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Autumn 2024

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ALI WONG

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EDITOR'S *letter*

"I think feminism is the worst thing that ever happened to women. Our job used to be no job. We had it so good!"

- Ali Wong

It's a funny point but I think that our cover star Ali Wong is a contrarian example to this particular quip. She has carved out a killer career in three of the most ruthless industries around. Stand-up comedy, film and TV. This pathway was also a rebellion against typical parental pressures. Good grades, a degree, and a safe career path. I'm not going to try and run a psychological analysis on Ali's decision-making but my sense is that whatever burning spark she had driving her to pursue comedy, trumped all other rational considerations of financial security and career path. To sit down and plan out a career pathway in the entertainment world is probably akin to building out a retirement plan based on winning two Instant Kiwi tickets, one Lotto ticket and a five-day winning streak at a casino. Not only has Ali managed to crack this beast though, she has used it as a platform to be totally unfiltered, raw and open. In the process, she has been able to take on a myriad of stereotypes across the spectrum of relationships, culture, race and gender. I think this is the biggest point of inspiration actually. Not so much the career choice and the multiple awards, but just the fact that Ali has not compromised with her dream. Nor has she compromised with what she thinks and the use of her talent to confront the often unsaid and uncomfortable. This is real power and it's really within us all regardless of what we do as a day job.

"The worst part of being the child of an immigrant is that you have to help your mother switch her cell phone plan."

- Ali Wong

Héloïse Garrity, Editor

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THE NOIRE NARRATIVE

In the labyrinthine alleyways of Paris, where the past lingers like the aroma of a well-aged Bordeaux is where the Noire collection by Silk&Steel finds its muse. Under the creative helm of Sarah Cotterall, the brand has always offered pieces that are as much a narrative as they are adornment and the Noire collection is no exception, drawing its inspiration from a France that once was - an era imbued with elegance and a certain je ne sais quoi. Each piece in the Noire collection is a testament to the artisan's touch. Particularly the collection's Petite Perle designs are a celebration of subtlety and strength, designed to be layered and stacked, much like the stories we collect over a lifetime. Wearing them is not just an act of adornment but an act of remembrance, a way to carry the essence of a time, a place, or a person with us.



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A NIGHT ON
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THE
JOURNEY



The **MACALLAN**

Crafted without compromise.

Please savour The Macallan responsibly. Never drink and drive.



Nature is Home. The collection completely removes plastic derived materials which usually speckle clothing. This means that all Kowtow thread and all fabric are 100% organic cotton. All elastic is 100% latex rubber and all buttons are either 100% nut or shell.

Kowtow Founder Gosia Piątek's vision for the brand has been clear from conception, "There are two reasons why Kowtow was born, one was to ensure fashion could be made in a humane, ethical and kind way and the other to work with nature and not against it".

Their mission doesn't end here though. They're literally setting out to teach everyone a lesson... With an open source handbook, a guide to plastic-free clothing components. It gives other designers what they need to know about going on their own plastic-free journey, from buttons to elastic, thread to fabric and where to source them.



WEAR

GOING PLASTIC FREE

If you're anything like me, which I pray you're not, then you think way too much about microplastics and our reliance on plastics in general. Thankfully we're not alone in this worry and businesses are ever so slowly beginning to take note. Wellington based Kowtow has always had a mission to create nature friendly fashion and they've just taken the next big step in organic fairtrade cotton garments by introducing a plastic-free collection dubbed



SHOP

THE RED CARPET TREATMENT

Good news for Auckland's Queen Street as it welcomes a brand new luxury boutique near the waterfront. Christian Louboutin has quite literally set up shop in a 90-square-metre boutique located at the entrance of Queens Arcade. You



cannot miss it with its bright red scale tile façade and blue ceramics. The inside is modeled on the designers personal haven, and has a cozy warmth about it. It's more like a villa than a store. It's broken into two sections, one styled after a daytime lounge and the other an evening living room. The lounge is adorned with the Maison's signature red carpet and throughout are items showcasing a selection of both men's and women's styles. The collection stretches across shoes, leather goods, and accessories. The second room has a presentation focal point of the designers most iconic pieces with the space complimented by a striking red sofa. Low walnut wood cabinets around the room present what the luxury brand has to offer.

It's a great space we can't wait to return to.

WEAR**BAGGY
LONG LEGS**

Levi's has focused on fit and fabric for their '24 Autumn/Winter collection as well as the democratisation of loose-fitting jeans. It's time to get comfortable no matter what body type you're sporting. The collection's revamped and relaxed jeans offer both versatility and longevity, and we're here for it.

They've focused on fit, creating subtle details in stitch treatments, deconstruction and patching. On the fabric side you'd think it's "denim and be done with it", but no they've made sure Autumn starts with super soft, washed-out fabrics that feel pre-broken in. Color-wise, ballet pinks and icy blues pop against washed blacks.

Leading the way for bottoms are the baggy mid-rise denim options, which is always a



closet favourite. Officially out of the closet now I guess. The baggy offerings extend to versatile cargo, utility styling. The collection's denim offerings also include the Ribcage Bell, a '70s-inspired super high-rise that softly flare.

For tops, the collection features an assortment of silhouettes and colorways in woven shirts and blouses that often nod to western aesthetics. Soft to the touch, the Mietra Blouse and Carinna Blouse offer foundations for any wardrobe with subtle prints and patterns.

CHANEL'S NEW YORK NOUVEAU

Fifth Avenue, New York, has become an even more glittery affair after Chanel has recently planted its très chic footprint with a new flagship dedicated solely to Watches and Fine Jewellery. This isn't just any boutique—it's a veritable temple to all things Chanel.

Designed by Peter Marino, the space is a golden jewel box amidst the concrete jungle. The boutique, a nod to Chanel's legendary address at 18 Place Vendôme, is essentially Coco Chanel's mood board come



to life. Think her love for the number 5, art, and those lavish interiors of her Parisian pad, but on Fifth Avenue.

The exterior, framed by the Beaux-Arts architecture of the Crown Building, is all about honed and grooved black granite and gold bronze screens that scream "I'm expensive" in the most refined way possible. Inside, it's a world where gold and black reign supreme. The boutique's entryway, with its black and gold lacquer panelling, is so elegantly dramatic, that one might need a moment to compose themselves before proceeding on to the gallery room with its "Dream Catcher" chandeliers—because why have mere lighting when you can have art? The Fine Jewellery Salons are a testament to the fact that too much is never enough, with coromandel-style finishes and a gilt mirror that probably



has more stories to tell than your average socialite.

Upstairs, the Watch Salon awaits with a custom polyptych that's so artfully done, that it might just make you forget you're in a boutique and not a gallery. The mezzanine floor, with its Tang Dynasty camels and a Louis XV desk, is where modern meets ancient, and everything is casually draped in diamonds because, of course, it is.

