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Big Beauty Wins

The results are in for our first-ever

Beauty { Bracket } Awards

HIGHLIGHTS

CELEBRITY Eva Longoria on turning 50—and her *no a**hole policy*

BEAUTY The new *buzzword* in beauty is *exosome*

WINE Four *limited-edition* holiday sip sets

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Beauty { Bracket } AWARDS

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TOTAL EYE LIFT
[RETINOL-LIKE TECHNOLOGY]

30 seconds
eye lift effect.*

Beauty
{ Bracket }
AWARDS

CLARINS
PARIS

Total Eye Lift
[RETINOL-LIKE TECHNOLOGY]

Concentré zone regard
lift-redensifiant

Lift-replenishing
eye concentrate

NOW
REFILLABLE

HARUNGANA EXTRACT

x12
COLLAGEN
PRODUCTION**

*Self-evaluation, perceived by 111 women. **In vitro test on harungana extract.



EDITOR'S DESK

A NOTE FROM NOA I am so excited to reveal the winners of our inaugural Beauty { Bracket } Awards (page 4)! The T-Zone pros helped us ID the best of the best—with hi/lo picks, there's something for everyone!

Noa Nichol

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Noa's November Picks



1. Smythe's Oversized Swing Coat (\$1,195) is a drama-free winter statement piece—with a peaked lapel, generous armholes for layering, oversized welt pockets, a swing silhouette and blended fibres, it will keep me cosy, runway-ready and warm. [Shopsmythe.com](#)

2. Vegan (yup!), waterproof and built for -30 C adventures, Olang's Spell Boots (\$270) with a cleated platform outsole and cosy wool lining are going to help me stomp through winter stylishly. [Olangcanada.com](#)

3. Sézane's Gary Maxi Bag (\$635) is what I call bucket-perfect. Roomy enough for everyday essentials, its adjustable strap, gold-finish hardware and secret magnet closure make Parisian style possible (practical and polished) even in a Canadian cold spell. [Sezane.com](#)

ISSUE 19

The Making of the Ontario
November 2025 Issue

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All About Eva

Eva Longoria on why she surrounds herself with women, how her beauty regimen has evolved, turning 50, and her no a**hole policy

Words by
Aileen Lalor

EVA LONGORIA IS A GIRLS' GIRL. Her body of work includes umpteen projects with other women, starting with the iconic *Desperate Housewives* (reboot when?) and most recently with *Land of Women*, her multigenerational comedy thriller for Apple+. Then there are the famous friendships, with people like Victoria Beckham and Jessica Alba. And her charitable organization, the Eva Longoria Foundation, focuses on opportunities for Latinas.

"I have three sisters, my mother's still my inspiration and role model today. I had nine aunts who were independent, strong, educated, intelligent women, and so I never had to look far to see the woman I wanted to be in the world," she explains on a Zoom call from Paris, where she's representing L'Oréal at the brand's Défilé fashion show (themed around liberty, equality, sisterhood). Her closest friendships date back 30 years. "I love being around women, supporting women, applauding women. I always tell young people ... find that sisterhood very early because you're going to need these ladies around you for the rest of your life."

She's also known her other sisterhood, fellow L'Oréal ambassadors like Jane Fonda, Aishwarya Rai and Cindy Bruna, for many years—she started working with the brand in 2005. How has her attitude to beauty changed over that time, and since she turned 50 in March? "Fifty allows you to not care about what people think and

also to not live by beauty standards set by society or someone else," she says. "You let go of people's validation and approval and you really just do what you like to do."

These days, what she likes to do is less. "I wear less makeup. I do less skincare. I do less, you know, planning out outfits—I just want to be comfortable. I want it to be easy. I want it to be effective. If it's skincare, I don't want 28 steps; I want two steps that are just as effective. It's about simplicity for me." That's not to say she doesn't enjoy getting glam. "When I was on *Desperate Housewives* it was photo shoots every day, all day, every weekend. I was so tired of being photographed. I was tired of putting on lipstick. I was tired of trying on clothes; I can't wear one more gown," she says. "And now that that frenzy is passed, now I get to savour the moment when I do get to do it—like Défilé or a movie premiere; it's a little more spaced out and calm, and that makes me appreciate it more and have fun with it."

These days Longoria's highly selective and purposeful about her work. "I'd rather work with people I love and know than take a chance on a possible asshole," she says. "I also like meeting new people and working with new people, but I'm very selective and I produce with purpose and direct with purpose. But [I'm always thinking] what am I saying? What is the purpose of a movie like this? What am I going to contribute to culture by doing this? The bars are pretty high."

