knit sweater offers effortless style and easy machine care.



\$29.90
Soft Knitted Fleece Crew Neck

Effortlessly stylish, this fleece sweater feels like a T-shirt, providing warmth and a relaxed fit for chilly days.



\$39.90
Soufflé Yarn Dress

This half-zip soufflé yarn dress combines a chic design with a relaxed fit, featuring soft and non-itchy fabric for ultimate comfort.



\$179.90
Seamless Down Parka

Premium down coat made seamless and windproof to keep wind and rain out.



\$29.90
HEATTECH Extra Warm Cashmere Blend Crew Neck

Using yarn that is approximately half as thin as the yarn used in cashmere sweaters, giving you the warmth of standard Extra Warm HEATTECH with approximately 70% of the weight.

*Availability may vary from store to store, and prices may change at any time. Shop at uniqlo.ca for our full collection and verify in-store availability.



Editor's DESK

A Note From Noa

This, our last issue of 2025, is chock-full of holiday cheer—and, after what's felt like another rollercoaster year, the festive feeling is more than welcome. From beauty tips to top gifts and our seasonal wine recommendations, we suggest cuddling up in cosy PJs and slippers by a fire (my space heater does the trick, too), hot drink in hand, to read this edition of *VITA*. Enjoy!

Noa Nichol EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



ON MY TO-GET LIST:
Rado's "tock"-worthy True Square Automatic Open Heart watch (\$4,200) is a "White Christmas" dream. *Rado.com*

Glamour Shots

Three foolproof beauty ideas to get you party-ready in a flash

BY EMILY MACCULLOCH & INGRIE WILLIAMS @T.ZONEBEAUTY

Getting glam is always the highlight of our holiday season. For easy ways to turn up the dial on your typical beauty looks (think beyond mascara and lip gloss!), we tapped the fall runways to gather a little inspo. From a cherry lip that won't budge to a moody nail colour that's made for NYE, these simple ideas will help anyone shine bright—no makeup skills required.

ELECTROPOP EYES Swiping a pigmented hue on will make you stand out in a sea(son) of smoky eyes—plus, it's a quick and easy hack when you're in a time pinch. Take a cue from Dior's Fall show, where models sported a dash of hot pink on the inner corners of their eyes paired with an otherwise bare face (aside from groomed brows, a dewy complexion and a slick of clear lip gloss). While we're big fans of the pretty-in-pink look, this trend works with any colour, so don't be afraid to get adventurous. Lastly, to amp up your eyes and complement your chosen colour palette, add in a few swipes of black mascara for dramatic flair.

★ Dior Diorshow On Stage Liner in Matte Pink \$45, DIOR.COM

★ Danessa Myricks Beauty Lightwork VI The Freedom Palette \$173, SEPHORA.COM



NOIR NAILS

A holiday mani sets the tone for the season, and this year we're gravitating to moodier shades. Taking cues from PatBO FW24, where the model's smouldering smoky eye was paired with nails sharply accented by inky French tips, black polish offers the traditional manicure motif a contemporary element that has an undeniable Cool Girl factor. Press-on sets trimmed in noir offer a foolproof, fuss-free shortcut. Or you can use a handy gift-wrap staple to hack at-home results: clear tape. After letting two coats of sheer pink or beige polish fully dry (it'll give nail beds a healthy looking sheen), place a strip of tape firmly along tips to create an exposed edge that you can paint black with ease. Remove tape once the dark shade is dry, finishing with a top coat for lasting shine.

★ imPRESS The No-Glue Mani - For the Night \$9, KISSUSA.COM

★ CND Vinylux Long Wear Nail Polish in Black Pool \$13, AMAZON.CA

LAVISH LIPS

The holiday heavy lifter: a bright lip, which has the power to dress your face all the way up in the blink of an eye ... even if that face is otherwise beautifully bare. That was the strategy at the Richard Quinn AW24 show during London Fashion Week, where vibrant scarlet lips with a softened edge stood out against a backdrop of luminous complexions to stunning effect. For a similar look with staying power, choose a liquid lipstick with a velvety finish and gently run a small makeup brush or tapered cotton swab along the lip line to blur the edge. The absence of harsh lines is key, allowing the strong colour to achieve an ethereal quality.

★ M.A.C. Cosmetics Retro Matte Liquid Lipcolour in Feels So Grand \$34, MACCOSMETICS.CA

★ Pixi MatteLast Liquid Lip in Crimson \$25, CA.PIXIBEAUTY.COM

THE MAKING OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

Holiday Issue

No. 104 ————— 2024

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NOA NICHOL
BUSINESS MANAGER JAY NICHOL
CREATIVE DIRECTOR MADISON HOPE
SOCIAL MEDIA VICKI DUONG
SPECIAL EVENTS ERIN SOUSA
PROOFREADER KATIE NANTON

CONTRIBUTORS LOUISA CHAN, ALEESHA HARRIS, AILEEN LALOR, EMILY MACCULLOCH, KATIE NANTON, SHERI RADFORD, JILL VON SPRECKEN, INGRIE WILLIAMS
CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT #42849020
Funded by the Government of Canada |

COVER DIOR HAUTE COUTURE LONG DRESS WITH ASYMMETRICAL PANEL IN MICRO-DRAPED POWDER-PINK LAMÉ MOIRÉ JACQUARD
Price Upon Request Available by Special Order 1-800-929-Dior
VITA PUBLISHED BY VITA DAILY MEDIA INC.
VITAMAGAZINE.COM

@ @VITADAILYMEDIA ✉ NOA@VITAMAGAZINE.COM

QUAILS' GATE
Okanagan Valley

QUAILS' GATE
Okanagan Valley
PINOT NOIR
STEWART FAMILY RESERVE

UNWRAP HOLIDAY MAGIC

GO FOR GOLD

Gifts for a *gilded* holiday season

BY LOUISA CHAN



01. FENDI O'CLOCK WATCH, \$1,980 Features a leather strap with embossed Selleria stitching details and diamond markers at 12 and 6 o'clock—charming! [Fendi.com](#)

02. EF COLLECTION MESH BRACELET, \$2,245 This gold woven bracelet, adorned with delicate diamond details, adds a light, airy vibe to your festive look. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

03. BRUNELLO CUCINELLI LAMÉ DRESS, \$7,595 Crafted in Italy from pure silk, this gown showcases intricate tailoring that accentuates the fabric's fluidity. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

04. LONGINES MINI DOLCEVITA GOLD WATCH, \$33,000 The 18-karat-gold Mini DolceVita exudes timeless elegance with its luxurious design. [Longines.com](#)

05. VERONICA BEARD IZARA DICKEY JACKET, \$1,198; GRACIE PANTS, \$598 Step into a chic bronze holiday ensemble with a sharply tailored jacket and flattering flared trousers designed for effortless elegance. [Veronicabeard.ca](#)

06. GANNI METALLIC BLOUSE, \$425 With its crinkled cloqué texture and voluminous puff sleeves, this shimmering shirt is bold, playful and perfect for parties. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

07. FENDI NANO BAGUETTE CHARM, \$1,350 This little bag, paired with a candy-shaped metallic charm on its strap, can be used solo or attached to a larger bag or belt. [Fendi.com](#)

08. MICHAEL KORS CROCODILE EMBOSSED HANDBAG, \$278; METALLIC LEATHER SLOUCHY BOOTS, \$578 Essential metallic accessories for the holidays—a crocodile-embossed metallic chain-strap shoulder bag and bold knee-high leather boots—perfectly pair with mini skirts. [Michaelkors.com](#)

09. JIMMY CHOO MIRROR CLUTCH, \$1,550 The iconic Bon Bon handbag, crafted from glamorous mirrored fabric, features a metal top handle and detachable chain strap for crossbody wear. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

10. BADGLEY MISCHKA GLITTER SANDALS, \$350 Whether for a formal evening or cocktail party, these glittery gold heels with a bow detail and ankle strap add a festive touch to your holiday style. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

VITA X CLOUD HOUSE

This Rum Was Made For Coffee Lovers

Ever dream you could pour yourself a cocktail that also offers you a much-needed coffee fix? Your wish has been granted! Cloud House premium rum liqueur (at BCLS) is infused with hand-harvested Colombian coffee for a delicious twist to classic cocktails.

