

VITA

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*Spring
and*

SUMMER
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Easy, Breezy STYLE

The UNIQLO pieces we'll be living in this spring and summer

WHEN IT COMES TO EFFORTLESS DRESSING, few brands do laid-back polish quite like UNIQLO. Think breathable linens, relaxed silhouettes and clever everyday pieces that make getting dressed feel refreshingly simple. Whether you're heading

to brunch, strolling the seawall or packing light for a weekend away, these versatile staples deliver comfort without sacrificing style. Here are the UNIQLO pieces currently topping our warm-weather wish list. UNIQLO.CA

Linen Blend
Tiered Dress



EASY, FEMININE AND ENDLESSLY WEARABLE, this tiered dress captures the carefree energy of warm days. The long, fit-and-flare silhouette creates soft movement while the linen-cotton blend keeps things cool and airy. A full lining adds comfort, and—always a welcome surprise—it comes with pockets. Equal parts relaxed and refined, it's the dress you'll reach for when you want to look effortlessly put together with minimal effort. \$69.90

Premium
Linen Skipper
Boxy Shirt



AN OVERSIZED LINEN SHIRT IS THE UNOFFICIAL UNIFORM OF SUMMER—and this one nails the brief. Cut in a relaxed boxy silhouette with a casual skipper neckline, it's designed to be worn loose over denim, tucked into trousers or layered as a light outer piece on breezy evenings. Crafted in breathable linen with a polished drape, it's the kind of wardrobe workhorse that feels just as right at the office as it does thrown over a swimsuit on vacation. \$49.90

Crepe Jersey Boat
Neck Bra Top



MINIMALISTS, TAKE NOTE: this sleek boat-neck bra top might be the hardest-working piece in your wardrobe. Designed with built-in cups for support and a smooth crepe jersey fabric that hugs the body, it works beautifully worn tucked into trousers or left untucked with skirts and denim. The clean neckline makes it ideal for layering—or for wearing on its own when the temperature rises. \$34.90



Narrow
Sunglasses

THE EASIEST WAY TO ELEVATE A CASUAL OUTFIT? A great pair of sunglasses. These narrow frames strike the perfect balance between modern and timeless, adding a subtle edge to everything from linen dresses to oversized shirts. Beyond style, they offer practical protection with UV-blocking lenses that meet ANSI standards—proof that a small accessory can make a big impact. \$29.90

Linen Blend
Easy Pants



IF THERE'S ONE PIECE THAT DEFINES RELAXED SUMMER DRESSING, it's a pair of wide, breezy linen pants. These easy straight-cut trousers offer a loose fit that keeps you cool while still looking polished. The linen-rayon blend gives them a soft drape, while practical pockets and versatile neutral tones make them endlessly adaptable—pair them with a simple tank, a crisp shirt or the matching linen pieces for a chic tonal look. \$39.90

Drawstring
Bag



PRACTICAL MEETS POLISHED in this versatile drawstring bag from the UNIQLO : C collection. With a roomy 14-litre capacity, adjustable strap, and clever design that shifts from tote to cinched bucket shape, it's made for busy days on the go. A water-repellent finish protects against light rain, while the structured yet relaxed silhouette keeps it looking chic whether you're commuting, travelling or heading to the market. \$49.90

Smooth Cotton Crew
Neck Sweater



FROM THE UNIQLO : C COLLECTION DESIGNED BY CLARE WAIGHT KELLER, this sweater brings elevated design to everyday comfort. Made from 100 per cent cotton, it features a relaxed, sweatshirt-inspired silhouette with a slightly cropped length that pairs effortlessly with high-waisted trousers, skirts or denim. Lightweight enough for transitional weather, it's the kind of refined casual staple that instantly pulls an outfit together. \$59.90





1 Dior's Capture regime of skin creams redefines "reverse aging" by targeting the 12 biological hallmarks of time. This pro-collagen duo optimizes oxygen transport to visibly firm skin. The revitalizing OX-C Treatment and innovative Night Creme (my favourite) work to boost skin cells' ability to produce collagen, leaving your complexion looking more toned in a month. [Dior.ca](#)

2 Apple's latest releases are total work-life game-changers. The (pink!) iPhone 17e (\$899) delivers a stunning 48MP camera and double the storage. I've paired it with the featherlight MacBook Neo (\$799), featuring a vibrant 13-inch display and A18 Pro power for the ultimate combo of value and performance. [Apple.ca](#)

3 Finding my signature scent with Guerlain national trainer Marie-Andrée Duchesne was a revelatory, psychological journey. I discovered Cuir Béluqa, a velvety "creamy vanilla cloud" from the L'Art et la Matière collection. In an engraved bottle, it's a bespoke masterpiece that truly speaks to my identity. [Guerlain.ca](#)

ISSUE 115

The Making of the Vancouver
Spring/Summer 2026 Issue

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Spring/Summer 2026

Insert *Injustice*

Why Canadian journalism is more than just a standalone stamp

Words by
Noa Nichol

FOR YEARS, VITA MAGAZINE HAS OPERATED AT THE HEART OF THE CANADIAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE. We aren't just a "supplement"; we are a long-form editorial powerhouse that champions local entrepreneurs, supports a roster of talented Canadian journalists, and tells the stories of this country's innovators with a depth that social media scrolls simply can't match.

Yet, despite our decades-long commitment to high-quality print journalism, we recently found ourselves on the outside looking in. The reason? A technicality in the Canada Periodical Fund's Special Measures for Journalism grant.

Under the current federal guidelines, the fund is designed specifically for "Canadian publishers of print magazines and print community (non-daily) newspapers" to help them overcome market disadvantages. However, because *VITA* reaches its audience as an intentional, curated insert within other papers rather than as a standalone "solo" publication at the newsstand, we have been deemed ineligible for this critical support.

The irony is not lost on us. In an era where the government is supposedly trying to "strengthen local and diverse journalism," a publication that successfully leverages existing distribution networks to get Canadian stories into more hands is being penalized for its efficiency.

We are Canadian-owned and controlled: a core requirement we meet with pride. We invest in original content, spending well above the required minimums for the creation of original Canadian editorial content. And, we prioritize substance. Our pages are filled with at least 80

per cent Canadian editorial content, far exceeding the "majority original" threshold required by the fund.

By excluding "inserts," the Special Measures for Journalism component ignores the evolution of the industry. Being an insert doesn't make our journalism "lesser"—it makes it accessible. It allows us to support Canadian writers and photographers while ensuring our features on local brands reach the widest possible audience across the country.

The fund's stated goal is to ensure Canadians have access to "diverse Canadian editorial content". We are that content. We are the long-form

interviews with female chefs, the deep dives into sustainable Canadian fashion and the profiles of entrepreneurs who are shaping our cities.

We aren't asking for a handout; we are asking for an even playing field. Journalism is defined by the quality of the reporting and the integrity of the storytelling—not by whether it arrives in your mailbox alone or tucked inside your weekend paper. It's time the Canada Periodical Fund recognizes that *VITA*—and publications like us—are a vital part of the Canadian cultural fabric, regardless of how we reach our readers' front doors. **V**



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WEEKEND

MaxMara



Why Dior's new skin essentials are the ultimate modern ritual

Words by Noa Nichol

IN THE FAST-PACED WORLD OF 2026, OUR SKIN IS CONSTANTLY ON THE DEFENSIVE. From urban microparticles to long-wear, transfer-proof makeup that refuses to budge, the daily toll on our complexion is higher than ever. Yet, for the modern woman, the act of taking the day off shouldn't just be a chore—it should be a moment of sensory indulgence. Enter Dior Skin Essentials, a universal routine designed for every lifestyle and skin type, proving that “expert” results can coexist with “ultra-sensory” experiences.