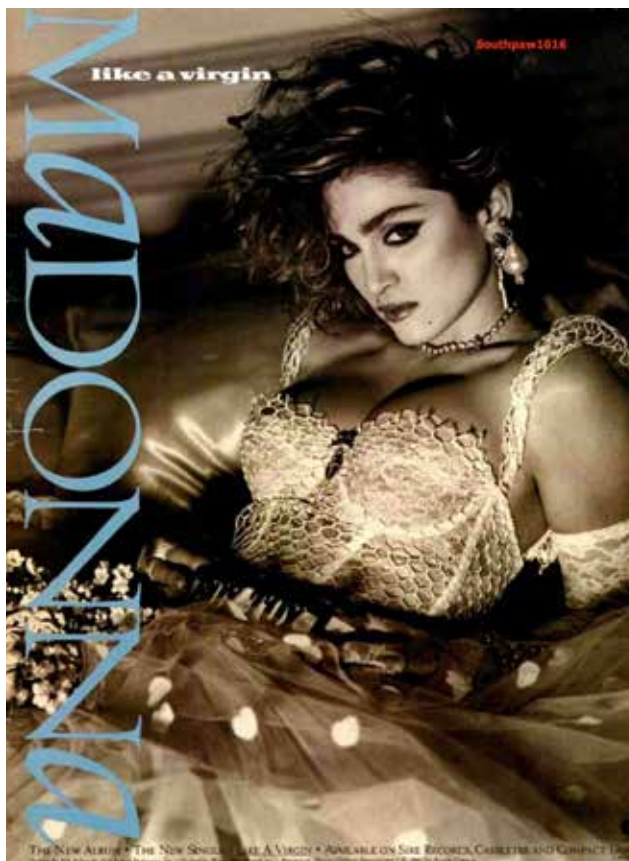
So, if you find yourself wandering Fifth Avenue come February, do stop by Chanel's new flagship. It's not just a store; it's an experience—a glittering, golden, slightly over-the-top experience that only Chanel could deliver.



LISTEN

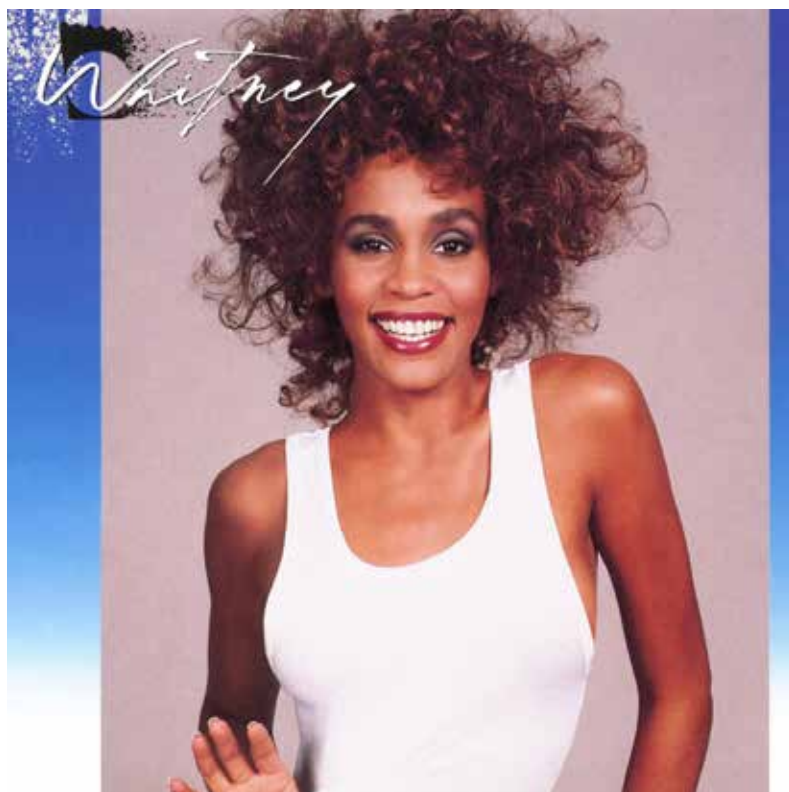
REWIND: 5 CASSETTES FOR YOUR NEW/OLD WALKMAN

Ah, tapes – those charming relics of a bygone era, complete with that ever-delightful risk of unravelling into a nested mess that no pencil can salvage. For some reason, they are coming back in a big way. Maybe it's some relentless lobbying by the Guardians of the Galaxy franchise and their blue Sony Tps-l2 Walkman complete with iconic orange headphones (eat your wireless hearts out Apple AirPods - you have nothing on these warm fuzzy {in both the audio and the physical sense} and foamy bundles of magic). Or maybe it's a bit of a musical revolt wrapped in



**MADONNA'S
"LIKE A VIRGIN" (1984)**

Because what's more empowering than belting out "Material Girl" while questioning your life choices? It's a pop bible for the modern woman, navigating love and ambition in a material world.



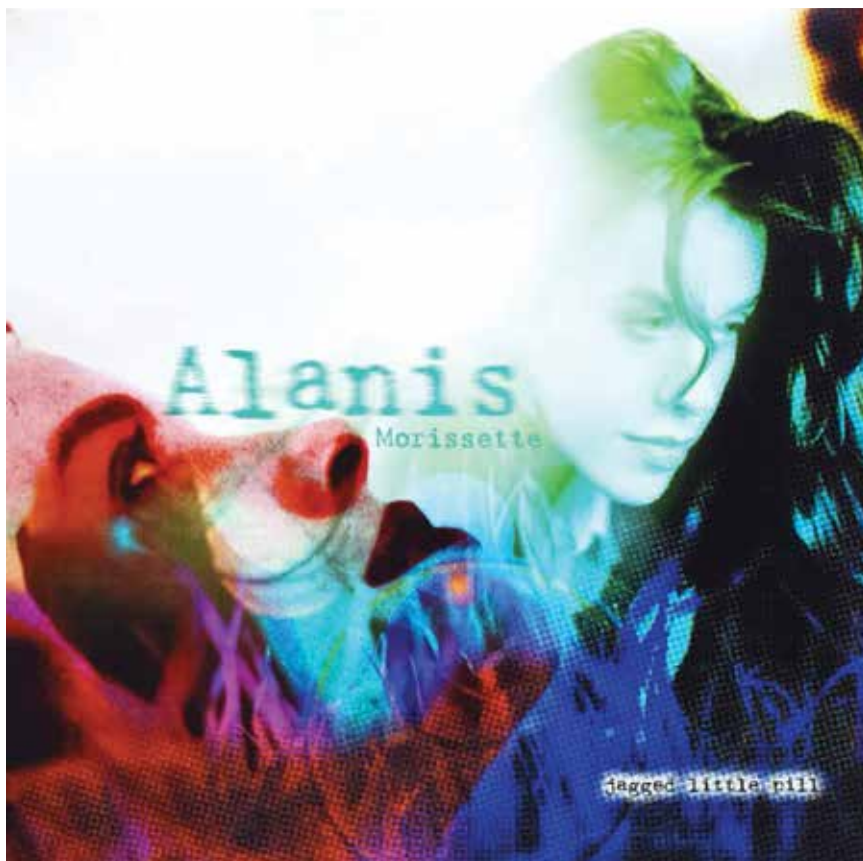
**WHITNEY HOUSTON'S
"WHITNEY" (1987)**

Whitney's voice was the soundtrack to every "I will survive" moment, from breakups to big promotions. This album is a reminder that you're every woman – it's all in you, and yes, you can dance with somebody.