The drink was manifested through a vision of its master blender: to create a combination of premium coffee and premium rum that's never been done before. To source his ingredients, he made his way to an isolated, almost hidden jewel lying between the Caribbean Ocean and the world's tallest coastal mountain range: the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia (a.k.a. the mecca of coffee). This secret spot, known only to locals, is called the Cloud House; it's surrounded by independent farms growing 100 per cent Arabica coffee beans. The combination of high altitude and proximity to the Caribbean makes the coffee in this area more concentrated in rich, intense flavours. It's also very rare; the area only yields one harvest per year, and each bottle of Cloud House contains more than 1,000 of these special beans. Next, master coffee blenders carefully nurture the flavour of these rare beans by cold brewing them. Cold brewing coffee is a slow process; it can take up to 24 hours, but enhances the rich, Arabica coffee taste, resulting in a brighter, less bitter and more flavourful coffee blend.

In terms of the rum, this comes from Colombia's oldest independent producer; it is aged in ex-bourbon oak barrels right at sea level, making it deep in flavour, with salted-caramel notes and a sweet finish. The rum and the cold-brew coffee are combined carefully in very small batches to make the perfect drink. It can be served as a Cloud House Negroni, Cloud House Espresso Martini or Cloud House Coffee Tonic (check out this recipe below). Cheers! [Cloudhousespirits.com](#)



Cloud House Coffee Tonic

**1 OZ. CLOUD HOUSE
3 OZ. TONIC WATER**
Garnish: ORANGE TWIST

Fill a tall glass with ice.
Add three parts tonic water.
Add one part Cloud House.
Garnish with an orange twist.

THE PERFECT Host Gift



11. MIA ROSE AND FRANK ROYAL COCKTAIL NAPKINS, \$130 Elevate your holiday party with this set of four napkins, crafted from luxe European fabric and adorned with gold embroidery.

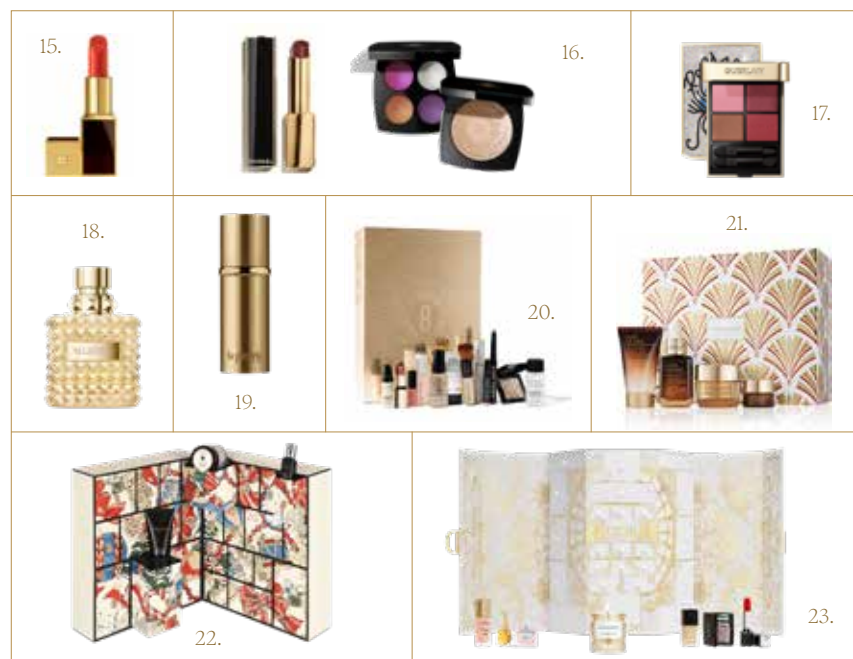
Personalize with custom letters for an extra touch of elegance. [Miaroseandfrank.com](#)

12. DANICA HEIRLOOM METAL TRIVET, \$27 This branch-like metallic trivet evokes the stark beauty of winter, adding a touch of nature to your holiday table. [Amonkeytree.com](#)

13. ADEGAS VALMINOR DAVILA WHITE WINE, \$25 From Galicia, the white wine capital of Spain, Davila offers vibrant aromas of apple, pineapple, grapefruit and delicate floral notes—perfect for seafood appetizers and cheese platters. [Bliquorstores.com](#)

14. DIPTYQUE HOLIDAY CAROUSEL CANDLE SET, \$220 Light the berry-scented candle and watch as the star ornaments spin, filling the room with iridescent starlight. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

THE Beauty Department



15. TOM FORD LIP COLOR LIPSTICK, \$80 Highly pigmented and moisturizing, this lippy gives long-lasting hydration and radiance. The Wild Ginger shade is perfect for fa-la-la looks. [Sephora.com](#)

16. CHANEL HOLIDAY MAKEUP, \$78 - \$115 Inspired by the aurora borealis, Chanel's holiday makeup collection includes an eyeshadow and blush palette in vibrant fuchsia pink and coppery coral, a luminous peachy-pink Diamond Dust highlighter and gemstone-hued lipsticks perfect for creating a festive look. [Chanel.com](#)

17. GUERLAIN EYESHADOW QUAD, \$125 This limited-edition quad, designed by Shourouk Rhaïem, comes in a dazzling rhinestone case with holographic reflections. Shades include burgundy, matte pink, matte deep red and metallic copper. [Guerlain.com](#)

18. VALENTINO BORN IN ROMA THE GOLD EAU DE PARFUM, \$200 This limited-edition fragrance opens with Italian citrus and gardenia notes, evoking the warmth of winter sunshine. [Sephora.com](#)

19. LA PRAIRIE PURE GOLD RADIANCE CONCENTRATE, \$1,210 Enhances skin's ability to absorb nutrients, leaving it with the graceful glow of golden hour. [Holtrenfrew.com](#)

20. JO MALONE ADVENT CALENDAR, \$675 Unveil 25 scented surprises, including candles, bath products and seasonal colognes—a perfect gift for fragrance lovers. [Jomalone.ca](#)

21. ESTÉE LAUDER REVITALIZING SUPREME+ MOISTURIZER HOLIDAY SKINCARE SET, \$163 This curated collection includes products to reveal a youthful, radiant glow. [Estelauder.ca](#)

22. DIOR LE 30 MONTAIGNE ADVENT CALENDAR, \$1,000 Capturing the elegance of Dior's iconic boutique at 30 Avenue Montaigne in Paris, this advent, designed by Pietro Ruffo, boasts 24 drawers filled with makeup and skincare essentials—along with a festive scented candle. [Dior.com](#)

23. BOBBI BROWN DAZZLE & GLOW 12-DAY ADVENT CALENDAR, \$264 Twelve top products in one box, including the bestselling Long-Wear Cream Shadow Stick, Extra Plump Lip Serum, Smokey Eye Mascara and nine travel-size skincare items. [Bobbibrowncosmetics.ca](#)

Deep Fakes

As luxury resale booms, the need for authentication is greater than ever

BY ALEESHA HARRIS



Scrolling Instagram recently, a particular post prompted a pause. From the Singaporean newspaper *The Straits Times*, the social media entry showed a stylized Hermès Birkin Bag, a plush wool blanket and smooth leather gloves resting atop the recognizable handbag silhouette. The text overlaid on the photo declared: Returns on Hermès' Birkin Bags nearly match those of S&P 500 investments.

Standard and Poor's 500—commonly referred to as the S&P 500—tracks the performance of 500 top companies on the U.S. stock exchange. Long considered to be a safer, more consistent investment by both financial analysts and buzzy social media savings experts than, say, single stocks, the index has boasted an average annual return of approximately 10 per cent. By comparison, Sotheby's reports the price of the Togo leather Birkin 30 went up 7.8 per cent in 2024 alone.

The lure of a potential investment asset—one that could be carried now before being sold for a profit years down the road—isn't the only element driving the booming global resale market of luxury designer handbags. The second-hand luxury leather goods market, which includes handbags, wallets, belts and the like, was worth some \$2.8 billion USD in 2023. That number is expected to grow to \$3.8 billion USD by 2028, according to a recent report. Mari Corella, GM of global luxury at eBay, also points to attainability and sustainability as key factors contributing to the handbag boom.

"Nearly \$50 billion worth of second-hand luxury products were sold worldwide in 2023, fuelled by younger consumers looking for accessible entry points into the traditionally exclusive luxury market," Corella says. "Specifically, vintage products are trending across the platform, with global eBay users searching for 'vintage' over 1,000 times a minute on average. This shift reflects a broader cultural change where a younger generation of buyers recognizes that the designers they want to wear don't have to be out of reach."