At the centre of this collection is the reinvented OFF/ON makeup remover line. Dior has moved beyond the basic concept of “cleansing” to create high-performance formulas that act as skincare treatments in their own right. The philosophy is simple: OFF eliminates impurities, persistent makeup and sunscreens, while ON respects the skin's

natural pH and strengthens the barrier.

Whether you are a double-cleansing devotee or a “one-swipe-and-done” minimalist, there is a bespoke texture in this lineup tailored for you. L'Huile OFF/ON is a rich, enveloping oil that uses a duo of jojoba and castor oils to capture waterproof and transfer-proof products. Upon contact with water, it transforms into a light milk that rinses clean, leaving skin more balanced after one month. Le Biphase OFF/ON is specifically designed for the delicate eye and lip areas; it's a high-performance formula that removes long-wear makeup without leaving a cloudy film over your vision. It is an instrumental powerhouse, boosting hydration in just one hour. And, for those seeking freshness, L'Eau Micellaire OFF/ON is a micellar water that purifies and hydrates in a single swipe. Infused with skin-strengthening properties, it leaves the complexion visibly plump.



To truly achieve that “radiantly clean” look, Dior recommends pairing these removers with the iconic La Mousse OFF/ON. Infused with Nymphaea cryo-extract—a plant from the Dior gardens known for its ability to detoxify its environment—and niacinamide, this mousse is a deep-cleanse essential that removes microparticles and increases skin radiance, revealing a healthy-looking glow that starts from the base layer.

Beyond the sink, Dior is celebrating the “cult” status of its multi-use skincare hero, Le Baume. This travel-friendly essential is designed to revitalize and nourish hands, lips, and the body. Its creamy formula is a “skin cocktail” of centella asiatica, squalane, shea butter and hyaluronic acid. It acts as an invisible protective dressing, revitalizing the skin barrier.

For 2026, Le Baume transcends skincare to become a true couture accessory. A new limited-edition trio features the

iconic Dior Logomania pattern in three high-energy shades: vivid pink, bright coral and pastel lilac. Each compact is highlighted by the signature Christian Dior band, making it as much of a style statement as a skincare necessity.

Indeed, Dior's commitment to “Everyday Luxury” extends to the very design of the bottles.

The new OFF/ON removers feature a sophisticated band with Christian Dior in capital letters, topped with lids displaying the all-over Logomania motif. These aren't just vessels; they are objects of desire that elevate your vanity to a Parisian atelier.

By focusing on clinically proven efficacy—respecting pH levels while transforming skin quality day after day—Dior is inviting us to rethink our evening routine. It's a universal routine that delivers instantly visible results, ensuring that your skin stays as vibrant and resilient as your lifestyle. *Dior.ca*





Water Works

The key to beautiful skin? Hydration

Words by
Aileen Lalor

WHEN I WAS A KID, MY GRANDMOTHER HAD A ONE-STEP SKINCARE REGIMEN: MOISTURIZER. There were no serums, pre-serums (yes, they're a thing), exfoliants, toners, lotions. For sure, most of those things didn't exist back then. And she could definitely have upgraded things—a cleanser and some sunscreen might not have gone amiss. But she had the idea right, because hydration is absolutely the cornerstone of beautiful skin.

Why is hydration so important? For starters, it makes skin look plumper, healthier and more radiant, and can fill out fine lines. But it goes deeper than that. "It helps keep skin supple, it supports the skin barrier and supports skin against external stressors," says Vancouver dermatologist Dr. Katie Belezny.

"When skin is well hydrated, it can help it in tolerating other actives, too."

"There's almost a Maslow's hierarchy of needs when it comes to the skin, where hydration and barrier function would be the most important," says Alex Apostolopoulos, co-founder of Canadian skincare brand Regimen Lab. "They really do go hand in hand." The skin's barrier is a layer of skin cells stuck together with lipids including ceramides. This essentially keeps the bad stuff (pathogens, toxins) out of skin, and the good stuff like water, in.

What are the best ways to get water to your skin? It's not chugging gallons of water. "There's a limit to what drinking water can do," Dr. Belezny explains. "Of course, just for general lifestyle measures you want to be hydrated and if you're significantly dehydrated, your skin might not look so great. But there's definitely been some overblown commentary on how much water you need in order to affect skin. Be hydrated, but 2 litres versus 3 litres won't move the needle much."

Ingredients called humectants are one way to increase hydration. These occur naturally in skin in the form of substances like hyaluronic acid, glycerin and urea that absorb water, mainly from inside the body. Our production decreases as we grow older, so many hydrating products are based on replenishing the skin's levels.

You used to be limited to doing this with topical skincare, which is effective, but not as effective as adding humectants by injecting them. "It's like going to the dentist every six months versus toothbrushing at home—you get longer lasting and more elevated results," explains Dr. Belezny.

This procedure is offered under a few different names, one of which is Restylane Skinboosters. At an appointment, numbing cream is applied and the doctor injects microdroplets of hyaluronic acid all over the face, into the deep dermal layer of skin. There's typically very little pain and minimal side effects (slight swelling and occasionally, bruising). "You might see an immediate improvement, particularly in fine lines like crow's feet and sleep lines where you can see softening immediately," says Dr. Belezny. Over the subsequent couple of months, Dr. Belezny says you really start to see the effects of increased hydration: Glowier skin that perhaps needs less moisturizer and feels smoother and more supple. Dr. Belezny says there are even a few studies that show it can prompt your skin to make more of its own hyaluronic acid and collagen. Effects typically last six months or so, but that depends on the person, and you can combine the injection with other treatments such as neuromodulators like Botox.

Of course, as well as the six-monthly "dentist visits," you need the daily "brushing" in the form of skincare. Dr. Belezny says that hyaluronic acid is a good humectant for topical use—safe, well-tolerated and effective—but it's not the only one.

The team at Regimen Lab have done a great deal of research into different types of humectant and say hyaluronic acid is actually far from the best.

"We initially had multimolecular hyaluronic acid in the first version of our Wave hydration serum and we wanted to update it to add more humectants to it," says Webster Magcalas, the brand's co-founder and a cosmetic chemist. His team bought an instrument called a corneometer that measured the hydration levels of skin after more than 30 different humectants were applied. To his surprise, hyaluronic acid performed significantly worse than other humectants including glycerin—an old-school staple in many skincare products—and acetamidoethoxyethanol, a newer ingredient that he says is now the gold standard for hydration. His research indicated the hyaluronic acid could even dehydrate the skin, though that's not to say it should be avoided since it's believed to have longer-term benefits. Still, the latest version of Wave serum has no hyaluronic acid at all.

Everyone should use some kind of hydrating product and probably a barrier-strengthening one to ensure that the hydration stays put, but what type

is best? Dr. Belezny says it depends on your skin type, condition and environment (for example, the weather conditions and time of year). "Dry skin can benefit from layering: You can start with a hydrating serum containing humectants like glycerin or hyaluronic acid, and then follow with a moisturizing cream," she says, "For very dry skin, consider occlusives like petrolatum (Vaseline) to seal it in. For oily or acne-prone skin I often recommend lighter textures, like gel-cream moisturizers that hydrate without feeling heavy."

Magcalas says you should also avoid excessive layering of products too, since

every time you apply a water-based product, the barrier opens up. The more times you apply a product and then allow it to dry, the more times the barrier is compromised, which can allow moisture to leave skin. "It's a balancing act," he says.

And how can you tell if your regimen is working? "For most people, when skin is well hydrated it feels soft and smooth, not tight, itchy, or flaky," says Dr. Belezny. "Other signs to look for to indicate hydrated skin are when fine lines that appear with dehydration are less noticeable and makeup applies smoothly without clinging to dry patches."