**TRACY CHAPMAN'S
"TRACY CHAPMAN" (1988)**

For the days when you're feeling introspective and a little bit 'save the world'. It's folk music with a conscience, perfect for the woman who's as concerned about social justice as she is about her carbon footprint.



**ALANIS MORISSETT'S
"JAGGED LITTLE PILL" (1995)**

The ultimate catharsis in a cassette, for when you need to scream-sing in traffic about the messiness of life, love, and everything in between. It's like a therapy session, but cheaper and with more harmonica.



**FLEETWOOD MAC'S
"RUMOURS" (1977)**

This album is for those complex moments that require a soundtrack as intricately layered as your feelings. It's the musical equivalent of a group hug from Stevie Nicks and the gang, reminding you that even legends have bad days.

nostalgia, a middle finger to the intangible, a reclaiming of the mixtape artistry that Spotify's algorithms will never understand. In an age where music generally floats about in the cloud, fleeting and disposable, the Walkman demands commitment. It's music with intention, a far cry from the mindless shuffle play that's become our default. So, for those ready to embrace this blend of irony and old-school authenticity, here's your starter pack – five cassettes that are not only iconic high notes in the chapter of the Walkman era but were also prolific enough to still be holding out somewhere in a garage sale, a TradeMe bulk buy or an op shop.



BUILT FOR PURPOSE

At the start of the year, there must be millions of fresh post-it notes that are sacrificed to the altar of goal setting only to appear months later stuck to the bottom of unread books or the back of drawers the world over. Reappearing as a faded testament to exuberant and wishful thinking that never had a hope in hell of sticking.



It seems such a human thing to have goals. It might be one of the key things that makes us human actually, to have the self-awareness about the areas that we need improving in and then the planning to go about resolving those things. Unfortunately though, if the rest of the world is anything like me you could probably power the onpeak electricity demands of a small industrial town with the neural activity dedicated to well-intentioned goal setting that never goes anywhere. But maybe the concept of a goal being something that you can tick off doesn't make it a serious goal. Real change is ongoing and it's driven by a deep-seated sense of purpose. I am not sure that there is a much better testament to this than The Hotel Britomart. It is the physical manifestation of purpose in the form of a sustainable, luxury boutique hotel.

The beating heart of Auckland's vibrant Britomart precinct, The Hotel Britomart is a glorious testament to the power of purposeful design, sustainability, and a commitment to community and cultural values. Not only do these elements give The Hotel Britomart a deeper connection with its environment and context but it also offers guests an experience that harmoniously blends luxury with ecological and social responsibility.

And this was the intention from the start. From its inception, The Hotel Britomart was envisioned to be more than just a building; it was designed to be a foundation of sustainability, operational efficiency, functionality, and cultural integration. "Building with purpose goes beyond the physical structure," explains Campbell Williamson, Development Director at Cooper and Company. "It's about embedding sustainability, efficiency, and cultural considerations into every facet of the hotel's lifecycle."

The design and architecture of The Hotel Britomart is an important conduit for the deep respect for the environment and local culture that is an important part of The Hotel Britomart's ethos. Amongst the many considerations along the way including the impact footprint of each brick, The hotel incorporates energy-efficient systems, maximisation of natural light, and the selection of eco-friendly materials. "The key elements that influence the 'greenness' of a build include concrete mixes, glass, insulation levels, and more," Williamson notes, underscoring the meticulous attention to detail that went into the hotel's construction. The construction process emphasized minimizing waste and employing sustainable materials.

Williamson shares, "It was about ensuring every aspect of the build was scrutinised for its environmental impact, from the sourcing of materials to waste management on-site." And the New Zealand Green Building Council agreed giving The Hotel Britomart a 5 Green Star standard which is no small feat. An incredible 80% of construction waste was reused or recycled, setting a precedent for sustainability in construction practices as well as a precedent for ongoing operations.

The hotel continues to prioritise waste reduction and recycling in its operations, from minimising single-use plastics to composting organic waste.

And this build, while an awesome achievement in its own right is really part of a long-term and continuous journey that extends from its design and build phases to its day-to-day operations, procurement practices, and even guest experiences. The building really forms the foundation for ongoing operations, ensuring that guests and staff benefit from its thoughtful layout and amenities. "Operational efficiency isn't just about energy conservation; it's about creating a smooth, enjoyable experience for our guests and a



productive environment for our team," adds General Manager Clinton Farley.

The hotel's approach to energy and resource management is proactive and innovative. "We use smart building technologies and extensive metering to monitor and optimise our energy and water use, and are a Toitū carbonreduce certified organisation" says Farley. This allows the hotel to adapt and reduce its consumption based on real-time data, significantly lowering its environmental footprint.

And this connection with its environment goes deeper in terms of the cultural connection also.



The Hotel Britomart is deeply rooted in the local community and culture, offering guests an authentic Auckland experience. "Our design and operations reflect a strong sense of place," Farley remarks. "We incorporate local art and materials, celebrate New Zealand's heritage, and engage with our community to offer a truly Kiwi experience."

As The Hotel Britomart continues to evolve, its commitment to sustainability, community, and cultural integration remains steadfast. "We're not just building for today; we're planning for the future," Farley concludes. "Our goal is to continuously improve, adapt to new sustainability practices, and remain a leader in eco-friendly hospitality."

The Hotel Britomart's journey is a compelling story of how luxury and sustainability can coexist, providing a blueprint for the future of the hospitality industry. It is a testament to long-term change and a showcase of the profound impact of building with purpose, not just for the guests it welcomes but for the broader community and the planet.

thehotelbritomart.com



A SAFE HAVEN FOR WAHINE AND TAMARIKI

It is a right for all New Zealanders—especially wahine and their tamariki—to feel safe in their homes. Unfortunately sometimes this isn't the case. To feel safe and secure is a right that everyone should hold.

INTERVIEW AND WORDS BY JAMIE TROWER



According to a report published by The Guardian last year, in New Zealand, police attend a family harm episode every three minutes with thousands of cases going unreported. Māori wahine especially are more likely to be affected by family and sexual violence than any other ethnicity, with nearly 50 percent experiencing partner abuse in their lifetime. These, along with dozens of other staggering statistics, are the reasons why women and their children don't deserve to be living in abusive situations or households in Aotearoa.

Officially opened this Valentine's Day, a new Women's Refuge in Tāmaki Makaurau offers the same comprehensive range of services offered by all refuges around the country—including 24/7 Crisis Line, Community Clients and Whanau Protect. The refuge also offers practical assistance, helping survivors navigate legal processes such as obtaining restraining orders, accessing legal aid, and securing housing.

M2women was given the opportunity to sit down and talk with the Manager of Women's Refuge Tāmaki Makaurau, Linda Thompson on the new safe-haven for women and children.

Can you tell me a little bit about this new Women's Refuge in Tāmaki Makaurau?

We're a new refuge, responding to a real need in the community. We cover the Central Auckland area and we set out to support women and children in any way they need us. I personally wish there was no need for us, with no violence happening in the country. I'd be out of the job, but I'd be happy for that to happen. However with an average of 71 crisis calls a day, it's not possible to not have refuges. We're all about spreading awareness and educating Kiwis about domestic violence. We hope we can be a sanctuary for survivors.

What sort of support do you offer there?