How was turning 50 for her? Far easier than turning 40. "I really felt like I had more of a crisis at 40 for some reason. I was ... reflecting and thinking, what does this mean? And 50 was so easy. I don't know if it's because I'm in the best shape of my life. I'm in the best moment of my career. I'm a mother to a beautiful boy. Forty was a little chaotic, but 50 was a breeze. And I think 60 is going to be a breeze. I'm so excited about my 50s and I think it's going to be one of the greatest decades of my life." **V**



Photographer: Kristy Sparow,
Credit: Getty Images for L'Oréal Paris



Superfoods Made Simple

FOR 25 YEARS ORGANIC TRADITIONS HAS QUIETLY SHAPED CANADA'S SUPERFOOD SCENE—introducing ingredients that felt niche a decade ago and now sit on mainstream shelves. This fall the Toronto-born brand celebrates a milestone with a bold rebrand, double-digit retail growth and a clear mission: make powerful superfoods effortless for everyday life.

The company's second-generation founder, Alexandra Mamalider, says the brand's roots explain its long view. "We're called Organic Traditions because our brand is rooted in the healing traditions that cultures across the world have turned to for thousands of years," she says. "These practices all share the same belief: food as medicine." Her father's early globe-trotting to source matcha, maca and other nutrient-dense ingredients set the tone—but Mamalider's focus now is accessibility. "We're focused on making superfoods simple—easy, delicious and approachable so that people can weave them into their daily lives without overthinking it."

That accessibility shows up across the brand's best-selling lines. Organic Traditions' Superfood Lattes—including matcha, turmeric and chocolate blends—lean into function and convenience, delivering adaptogens and shelf-stable probiotics in an instant format. The company markets these as daily rituals rather than fussy wellness experiments, a positioning that helped lattes sell "two times faster at major Canadian retailers."

Mushroom coffees have been another breakout. "People want the powerful benefits of mushrooms but not the hassle," Mamalider says. The mushroom line—from Focus Fuel to mocha blends—balances efficacy (functional doses of lion's mane and other extracts) with a smooth, café-friendly taste, a combo the brand credits for its top sales in the category.

As well, Organic Traditions is pushing into fibre and gut health with fibre-forward smoothies that deliver 6g+ of fibre per serving—a timely play given that dietitians note most Canadians fall short



of recommended fibre intake. "Fibre is the next super-nutrient consumers are chasing," Mamalider says, calling fibre "the next protein."

A big part of the company's edge is vertical integration. By controlling sourcing, manufacturing and quality from its Toronto facility, Organic Traditions ensures traceability and rapid innovation—though Mamalider admits it's complex. "Running sourcing and manufacturing under one roof requires two distinct but values-aligned workforces," she explains, "but it's worth it, because this model protects the core of our DNA: obsession with

VITA X ORGANIC TRADITIONS



quality, sustainability and authenticity."

Looking ahead, Mamalider teases ready-to-drink formats, functional snacks and co-brand collaborations that stretch the new identity beyond powders and packets. "The rebrand is our launchpad," she says. "It feels like the beginning of a bold new chapter—one that can finally match the ambition we've always had."

Whether you're a longtime convert or curious newcomer, Organic Traditions is betting the next 25 years will be about habit, not hype—and taste will be the tether that keeps functional foods in daily routines. [Organictraditions.com](#)



Glow Recipe's latest
superfruit serum

GLOW RECIPE HAS ALWAYS FELT LIKE A SUNNY CORNER OF SKINCARE—fruit-forward, playful and obsessively tactile. But behind the pastel jars and gummy textures sits serious science. Their newest launch, the Prickly Pear Mucin Serum, proves the point: this is a brand that can make a product feel delightful and deliver measurable results.

"We already knew the power of the



prickly pear cactus since it's in our bestselling Watermelon Pore-Tight Toner—it has 40+ bioactive compounds including amino acids, electrolytes and fatty acids that make it an incredibly healing and efficacious ingredient on skin," says co-founder and co-CEO Christine Chang. "Prickly pear mucin is a highly effective product we formulated to help hydrate and strengthen the skin barrier. Our clinical studies

showed that 100 per cent of participants experienced improved hydration and barrier strength after just one use."