We'll drink to that. **V**



Ready to get your skin hydrated to the max?

Here are six products to try

LA ROCHE POSAY TOLERIANE HYDRATING CLEANSER Some cleansers can strip moisture. This one has glycerin and ceramides to ensure the skin stays hydrated, while still removing dirt and impurities.

EUCERIN HYALURON-FILLER EPIGENETIC SERUM This creamy serum works on hyaluronic acid three ways: by adding it to skin, boosting skin's own production of it, and reducing production of an enzyme that degrades it. There's also Epicelline, which is designed to target age-related DNA damage to improve skin's structure, elasticity and overall appearance.

CURÉL INTENSIVE MOISTURE FACIAL CREAM Humectant glycerin helps skin's hydration levels while ceramides repair the skin barrier to lock it all in. This is ideal for very dry skin that's sensitive, since it has no fragrances, colourants or alcohol.

REGIMEN LAB WAVE SERUM A light serum, this contains humectants acetamidoethoxyethanol and glycerin, plus barrier repair ingredients and an ingredient designed to kickstart the skin's own production of aquaporins (channels that facilitate the transport of water in skin).

EMINENCE ORGANICS SHIITAKE & ASHWAGANDHA BI-PHASE MIST A refreshing mist that also promises blue-light protection, this is has vitamin D-rich shiitake, ashwagandha and birch water, and is used after makeup for a final spritz of moisture, or to refresh skin during the day.

BIODERMA HYDRABIO LIGHT WATER CREAM Oily skin needs moisture too. This contains ingredients to strengthen the moisture barrier as well as hyaluronic acid, niacinamide and an apple seed extract said to increase circulation of water in the skin.

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SOME BEAUTY IS NATURAL AND ETERNAL

Eternal beauty has always been linked to the idea of lasting value – something that stays meaningful and untouched as time goes by. In the early days, this idea focused more on longevity than on the nuances of aesthetics. It was less about defining what beauty looked like, and more about ensuring that it could remain unchanged for as long as possible. When this philosophy met the world of Rado, it opened the door to major innovation. The desire to protect beauty over time led to new materials and technologies designed to keep a design true to its original vision, even decades later. With time, the understanding of eternal beauty expanded. It came to include not only technical mastery but also the creative vision of exceptional designers whose bold, original ideas deserved a long life of their own. Form and function became a powerful pair – both essential, both celebrated – perfectly reflecting one of the guiding beliefs of Rado's founders: "If we can imagine it, we can make it. And if we can make it, we will."

In 1986, this vision led Rado to introduce high-tech ceramic to watchmaking – a pioneering material whose exceptional durability and smooth, tactile finish soon became a signature of the brand. The Rado Integral embodies this achievement and stands as a true witness to time, proving that some beauty is natural and eternal.

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Words by
Alison McGill

TIME *for* LOVE

MORE AND MORE COUPLES ARE TRADING IN TRADITIONAL DIAMOND RINGS FOR SOMETHING JUST AS PRECIOUS—but with a twist. Enter the engagement watch: a luxury timepiece gifted as a symbol of love, commitment, and, yes, impeccable style.

According to Pinterest's 2025 Wedding Report, individuality is defining the modern engagement era. Couples are putting their own spin on long-standing traditions—opting for unique stones, nostalgic colour palettes, and increasingly, replacing or complementing engagement rings with high-end watches. And why not? After all, a luxury watch isn't just a piece of jewelry—it's a wearable heirloom that marks the moments that matter most.

"We are seeing a growing number of couples choosing timepieces to commemorate their engagement, and it's a trend we welcome," says Matthias Breschan, CEO of Longines. "A watch is something you wear every day; it becomes a part of your story. Selecting a timepiece to mark an engagement feels modern and personal. It's a lasting symbol of love, but also something that reflects your individual style."

The shift is part romantic, part practical, and all about expressing identity. Toronto-based jewelry designer Alexandra Mann, owner of Alexandra Mann Jewelry, has seen this shift firsthand.

"As someone who designs engagement rings, I'll be the first to say they are stunning. But, after a while, they can start to look similar," she says. "A watch gives you the chance to tell your story in a way that feels fresh. Additionally, with more women proposing to men these days, it's a natural choice—many

men prefer watches over rings."

Mann, whose business includes a growing collection of vintage timepieces, loves the symbolism that comes with engagement watches. "A watch is such a personal object. It travels with you, and it holds memories," she explains.

"When a timepiece is given with intention, it becomes more than an accessory—it becomes a part of your story."

For Rado CEO Adrian Bosshard, this evolution in gifting rituals makes perfect sense. "A watch has many special advantages," he says. "It has a beating heart and represents time in its many facets. Time spent together. The future ahead. It also ensures you are punctual on your wedding day."

Bosshard adds that gifting watches for special occasions is already part of many cultures around the world. With more young couples seeking meaningful and emotionally resonant alternatives to rings, he predicts the engagement watch will only grow in popularity. "With a premium timepiece, you have such a range of styles to choose from to suit every individual taste."

And just as the engagement ring world has seen an influx of creativity with lab-grown stones and coloured gems, the luxury watch industry offers variety across styles and price points. Vintage models, in particular, are having a moment.

"When you are looking at vintage pieces, the story behind the watch adds so much more depth," says Mann. "I love the idea of choosing a birth year watch, or a model from the year you met. It adds an extra layer to your engagement and makes the piece feel completely yours—like it was waiting for this exact moment."

Mann also notes an emerging trend:

"When a timepiece is given with intention, it becomes more than



an accessory—it becomes a part of your story"

designing wedding bands that are meant to complement your engagement watch. "Instead of seeing the band as a standalone piece, you're building a set that speaks to your full story," she explains. "If the watch has a fluted bezel, maybe your band echoes that texture. If your timepiece is vintage, you could incorporate old-cut stones or Art Deco detailing. If it's super

modern and minimal, a bold, sculptural band can make a huge statement."

Ultimately, an engagement watch isn't about replacing the ring—it's about expanding what's possible. It's a celebration of love, style, and the moments that make time stand still. Because what better way to honour your forever than with something designed to stand the test of time? ▽

THE RISE *of* DIVORCE RINGS

FASHION STYLIST, DESIGNER AND REALITY TELEVISION RACHEL ZOE SPLIT WITH HER HUSBAND RODGER BERMAN IN JULY OF 2025 AFTER 27 YEARS OF MARRIAGE. To make the occasion of her divorce and commemorate her next life chapter, Zoe treated herself to a sparkling new bauble: a multi-carat, mega-watt oval diamond solitaire divorce ring flanked by two smaller stones, which she had custom designed by jewelry brand Ring Concierge.

"It's like a freedom ring," Zoe shared during an appearance on *Today with*

Jenna & Sheinelle. "I just think ... why do women have to wait their whole lives to get a ring because they're engaged? Why can't they just have a ring that's either, 'OK, I'm divorced. I'm free. I'm widowed. I'm single.'"

This power-move is a narrative we've seen happening in pop culture for a few years thanks to Zoe's famous divorce ring contemporaries, Brooks Nader and Emily Ratajowski, who both fashioned their old engagement rings into something new and beautiful. Melissa Gobeil and Susan Shaw, the co-founders of

Canadian fine jewelry brand ATTIC, say that divorce rings—redesigning old ones or creating new designs—have become an increasingly important part of their business. And it's a market shift they are massive supporters of.

"We see divorce rings as an empowering way for women to create something new representing who they are now," Gobeil says. "Jewelry holds so much meaning, so being able to take a piece from your past and intentionally transform it into something aligned with your present can be incredibly affirming. It's much less about the divorce itself, and more about agency and choosing what you carry forward."