We want to be a safe haven for wahine and tamariki to heal, rebuild their lives and regain their strength. These wahine might have been in a relationship at their lowest points and it's good if they reach out for support, so they can regain their strength and give them time to breathe and just be themselves. Women's Refuge Tāmaki Makaurau will offer the same comprehensive range of services that are offered by most refuges around the country, including 24/7 Crisis Line and Community Clients. We're doing a community service called Whanau Protect which means if there's somebody who might want to stay in their own home, we go in and assess windows, doors, access, locks. We give them an alarm that they press if they feel in danger and the police will respond in 15 minutes. Other refuges offer different things, but that's what we're going to offer at the moment. This refuge will offer practical assistance with helping survivors navigate legal processes such as obtaining parenting or protection orders, accessing legal aid or securing housing.

The vision is for all women and children to feel safe every day and we know reaching out isn't easy. Sometimes, the women may not want to leave the relationship, they just want the violence to end. We'll be here in any way without judgement, free and confidential. We just want them to be safe.

What do the policies look like at the moment in regards to domestic violence and what would you like to see changed?

There are a few things that are on the radar. I think there was an article that came out recently about police doing a refocus on domestic abuse. The article read:

"A 'refocus' of police work is the leading 'key opportunity' in a briefing to the

incoming Police Minister Mark Mitchell, released on Thursday.

The briefing says police have been forced, by the lack of other social services, to step in when it comes to family harm, mental health, and child protection calls.

The proposed change would involve 'supporting managed withdrawal and advocating for that role to be filled by others'.

'For example, reducing police's role in mental health crisis response is a clear opportunity, as is right sizing our response to family harm,' the document says."

—RNZ, 1st of February, 2024: 'Police may step back from responding to family harm, mental health callouts - briefing paper'

That for us is a massive issue, because if police don't step in, more people are going to get more harmed. It's a 'watch this space' thing. For us, family harm is so life-impacting. If they change that, who's going to respond that's got the mana and community to make proper change? It's a really worrying thing. Because we've just had a change of government, everything has been up in the air. Everyone's been concentrating on the first hundred days, but no one is giving us answers on anything.

I'm in a coalition group where we lobby the government. Pre-election, National said that they'll definitely bring a stalking law into force, making it a criminal offence. We asked to follow-up on this, but they remain quite tight-lipped.

Stalking is very much an issue we're worried about because it leads to so many other problems. We want more severe punishment for strangulation and things like that, because they're a pre-indicator of further harm. Also looking at parenting orders, in the context of domestic violence, the family courts don't

“For example, if you were to strangle me, you would go to jail, whereas if we were in a relationship it doesn't have the same rules.”

There is inter-relational violence out there and especially on this day not everything is happy and rosey. Sometimes getting a bashing is the gift someone will receive on Valentine's Day, which is a hard fact to swallow.

necessarily support victims. Sometimes it's retraumatizing them. I'm not criticising the family court, I'm just asking: could we do better?

I don't want to go out there in some big political statement, but it's definitely on our radar. The last thing we want to do is re-victimized people and not support them.

You remember the construction site shooting last year in Auckland? The shooter had kicked and strangled a woman and left her with a broken neck. Yet there doesn't seem to be the same consequences for intimate-partner strangulation. For example, if you were to strangle me, you would go to jail, whereas if we were in a relationship it doesn't have the same rules.

We look for things that are indicators. Like, if someone says to me that they've been strangled that's a real warning sign to me that something worse could happen.

People are also worried about the parental alienation aspect of it and that's why parenting orders don't necessarily help the victims because the partner has equal rights to the children. I think, when it's in the context of domestic violence, it's not a fair presumption to assume that they should have equal rights.

What is your own background and how did this opportunity come about for you?

My background is in nursing, so I guess that's where my nurturing aspect comes from. I did grow up and experience domestic violence, so I know what it's like to be the child in the middle. I feel like I'm a survivor, not a victim. When I saw the role come up, I thought: yeah, I can do this. I also really want to make a difference and do a great job in the community. We make a real difference in women's lives. And we need to keep the tamariki safe as well!

I think it's important too to not just talk the talk—I actually know what it was like.

Even though I'm not necessarily seeing the clients face to face, I think being able to offer valuable advice to the team going forward. It's all about who supports us along the way, no matter what 'domestic violence' looks like to the victim.

What are you most proud of for being involved in the refuge?

Right now, my team. They're doing an awesome job. I like to manage in a style where we all have each other's back and I'm so proud of all the jobs they've done. They're really an outstanding team. We still have a couple of others to add to our team, but I feel like we're doing baby-steps. They all bring a bit of difference to the role, and they do an awesome job.

What has been the biggest challenge in starting up the refuge?

I think it's the red tape! It's a cliché, but we waited six months to get a safe house. I started in May last year. It's taken so long to get everything ready. I'm glad of the time, but I was chomping at the bit. I wanted to hit the ground running. There's been good and bad, but it's probably the waiting. It's also important to note how many others have gotten behind us. So when I say that we were waiting for things, we do have support. Te Whatu Ora, The Ministry of Social Development, Oranga Tamariki, the police, to name a few. I say 'red tape' but I think that also might be my impatience too.

What has given you hope in this project?

I bring it back to my team—how they cope with every situation as soon as they arise. We have conversations and they listen. Seeing a wahine leave our service in a better situation to when they arrived—stronger, clearer, less vulnerable—gives me hope. I know we can't help everyone, but what I'm really hopeful for too is the support we're getting in the community too. We can empower people too. Watching them rebuild is great.

The launch day for the Women's Refuge was Valentine's Day. Was that a coincidence, or was that intentional?

It was very intentional! We wanted it to be a day that was thought-provoking. Calling awareness on a day of love and beauty. There is inter-relational violence out there and especially on this day not everything is happy and rosey. Sometimes getting a bashing is the gift someone will receive on Valentine's Day, which is a hard fact to swallow. In New Zealand, nearly half of all homicides that are reported relate to family violence. Half of them are family harm. Also, as a bigger coincidence (if you're Catholic) it's also Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent! It just seems like a perfect date to raise awareness.

What's the best piece of advice you've been given?

It's very simple, I think. For me—way back when I had a teenager—people would say to me: 'don't sweat the small stuff!' Along the same lines it's following your heart and always be kind. You don't know what somebody has woken up to. If you always go out to follow your heart and be kind, I think you'll be the best version of yourself.

What would be the next steps in protecting wahine and tamariki in Aotearoa?

We need to mitigate the violence here. We set out to help people get through physical and mental abuse. Also financial abuse! There's a lot going on! It's about education and making people aware of what's going on there. Women's Refuge regularly advocates for policy change and the help of the community. We've had men being like: 'well, what about men's refuge!' They're going to have to start their own! It's all about knowing what's out there in your community. It's all about educating everybody and finding resources to help, and having wrap-around support so they can go out and stop the violence.



ALI WONG: THE COMEDY QUEEN OF HOLLYWOOD

The crowd bursts into fits of laughter. Ali Wong has just told a rip-roaringly funny joke in her 2016 critically-acclaimed Netflix comedy special, *Ali Wong: Baby Cobra*. Something about Fancy Asians versus Jungle Asians. It's Ali Wong's signature dry, self-deprecating humour, and her audience is lapping it up.