With interest and values skyrocketing, the question of authenticity seems more relevant than ever. Especially as the improving quality of counterfeit luxury goods continues to be a problem for brands looking to safeguard their product integrity, and for customers who are looking to purchase authentic preloved designs. According to a 2019 article in *Harvard Business Review*, the counterfeit luxury goods trade accounts for some 60-70 per cent of the estimated \$4.5 trillion USD luxury market. Counterfeit goods including handbags and even fine jewelry have become almost indiscernible from the authentic designs to the naked eye, prompting resale platforms to lean into tech innovation and artificial intelligence in an attempt to battle back against these "superfakes".

The popular social commerce marketplace Poshmark, which sees users buy and sell items from their own closets, has noted a marked increase in the interest and sale of designer items in recent years. "Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Christian Dior, Chanel, and Prada are the top-purchased women's handbag brands on Poshmark Canada," says Janet Wong, director of Posh Authenticate. "Shoppers are turning

to Poshmark closets and increasingly seeking higher-priced items for a great deal; just in September 2024, sales of Balenciaga items soared by 49 per cent year-over-year on Poshmark Canada."

The platform offers Poshmark Authentication for all items priced over \$700 CAD, according to Wong. Items are sent from the seller to the company's headquarters for a "pre-authentication process" done by a dedicated team of authenticators, as well as "machine learning," to inspect logos, tags, hardware and materials for authenticity before the item is released to the buyer.

"The Poshmark Authentication team undergoes rigorous education and training to efficiently inspect luxury items," Wong says. "Their ongoing development aims to create a stress-free selling and shopping experience, prioritizing trust and transparency at every stage." She adds that the sale of counterfeit items are prohibited on Poshmark, stating that "sellers must ensure their items are authentic, and if a buyer suspects a product is counterfeit, they should contact Poshmark Support for review."

At eBay, Corella notes that ensuring authenticity is a "number one" priority: "eBay Authenticity Guarantee ensures that consumers can purchase eligible items and designer goods with confidence, knowing they are verified by experts." To date, eBay has authenticated more than 10 million items globally. "Our acquisitions of Certilogo and Known Origin were strategic moves towards empowering brands and designers to manage the lifecycle of their garments and increase trust when shopping second-hand fashion," she says.

At the centre of the authentication conversation is artificial intelligence, like that used by the New York-headquartered company Entrupy. "AI is able to look at microscopic details as well as the holistic picture of the item that the human eye will never be able to," says Jake Stewart, head of sales and marketing, Entrupy. "Traditional authentication methods tend to rely on the human eye, which has proven to be faulty over the years as it has become harder and harder to determine what's real and what's not. Not to mention, it has also become harder to find, train and scale the knowledge across human authenticators."

Using its own AI technology, items are scanned using a proprietary Entrupy device and app to capture a set of microscopic images that are then run through the machine learning algorithms and checked against a "growing database of millions of similar images, including pieces that date back to the 1920s," according to Stewart.

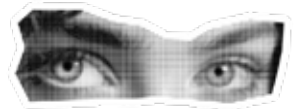
"As our inventory grows, our technology advances," Stewart says. "To date, Entrupy has amassed over 50 million unique images of both authentic and counterfeit items. Based on the results of the initial comparison, the AI will either verify the item's authenticity or return an 'unverified' result. Each scan from an Entrupy device becomes part of the database, further refining the algorithms and making our solution smarter and more accurate."

Entrupy's accuracy rate is 99.1 per cent, according to Stewart, who notes

the entire scanning process typically takes between 3 and 5 minutes. "In some instances, it can take up to an hour, and Hermès Premium items can take up to 24 hours," he says. The authentication technology is currently being utilized by luxury resellers, pawn shops, department stores, online marketplaces and even luxury brands.

"With more and more technological advancements, the ability to manufacture counterfeit goods is getting easier and the quality is getting better," Stewart says. "Not only are the counterfeits themselves getting harder to identify, but then we are seeing crimes like return fraud being committed where a person will purchase an authentic luxury good from a department store and then return a counterfeit item because these stores don't have the correct authentication technology put in place."

"AI is able to look at **MICROSCOPIC DETAILS** as well as the **HOLISTIC PICTURE** of the item that the human eye will *never* be able to"

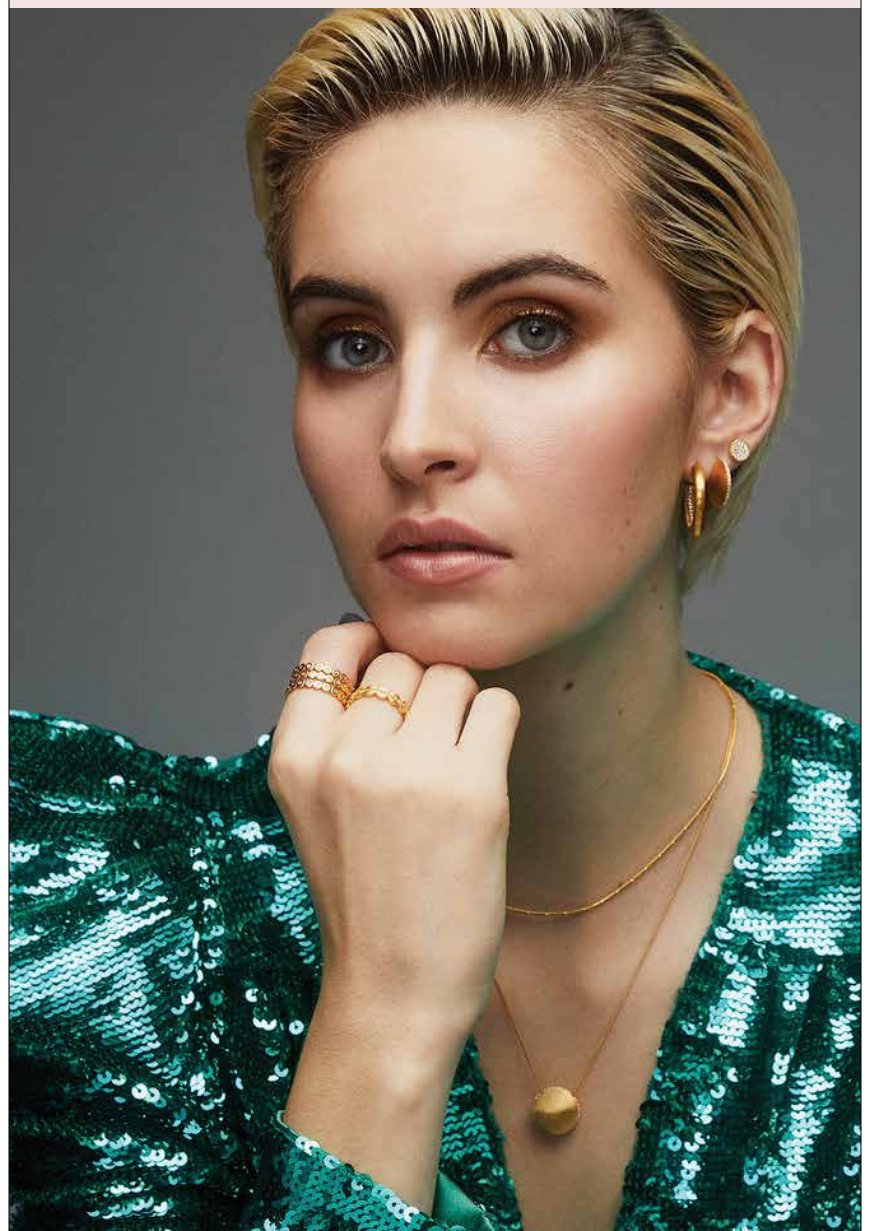


These elements, coupled with the booming business of luxury handbag resale, equals a growing demand for authentication services. A need that shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon.

"With instances such as The Real-Real continuing to face legal scrutiny from Chanel over allegations of selling counterfeit items, there is an ongoing need for third-party luxury authentication to underscore the complexities of the second-hand luxury market," Stewart says. In an effort to bring attention to the full scope of counterfeit goods—including the "direct and devastating impact on both workers and the environment"—Entrupy releases a yearly public report, titled *State of the Fake*. Says Stewart: "[It] looks at proprietary data along with the rare insights they have garnered from hundreds of thousands of AI-driven evaluations performed on products from around the world to build awareness around the murky world of counterfeits." V

FINE FINDS

• BOUTIQUE •



CLOTHING GIFTS SHOES ACCESSORIES

SHOP ONLINE! FREE CANADA-WIDE SHIPPING OVER \$150

finefindsboutique.com

1014 Mainland St, Vancouver | 604-669-8325

If I Could Turn Back *Time*

What to do if you've had an aesthetic procedure and don't like the results

BY AILEEN LALOR

The adage, "It's better to regret something you did than something you didn't do," is often true—but not always. Case in point: beauty procedures. From eyebrow microblading to a nose job, the message is that you should find a practitioner you trust, have an open conversation about what you really want and really understand the results that are possible before you go under the needle or knife.