When it comes to the process of a redesign at ATTIC, Gobeil says once an original engagement ring has been broken down (gemstones are removed, gold is recycled), they work with a client to create a piece that perfectly encapsulates who they are in this new life era.

"Most times the design feels completely different from what it was before," Gobeil shares. "Our advice is to just go for it with the look of the ring; choose a style you've always wanted. Be bold and create a piece that feels unmistakably yours. This moment is a chance to tap into your gut, imagine what excites you, and create something that expresses who you are."

Hayley Woodbury is the co-owner of Anne Sportun, also a Canadian-based fine jewelry brand, and a custom design specialist. What she loves most about the process of crafting a new ring with an engaging narrative for a client is that it's a powerful way to mark a huge life shift and include a precious part of their past.

"Jewelry is a powerful way to mark transitions in life," Woodbury explains. "I think an engagement ring transformation allows people to wear a piece they love and prevent it from being stored away in a box, unworn and unseen. Each piece you wear carries a story and jewelry is meant to be worn and celebrated."

In her business, Woodbury has an equal mix of clients looking for a divorce

ring that's a redesign and brand-new bauble. "For some, using the original engagement diamond feels too sentimental, or perhaps the wearer never loved the ring to begin with," she says. "This is when a client chooses to purchase something new and sell their old piece to help fund it. In other situations, there's still emotional attachment, and the redesign can be as simple as resizing the ring to a different finger or resetting it into another ring style or even a pendant."

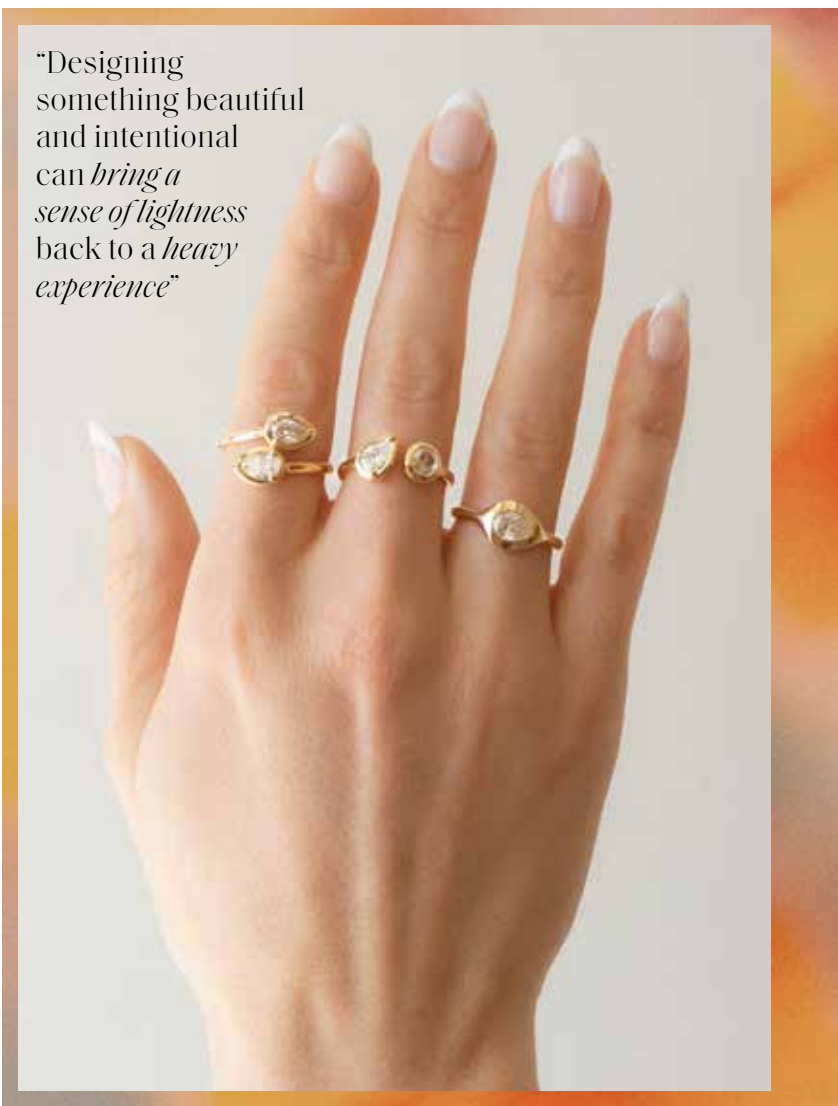
She recently worked with a client who had an Anne Sportun engagement ring from a previous marriage, and though she still loved it, she no longer felt comfortable wearing it because of the memories attached to it. After Woodbury spent some time with her client to figure out what would be a perfect match for her now, they landed on the idea of creating a more casual design that didn't feature a centre diamond as the focal point.

"We removed the stone from her solitaire and reset it into a wide, bombé-style band," Woodbury describes. "We reused the original plain shank from her engagement ring, resizing it to fit into a right-hand ring stack she already wore. In the end, she had two new rings in a completely different style. It was truly a lovely moment for me to help bring her joy and celebrate her new life chapter."

Gobeil had a similar experience with a client, transforming a divorce diamond into a statement, signet-style pinky ring. The wearer reframed the diamond as hers, not 'theirs.' The design process was not only incredibly cathartic for the client, but also a fun experience.

"Designing something beautiful and intentional can bring a sense of lightness back to a heavy experience," she says. "We're seeing a broader cultural shift toward reclaiming jewelry. It's less about collecting pieces gifted from a partner or marking a relationship, but more about women choosing jewelry for themselves to reflect identity, growth and personal milestones. Divorce rings fit very naturally into that shift." ▽

"Designing something beautiful and intentional can bring a sense of lightness back to a heavy experience"





SIP THE SPRING

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À la Dogue

From dog walks to catwalks, man's best friend is nosing into marketing campaigns

Words by
Jill Von Sprecken



THE DOG DAYS OF FASHION ARE UPON US. Not only do handsome hounds grace the cover of *Vogue's* canine-centric issues of *Dogue*, but they also take walkies down runways for fashion houses Armani and Bode, steal the show in Louis Vuitton's latest Pharrell-designed men's collection, and inspire designers—like the top-handled “Hector” tote by Thom Browne.

They also curl up and get comfy on social media. Influencers like Boobie Billie and Tika the Iggy (who sadly passed away at the end of 2025) are clothes horses in their own right, and log more followers on Instagram than some human celebrities. Retailers are taking note, and charismatic canines make guest appearances on social media feeds that include Burberry and Valentino, and Canadian brands Aritzia and Plenty.

So why has marketing—and fashion marketing in particular—gone to the dogs?

“There’s so much competition in the retail landscape today, and especially with fashion, anything you can do to make your product seem more relatable, to give it that extra little edge; the cuteness factor,” says Emily Scarlett, a branding and communications consultant who has worked for brands like H&M and Knix. “But also that ability for people to see themselves in the product or see themselves in the advertising.”

It’s a solid strategy. Dog ownership is on the rise in Canada and the US, which means more people are able to visualize themselves lounging in style with a canine companion. So even if you don’t look like a Louis Vuitton model at the dog park, at least there’s something to aspire to.

It’s worth noting that the uptick in canine-saturated marketing is fuelled in part by the booming pet apparel industry, which can support a brand’s adjacent line of canine accessories. Take Aritzia’s Super Ruff Puff, a Rover-sized

twist on the brand’s popular Super Puff jacket. It’s clever, it’s adorable, and an Instagram post featuring the Super Ruff got 500 percent more likes than an adjacent post with a human model.

“If you think about it, what performs well on Instagram?” points out Adele Tetangco, the fractional CFO at Plenty. “It’s babies and pets ... I don’t even own a cat, and I’m just watching videos of kittens.” Plenty started featuring dogs in their marketing campaigns as a way of fulfilling the brand’s “for all of us” tagline. “So many customers that come into the store, especially Kitsilano or Robson, there’s so many dog lovers,” she says.