The serum is positioned as a vegan mucin alternative—one that delivers the plumping, barrier-repair benefits long associated with snail mucin without ethical baggage. "We wanted to stay true to our brand values and create a vegan, cruelty-free mucin alternative that's highly efficacious," explains co-founder Sarah Lee. "We worked with our Korean labs to harvest a stretchy mucin from the natural mucilage of prickly cactus and use an 81 per cent prickly pear concentration. After four weeks, our tests showed a 30 per cent increase in skin density."

That combination of feel and proof is quintessential Glow Recipe. The co-founders lean on their Korean heritage both as inspiration and methodology—think rituals passed down through families, translated into modern, research-backed formats. "Our approach to skincare and formulation philosophy have largely been influenced by our Korean upbringing and traditions taught to us by our mothers and grandmothers," Lee says. "We create multi-tasking formulations inspired by that heritage to make skincare fun, approachable and

clinically effective."

Practicality meets ritual in their favourite hacks. Chang swears by the "three-skin method"—layering a hydrating toner three times to flood skin with moisture. "I still do this every morning and night with the Watermelon Glow Pore Tight Toner—it's concentrated yet gentle and you can really see the glow," she says. Lee's go-to? Toner-soaked cotton pads as mini masks before makeup: "Saturate each pad and press for five to 10 minutes for silky-smooth, glass skin."

Sustainability is threaded through the launch. The prickly pear cactus is sustainably farmed—no wild harvesting, minimal irrigation—and leftover plant matter is composted to restore soil. Packaging uses FSC-certified paper printed with soy and vegetable inks.

"We call what we do 'edutainment'—snackable, fun skincare education," Chang adds. It's a neat distillation of Glow Recipe's ethos: joyful formats, cultural authenticity and rigorous testing. With Prickly Pear Mucin Serum, the brand proves a playful aesthetic and serious results can coexist—fruit-forward, science-forward, and designed to be loved every day. [Glowrecipe.com](#)

Beauty { Bracket } Awards

From skin-transforming serums to mood-lifting mascaras, consider these A+ winners your definitive guide to the products that truly rise above the rest



Emily MacCulloch and Ingrie Williams of The T-Zone

READY, SET, GLOW! VITA's first annual Beauty {Bracket} Awards, in collaboration with The T-Zone, are here. We couldn't be more excited to share our top shelf picks and celebrate the products that truly deliver—no matter your budget. We've swatched, swiped, blended and buffed our way through a long list of contenders to bring you the best in makeup and skincare across 10 standout categories. For each, we've crowned a "steal" that delivers results at a budget-friendly price tag and a "splurge" that's absolutely worth your hard-earned pennies—because we believe the best in beauty can be found at every price point.

Best Cleanser

Merit Great Skin Double Cleanse, \$44 A true innovation, this cool cleanser is formulated to act like a 2-in-1 balm and foam thanks to PHA and oat-derived surfactants breaking down sunscreen and makeup, while also leaving skin feeling gently exfoliated, soft and never stripped.



{ OVER \$40 }

{ UNDER \$40 }



Marcelle Hydrating Cream Cleanser, \$20 Safe for all skin types, including eczema and psoriasis, this wash is packed with gentle hydrators like hyaluronic acid and glycerin to restore the precious barrier. All that in a 500mL jug with an incredible price tag? A big yes.

Best Serum

{ OVER \$50 }



Tatcha The Longevity Serum, \$149 An age-better boost in a bottle, and inspired by the long-game lifestyle of centenarians from okinawa, this silky, lightweight serum is infused with a japanese botanical blend of shikwasa lime, shell ginger and noni juice that leads to a stronger, firmer appearance.



{ UNDER \$50 }

e.l.f. Bright Icon Vitamin C + E + Ferulic Serum, \$22 A daily heap of antioxidants helps keep skin in glow mode. Suitable for dry, combination and oily skin, a potent blend of 15 per cent vitamin C, 1 per cent vitamin E and 0.5 per cent ferulic acid gets the job done beautifully at an irresistible price.

Best Sunscreen

SkinCeuticals Clear Daily Soothing UV Defense SPF 50, \$64 What we know for sure is this fragrance-free sunscreen earned top points for delivering a non-greasy texture that disappeared into our fair to tan complexions. With a high SPF, the hybrid of chemical filters and mineral zinc oxide soothes inflammation and redness, too.

{ OVER \$50 }



{ UNDER \$50 }

Bioré UV Aqua Rich Glow Moisturizer SPF 50, \$20 Run, don't walk, to discover an SPF that truly does it all. A blend of chemical filters provides high UV protection, niacinamide helps to brighten skin tone and a sheer rosy tint acts as the perfect primer that leaves a luminous finish.