WORDS BY JAMIE TROWER



Credit: Album / Alamy Stock Photo



Several months pregnant, Ali waddles across the stage, her prominent baby-bump very visible under her black and white tube maternity skirt. Wong looks sorta over it (the pregnancy might be taking it out of her)—exhausted, with a hacked-off expression on her face. That guise could also have been all part of the act. She knows she's got the fans hooked. She has a lot to say and knows just how she's going to say it.

From trying her hand at stand-up to a crowd of twenty people at a laundromat-cum-coffee bar in San Francisco to becoming the first woman of Asian descent to take the gong for a lead acting Primetime Emmy for her stellar performance in *Beef*, to having three wildly successful Netflix specials under her belt, she's proved to us all that she's got what it takes. As a loud-and-proud American-born Asian woman, she's funny, daring, always has fun, embraces her roots and is a hilarious role model. In her award-winning role in the 2023 Netflix series, *Beef*, she certainly took the world by storm. Created by Korean-American screenwriter, Lee Sung Jin, the series—starring Ali as Amy Lau—was an utter success. Following the aftermath of a road rage incident between two very different strangers, Amy Lau, an entrepreneur with quite the picturesque life, and Danny Cho, a failing contractor with a chip on his shoulder. It's all, in part, what Ali brought to the role. It was uncharted waters for Wong. A veteran comedian and comedy actor, she poured

herself into this project with such gusto. *Beef* (and Ali) took over awards season too, either winning or being nominated for 25 big gongs for Wong. Another comedy special for her would've been a walk in the park, but she needed something new, another skill to add to her increasingly dense resume.

I mean, look, she's a busy lady, guys. She's a New York Times best-selling author, walked at New York Fashion Week, appeared in a superhero movie (the 2020 *DC Comics Birds of Prey*) and even graciously manoeuvred a very public separation with her ex-husband and she still stays cool and calm throughout the process. Does she see herself as a role model? 'I don't know. Parts of me,' she says. 'Maybe my work ethic is something to aspire to.' No matter what she says, Ali Wong is the performer that many girls aspire to be. Born in 1982 to Adolphus and Tammy Wong in the Pacific Heights neighbourhood of San Francisco, Ali grew up a happy and very imaginative kid. Her parents, both of Asian descent, raised their four children (Ali being the youngest) in a kind and caring household. According to online gossip, Ali liked getting her own way, and was quite bossy when she wanted to be.

Her parents would jokingly accuse her of being a 'dictator' and her primary school teacher even informed Adolphus and Tammy in a parent-teacher evening that she may suffer from 'Napoleonic syndrome', a purported condition given to a person of

short stature who is quite domineering. At home when she was a kid, Adolphus' Chinese heritage reigned supreme in her childhood home so she quickly grew up knowing her roots. Her mother's Vietnamese upbringing, however, was pushed to the wayside.

'I spent all of my summers and Friday nights at Donaldina Cameron House,' Wong wrote in her short essay, *Discoveries Terrible And Magnificent*, whilst attending the University of California. 'Donaldina Cameron and other female white missionaries founded Cameron House in the late 1800s as a rescue home for Chinese prostitutes and abused wives. Rescued women learned how to sew, cook, speak English and read in order to become more self-sufficient.'

It was whilst assisting at the House that she and her mum really bonded. Their relationship flourished throughout her childhood. As a cute side-note, in her acceptance speech at the 30th annual SAG awards this year at the Shrine Auditorium and Expo Hall in LA, Wong gave a heartfelt shout-out to her mum.

'I want to thank my 83-year-old mother, who's here tonight in her pearls and her Tevas because she doesn't give a f**k. I know it was really hard when I told you I wanted to do stand-up comedy. I hope you feel like it's all worked out.'



'I want to thank my 83-year-old mother, who's here tonight in her pearls and her Tevas because she doesn't give a f**k. I know it was really hard when I told you I wanted to do stand-up comedy. I hope you feel like it's all worked out.'



“Before I packed up my best friend told me how her friend had witnessed a rat giving birth on a homeless lady’s lap on the subway. And that single image pretty much sums up New York.”

As the Donaldina Cameron House is situated in Chinatown, Wong took to really thriving there in her youth. As the community she had grown up around in Pacific Heights was predominantly white middle-class, she loved using the district as a space for recreation, where she could find her own, unique voice.

Her family were very interested in art too, and her mum and dad regularly took Ali and her siblings to the Asian American Film Festival. Reportedly, every time there was a new Wong Kar-wai film release, the excitement sizzled amongst the Wongs.

Over her teen years and into her early twenties, Wong used that time to strengthen her comedic voice. Her presentation and word usage too. She often showed her parents, who were supportive, yes, but made sure that she was also dedicated to her studies as well. After graduating from the San Francisco University High School (where she was student body class president and achieved top grades in all her classes), she still yearned to know more about her Vietnamese heritage.

‘I have the proficiency of a second grader,’ she joked on Marc Maron’s podcast, WTF. ‘When I talk to Vietnamese people they’re like, “What the f**k is wrong with you? Just speak English.”’

She enrolled herself at UCLA to study Asian-American studies and, whilst studying in her first year, was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to go and study in Hanoi, Vietnam in Reportedly, whilst studying at UCLA, her main goal was to become a lecturer, specialising in Asian culture. The allure of being a funny girl on stage allowed her to take up a side hobby as a member of the longest-running Asian-American theatre company in the USA, Lapu, the Coyote that Cares (LCC for short). Years later, in the run-up to the release of her second Netflix comedy special, *Ali Wong: Hard Knock Wife* (in which she was pregnant with yet another baby), Wong told HuffPost, ‘People obsess about casting and representation, but really all the real work is behind the camera,’ referencing the importance of what she learned at LCC in people of colour also writing for other actors.

The LCC was co-founded by Randall Park, Ali’s buddy from UCLA, who would later

go on to collaborate and co-star in *Fresh Off the Boat*. The two had met in quite funny circumstances. As the story goes, Ali had entered a fried rice competition (as ya do) to be held at Park’s apartment. The annual party was strictly for LCC members only and Ali had only heard rumours of Park, this illustrious ‘legend’. When he eventually did turn up, it was as though Jesus had entered the room.

‘I was very aware of who he was,’ Wong told *Glamour* in 2019. ‘But I don’t think he had any idea who I was at the time.’

Her infamous cranberry fried rice didn’t take home the prize that night (apparently a chocolate fried rice did—ick) but the two eventually became pals and frequent collaborators. Wholesome.

After graduating from UCLA in 2005, the idea of pursuing an academic route seemed daunting to her, so she packed up her things and moved to New York to pursue a career in stand-up, much to her parent’s dismay.

“Before I packed up,’ Ali wrote in her 2019 memoir, *Dear Girls: Intimate Tales, Untold Secrets and Advice for Living Your Best Life*, ‘my best friend told me how her



©Matt Sayles/Shutterstock for SAG



© David Fisher/Shutterstock for SAC

friend had witnessed a rat giving birth on a homeless lady's lap on the subway. And that single image pretty much sums up New York.'