The trend isn’t just limited to fashion. Relating to canine-owning customers is also what inspired Vancouver restaurant Honey Salt to launch a daily Yappy Hour on their dog-friendly patio, where there are deals for humans and treats for their companions. Jason Labahn, the director of food and beverage at Honey Salt,

explains that the idea began when the restaurant’s co-owner, Kim Canteenwalla, went for a walk along the nearby seawall and noticed how many dogs were also out for a stroll. “People want to bring their dogs into their everyday life,” says Labahn. “A restaurant that can facilitate that is a great marketing tool, but also creates a really fun environment as well.”

Whether it’s dining at a stylish spot or coveting the latest style, Tetangco argues that it’s all about connection. “At the end of the day, it comes down to meeting your customer where they’re at and relating to them. The dog is such a common theme,” she says. “This is probably why even the luxury brands are leaning into it. Out of everything that’s so AI, it just feels more real at the end of the day.”

As AI proliferates, the desire for authenticity grows. Classic Americana brands like Ralph Lauren and the Gap are seeing a resurgence, and Scarlett suspects it’s in response to a vintage trend that’s already in full swing. “When you

think about those classic Americana brands, you also think about the American dream,” she says. “And what does that mean? Status symbols.” For many, that may include a—fashionable or not—Spot or Rover in the family.

So what’s it like to work alongside man’s best friend? “We did this casting call, and I think we got 500 dogs,” says Tetangco of a recent campaign at Plenty. Sorting through hundreds of pictures of adorable pups sounds like a dream job to some, but Scarlett points out that a dog brings its own challenges and considerations—“what if the dog doesn’t like people on set?” she asks—plus a schedule of breaks for food and exercise. “There’s a lot that comes into play with that, that makes doing shoots more complicated.”

It seems to be worth the trouble. After all, as long as there are dogs, there will be those who love them and all the wet-nosed, tail-wagging antics. “I think this is just the beginning,” says Scarlett. We can only hope. **V**

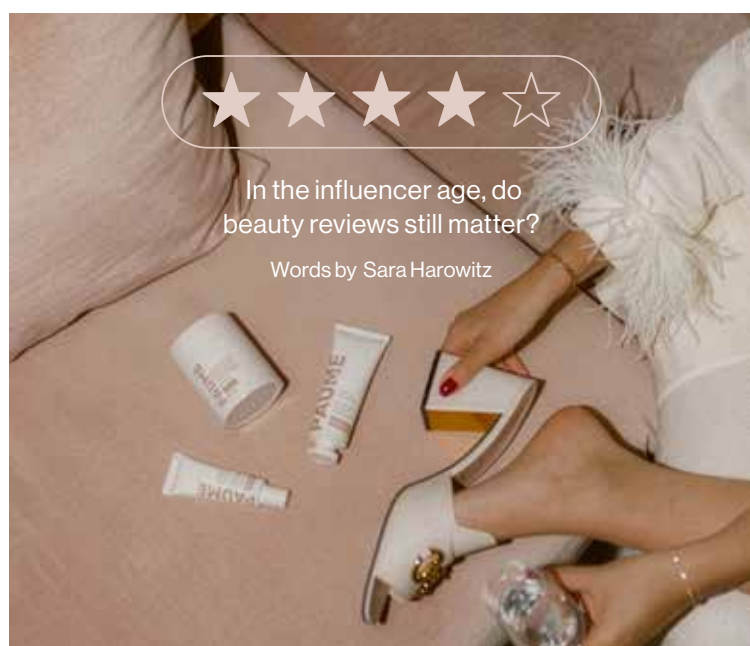


“If you think about it, what performs well on Instagram? It’s babies and pets”



In the influencer age, do beauty reviews still matter?

Words by Sara Harowitz



WE’VE ALL BEEN THERE: a beauty brand pops up on our social feeds, tempting us with videos of “real” women (who often look more like supermodels) declaring their love for a certain product. Her skin looks like glass! Her hair grew so thick in just a few months! Her lips have never been plumper!

It’s easy to fall for these sponsored posts—the influencer’s job is to make it convincing. But for the savvy consumer, it can also raise a healthy dose of skepticism: is the product really so great, or is the poster just collecting a paycheck?

In today’s social-media-centric world, it can feel like influencers are at

the top of the pecking order. But this might not actually be the case: for many beauty brands, honest reviews from real people will always reign supreme.

“Customer reviews are critical for us,” says Amy Welsman, founder and CEO at Paume, a Toronto luxury hand-care brand. “They provide social proof, build trust and help potential buyers understand the real-world performance of our products. ... They validate the results we promise and create a sense of community around our brand.”

In fact, customer reviews are a key part of Paume’s ecommerce strategy: “In my opinion, reviews are a super powerful

conversion tool,” Welsman says. “A compelling review—especially one that details a customer’s experience, concerns and results—can be more persuasive than a product description. People trust people.”

Shoppers are also becoming more aware, she says, which means reviews from unpaid sources are actually more relevant than ever: “Personally, I think customer reviews will only become more important. Consumers are getting savvy—they know when a promotion is paid, and they’re actively seeking unfiltered, real experiences. Influencers still play a huge role in discovery, but customer reviews act as the ‘honest friend’ that helps validate whether a product is truly worth it.”

For Graydon Moffat, founder of Toronto’s Graydon Skincare and a founding member of Canada’s Indie Beauty Collective, customer reviews are not just great for sales—they’re critical to product development and improvement. “We value transparency, so reviews are key to fostering community and credibility,” she says. “They also guide us in improving our formulations and offerings, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our customers. Positive feedback reinforces what works, while constructive criticism helps us grow and refine our products.”

That sentiment is echoed at American body and hair-care brand SheaMoisture. “Customer reviews are crucial for driving trials and consideration of both new and existing products,” says

Maureen Kitheka, marketing and engagement lead at Unilever, which owns SheaMoisture. “These reviews provide valuable insights into the actual performance and user experience of the product based on personal experiences, which can help potential buyers make informed decisions—shoppers are more likely to purchase items with positive reviews. Internally, we use these reviews to understand what works in our product propositions, what customers like or dislike, and why.”

This doesn’t mean influencer reviews should be nixed. For Kitheka, it’s all about finding the right mix: “Influencer reviews can generate initial interest and excitement, while customer reviews can validate the product’s quality and performance through authentic feedback. This dual approach can enhance consumer trust and confidence in the product.”

Moffat agrees, saying, “Genuine influencer reviews can introduce so many new people to our products and increase our brand awareness. It’s great for reach, especially when the influencer has a lot of trust with their followers.”

No matter what type of review it is, she adds, the goal is to strive for authenticity. “With both, it’s great to have reviews that dive into someone’s personal experience using a product. It allows for more specific insights into a product to be shared beyond what’s on our product page.” After all, beauty is in the eye of the reviewer. **V**

The *Eyes* Have It

Of a certain age? Vision changes can happen in the blink of an eye

Words by
Jill Von Sprecken

RECENTLY, ALLYSON GRANT, A FORTY-SOMETHING VANCOUVER-BASED ARTIST AND ACTOR, NOTICED CHANGES IN HER VISION. “In restaurants I did the thing that I always made fun of all my older friends for doing: pulling and pushing the menu closer and then finally getting out my light.”

There were other indications: “Everything was really blurry in the morning,” she says. “I do a gratitude journal ... and I couldn’t read the small print to see the prompts.” She booked an appointment with her optometrist, and was prescribed reading glasses.

There’s a name for this natural, age-related loss of up-close focus: presbyopia. It’s a phenomenon that you’ve either experienced—or will eventually. In Greek, the word means “old eye” (rude).