"You want to ask if people are certified and how long a place has been in business or performing treatments," says Lisa Blair, who owns The SkinGirls in Vancouver. "Word of mouth is great—and bearing in mind that just because someone has a shiny beautiful [clinic or studio] doesn't mean they are equipped or certified." She says that there are some procedures that, in her opinion, are simply not worth it—for example, dermaplaning, which she says often results in a stubbly face that needs to be constantly maintained.

Once you've found a practitioner, what should you discuss with them before you commit? Absolutely everything. "It's about reassurance and trust," says Brianna Errelat, owner of BE Brow Studio in Vancouver. "We will talk about the shape, what happens, the aftercare, the hygiene standards in the clinic. I will talk with them and Zoom with them—it's about being willing to go the extra mile."

Dr. Farshid Shahbazi of Theory + Essence in North Vancouver says predictability and being on the same page is also key; he uses AI to model how teeth will look after Invisalign or veneers and patients will receive temporary veneers to wear for a few days or a week before they commit to the finished look.

A lack of consultation and predictability can be a big problem when folks decide to go overseas for treatments, though all experts will say you can get a botched procedure—or a good one—wherever you go. The main issue with going to a foreign country to get your

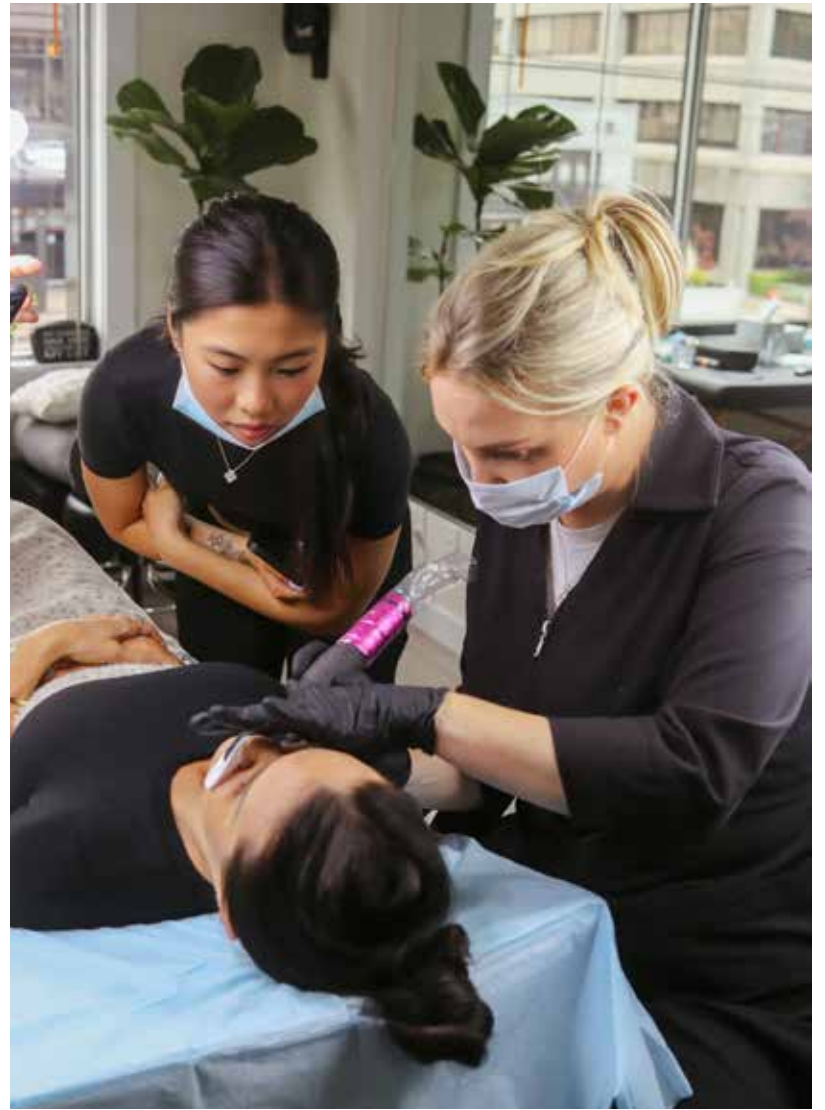
breast augmentation or veneers is a lack of transparency, aftercare and accountability.

"We see a lot of regret with travel surgery when people go to places like Mexico or Turkey for surgery," says plastic surgeon Dr. Ron Somogyi of FORM Face + Body in Toronto. "The biggest thing we see is poor education on the part of the physician or practitioner where the person doesn't understand what they were going for."

This can be a situation where a patient thought results would be more dramatic or longer lasting than they turn out to be—for example thread lifts or liquid rhinoplasty that simply cannot achieve the same longevity as face lifts or surgical nose jobs. And it's compounded by the fact that, if Dr. Somogyi is attempting to correct someone else's work, he needs to know exactly what they've done, and that might not be the case with travel surgery. He says: "In cut-price places, I literally have no idea what a surgeon might have done and it's terrifying."

If you have had a result that you don't like or that is downright disastrous, it depends very much on what you've had done. In some cases, like Botox, the effect will wear off over the course of a few months—though if you end up looking wonky, some practitioners will inject more of the toxin in order to balance you out, which can leave you appearing frozen. Hyaluronic acid fillers such as Restylane and Juvéderm can be dissolved with an enzyme injection, which can send you back to normal in two weeks or so, though it can be sore.

If you want to change your microbladed eyebrows, it's possible to have laser; Errelat says it can work, but can also be painful and damaging to skin. She's an expert in a procedure called UNDO, in which she uses a tattoo needle and serum called deracination serum to pull the pigment out of skin. It's about as painful



"I overplucked my eyebrows in the 1990s and, when they didn't grow back, had them microbladed back on. But they faded and bled over time. Brianna has brought my brows back to life, with better results than I ever expected. Talk about a Hallelujah!"

NOA NICHOL, EDITOR IN CHIEF, VITA MAGAZINE



BE Brow Studio

Professional Cosmetic Tattoo Studio and Training Center Owned & Operated By Brianna Errelat, Specializing In:

BROWS, LIPS, EYELINER, LASH LIFTS, NON LASER TATTOO REMOVAL, BROWN TINTING AND LAMINATION, SKINCARE AND AESTHETICS



#201-1638 W BROADWAY VANCOUVER, BC
604.351.5092 | BEBROWSTUDIO.CO
BRIANNA@BEBROWSTUDIO.CO

as the original microblading, and leads to scabbing for a week or so after. Most people need at least two sessions, with a minimum of four weeks between, and can have fresh new brows via microblading or nanobrows four weeks after that. The UNDO procedure also works on permanent makeup such as brows, eyeliner and lips, as well as body tattoos.

Some practitioners will convince a client to try IPL in order to treat melasma, but Blair says that's always a bad idea, since it can actually trigger the condition to worsen or, in the wrong hands, burn and scar the skin. Scarring cannot be fixed, and if you have melasma, it's a question of keeping the condition at bay, rather than getting rid of it.

"Avoid triggers like heat, which is why you need to avoid IPL, which creates heat in the skin," she says. "Even cooking over a hot stove can be a problem. Wear sunscreen all the time, even in winter or on rainy days, and reapply it. Ingredients like kojic acid, hydroquinone and retinoids can be helpful along with sunscreen and they're not necessarily prescription only. You can do some lasers such as Clear + Brilliant and fractional as well." Basically, though, the goal is to minimize it and prevent it from getting worse. "Even if we do completely make it disappear, with hormonal changes, sun exposure on vacation and so on, it might come back and we have to treat it again," she says.

Badly done veneers can cause terrible problems, particularly for the gums, Dr. Shahbazi says. Sometimes dentists will mix materials, not prep the teeth appropriately, or position the veneers imprecisely. "Patients will come to me because their gums look red and the teeth aren't right," he says. "Yes, the veneers can be taken off and replaced, but there may be permanent damage to the gums and underlying bone." Correctly done, veneers should feel comfortable, and you should be able to floss and brush them like natural teeth.