She recalled to The Washington Post that she was eating beans from the can and lived in overcrowded flats as she was starting to find her footing in the industry. She'd work a full day in a cafe as a wait staff, rush home and (if she didn't have any gigs that night) would work from 9 pm to 2 am perfecting her voice, stage presence and delivery.

'When I was hustling, I would sometimes do up to thirteen sets a night,' she told Seth Meyers on his talk show in 2023. 'Bouncing all over the city. Sometimes to Brooklyn, back to the Upper East Side, to Bed-Stuy, back to the Lower East Side. It was sometimes for no money and usually only three-minute sets.'

She did that to practise her art, giving everything to her passion. It was over the years of trying and trying, her first proper flash of serious recognition came her way in 2011.

Variety magazine had named her one of the '10 Comics To Watch' alongside the likes of Amy Schumer, Rebel Wilson and Tim Minchin. She was also given her first spots on late-night TV, in shows such as *The Tonight Show*, *John Oliver's New York Stand-Up Show* and *Dave Attell's Comedy Underground*.

With that boost in her confidence (and as well as doing more and more stand-up gigs on the side) she auditioned for the role of Olivia in the NBC sitcom, *Are You There, Chelsea?*

The sitcom went on to receive a mixture of reviews and unfortunately got cancelled after its first season. The Rotten

Tomatoes consensus reads that the show 'tries hard, but never matches the book's caustic wit'.

Ali took it in her stride, though. She didn't let her confidence waver at all. She went on to star in VH1's *Best Week Ever* and ended up starring alongside Vanessa Redgrave in the American Psychological drama, *Black Box*, and guest starred in three episodes of *Inside Amy Schumer*.

This was when her fame started to rise. She had started really making a name for herself as a comedian (thanks to the Variety list) and had heard mutterings of a new show being written called *Fresh Off the Boat*. Her friend from UCLA, Randall Park (who had scored the lead role in the series), had gotten in touch with the team and had put her name forward to be a writer. She got the gig and wrote for the series for the first three seasons. *Fresh Off the Boat* follows the adventures of a Taiwanese-American family adapting to suburban life in Florida in the 1990s.

'For a lot of Asian-American comedians,' Park told The New Yorker in 2016, 'myself included, the crutch when you first start out is to do hacky ethnic jokes. It's in a lot of ways an easier laugh. She never really relied on that. Her voice is just so...it's Ali.'

Alongside writing for *Fresh Off the Boat*, Wong released her first Netflix special, *Baby Cobra* which certainly put her name on the map.

Filmed in the U-District's very own Neptune Theatre, *Baby Cobra* knows no bounds. After years of asking if women are funny, the resounding answer is a big yes. She cemented that fact in her 2018 *Hard Knock Wife* and the 2022 Netflix special, *Don Wong*. All of her specials are hilarious. All are brutally honest and brutally funny. Her unique experiences and the unfiltered humour in the special undoubtedly made her a comedian to look out for.

After the release of *Baby Cobra*, the roles started flooding in. She was getting calls from Hollywood—stage, screen and even animation. All of the calls she accepted, adding to her impressive resume.

After the huge success of *Fresh Off the Boat*, and her many acting roles and stand-up specials, she received the call that would change her life in 2021. It was from Lee Sung Jin asking if Wong was keen at all for a role in a little Netflix thing he was working on. She was told that she would be acting alongside *The Walking Dead's* Steven Yeun, who would play Danny Cho, the other lead in the series. She jumped at the chance and did a fantastic job in the role.

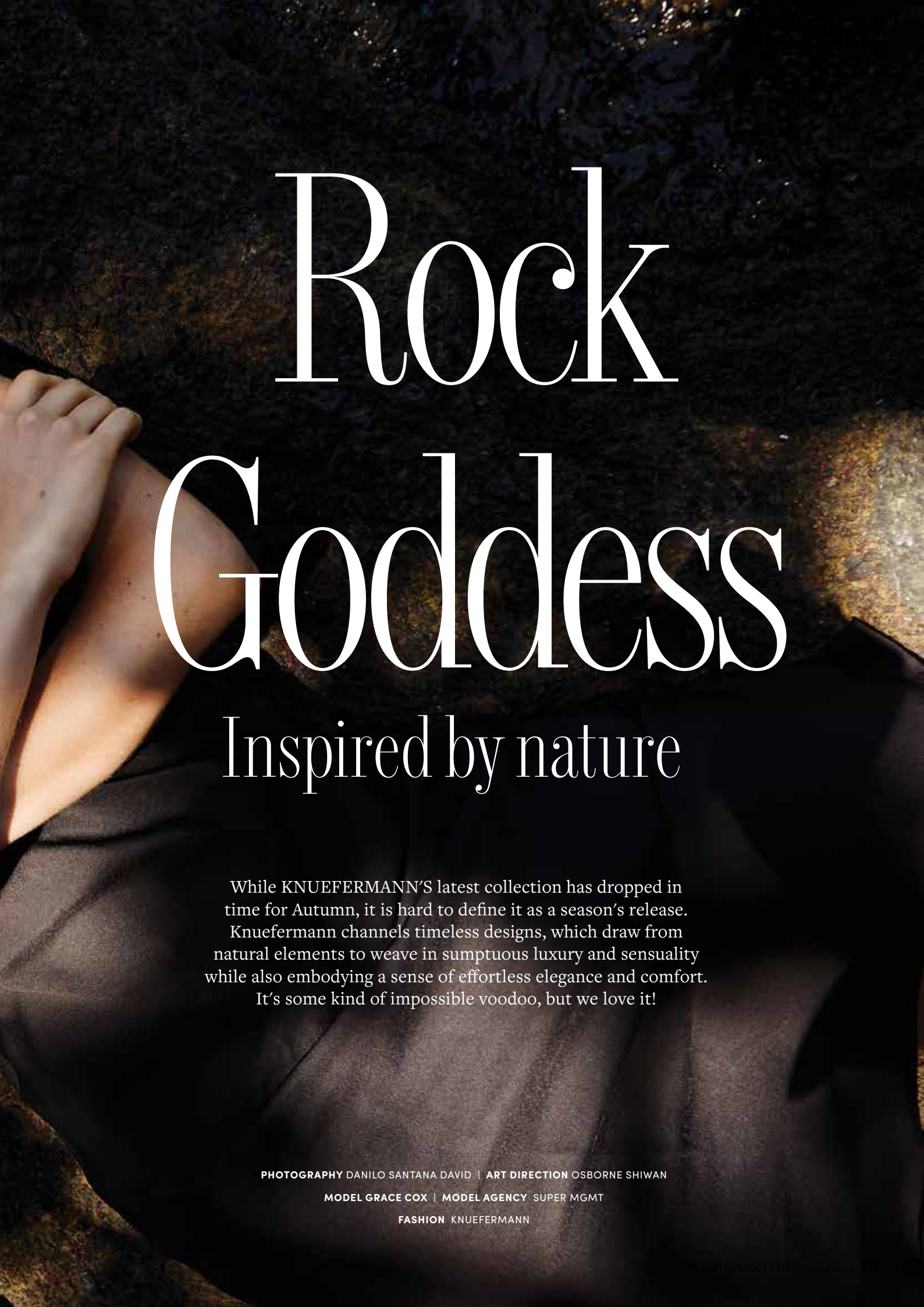
At the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards, it took out the night, with awards for every aspect of the show being recognized and Wong taking a female lead award too, making her the first actress of Asian descent to ever win a lead acting Emmy award.