“It’s the result of the lens inside the eye losing flexibility over time,” says optometrist Dr. Natalia Nowakowska. “That lens works like a zoom lens.” The lenses in our eyes are more flexible in our youth, she explains, allowing us to focus on nearby objects.

The shift from being able to read a menu in low light to having to lean dangerously close to the ambience-providing candle may come on suddenly—or at least feel that way. Plus, if you’re female and of a certain age, there may be other factors besides age affecting your vision. “During perimenopause, as well as menopause, drops in estrogen can cause blurred vision from dry eye and increased risk to certain eye conditions,” says Dr. Nowakowska. “Glaucoma, even cataracts.”

Toronto-based content creator Sasha Exeter recently published a Substack article about her vision, which she describes as changing from one day to the next: “One night I went to bed seeing my phone perfectly. The next morning? My text messages looked like they were written in a light fog. It honestly felt like a betrayal I didn’t see coming.”

We asked Exeter in an interview to tell us more about her experience: “One day my body was doing exactly what I expected of it and the next—it shifted the rules without asking for permission. It was like a line I didn’t even know I was approaching, but then it was suddenly behind me. And I think that part rattled me the most. The vision is just one part of it. There was also a feeling of losing control.”

But, she continues, “Here’s what I’ve come to understand—and what I’d say to any woman hitting that same invisible line: first, this isn’t a failure. It’s not you ‘losing it.’ It’s your body doing exactly what it’s designed to do, even if the timing feels wildly inconvenient. Second, don’t suffer in silence or power through it like it’s something to endure. We’ve unfortunately been conditioned

to normalize discomfort, especially as women in our 40s. Addressing it head-on means booking the eye exam, getting the glasses or simply saying out loud, ‘OK, things are changing.’ Because the truth is, this won’t be the last shift. But it doesn’t have to be a scary one—it can be a clarifying one.”

Indeed, the next logical step is reading glasses, which, let’s be honest, come with their own emotional baggage. Exeter says she’ll embrace this necessary new accessory: “Most people in my industry assume I am younger than I am, so wearing readers felt like handing over a birth certificate and announcing my age. But I have come to realize that there’s a level of clarity, discernment and self-trust I have now that I didn’t have in my 20s. The glasses just happen to be the most visible symbol of that. So instead of seeing them as something that gives me away, I see them as just something that grounds me in who I am now.”

For Grant, appearance, and her apparent age, are important in her line of work. But she says she doesn’t mind wearing readers. “Glasses are super chic and fun.” However, she concedes that reading glasses in particular can betray a person’s age. “I have readers, which certainly are an indication of usually mid- to late-40s or later.” Without them, she “can usually squeeze by as a little younger than that.”

Both women’s sentiments are exactly what Montreal-based eyeglass company French Kiwis built its brand on. Gad Benchimol, co-founder and CEO, supplied reading glasses to pharmacies, but business faltered during the pandemic due to “no try-on” policies. Then an idea formed: what about reading glasses that look good, like a designer pair, but don’t have the same price tag? The success of their stylish readers have propelled them into sunglasses and other frames, but reading glasses are their base.

Benchimol imagines the French Kiwis customer on a date or in a business meeting, pulling out a pair of reading glasses to read the menu or contract in front of them. In that scenario, Benchimol asks, would you rather pull out a cheap pair of readers or “a pair that the person in front of you is going to be like, ‘Oh my god, those are amazing glasses.’”

That Benchimol’s imagined customer is out on a date or at a business meeting—not straining to see their cross-stitch—reflects a shifting sentiment about aging. At one time, getting older meant creakiness and obsolescence.



“One day my body was doing *exactly* what I expected of it and the next—it *shifted the rules* without asking for permission”



Today, a person’s vitality enjoys a dramatically increased lifespan.

“We are very much still in our prime, and we are still very much into fashion and self-expression,” says Gaelle Margulies, the marketing manager at French Kiwis. “And so for us, it was easy, in a sense, to identify the type of product that we wanted to create. Because we felt like we were creating it for ourselves.”

Whether you wear reading glasses or not, there are a few things you can do to support eye health. “Diet is important. Lutein, specifically, which we could get from leafy green spinach helps with maintaining macular health. Omega-3s help with dry eye. Staying hydrated is always important,” says Dr. Nowakowska. But perhaps even more important: UV protection and regular eye exams.

Indeed, despite her protestations, Exeter came around to reading glasses. “What I thought would feel like a

concession ... started to feel like accessorizing,” she says. “There’s something very powerful about owning the phase you’re in instead of pretending you’re not in it.”

And, she adds, “I approach readers the same way that I would approach any accessory—they need shape, intention and a point of view. I’m drawn to frames that feel architectural and refined, not invisible. Colour matters, too; creamy neutrals, tortoiseshell or clear tones that work with my wardrobe. And styling is key—glasses should be part of the look from the start, so everything from the lip to the earrings feels cohesive and chosen.”

Grant has similar feelings of acceptance. “I’m an artist. I use my eyes for everything. I’m very visual.” Plus, wearing reading glasses helps to protect her eyes from the progression of vision loss.

“I’m not devastated about it, but there’s an awareness of time passing,” she says. How very grown up. **V**

VITA X WALMART CANADA

THE LIZZIE RESET

How to master Y2K style for Hilary Duff’s summer tour

WITH THE SCRAMBLE FOR HILARY DUFF SUMMER TOUR TICKETS OFFICIALLY UNDERWAY, a familiar aesthetic is dominating the cultural zeitgeist: the return of Y2K style. We aren’t talking about a costume-party caricature; instead, the trend is leaning into Lizzie McGuire-era confidence—playful, flirty and effortlessly fun, but updated with a modern, wearable twist. Luckily, mastering this “2000s pop star” vibe doesn’t require a designer budget. Walmart Canada has curated a collection of affordable, nostalgic pieces that feel current enough for everyday wear while still delivering that high-energy concert look. Here is the blueprint for the ultimate reimaged Y2K outfit.



THE FOUNDATIONS

Denim & The Baby Tee

The cornerstone of any early-aughts wardrobe is the silhouette. Start with a pair of **George Women’s Boot Leg Jeans**. Sitting just below the waist with a slim fit through the hip and thigh, the boot-cut opening offers a flattering, retro-inspired shape that serves as a chic alternative to the baggy styles of the ’90s. Pair your denim with the quintessential **No Boundaries Short Sleeve Baby Tee**. Crafted from soft, stretchy rib knit, this fitted tee provides the perfect balance to the flared denim. It’s a versatile staple that works just as well with joggers or shorts once the tour ends.

THE LAYERS

The Oversized Trucker

To achieve that authentic light-wash denim-on-denim look, layer your baby tee with the **Levi Strauss Signature™ Women’s Loose Trucker Jacket** in “Summer Eve”. The oversized, on-trend fit provides a modern contrast to the fitted layers underneath, giving the outfit a relaxed, “cool-girl” finish.

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

No Y2K Transformation is complete without bold accessories.

THE FRAMES Madden NYC’s Oversized Square Sunglasses in pink deliver instant glamour. The gradient lenses and bold frames add the “alluring visual depth” necessary for a front-row selfie.

THE FOOTWEAR Keep the look breezy with Time and Tru Strappy Sandals. The woven faux-leather design and cushioned sole ensure you can stay on your feet from the opening act to the final encore.