Best Moisturizer



{ UNDER \$50 }

{ OVER \$50 }



Neutrogena Collagen Bank Moisturizer, \$30 Finding a wallet-friendly cream is tough, but this one checks all the boxes. Innovative ingredients like peptides and bakuchiol? Check. A fragrance-free formula that doesn't leave skin looking too shiny? Check. Beautifully hydrated skin that's perfectly prepped for makeup? Check, check.

Skinfix Barrier+ Barrier Balancing Water Cream, \$70 This cream became an instant classic in our routines. The fragrance-free, peptide-rich formula gives you the best of both worlds: grease-free hydration that can soften and plump up parched complexions. Added bonus? It's a homegrown fave hailing from the East Coast.

Best Eye Skincare

Clarins Total Eye Lift, \$118 With its 30-second lifting technology, this refillable eye cream helps to smooth fine lines, de-puff and brighten dark circles right after application and in the long term. Powered by organic Harungana extract, which has retinol-like qualities, it leaves peepers looking more rested.

{ OVER \$50 }



{ UNDER \$50 }



Bioderma Sensibio Eye+, \$28 This is a dream cream for sensitive eyes. The ultra-gentle formula targets dark circles, puffiness and fine lines while boosting hydration, soothing irritation and reducing redness. Plus, the fresh and cooling texture perfectly preps under-eyes for concealer.

Best Lips

{ OVER \$30 }



Sisley-Paris Color Cloud, \$86 From the chic metallic tube to the velvety mousse texture and long-lasting finish, everything about this luxe lip gloss is so easy to fall in love with. Did we mention it also pulls double duty as a powdery cheek colour? Swoon!

{ UNDER \$30 }

Pixi LipTone, \$10 Slick on this glossy balm-like lip gloss for a collaboration of high shine, colour and moisture that never disappoints. Blended with rosehip seed oil, mango and shea butters, the real treat is the pH-reactive formula, which creates a unique tone that's just plain pretty.

Best Eye Makeup

Makeup by Mario Master Mattes Long-Wear Cream Eyeshadow, \$34 In a collection of 10 flattering neutral hues, each swipe of these highly pigmented cream eyeshadows is a dream to play with. The pigment payoff is major, the whipped texture blends effortlessly and then it sets into a soft matte finish with staying power.



{ OVER \$30 }

{ UNDER \$30 }



Revlon Glimmer Liquid Shadow, \$14 Minimal makeup skills required, maximum results guaranteed. An angled wand applicator makes adding a molten flash to lids, lash lines and illuminating inner eye corners a breeze. Plus, these metallic liquids dry down to a reflective finish that Does. Not. Budge.

Best Blush

{ OVER \$30 }



{ UNDER \$30 }

Tower 28 GetSet Blur + Set Matte Powder Blush, \$32 After cream blushes dominated the market, this powder formula—which comes in seven flattering shades—was a welcome surprise at first swipe. Dubbed a "setting blush," it's a home run for oily skin with larger pores—plus, the 12-hour fade-proof pigment stays put while still blending easily.

NYX Cosmetics Fat Cheeks Blush, \$15 Delivering a 24-hour hit of hydration with a juicy pop of colour, this liquid formula melts into the skin for a natural, dewy glow. It's lightweight-but-buildable and the doe foot brush makes for a foolproof application every time.

Best Mascara

M·A·C Stack Elevated Mascara, \$38 Infused with nourishing argan oil, this buildable mascara separates and defines like no other, letting you customize your lash look from subtle to sultry. Add in 36-hour hold and a flake-resistant and sweat- and humidity-proof formula and it's the ideal lash enhancer.

{ OVER \$30 }



{ UNDER \$30 }

Maybelline New York Colossal Bubble Mascara, \$22 A volume-boosting formula meets a bubble shaped brush in this high-impact mascara that can do it all. Designed to lift and amplify your fringe, whether you swipe on one coat or multiple, the result is always lifted and lush-looking lashes.

Best Complexion

{ OVER \$30 }



{ UNDER \$30 }

Milk Makeup Hydro Grip 12-Hour Hydrating Gel Skin Tint, \$54 The strongest selling feature of this skin tint? No one can ever tell that you're wearing it—your skin just looks selfie-worthy all day. Lightweight, long-lasting and in 15 shades, the nourishing gel unifies a skin tone instantly with a dewy finish.