Dr. Somogyi says there's a big range in what can and can't be reversed or revised when it comes to plastic surgery. There's usually something that can be done, but

it's not always straightforward. "If you have a B cup and you want a D, I will tell patients, 'You have to be happy with this for a long time.' They need to know that when we take them out, the skin is stretched, there may be scars. There are things we can do—we can do a lift, we can add fat." For rhinoplasty, if you've gone too small with the nose, you can have grafts or augment with fillers, and, he says, there's always new technology developing. "Plastic surgery is such a fast-moving field. Gall bladder surgery hasn't changed in the past 30 years. We don't do anything the same as we did six months ago."

Blair has a personal example of a surgery that went wrong, despite her doing everything possible to ensure it would not. "I had a lower blepharoplasty [eye-bag-removal] done. I went to a surgeon who was well-renowned: I did my research, I didn't go to Colombia or Mexico or try to cut corners. And it went badly. I went to four different doctors to try and get it corrected, and they told me that because too much skin had been removed, it could not be undone," she says. "Sometimes things go wrong. I happened to be that person. It is a risk with surgery. He offered to fix it but I had lost faith and trust."

Finally, a surgeon recommended she go and see a reconstructive ocular surgeon, and she found Dr. Guy Massry. "I had to fly to L.A., he had to use skin from my palate, but it was worth every penny," she says. Her message? "Be persistent. Don't take no for an answer. Sharing your story isn't always fun and you can feel insecure, but you have to talk to a lot of people."

And finding a true specialist is key, too. "Maybe that's the lesson: see someone who is the best at the specific thing that you want to have done," she says. "I lived with botched surgery for two years. I didn't want to go out. But you shouldn't have to live with something that makes you feel so insecure and depressed. When I had a consultation with him, he was honest—he said he could make it better, but not perfect. He made me feel comfortable, and I could see some of the cases he'd fixed and the lives he'd changed." ▽

UNWRAP *Timeless* ELEGANCE

MUST-HAVE WATCHES FOR THE SEASON

From a showstopping hot pink multi strap watch with diamond details to sleek, technically proficient watches for the modern-day adventurer, Longines is having a moment. The Swiss watch brand, founded in 1832, is known for exquisitely designed watches that perfectly balance form and function. While smart watches continue to provide wearers with up-to-date information, mechanical watches are taking their place in the wardrobes of stylish men and women.

Longines' Mini DolceVita collection's iconic rectangular design is a sleek, slim 21.50 mm x 29.00 mm case, with a five-brick link style stainless steel bracelet, offering a classic take on modern dressing (starting from \$2,100 CAD). Jennifer Lawrence, Longines' Ambassador of Ele-

gance, exudes her trademark quiet luxury in the sophisticated ad campaign.

The latest iteration of the Mini DolceVita draws on Longines' equestrian heritage, featuring a unique double strap crafted from soft Nappa leather, reminiscent of riding saddle stirrups down to the hot press numbered strap holes. Available in an array of vibrant strap colours, including red, green, and orange, and diamond-set versions in hot pink and tan, perfect for statement makers (starting from \$2,200.00 CAD).

"What I love about this watch is its versatility," says fashion stylist Kim Appelt, author of the book *Style for Everybody*. "It transitions effortlessly from gatherings in a cosy sweater to a sophisticated little black dress."



Longines' Ambassador of Elegance, Jennifer Lawrence, wearing the Longines Mini DolceVita - L5.200.0.75.6



Longines Mini DolceVita - L5.200.0.71.0



Longines Legend Diver - L3.764.4.99.6



Longines Spirit Flyback - L3.821.5.53.2

Sixty-five years ago, Longines made waves with the introduction of their first dive watch, the Legend Diver (starting from \$4,200 CAD). Originally designed for underwater exploration, this iconic timepiece appeals to both land lovers and sea explorers alike. The latest 39 mm version of the Legend Diver, available in green, terracotta, and anthracite grey dial options, makes the perfect accessory for this season's earth-toned outerwear. And if you are planning on diving to 300 metres, you can do it in style.

From the sea to the sky, Longines' Spirit Flyback is the continuation of the brand's love affair with aviation. With its 42 mm case crafted from 18k gold and a monochromatic olive-green dial and leather strap, you'll be set with a power reserve of up to 68 hours (\$8,000 CAD).

"When I think about buying a watch," says Appelt. "I ask myself if I'll still love it in 10 years and if my daughter and sons will cherish it in 30 years." Shop the Longines collections online at Longines.ca.

RADO

S W I T Z E R L A N D

MASTER OF MATERIALS

RADO.COM



Feel it!

CAPTAIN COOK HIGH-TECH CERAMIC SKELETON
& CENTRIX OPEN HEART

Make or Break

BY JILL VON SPRECKEN

When it comes to Etsy, scams and knockoffs threaten the forum for all things handmade

The whole thing started with a flamingo-print zip pouch—the first item ever sold on Etsy, back in 2005. Just two years later, 450,000 sellers were registered on the site (along with a flamboyance of animal-print pouches, we're sure), creating a robust marketplace of makers and crafters that set the site apart from other online retailers like eBay and Amazon. Need a knit emotional support pickle? Or a Pedro Pascal-scented candle? A felt Falkor dragon from *The Neverending Story*? Etsy has long been a marketplace for niche, one-of-a-kind items.

Today, the platform is home to 7 million sellers and an array of crafted goods ranging from heirloom quality to irreverent and fun. To meet Etsy's own creativity standards, an item must be made, designed, hand-picked or sourced by the seller. It's all outlined in the "House Rules" that help Etsy maintain its standards. Currently, there are more than 100 million items for sale on the site—that's a lot of listings to make sure meet the criteria.

"We have really amped up our trust and safety team to have even more of a keen eye on what is being listed on Etsy," says Dayna Isom Johnson, the platform's trend expert. "To ensure that our shoppers have a safe destination to come to." In the past year, she explains, Etsy "removed about 115 per cent more listings that violate our policies."

The site's recent focus on trust and safety may be in response to growing concerns that Etsy has been infiltrated by knockoffs and scams. One such scam is "dropshipping," where a seller buys an item overseas (from a site like Chinese wholesaler AliExpress) and has the retailer deliver the product directly to the customer. "Keep commerce human" is Etsy's mission, but practices like these—that often involve ripping off a legitimate seller's designs—introduce faceless, address-less scammers to a marketplace that prides itself on its human touch.

Back in 2019, Montreal-based ceramic artist Kness used Etsy to launch her online store, which is stocked with handmade animal figurines. "I joined Etsy as a way to test my market," she says. Before that she was a web marketing consultant and needed a platform to start selling her art. Etsy seemed to fit the bill but, less than a year later, she quit Etsy and decided to sell on her own website instead.

"My sales were going up, and I was seeing my Etsy bills go up, too. But it was a lot more Etsy fees than it used to be. I was also checking my traffic, because I was a web marketer before." Upon inspection, Kness found that the majority of her shop's traffic came from her own social media accounts and website. "I was bringing my own traffic to Etsy."

Kness decided to dig a little deeper by testing keywords, and was surprised by what stores popped up next to hers in the site's search results. "The competition seemed a little bit unfair," she says. "I was put on the same page as Chinese mass-produced stuff, while Etsy advertises selling from makers and artists." That realization coupled with the fee structure influenced her decision to quit Etsy.

Listing an item on Etsy requires just 20 cents per item and, if it sells, the platform takes a 6.5 per cent transaction fee. But, as Isom Johnson explains, that money goes somewhere: "You have access to all of the tools on the backend for us to really help you amp up your business. Not only do we offer you the platform for you to have your items seen ... but we also have incredible tools to help you grow your business."

Melanie Gordon is the owner of Etsy shop Mood + Mantle, where she sells her handcrafted quilts and quilted art. She has been selling on Etsy since 2021 and appreciates that the shoppers who peruse the site are already in the market for unique and handmade items, so the traffic is targeted. "Etsy provided a huge audience that I did not feel confident I could immediately build on my own," she says. "Now my artwork has reached so many people around the world."

Isom Johnson agrees. "As we consider the state of the world and the amount of generic and commoditized items that are out there. Etsy sets itself apart from those traditional retailers, not only with the human connection, but also with the type of items."

These days, finding the cream of the crop—and avoiding knockoffs—while



DAYNA ISOM JOHNSON, PHOTOGRAPHED BY EDUARDO AMORIM

perusing Etsy's 100 million listings takes a little know-how. Isom Johnson is eager to share her suggestions, which include following Etsy's social channels, perusing the editors' picks and striking up conversation with sellers.

To really separate the sellers from the scammers, keep an eye out for badges. Spot that little sticker and "that's when you can really shop with confidence," she says. "That means that they are hand selected by someone like myself ... we've spoken to the seller, we know that they follow the guidelines." She adds that, when you're searching for an item, you can even filter by badge, so you're only combing through tried-and-true listings.