'I think the challenge of it was just really fulfilling,' Wong told Newsweek. 'So, I'm looking back on the footage and the episodes and being like, "Wow, who is that person?" When I see myself, it's pretty mystifying and satisfying at the same time. But, I was like "OK, I think you can do that". I'm still really surprised with all of it and I'm really happy I did it. It was an incredible experience.'

It would seem then that Ali Wong's got it in the bag with being the comedy queen of Hollywood. She's hit the ground running. She's nailed it. Her success thus far from the mean streets of San Francisco to hustling stand-up gigs in New York to becoming one of the biggest comedy stars in the world, makes one thing crystal clear. That her drive for her success is unwavering and her passion will never die. Long may she reign.







Rock Goddess

Inspired by nature

While KNUEFERMANN'S latest collection has dropped in time for Autumn, it is hard to define it as a season's release. Knuefermann channels timeless designs, which draw from natural elements to weave in sumptuous luxury and sensuality while also embodying a sense of effortless elegance and comfort. It's some kind of impossible voodoo, but we love it!

PHOTOGRAPHY DANILO SANTANA DAVID | ART DIRECTION OSBORNE SHIWAN

MODEL GRACE COX | MODEL AGENCY SUPER MGMT

FASHION KNUEFERMANN



Cover Image Gala Sandwashed \$350. **Above** Everyday Dress \$350. **Right** Gypsy Shirt \$450, Daisy Shorts \$289, ISHI Bracelets \$285.

"Garments should
complete you:
they become part
of who you are...
your signature."

- Turet Knuefermann







Left Canga Skirt Top Black \$315, Gala Linen \$350. **Top** Original Tank \$99, White Jean \$199, Classic Belt \$199





“It doesn’t have to be remarkable - just reliable and relevant. It’s about lasting style.”

- Turet Knuefermann

Left Imagawa Mini \$389. Above Tiered Drawstring Pants \$245



Above Winston Vest \$650. **Right** Street Pant \$450, Snuggly Jumper \$185



BEAUTY HOTLIST

HEAD OVER HEELS

12 game-changers to level up your beauty routine.

1

CUSTOM MADE

The ultimate on-the-go hydrator, **dermaviduals** Individual Lotion, \$69, is fortified with actives to create a custom skin solution, no matter your needs.

2

FEELING 22

Oil soluble Vitamin C is housed in **Tronque** Fully Ripe Vitamin C Body Oil, \$120, to restore radiance and balance the lipid profile of your skin.

3

EYE OPENER

The reimagined **La Prairie** Skin Caviar Eye Lift, \$905, resculpts the appearance of the eye contours by targeting the skin's horizontal elements to lift, firm, hydrate and energise the skin.

4

LAMINATED LOOK

Anastasia Beverly Hills brings us the next generation of brow formulas with the Brow Freeze Gel, \$52; a wax-gel hybrid to shape and set brows with ultimate hold.

5

A GAME

Powered by a stabilised form of retinol to boost cell regeneration, **Augustinus Bader** The Retinol Serum, \$585, works to reduce deep lines, wrinkles, blemishes, scarring and pigmentation.

6

CORRECT & PROTECT

Lightweight and fast-absorbing, **Clinique** Smart Clinical Repair SPF15 Wrinkle Correcting Cream, \$149, is a plumping protectant that keeps the skin hydrated during the day.

7

JUST BITTEN

The latest hue from the widely loved **Aleph** Cheek/Lip Tint range is Emanate, \$58, a neutral rose that's perfect for an everyday look.

8

SICILIAN SUN

Flamingo Estate Roma Heirloom Tomato Candle, \$105, will fill your space with the scent of ripe and juicy tomatoes sprinkled with black pepper, reminiscent of summer dinner parties.

9

GOT TO GLOW

Ultra smooth with micro-sized light reflecting pigments, **Chantecaille** Liquid Lumiere, \$87, is a buildable skin luminiser that creates a naturally glowing sheen.

10

BEND & SNATCH

Huda Beauty Easy Bake And Snatch Pressed Brightening And Setting Powder, \$66, provides speedy baking to brighten, sculpt and set with minimal effort.

11

ONE SWIPE WONDER

The latest in beauty technology, **ghd** Chronos, \$500, delivers impressive speedy tugless styling with superior shine and softness.

12

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

As the saying goes, an artist is only as good as his tools. **LUST** Luxury Brush Collection, \$69, are made from ultra-soft, hygienic and hypo-allergenic synthetic fibres to ensure a quality face beat every time.



BEAUTY SPOT



Show up for the glow up - it's time to indulge in luxurious beautifying experiences.



SWEATER WEATHER

It's time to swap out the breezy scents with autumnal aromas that suit your knitwear and leather boots. The final installment of **Aēsop's** Othertopias collection, **Ouraneon**, EDP, 50ml, \$265, is a herbaceous woody fragrance with a touch of spice and minerality. Intimate and soothing, white musk, mimosa and rice steam create a unique abstraction that portrays moments of inspired creativity in **Diptyque L'Eau Papier**, EDT, 50ml, \$168. A new vegan perfume by **Narciso Rordriguez**, **For Her Musc Nude**, EDP, 50ml, \$186, is a floral chypre scent that caresses the skin with its signature heart of musk. Sink your teeth into the juicy **Kayali Eden Sparkling Lychee**, EDP, 50ml, \$172; a flirty gourmand fragrance that will boost your mood.