Sephora Collection Best Skin Ever Concealer, \$22 Buildable, medium-coverage and with hyaluronic acid that hydrates and plumps, this multi-use concealer can make dark under-eye circles, angry blemishes and general discoloration less prominent. The diverse shade range clocks in with 30 options for all undertones.

THE T-ZONE Emily MacCulloch & Ingrie Williams Based in Nova Scotia and Ontario, Emily and Ingrie started their beauty content site The T-Zone in 2019. With a combined expertise of 35 years in the beauty and style industries, both contribute regularly to Canada's top print and digital lifestyle publications. As established magazine editors and beauty writers, their hearts skip a beat whenever they encounter an innovative product, a genius brain behind a brand or a beauty trend that jumps off the red carpet or runway. For more accessible beauty content with an upbeat POV, follow along @t.zonebeauty.

EXO EXO

The new buzzword in beauty is exosomes. What are they, and what can they do for our skin?

Words by Aileen Lalor

ONE DAY IT'S HYALURONIC ACID, THE NEXT IT'S CERAMIDES OR—GOD HELP US—BEEF TALLOW. The new skincare ingredient on the block? Exosomes. But what are they, and are they all they're cracked up to be?

For starters, they aren't really an ingredient in the way that something like retinoids would be, where it's a specific type of chemical (albeit one that can be formulated in a number of different ways) and has a defined action on skin. "Exosomes are vesicles, so little packets that exist in our bodies, and they're part of internal signalling," explains dermatologist Dr. Shannon Humphrey. "There are exosomes in so many different tissues in our body and the messages are different depending on what our body needs in those particular areas and what are the functions of the body in those areas."

Dermatologists and beauty industry insiders are starting to use exosomes that can "tell" the body's cells to heal and regenerate, for example, by starting to produce more collagen. But that doesn't mean the therapies out there are some kind of beauty potion, à la *Death Becomes Her* (we all know how that ends). "We are still at the early stage of understanding and harnessing the potential of exosomes in human medicine and aesthetic medicine," Dr. Humphrey explains.

Exosomes, which can be derived either from plants, human stem cells or the cells of other animals, or can be synthetically bio-engineered, were first identified in the 1980s, but their therapeutic possibilities only became apparent in the 2000s. They were first used for aesthetic medicine from the 2010s onwards, says Dermalogica's director of education Nadia Paglia. They're often used to amplify the effects of procedures like microneedling and lasers, which are designed to create targeted damage to skin that then promotes healing.

"Microneedling alone typically involves one to three days of redness and sensitivity—a mild sunburn-like feel," Paglia says. "When combined with exosomes you get faster recovery by enhancing cell repair, less inflammation and quicker resolution of redness, and improved results due to better penetration and skin regeneration." The exosomes that Dermalogica uses in its microneedling with exo booster and dermaplaning with exo booster treatments are derived from a good bacteria called lactobacillus.

Some brands are also integrating exosomes into products you can try at home rather than in clinics. Reversa's Multi-PEptide Concentrate contains exosomes derived from centella asiatica (cica) plant. In combination with



hyaluronic acid and 10 different peptides, the brand claims it can help regenerate the skin barrier, firm and tighten skin, hydrate, and promote skin healing.

Skinfix, which specializes in sensitive skin products, uses exosomes from bitter melon as well as peptides and soothing ingredients such as ectoin, allantoin and arnica in its vegan Exo Baume intensive treatment. "The intent with this product was to develop something gentle enough for post-procedure skin that could help the recovery process—similar to how exosome treatments are used in dermatology offices," says Amy Gordinier, the brand's founder and CEO. She adds that the treatment can be a great option for people whose skin can't tolerate retinol. "The formula uses plant-derived exosomes and vegan growth factor peptides, both of which help promote firmer, smoother skin by encouraging repair," she explains. "So we learned that, just by supporting the skin in that way, Exo Baume could really be a retinoid alternative, helping visibly improve fine lines and overall skin texture without the irritation commonly associated with retinoids."

Another Canadian brand delving into the exo-sphere is Functionalab, which has created both an in-clinic treatment, Exo-GF Booster, and one for at-home use, Exo-GF Pro-rejuvenating regenerating serum. The latter combines exosomes derived from plant sources with growth factors, coenzyme NAD+ (which provides energy to cells) and other ingredients like hyaluronic acid. Nathalie Pelletier, the brand's scientific director, is excited for multiple reasons—one of

which is the serum's universal appeal.