For many, Etsy is still the destination for handcrafted items. But those who are also willing to cast their net wider will find sellers like Kness, who discovered fresh success off the site. "The platform changed a lot," she says. Based on her personal experience, "It's now more dropshipping than true artists, and it's sad. I still buy on Etsy for some Canadian artists, but it's tough to buy something that's not made in China."

"We really have the ability to now have a real microscope on this, to make sure, again, that things are following the policy guidelines to ensure a safe place for our customers to shop," Isom Johnson insists. "We empower our shopping community to flag these items if they're not aligned with our policy." And she really does encourage shoppers to take action. "If you engage with something that you don't think ... meet[s] the guidelines of what should or shouldn't be on Etsy, there's a little flag button on each listing, so you can flag it and it will go directly to our trust and safety team to see if it is, in fact, going against our policies." V



CUSTOM EMBROIDERED LINEN TABLECLOTH BY MERVE OZKAN OF GORIL MARKET: 2024 ETSY DESIGN AWARD GRAND PRIZE WINNER



CUSTOM CERAMIC FIGURINE BY KNESS



BOLD WAVY SHAPED WALL QUILT BY MELANIE GORDON OF MOOD + MANTLE: 2024 ETSY DESIGN AWARDS ART WINNER



VINTAGE RHINESTONE CERAMIC HAND EARRINGS BY SANDRA PACCIONE OF HISTORY TIME TRAVELER: 2024 ETSY DESIGN AWARDS JEWELRY WINNER



BAGELS SILK SCARF BY KHRYSTYNA KUNANETS OF UWANNAART: 2024 ETSY DESIGN AWARDS ACCESSORIES WINNER

HOME ACCESSORIES WITH PERSONALITY

2717 GRANVILLE STREET VANCOUVER
 MON - SAT 11 TO 6 SUN 12 TO 5
 T 604.806.0510 / DETAILSBYMRK.COM

merry,
happy
everything

Overnighter Lojel \$200



Holiday Decor
The Latest Scoop



Rain Boots
Fluevog \$299



Men's Denim
DUER from \$99



Designer Handbag
Mine & Yours
See in store

Diffuser
Saje \$129



Ornaments
Old Faithful Shop
4 for \$36.95



Mary Jane
Poppy Barley \$290

Tumbler
Old Faithful Shop \$80.95



Metro Toiletry Case
Monos \$75



Glasses Bailey Nelson
2 from \$229



Florgasm Parfum
TurF \$225



Quilted Jacket
Kit + Ace \$250



Reed Diffuser
Figure Lecture \$135



Venta Mittens
Arc'teryx \$70



Gold Rings
Melanie Auld Jewelry
From \$75



Kids Goggles
Comor \$41.99



Velvet Blazer
The Latest Scoop \$180



Beaded Keychain
Hill's Dry Goods \$65

Body Scrub & Soap
Aesop \$53



Beanie
Helly Hansen \$17



Books & Toys
Hip Baby



Weekend Tote Bag
Benni & Co \$19.99



Happy Face Bracelet
Lisa Gozlan \$128

Skate Deck
The Boardroom \$94.99



Jewelry
Bloodline Design



Bath Bombs
Lush from \$7

Swimsuit
Knix \$125

Kitsmas

2024 SEASON

The Kitsmas season is once again here on West 4th Avenue! Come on down and check some names off your list... and maybe get a little something for yourself too.

Join us for Kitsmas in the Plaza on Saturday, December 14 at 11-3! We will also be featuring Instagram advent giveaways, a holiday selfie wall and other festive fun. Find full details at shopwest4th.com.

Hot Stops

Where to eat and shop in the Lower Mainland this month



THE NORDIC SPA AT FAIRMONT PACIFIC RIM On the sixth floor of the Fairmont Pacific Rim, the Nordic Spa is Vancouver's seasonal sanctuary for relaxation, wellness and an immersive connection to nature. This self-guided outdoor thermal spa lets you soak, sweat and unwind before views of the harbour and mountains. Start with a hot tub soak followed by a plunge into cold baths to instantly invigorate the senses. Unwind in the cedar-plank sauna, stretching and deep breathing for a full-body release. After, heated relaxation areas provide a tranquil setting to gradually reintroduce yourself to the world, wrapped cosy robes and slippers. Peckish? Seasonal and locally inspired dishes pair with warming cocktails and beverages, adding a culinary delight to your spa-ing. **1038 Canada Pl. Fairmontpacificrim.com/nordicspa** NOA NICHOL



HERITAGE RESTAURANT & BAR This elevated sister spot to the original Heritage location on West Pender finds chef/co-owner Jimmy Lang paying homage to traditional Chinese dishes with a few fresh twists. Take a sultry seat amongst the natural woods, rich greens and brass fixtures—perhaps one of the stools wrapping around the 50-foot-bar, so you can watch your scotch-ginger-miso Koji Kick cocktail being crafted—then dive in with handmade siu mai dumplings filled with pork, prawn and truffle, and lightly battered eggplant fries, served



in an artful trellis alongside sweet-and-sour sauce. You can't go wrong with the Peking duck, made through a week-long process of roasting, brining and aging before it's served with delicate pancakes and umami-rich hoisin sauce (secret ingredient: duck drippings). Manila clams are wok'd up with homemade XO sauce and delicate vermicelli; get an order of char siu pork with honey glaze on the side. Finish with the dulce de leche and raspberry jam sesame balls, then roll yourself home. **4242 Main St. Eatheritage.ca** KATIE NANTON

LOAM A six-foot-tall Ficus tree greets guests inside North Van's newest brunch-slash-lunch spot, and potted greenery and kitschy-cool interior accents are everywhere, courtesy of green-thumbed co-founder Honoka Saito, who opened Loam with her partner Rahul Negi. Mochas are blended with a rotating selection of grade-A beans (like House of Funk); hearty dishes include potato latkes with perfectly poached eggs and a heavy grate of Grana Padano cheese. The French toast took many rounds of trial and error before the team settled on a Japanese milk bread from a small maker that doesn't do much wholesale, but agreed to supply Loam, and the lobster mac 'n' cheese is already a fan fave, made with sharp cheddar and Gruyère—go early for that one.

230 Esplanade W., North Vancouver.

Loambistro.ca KATIE NANTON



PHOTO: JACOB WALKER



PHOTO: MELODY LU

ELEM A restaurant, a cocktail lab and all four seasons walk into a bar—Elem, by chef Vish Mayekar (Caffe La Tana, Pepino's, Top Chef Canada) and Hassib Sarwari and Winnie Sun (both from modern Afghan restaurant Zarak), is the multi-sensory result. Inside, a trio of mercurial spaces give three distinct dining experiences: a bright concrete room features the apothecary-like "cocktail lab" and copper-framed kitchen, another is decorated in blues and floor-to-ceiling fabric curtains and the last is all about the warmth of wood. The cocktail menu is divided into earth, air, fire and water-inspired sips, and the cuisine fuses flavours inspired by Mayekar's South Asian heritage and travels. Bangkok, California, Spain, Mexico, Italy and Mumbai all show up here, in yellowfin tuna bhel with cilantro-mint chutney (a nod to the popular Mumbai street food of puffed rice and spices), honey mussels harvested from Lasqueti Island in a tamarind rassam (a South Indian soup) with crispy sushi rice balls, and housemade cavatelli pasta with a white rabbit ragu sauce topped with shaved Matsutake mushrooms. For dessert, the mulberry kulfi is served on a popsicle stick, while the rich Japanese pudding is made with milk from Hokkaido, which has some of the happiest cows on earth. **2110 Main St. Elemvancouver.com** KATIE NANTON



UNIQLO LANGLEY Last month, fab-fashion retailer UNIQLO celebrated its newest store in Greater Vancouver at Willowbrook Shopping Centre in Langley in style, with a weekend full of community-centred festivities, including a taiko drumming performance by Uzume Taiko, treats from Lee's Donuts, limited-edition "Langley" UTime! T-shirts and totes and a UNIQLO Garapon Wheel—a Japanese-style lottery game that promised great prizes. Now, the 10,000-square-foot location (the brand's fifth store in Metro Vancouver) is open for business, serving up an impressive range of UNIQLO's signature LifeWear for men, women and kids, its popular Ultra-Light Down jackets, HEATTECH essentials, cashmere knitwear and more. Customers can also take advantage of free hemming on pants over \$20 and in-store pickup for online orders. Welcome to Willowbrook, UNIQLO! **19705 Fraser Hwy. Unit #610, Langley. Uniqlo.com** NOA NICHOL



PHOTO: SHERMAN CHONG



PHOTO: ERIC TSU

SELENE From the playlist, lighting and hand-painted frescoes to the branded silver napkin rings and matchbooks, the vibes are immaculate—or should we say, electromagnetic?—at this seductive Greek-Mediterranean resto in Hastings-Sunrise. Named after the goddess of the moon, Selene was brought to life by the owners of Nammos Estiatorio and Loula's Taverna. And, just like the dinner-after-8 p.m. culture from which it was born, it's "open late" every night—a rarity for Vancouver. The menu is divided into shareable meze, half moon and full moon dishes like baba ghanoush with maple tahini and baharat chili crunch, warm koulouri bread with kalamata butter, oyster mushroom souvlaki, triple-cooked patatas with feta mayo, and lamb ribs splashed with pomegranate barbecue sauce and a pistachio dukkah spice blend.