This season, fashion is about feeling good in your skin without upending your life—or your bank account. Whether you’re heading to the stadium or just meeting friends for a “cake picnic,” these pieces make A-list style accessible to everyone. *Walmart.ca*

A laughing Matter

Vancouver's comedy scene is evolving—and getting funnier

Words by
Sheri Radford

“THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE DOING COMEDY RIGHT NOW IS THE MOST I’VE EVER SEEN IN VANCOUVER, BY FAR, AND I DON’T KNOW IF THAT MAYBE HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH HOW DARK THE WORLD HAS GOTTEN,” says Cameron Macleod, host and producer of *The Hero Show*. The longest-running sketch-comedy show in the city, it’s always filled with funny folks doing solo performances of character monologues, songs, readings from fake books and other sketches that defy easy categorization. “There’s just a whole city full of weirdos doing fun stuff.”

Denise Jones similarly points to the bleakness of the world right now as a reason audiences are seeking out funny live shows for a few hours of escape. Jones is the cofounder of *The Comedy Department*, which puts on improv shows each week at the Show Cellar in the West End. “I think improv is still popular because it is so joyful,” she says. “The whole purpose of improv is saying yes to other people’s ideas.” She notes, “With Netflix and post-pandemic, I definitely think that comedy is experiencing a gigantic renaissance of interest from audiences.” And as we continue to spend more and more time staring at our screens, Jones predicts that authentic live experiences such as improv—where anything can happen—will become even more popular.

Local organization *Blind Tiger* offers classes in improv, standup and sketch comedy. Co-founder Tom Hill sees positive changes in Vancouver’s evolving comedy landscape, such as an increase in inclusiveness. “A big part of our mission of *Blind Tiger* is to welcome folks into comedy that were underrepresented in the scene,” he says. Shows featuring BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ performers are far more common now. Hill praises the venue *Little Mountain Gallery* in particular for creating a welcoming, affordable space that allows all sorts of creative people to make the work they want to make. “That’s so important to the development of comedians and voices in town.”

Vancouver also hosts several big events each year geared toward making people laugh. The *Great Outdoors Comedy Festival* in August attracts headliners such as Bill Burr, Anthony Jeselnik and Pete Davidson, while *Vancouver Is Funny* in September has featured the likes of Rick Mercer and Sophie Buddle. Just for *Laughs Vancouver* in February is the most established event of the bunch, with big-name performers such as David Letterman, Zach Galifianakis and Brent Butt.



Photo: Chelsey Stuyt



“I think improv is still popular because it is so joyful ...

the whole purpose of improv is *saying yes to other people’s ideas*”

That’s not to say the local comedy scene is entirely rosy. Oldtimers still lament the 2006 closing of *The Urban Well*, where Robin Williams sometimes did impromptu sets. The *Comedy Mix* shut down in 2019, and *Yuk Yuk’s* shuttered for good during the pandemic, leaving the city without a large, dedicated comedy club. The old system in which local standup comics worked regularly in these clubs—learning from more experienced comedians and gradually progressing from opener to feature performer to headliner—doesn’t really exist anymore. Instead, we have a mix of venues offering comedy just part of the time, along with an increasing number of TikTok and YouTube stars who haven’t had the chance to hone their acts by performing regularly in front of (sometimes unpredictable) live audiences. These social media stars also feel a constant need to pump out new content for their feeds.

“The lasting effects of the pandemic on the comedy industry, I would say, are the online nature of comedy has become front and centre,” says Ivan Decker,

whose comedy album *I Wanted to Be a Dinosaur* nabbed a Juno Award in 2018. Online comedians are largely siloed from each other, whereas the old club system meant that young standups learned from more experienced performers, “watching what they do and how they work the very same audience in the very same room on the very same microphone that you just performed on,” which was extremely valuable, Decker says. “That’s happening less and less because of the fractured nature of the scene.”

“I think it would be better if there was a dedicated comedy club downtown,” says Jacob Samuel, who won a Juno Award in 2021 for his comedy album *Horse Power*. “There’s fewer opportunities for comedians to learn in a more structured kind of environment.” But, on the plus side, Samuel says the breakdown of the old system has removed many of the barriers and gatekeepers to comedy, resulting in a local scene that feels more accessible and diverse. “There’s more space for people who maybe felt marginalized before.”

Many of today’s Vancouver standups

perform at *Little Mountain Gallery*, *Comedy After Dark* and *Underground Comedy Club*, all in Gastown. You might see an experienced performer polishing some material, a newbie at an open-mic night or shows like *Couples Clownselling*—comedians and their partners get hilariously bad couples’ therapy from completely unqualified people—or *Pillow Talk*, a comedy show featuring classic slumber party games.

Brent Constantine, executive director of the not-for-profit *Little Mountain Gallery*, points out that although Vancouver has lost its big corporate comedy clubs, the unexpected silver lining is that the smaller venues springing up to replace them are less driven by profits. Many of these places are even run by comedians. Constantine says, “If you’re just trying to do comedy—standup, improv, sketch, other weird formats—it’s a great time to be in the city because there’s a lot of places that their first priority isn’t making money, but it’s in providing space for people to do what they want to do.”

Where Desert Meets Water

A new vision for wellness in Kamloops



IMAGINE SINKING INTO A WARM THERMAL POOL AS THE SUN SETS OVER ROLLING SAGEBRUSH HILLS. Steam rises into crisp desert air. A cold plunge awakens the senses beneath an open sky, framed by pine and

striking hoodoo formations. This isn’t Scandinavia—it’s Kamloops, B.C., and it’s poised to redefine wellness tourism.

Tourism Kamloops is developing a proposal for a world-class Nordic Spa—an immersive, year-round destination

that blends elemental contrast with elevated design. Set within B.C.’s only semi-arid desert landscape, the experience is unlike anything currently offered in the province’s interior. Guests would move through a curated circuit of thermal pools, cold plunges, steam rooms and saunas, complemented by massage treatments and a bistro café designed for lingering. And this vision is more than aspirational—it’s backed by data.

The Nordic Spa is one of three concepts validated in the 2025 CBRE Iconic Attraction Study, an independent feasibility analysis commissioned by Tourism Kamloops that projects approximately 87,500 annual visitors and \$14.7 million in revenue by its fourth year of operation, with estimated capital costs ranging from \$13 to \$20 million. In short: the demand is there, and the opportunity is real.

Equally integral to the project is its cultural foundation. The proposed spa is designed in collaboration with Tkemlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, on whose traditional territory Kamloops sits. The vision includes opportunities

to thoughtfully integrate cultural and heritage elements throughout the guest experience—ensuring the destination is not only beautiful, but meaningful.