"You can combine it with retinol or brightening serums or acids, and it has no added fragrance, so it is great for sensitive skin," she says. "Use it when you're young and it protects; and, when you're older, it replenishes." With many years in the beauty industry, she likens the new exosome technology to ingredients like peptides or retinoids that completely transformed cosmetics when they arrived on the scene.

The most exciting frontier of exosome treatments is the possibility of using your own exosomes to create a personalized treatment. Dr. Humphrey points to Acorn Bio Labs—a Canadian company that, in addition to allowing clients to bank their stem cells for future cell-based therapies, offers a product, Secretome, for topical application. "It's exosomes that come from your own body [and] the mixture also contains growth factors and cytokines, also generated from your own body," she explains. "It's a topical preparation, an autologous and regenerative preparation that can be micro-needled in or applied after another laser treatment like fractionated laser or Tixel. The fact that this is personalized and regenerative is very attractive and innovative."

Google Trends indicates that interest in exosomes really began to pop at the end of 2024, when research papers were published about their use in dermatology and as a part of cancer treatment. If, as Dr. Humphrey says, it's still early days, this kind of technology could transform many aspects of medicine. Call us exo-cited. **V**



VITA X WALMART CANADA

Beat the Holiday Rush

Early toy picks to cross off your list now

Once the last slice of pumpkin pie disappears, the holiday countdown is officially on—some of us are already popping up the twinkling lights, jotting wish lists and happily getting a head start. For early shoppers, we've rounded up a Walmart Canada toy guide of this season's must-haves and crowd-pleasers—perfect for crossing a few gifts off your list before the holiday rush hits. [Walmart.ca](#)

1. SHARPER IMAGE MECHA RIVALRY RC EJECTING BATTLE ROBOTS BLUE AND WHITE, \$49.97 Challenge your friend to a rocking, socking battle with this duelling pair from Sharper Image! Try to hit your

opponent's chest plate twice to launch their pilot in the air and out of the battle. Use left, right and combo punches to break down their defences and win the fight. Want to brush up on your skills before your next match-up? Play on single-player mode against the AI to practice your moves and strengthen your tactics. Take advantage of the cutting-edge robotics inside these fighters with infrared technology in the palm of your hand!

2. LEGO BOTANICALS PETITE SUNNY BOUQUET FLOWER SET, \$39.86 Blooming with mood-boosting pastel shades, realistic details and adjustable stems, this floral building set for ages 9+ is filled with a variety of LEGO spring flowers, including Billy buttons, bluebells, Cleopatra ferns, yellow yarrow, a pink gerbera, a peony and a tulip. Budding florists of all ages will have lots of fun building the bouquet and adjusting the stems to create a one-of-a-kind floral display.

3. DISNEY ILY 18 INCH DOLL - INSPIRED BY ELSA, \$49.97 Inspired by her favourite Disney character Elsa, this Disney doll is ready to skate her way into adventure. With an icy blue long sleeve complemented with an iridescent white vest, a lavender skirt with snowflake pattern and an Olaf-themed beanie, she is dressed for a wintery wonderland.



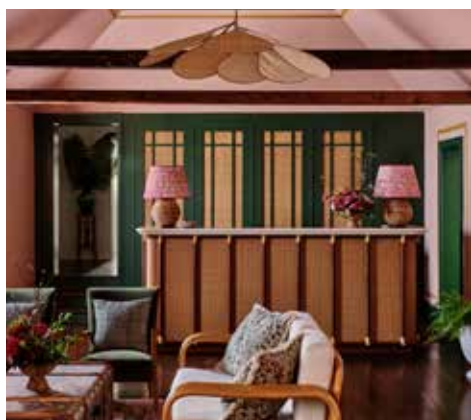
4. CASDON BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP STUFFING STATION, \$49.97 There's only one thing that can match the joy of the build a bear workshop stuffing station, and that's experiencing the excitement under your own roof. Yes, you and your littles can bring furry friends to life at home; it's as easy as 1, 2, 3! The play set comes with a mini build-a-bear workshop stuffing station, complete with party lights to watch the magic happen up close.

5. GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE: THE MOVIE, SWEET TREAT MOUNTAIN PLAYSET, \$44.97 With this playset, kids will explore Sweet Treat Mountain with a Gabby movie figure in her chilly sweet treat outfit and her pal, Chumsley. Kids will love using peggable popsicles to climb whipped cream mountain and uncover hidden activations; push the Paw Bump Magic buttons to reveal Cookie Bobby, or spin the whipped cream to reveal Chumsley's hideout.