360 Penticton St. Seleneagn.com KATIE NANTON



PRAGUERY Praguery Café, in Coquitlam, offers slices of Basque cheese-cake, cream puffs, savoury danishes, sandwiches and signature chimney cakes and ices cream. For the ultimate sugar rush, go for a Ferrero Rocher soft serve: a huge swirl of chocolate ice cream in a freshly baked cinnamon cone lined with Nutella, topped with a Ferrero Rocher chocolate. Kiddos will love the birthday cake "latte". **1207 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam. Praguery.com** KATIE NANTON

VITA X WALMART.CA + AMAZON.CA

Festive Five

Gifts ideas for everyone on your holiday shopping list

The holidays are fast approaching and, for some, it can be hard to begin the shopping process, and easy to overthink the perfect gift. To make things a little merrier, here are five favourite things that make great gifts across all ages. Whether you're shopping for the new or experienced home chef, the lifelong Pokémon fan or a little one, find something for everyone below!



1. MEATER SE, \$87.95 AT AMAZON.CA Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned chef, MEATER SE takes the guesswork out of cooking meat to perfection with smart temperature monitoring. Stay in control of your meal with the MEATER app, offering cooktime estimates and alerts, so you can relax while your food cooks perfectly.

2. MINECRAFT EXPLODING RC CREEPER, \$59.97 AT WALMART.CA The ultimate remote-control figure with game-authentic movement! Load the 10 explosion particles into the Exploding RC Creeper and press the button on the controller for lights and sounds; then, press and hold to explode and launch the particles into the air!

3. MEGA POKÉMON PIKACHU BUILDING TOY KIT, \$19.18 AT WALMART.CA Decorate your space and build some of your favourite Pokémon with MEGA. Build Pikachu one brick at a time to create a retro-inspired figure, featuring official Pokémon Pixel Art. Display it on your desk or mount it on the wall to show off your love of Pokémon.

4. UNO SHOW 'EM NO MERCY, \$12.97 AT WALMART.CA The most brutal UNO game yet! It has a tonne more cards with WAY tougher penalties (draw 10 cards anyone?) and new rules that will have players stacking, swapping and drawing more cards than ever before!

5. POWERXL STIRMAX MULTI-COOKER, \$139.98 AT WALMART.CA A great gift for foodies looking to make cooking quick and easy! With a 360-degree paddle and more than nine pre-programmed presets, the StirMax Multi-Cooker stirs, shreds and cooks meals hands-free, letting you enjoy perfectly cooked dishes like soups, sauces and even risotto with ease.

Adventure Cats

These cool cats are living the good life

BY SHERI RADFORD

From beach outings and mountain hikes to paddleboarding and playing in the snow, Olaf the cat has a fuller calendar than many humans. He also has an impressive collection of dress-up accessories, including a cowboy hat, bunny ears, heart-shaped glasses and a tiny green top hat. Some of the most popular posts on his Instagram, @toastedmarshmallowolaf, show him in a snowman costume, looking like his namesake, Olaf the snowman from the animated movie *Frozen*.

Shana Gravenor has had Olaf since he was seven weeks old. From the start, Olaf enjoyed car rides, so Gravenor started taking him more places, around British Columbia and even into the United States. She says, "Pretty much it's just evolved to me taking him everywhere with me." Getting young Olaf accustomed to a wearing harness was Gravenor's first task, to keep him safe on outings. Fortunately, he adapted quickly. "It's to the point where now, it's like just an extra skin for him," she says. "It doesn't bother him, and he doesn't try to get out of it." Olaf also swiftly learned to wear goggles, which look undeniably adorable but also protect his eyes. "As soon as I took him outside, he just kind of forgot they were on," she adds. "He'll even take naps wearing them."

Another adventure cat who's spent much time exploring Vancouver and beyond is Tofino, and her globetrotting travels are also documented on Instagram, @tofinothecat. Tofino's owner, Mariko Pickerell, has taken her hiking, snowshoeing, camping—and to Japan, twice. Tofino is comfortable wearing a harness, a lifejacket when canoeing or kayaking and boots in snow. Pickerell started training Tofino to use a harness and leash when the kitten was 10 weeks old. "If you start earlier, that's the easi-



OLAF THE CAT



TOFINO THE ADVENTURE CAT



OLAF THE CAT

"It makes our bond stronger. They *trust us more*, and then we *trust them more*, and then we *understand each other*"



OLAF THE CAT



PHOTOS: GIBSON CHRONICLES



OLAF THE CAT

est," she says. "But if the cat is older, it's not impossible." The key is to combine training with something the cat enjoys, such as playing or eating a specific treat, and to try different harnesses until you find the perfect fit.

Eventually, it seemed a shame to Pickerell that Tofino could go on outings while her husband's cat, Darth Vader, stayed at home, so Pickerell decided to try harness training the former stray. "When you train an adult cat, it's a bit trickier," she says, but eventually—after much trial and error—she found the right harness. "He's a big boy. He's 21 pounds, so he's using a dog harness instead of a cat harness." All the hard work is worth it, she says. "It makes our bond stronger. They trust us more, and then we trust them more, and then we understand each other." This past summer, Tofino and Darth Vader accompanied Pickerell and her husband on a two-week road trip by van.

Indeed, a harness is the most crucial piece of gear for any aspiring adventure cat. Jill Connolly is the creative director of RC Pets, a Vancouver company that makes pet accessories, and she says the company started noticing a sales uptick for their Moto Control Harness about five years ago. Designed as a car harness for dogs, the Moto was being purchased by cat owners. The company decided to design a cat-specific harness. "Cats can be a little more wiggly when they want to be," Connolly says. "They're just generally a longer, more fluid animal."

The resulting Adventure Kitty Harness has been "a huge success". Buckles at both neck and waist make it easy to put on and take off, and the adjustable webbing ensures a secure fit. Still, the company strives to make improvements, holding regular focus groups. "People who do adventure with their cats are very passionate about it," Connolly says. "They love to tell you about what's working and what's not."

Another necessary piece of gear is a backpack, says Louisa Chan of Bodega Pets in Richmond. It's a safe way to remove a cat from an encounter with a bear, coyote or aggressive dog. And sometimes an adventure cat simply gets tired or doesn't want to socialize anymore. Chan also recommends training a treat the cat loves, to help with training or with soothing a scared animal. But, she says, no cat should ever be forced to become adventurous. "If your cat prefers to stay inside, prefers to stay away from people, then let them be. You don't train them to be an adventure kitty. They choose to be an adventure kitty." She notes, "Not every cat can do this." ▽

VITA X OHME!

FREEZE-DRIED, FRUIT-FORWARD

Festive

Made with love in B.C. using locally sourced fruit where possible, OHME! offers delicious freeze-dried fruit snacks that are shelf-stable, non-GMO, gluten-free, 100 per cent natural and free from added sugars. Try OHME! in this festive blondies recipe at home! Ohmefoods.com



Ingredients

BATTER	1/2 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER	1 CUP ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
	1 CUP LIGHT BROWN SUGAR	1/2 TEASPOON BAKING POWDER
	1 LARGE EGG	1/2 TEASPOON SALT
	1 1/2 TEASPOONS PURE VANILLA EXTRACT (OPTIONAL)	1/2 CUP OHME! FREEZE-DRIED DRAGON FRUITS
TOPPING	1/2 CUP FINE CHOPPED MACADAMIA NUTS (LIGHTLY TOASTED)	1/4 CUP OHME! FREEZE-DRIED DRAGON FRUIT
	120 GRAM WHITE CHOCOLATE	1/2 CUP LIGHTLY CRUMBLED OHME! FREEZE-DRIED STRAWBERRIES

Steps

BATTER

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a small pan, melt the butter over medium heat and continue to cook the butter until the bubbles die down and the butter turns light brown with a nutty aroma. Transfer to a bowl for cooling.