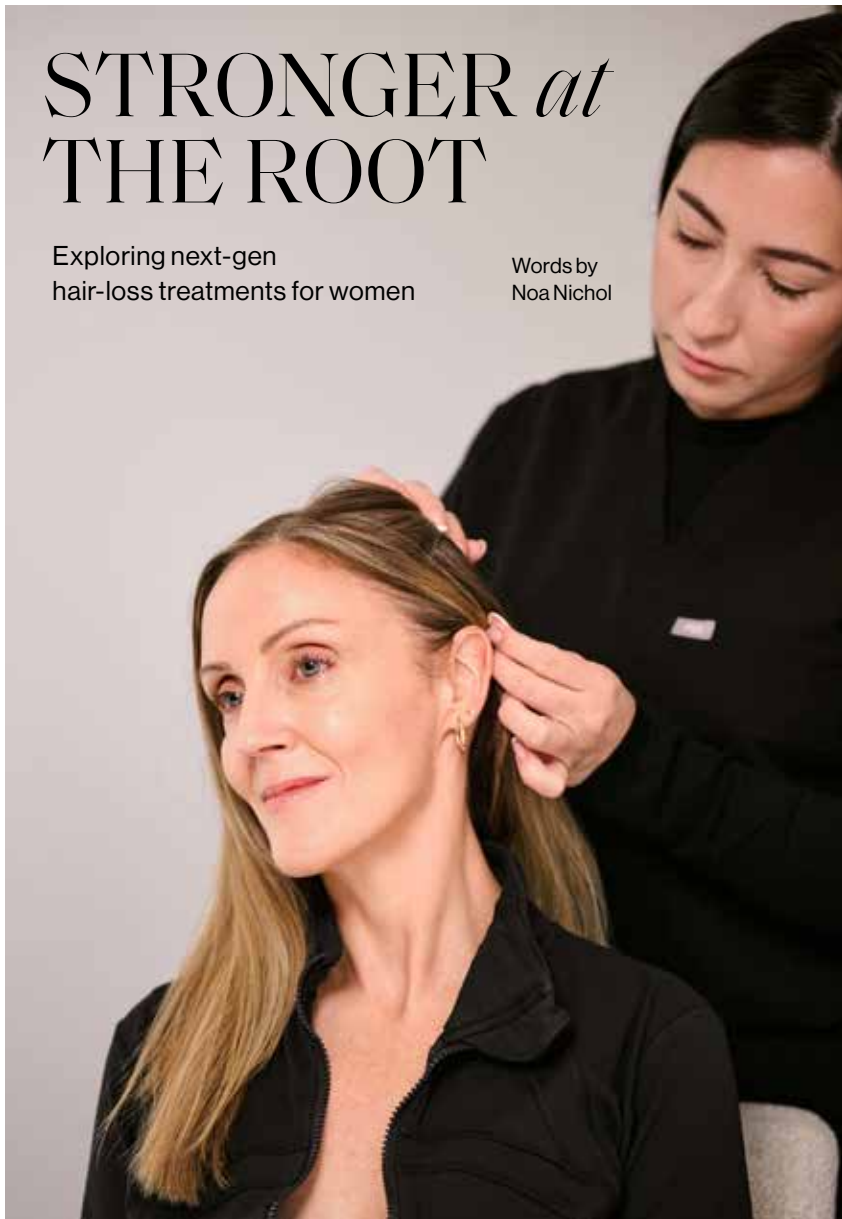
This Nordic Spa is part of a larger, ambitious initiative to position Kamloops as a must-visit destination for both domestic and international travellers. Alongside concepts like a dramatic Skywalk over the hoodoos and a future Iconic Tower and Adventure Park, the spa represents a cornerstone of the city’s evolving tourism landscape.

Strategically located along two of Destination BC’s major touring routes—Rainforest to Rockies and Nature’s Heartland—Kamloops is also one of Canada’s fastest-growing cities. With identified sites, municipal support and investor-ready lookbooks complete with market projections and operating insights, the groundwork has already been laid. Now, Tourism Kamloops is seeking visionary partners to bring this next chapter to life. Because in Kamloops, wellness isn’t just about escape—it’s about experience. Tourismkamloops.com

STRONGER *at* THE ROOT

Exploring next-gen hair-loss treatments for women

Words by Noa Nichol



FOR MANY WOMEN, hair thinning can feel both deeply personal and frustratingly complex. Unlike the more visible patterns of male hair loss, female hair thinning often shows up subtly—through a widening part, overall density loss or increased shedding in the shower. The good news: a novel generation of treatments is shifting the conversation from resignation to regeneration.

In clinics across Canada, physicians are increasingly turning to regenerative approaches that focus not only on the hair itself but on the health of the scalp and follicle environment. Among the most promising: microneedling paired

with exosome-based therapies, which aim to stimulate dormant follicles and restore healthier hair-growth cycles.

According to Dr. Jacky Lo, a general practitioner with a focus in aesthetic medicine at Dermapure Vancouver, the first step is understanding that hair loss in women is rarely caused by just one factor. “Most of the women I see for hair loss are in their 30s to 50s, but what’s changed is that many are noticing it earlier and seeking help sooner,” says Dr. Lo. “The most common underlying cause is still female-pattern hair loss, which tends to show up as overall thinning or a widening part rather than a receding hairline.

What’s different now is that hair loss is often not just one issue—it’s layered.”

Stress, illness, rapid weight loss, hormonal changes and nutrient deficiencies can all disrupt the hair-growth cycle. “Hair is highly sensitive to internal stress,” Dr. Lo explains. “Physical or emotional stress can push more hairs into the shedding phase, which is why many women notice increased hair loss after illness, surgery or major life changes.” Because of this complexity, diagnosis is critical. Physicians typically begin with a detailed medical history and scalp exam, sometimes supplemented by bloodwork to assess factors like iron levels or thyroid function. “Overall, the goal is to identify not just what type of hair loss is present, but why,” he says. “That’s what guides an effective, personalized treatment plan.”

One factor that often surprises patients is the importance of scalp health. “Healthy hair can’t grow from an unhealthy scalp,” stresses Dr. Lo. Conditions like seborrheic dermatitis, inflammation or buildup from oils and styling products can disrupt the hair cycle and worsen shedding. Once these underlying issues are addressed, newer regenerative treatments can help support follicle recovery. And, among the most promising developments is the use of exosomes—microscopic particles that act as cellular messengers.

“Exosomes are best thought of as tiny ‘messengers,’” Dr. Lo explains. “They carry signals between cells that support processes like repair and regeneration. In hair loss, the idea is that these signals can help create a healthier environment for weakened follicles and support the hair growth cycle.”

Because exosomes are applied topically in Canada, clinics often combine them with microneedling to improve delivery. “Microneedling creates very small channels in the scalp, which can help improve delivery of topical treatments to the level of the hair follicle,” he says. “It may also stimulate local blood flow and activate natural repair pathways, further supporting hair growth.” While regenerative treatments are gaining traction, he says they work best as part of a comprehensive plan: “Treatments like exosomes are best viewed

as part of a broader strategy. If there’s a hormonal component or nutritional deficiency, those need to be addressed as well. The best outcomes come from a personalized, evidence-based approach.”

At the product level, companies like Functionalab are developing exosome-based formulations designed specifically for scalp health and hair density. “Exosomes are tiny messengers released by cells that carry growth signals and bioactive compounds,” explains Functionalab scientific director Nathalie Pelletier. “In scalp treatments, they help stimulate hair follicle stem cells, support repair and regeneration, and create a healthier environment for hair growth.”

Functionalab’s formula, she adds, uses plant-derived exosomes combined with growth factors and targeted actives to support multiple aspects of the hair cycle: “Our formulation was designed to target the root causes of hair thinning. It helps wake up hair follicles and restart natural growth signals, strengthen hair at the root to reduce shedding, and support a healthy scalp environment.”

In clinical settings, like at Dermapure locations, these products can be paired with procedures such as microneedling or scalp JetPeel to enhance absorption. “After microneedling, the exosomes are applied directly to the scalp where the treatment helps enhance their absorption,” Pelletier explains. “The combination can help stimulate follicle activity, support scalp health and strengthen hair.”

Patience, however, remains essential. “Hair follows a natural growth cycle, so results take time,” she says. “With consistent use, some patients may begin noticing early improvements after the first month, but fuller results typically develop over several months.”

For Dr. Lo, the shift toward regenerative hair treatments reflects a broader change in how medicine approaches hair loss: “The earlier we intervene, the more hair we can preserve. Hair restoration is really about preserving follicle health and supporting the growth cycle over time.” And for women navigating hair thinning? That approach offers something that has long been missing from the conversation: hope grounded in science. Dermapure.com

Burnaby Blooms

FREE family fun

May 3 | 11 am-4 pm

Shadbolt Centre, Deer Lake Park

Schedule and details:
Burnaby.ca/Blooms

City of Burnaby

Gifts for Mom. On West 4th Ave.

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 10th



Flowers, cards, gifts, brunch dates, and spa days — however you're celebrating Mom, find it on West 4th. She deserves it.



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HYDROCONQUEST

Elegance is an attitude

LONGINES