The Bermuda Angle

From Cambridge cottage calm to secret swim coves, here's how to get the most out of a Bermuda getaway

Words by Noa Nichol



ABOVE Photo by Nhuri Bashir BELOW Photos by Read McKendree

SEE Bermuda's history and natural drama are everywhere. Stroll the UNESCO-listed streets of St. George's to unlock colonial stories and pastel facades. A St. George's Foundation guide can help you find hidden architectural details (think mystical moongates and white stepped roofs designed to catch precious water), share neighbourhood gossip from centuries past and lead you to must-see stops like St. Peter's Church, the evocative Unfinished Church ruins and the Tucker House museum for intimate glimpses into daily life across the ages. But the island's story doesn't stop at its cobblestones—Bermuda's subterranean world and wild trails offer an entirely different kind of wonder. Grotto Bay Beach Hotel's Cathedral Cave and

Prospero's Cave are literal marvels—the hotel spa even runs signature treatments in the latter (the drip-drip-drip of water from the cave roof makes for perfect mood music). Active travellers will love doing: the Railway Trail (even better on an e-bike and with a guide from Pedego Rentals); and the cliff-studded hikes through Tom Moore's Jungle and Blue Hole Park, where dry caves (rumoured to be the inspo for Jim Henson's *Fraggle Rock*), jungle pools and cliff jumps await (we recommend tapping Island Tours for a guided walkabout). In Dockyard, the National Museum and Vermont (a sprawling historic estate) round out the picture, offering deep dives into Bermudian life from maritime lore to the island's layered cultural history.



STAY Perched on a 20-acre peninsula with panoramic ocean views, Cambridge Beaches Resort & Spa is the kind of place that makes you forget clocks exist. Think pastel cottages, broad porches and private pools tucked into garden paths—plus several tiny sandy coves where you can disappear into your own stretch of pink-tinged sand. Rooms feel quietly

luxurious (with a full-service spa, gym and putting green on site), but the real draw is the slow-down rhythm: hammock afternoons, sea-salt air and the sort of hospitality that hands you a towel and a smile before you even ask. Pro tip: bring two swimsuits—you'll want one for the beach and one for the poolside spa circuit. Cambridgebeaches.com



Photo by Read McKendree



SAVOUR Bermuda is a small island with big flavours; the country reads like a delicious map of local favourites. For lunch, tuck into the old-school comfort of Mamma Mia's famous fish sandwich (raisin bread + crispy fish = local legend); balance it with a light, alfresco dinner at Cambridge's own Breezes, where fresh seafood tastes even better with front-row sunset seating. For fine dining, book a table at Waterlot and order the tuna tartare,

with pink grapefruit and a crispy beet tuille, and the chef's tasting trio of steaks. Finish with the banana inferno for two, flambéed tableside; it's a showstopper. Lunch at Rosewood Bermuda's Beach Club delivers sensational sushi served above a pink sand cove, while the Frog & Onion in Dockyard mixes pub energy with unexpected Bermudian twists (tip: order a drink in a Frog & Onion glass so you can take the fun cup home with you!).

SMELL While in St. George's, be sure to allow time for a fragrant pause at Lili Bermuda, where owner (and honorary consul of Canada in Bermuda) Isabelle Ramsay-Brackstone greets guests with warm stories about her island-inspired scents. Lili is more than a shop; it's a tiny olfactory museum where each fragrance is

a memory of Bermuda: the sharp tang of wind and salt spray, the resinous whisper of Bermuda cedarwood, the powdery sweetness of spring freesias and the sun-warmed perfume of juicy local loquats. Can't choose just one? Snag a sampler set and take a number of Ramsay-Brackstone's sweet, sunlit perfumes back home.



SEA If Bermuda sells itself on pink sand photos, it keeps you with what lies beneath the waves. A glass-bottom boat to the Sea Gardens gives you front-row views of the northernmost coral reef, while snorkellers can swim among Living Reefs Foundation installations and juvenile corals near Castle Harbour. For the brave, shipwreck dives reveal sunken stories (and colourful marine

life); for gentler thrills, paddleboarding or kayaking around Whalebone Bay lets you nose up to hidden coves and marine reserves. Watch for turtles in seagrass beds and, if you time it right, the ocean will hand you a postcard moment—sunlight caught on waves, a reef shimmering below and a quiet, very island sigh. Gotobermuda.com



4 Seasonal Sip Sets

Snag these limited-edition holiday wine and spirits offerings before they vanish

Seasonal sipping just got upgraded. From gift-ready wine sets and festive sparkling bottles to countdown advent calendars stocked with cocktail-friendly pours, these limited-edition holiday drinks sets are made for gifting, gifting-to-self, and unforgettable toasts—grab them now before they disappear.