In a big bowl, add in brown sugar, cooled browned butter, egg and vanilla extract and whisk to combine. Then add the flour, baking powder and salt to the mixture; when it's well combined, add in OHME! freeze-dried dragon fruits and stir until evenly distributed throughout the batter.

Transfer the batter to the 8x8 baking pan (make sure the pan is lined with a strip of parchment paper covering the bottom and two sides), and spread into an even layer. Bake in a preheated oven for 20–24 mins, until the edges are set and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with a few moist crumbs. Let the blondies cool.

TOPPING

Place white chocolate in a big bowl and microwave for 30-40 seconds; then add in OHME! freeze-dried dragon fruits and mix well. Pour the chocolate mixture on top of the blondies and spread into an even layer. Sprinkle OHME! freeze-dried strawberries and macadamia nuts on top before the chocolate sets. Drizzle additional white chocolate on top. Let it cool at room temperature for an hour and cut into squares to serve.

Cheers to Perfect Holiday Gifts

Our festive roundup of *fine spirits* and *wines*

Looking for the ideal gift to make your loved ones' holiday season sparkle? We've curated a selection of sophisticated spirits and wines—each unique, delicious and full of festive cheer. From rich champagnes to smooth whiskies, here are the best bottles to gift (or keep for yourself) this holiday season.

1. Tequila Tromba Blanco

For the tequila lover, Tromba Blanco offers a refreshing twist. This high-quality, crystal-clear tequila is crafted from 100 per cent blue Weber agave and made in small batches in Jalisco, Mexico. With vibrant notes of citrus and a smooth finish, it's ideal for a creative cocktail or sipping straight. This versatile tequila is sure to impress any spirits aficionado.

2. Lanson Le Black Création Champagne

For a classic touch of elegance, Lanson Le Black - Création Champagne is a must. Founded in 1760, Lanson brings centuries of expertise to each bottle, offering a bright and crisp champagne with notes of apple, pear and a hint of honey. It's the perfect way to elevate any holiday gathering or toast to special moments.

3. 7 Deadly Zins Zinfandel

Bring a playful-yet-delicious bottle to the party with 7 Deadly Zins Zinfandel. This California classic offers lush, jammy flavors of ripe fruit, spices and vanilla, making it an easy-to-drink choice for gatherings. Whether paired with a holiday meal or enjoyed on its own, it's a crowd-pleaser with a cheeky edge.

4. Quails' Gate Winery 2021 Stewart Family Reserve Pinot Noir

Celebrate with the exceptional Stewart Family Reserve Pinot Noir, a rich, complex wine crafted by one of Canada's

top producers. Its elegant profile makes it a perfect match for holiday feasts or intimate gatherings, leaving a lasting impression with every sip.

5. Rockaway Cabernet Sauvignon

Bold and memorable, Rockaway Cabernet Sauvignon is a red wine that any connoisseur will adore. With rich layers of dark berries, earthy undertones and a smooth, tannic finish, this wine pairs beautifully with hearty holiday dishes. A gift of Rockaway is a sophisticated nod to true wine appreciation.

6. Jura 12-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky

For the whisky lover, Jura 12-Year-Old Single Malt is a warm, smooth scotch with subtle smoky notes, balanced by hints of sherry sweetness. Crafted on the Isle of Jura, this scotch carries a unique character that transports the drinker to a cozy fireside on a chilly winter night. A thoughtful and luxurious gift for whisky enthusiasts.



MONOGRAM

SIGNATURE

VANCOUVER

RESIDENCES

1, 2 & 3 BED HOMES · BURRARD & DAVIE
REGISTER NOW
MONOGRAMLIVING.CA



PRIMA
PROPERTIES



Copyright© 2024 Monogram Developments Limited Partnership. All rights reserved. Listing Agent VIRANI REAL ESTATE ADVISORS, a division of VIRANI Holdings Ltd. Monogram Developments Limited Partnership, Tel: 604-684-0255, Address: 1670-1066 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3X1. This is not an offering for sale. An offering for sale can only be made after filing a disclosure statement. E&O.E.

The Art of Time

BY NOA NICHOL

How to take it slow in Vienna during the holiday season

Walk into most restaurants, cafés and shops in Vienna, and someone will ask to take your coat; here, people like to take their time. There's no rushing through a meal, no "quick" coffee meet-up and no grab-and-go retail experience. In Austria's stunning capital city, no matter where you are or what you do, you'll most certainly want to stay awhile—and particularly so at Christmastime. Wien.info/en



SEE Vienna's rich artistic heritage shines at Albertina Modern, a museum celebrating contemporary art with thought-provoking exhibitions in a beautifully restored building. A stop at the Belvedere Museum offers insights into Austria's historical and artistic achievements, with a special focus on Gustav Klimt's masterpieces. To dive deeper

into the city's intellectual heritage, the Sigmund Freud Museum provides an intriguing look at the life and legacy of the famous psychoanalyst. Finally, for architecture and cultural immersion, St. Charles Church (Karlskirche) is an awe-inspiring Baroque landmark with stunning frescoes and views of the city from its dome.



STAY

There's no better place to "time out" than Vienna's luxurious Hotel Sacher—an iconic establishment at the heart of the city, boasting three Michelin Keys, over-the-top opulent rooms and a rich history that dates back to 1876. You'll be in good company, too: Sacher has been the cherished meeting place of everyone from artists to heads of state, including U.S. President John F. Kennedy, Anna Netrebko, Queen Elizabeth II of England, Sharon Stone, Justin Bieber and Naomi Campbell (you can see their headshots,

many autographed, on the walls surrounding the check-in desk). The inn is also famed for the Original Sacher-Torte: a circa-1832 chocolate cake with a cult following, which you can enjoy by the slice at the on-site café and restaurant, or purchase whole at the boutique. And finally, staying on the sweet theme, be sure to visit the in-house Sacher Boutique Spa for a "Time to Chocolate" treatment that draws on the most valuable ingredients of the cocoa bean to create a premium pampering experience for body and soul.

La Jolie Madame LINGERIE

Personalized service since 1971.
Specializing in bra fittings | 30-44 A-I Cups

SAVOUR While there is plenty of schnitzel to be had (even a vegetarian version of the famous German dish is available at some establishments, including the Hotel Sacher's Rote Bar), Vienna's culinary scene does a wonderful job balancing tradition with contemporary flair. Allergikercafé, for one, serves lactose-free, low-glucose, gluten-free and nut-free (among other) dishes for patrons with food sensitivities (and guests who just like good food) while, at Mast Wine Bar, clients can explore a vibrant selection

of Vienna's best natural wines alongside delicious bites. For supper, three can't-miss dining experiences are Gasthaus Rebhuhn (for a cosy atmosphere, classic fare and a sweet cheese dumpling with breadcrumbs and sour cherry compote for dessert that you will not regret ordering), C.O.P. (Collection of Produce, with a menu that is à la carte and written daily, shortly before guests' arrival) and Zur Herknerin, where chef Stefanie Herkner makes the most delectable dumplings we have ever eaten in our lives.



Shop our selection online:

LAJOLIEMADAMEBOUTIQUE.COM

849 Hornby Street Vancouver, BC | PHONE: (604) 669-1831

'TIS THE SEASON Got Christmas on your mind? Vienna will not disappoint; the city is festooned with dozens of merry outdoor markets, large and small, packed with vendors selling crafts, gifts and ornaments, as well as piping-hot roasted chestnuts and mugs of warming mulled wine. The best way to seek out and enjoy these spectacles, along with other city sites, is by booking a tour with charismatic brother-sister duo Basti and Gabi of Rebel Tours, who bring tourists and locals for a fresh perspective on Vienna. Just follow the curls!



Fairmont
PACIFIC RIM

the
NORDIC
SPA

Discover The Nordic Spa at Fairmont Pacific Rim, Vancouver's ultimate wellness retreat. Our self-guided outdoor thermal spa offers an immersive healing experience that encompasses the essence of the West Coast, with a cedar plank sauna, cold plunge baths, hot tub and heated relaxation areas.

fairmontpacificrim.com | [@fairmontpacific](https://www.instagram.com/fairmontpacific)

Enjoy Responsibly

CELEBRATE LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES

Penfolds[®]