1. MISSION HILL LASTING LEGACY HOLIDAY SET A classy gift for the wine lover, Mission Hill's holiday set spotlights the winery's Lasting Legacy reserve with elegant seasonal packaging that feels made for under the tree. Think plush presentation and a bottle built for memorable dinners—it's the kind of wine you uncork for a special roast or save for a milestone. Pair it with a cedar-smoked roast, aged cheddar or a rich chocolate torte for maximum impact. Available directly from Mission Hill while supplies last. Missionhillwinery.com

2. HENKELL TROCKEN LIMITED EDITION CHANDELIER If sparkle is your vibe, the Henkell Chandelier is pure party energy: a festive bottle dressed up for the season, ideal as a celebratory host gift or a dramatic centrepiece for holiday photos. Its crisp, effervescent character makes it wonderfully versatile—sip straight from the flute to kick off the night, pair with salty oysters or use it in elevated brunch mimosas. Because it's a seasonal run, plan to snag one early for New Year's toasts (or any moment that calls for bells and bubbles). Henkell.com

3. ROAD 13 ADVENT CALENDAR Road 13's take on the advent tradition brings a regional, craft-forward sensibility to holiday countdowns. Expect a thoughtfully assembled collection of pours and sipper-sized discoveries that showcase the brand's flavours—an excellent choice for anyone who prefers rustic, locally made libations over mass-market options. Serve the calendar's selections alongside charcuterie, spiced nuts, or warm winter desserts and watch simple pairings elevate each tasting. Road13vineyards.com

4. DILLON'S ADVENT CALENDAR For all the cocktail lovers who want 12 mini-moments of joy, Dillon's Advent Calendar turns the lead-up to the holidays into a daily tasting ritual. Curated by a craft distillery known for thoughtful botanicals, it's designed to surprise—mini bottles, unexpected flavours and cocktail prompts to coax out your inner bartender. It's ideal for gifting to a friend who loves to experiment, or for hosting a weeknight tasting evening with a small group. Check Dillon's online shop for availability. Dillons.ca

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UNIQLO's HEATTECH and PUFFTECH deliver serious warmth without the bulk

FROM TIERED HEATTECH (Standard, Extra Warm, Ultra Warm) to PUFFTECH's down-like, water-repellent outerwear, UNIQLO's tech-forward pieces—cashmere-blend

turtlenecks, pocketable lined scarves, Ultra Warm leggings and relaxed long coats—make layering effortless for city commutes and outdoor adventures. UNIQLO.CA



HEATTECH Lined Padded Scarf

THIS COSY SCARF COMBINES UNIQLO'S SIGNATURE HEATTECH fleece lining with Heat of Absorption technology, ensuring warmth and comfort during chilly days. Its pocketable design makes it easy to carry and layer, while the machine-washable fabric offers convenience for everyday wear. **\$29.90**



PUFFTECH Parka

THE ULTIMATE WINTER COMPANION. Lightweight yet incredibly warm, this parka features UNIQLO's PUFFTECH insulation to keep the cold out without the bulk. Water-repellent and easy to layer, it's a stylish, practical gift for braving chilly days in comfort. **\$99.90**

HEATTECH Ultra Warm Leggings



STAY COSY FROM HEAD TO TOE. These leggings use HEATTECH Ultra Warm technology to trap heat without bulk, perfect for layering on the coldest days. **\$39.90**



PUFFTECH Long Coat | Relaxed

LIGHTWEIGHT INSULATION AND A RELAXED SILHOUETTE make the Women's PUFFTECH Long Coat a versatile outerwear choice for cooler seasons. The long length and integrated hood provide added coverage, and adjusters at the waist and hood allow for a customizable fit. **\$149.90**

HEATTECH Extra Warm Cashmere Blend Turtleneck T-Shirt



THIS LUXURIOUS TURTLENECK combines the warmth of HEATTECH Extra Warm technology with the soft touch of cashmere, making it the perfect gift for layering or wearing on its own. **\$34.90**





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