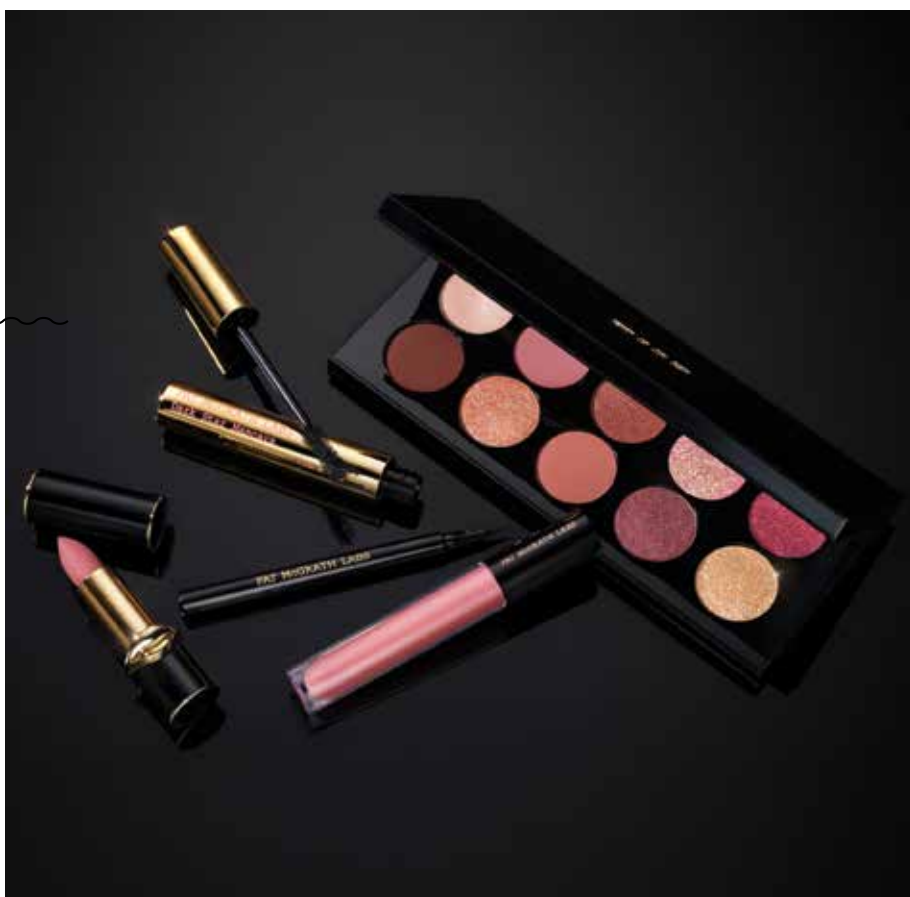
LIP LOGIC

As we leave our minimalist grey world behind, colour is coming back with a vengeance.

Serve a striking full coverage lip look in satin, matte or shine with **Clinique** Pop Longwear Lipstick, \$54. For a true-matte nude that's comfortable and cushioned, **Anastasia Beverly Hills** Lip Velvet, \$49, provides flattering hues for all skin tones. If the effortlessly undone Scandinavian lip look is more your style, **Henné** Luxury Lip Tint, \$45, in Blissful of Intrigue is a great handbag staple.

ASTRAL ALLURE

Making top news for the makeup obsessed is the launch of **Pat McGrath's** Mothership XI Eyeshadow Palette in Sunlit Seduction, \$231. Featuring 10 warm pink couture colours in matte, shimmer and duo chrome glitters, there will be no shortage of romantic looks that you can create. Paired with the iconic MatteTrance Lipstick, \$63, and a swipe of the ethereal Lust: Gloss, \$47, your sublime beauty will hypnotize passers-by.





SKIN SOLUTIONS

As the days get shorter, now is the time to undo the damage the sun has wreaked on our skin this past summer. **dermalogica** Pro-Collagen Banking Serum, \$180, visibly firms the cheek and jaw in 7 days by preserving the skin's collagen for plumper skin. If pigmentation is your main concern, **Aspect DR** Complete Pigment PLUS Age Support, \$179, includes tranexamic acid and phytoestrogens to inhibit the production of melanocytes. For the time poor, **Aēsop** B Triple C Facial Balancing Gel, \$175, is a honey-like vitamin-rich gel with a matte finish that balances combination skin. Arguably the best moisturiser to use as a day cream under makeup, **Tatcha** The Dewy Skin Cream, \$127, is rich and nourishing while sinking into the skin seamlessly.

CINNAMON GIRL

To pay homage to 30 years of leading the clean beauty movement, **Jane Iredale** has launched the Ready to Bloom collection in earthy tones to suit the autumn aesthetic.

PurePressed Blush in Velvet Petal and Flourish, \$70 each; PurePressed Eye Shadow Triple in Wildflower and Honeysuckle, \$82 each; Just Kissed Lip and Cheek Stain in Forever Peach, \$70.



FLAWLESS FINISH

Following the huge success of the Tik-Tok sensation **Laura Mercier** Real Flawless Foundation, \$76, for its luminous skin-like finish and longwearing capabilities, the Concealer, \$57, has been added to the line. A serum-infused with undetectable coverage, the new crease-proof formula brightens the skin while reducing the look of fine lines.

CLEAN CARE

Continuing their promise to cut through the skincare clutter, **Urban Jungle** has launched a clean body care duo with ingredients that are usually reserved for facial skincare. The Grime Fighter Exfoliating Body Wash, \$40, includes AHAs to eliminate dead skin cells and improve skin texture. Apricot seed oil, rich in vitamins A, C and E, alongside niacinamide, are the hero ingredients in Midas Touch Body Lotion, \$42, for soft, hydrated and radiant skin.



Living

CURATED BY JUVENA WORSFOLD

UNDERFOOT

Portuguese purveyors of all things cool, Covet House have brought together New Zealand wool, Bamboo Silk and some abstract pizzazz with the Amazon rug from their botanical collection. Just the ticket for a quick room transformation while adding a touch of warm fuzzies.

Colour Match:
Resene Hathaway
Colour code: Y91-070-086
A gentle yellow with old world charm.



COLOUR THEORY

Opposites have never looked so attractive. Be it the juxtaposition of bittergreens and forest fruits, muted sage and mulberry or zesty lilac and celery, find a combination of contrasts that suits your fancy.

Style TIP.

Balance shades that have equal depth and vibrance for a soothing rather than jarring aesthetic.

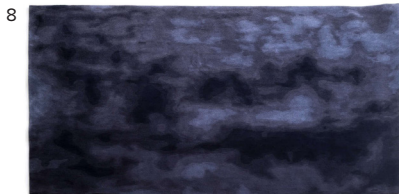
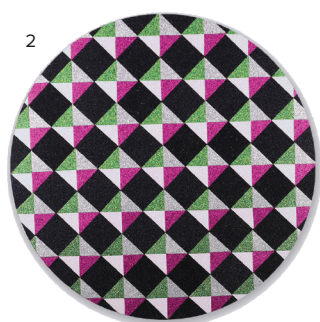


Image of the Theia wallpaper by Casamance, available at **James Dunlop Textiles**



- 1. Resene Permanent Green, from **Resene ColorShops** | 2. Artwork by Les Kitto, \$1250 from **The Poi Room** | 3. Rug by Kvadrat, \$15,780 from **Simon James** | 4. Dress \$359 from **Kowtow** | 5. Duvet cover from \$389 from **Citta** | 6. Mushroom sculpture by Lorraine Natusch, \$375 from **The Poi Room** | 7. Coupe glasses by FAZEEK, \$119 from **Sunday home store** | 8. Wall rug by Stellar Works, POA from **backhouse** | 9. Glasses by Tom Dixon \$190 (for set of 2), from **Simon James** | 10. Bench \$1199.99 from **A&C Homestore** | 11. Sofa from \$16,590 from **BoConcept**

EARTHEN VESSELS

Build a warm, inviting space from the ground up with pieces that reflect raw materials. Rustic stone, rich velvet and lashings of molten metal make for a decadent interpretation.

Style TIP.

More is more—the layering of mixed materials within a cohesive colour palette does the trend justice.



Image of the Mineral wallpaper by **Emma Hayes**



1. Resene Road Trip, from **Resene ColorShops** | 2. Pendant light \$5718 from **Tim Webber** | 3. Bookends by Studio Henry Wilson, \$465 (for a pair) from **Simon James** | 4. Cushion \$99 from **Weave Home** | 5. Coffee table by Henge, from \$23,225 from **Ecc** | 6. Side table \$829 from **Nest** | 7. Vase by Margi Nuttall, \$490 from **Simon James** | 8. Wall light POA by **David Shaw X Nightworks** | 9. Vase \$329 from **Nest** | 10. Portable lamp by New Works, \$450 from **Slow Store**

CHAIRS TO THAT

Grab the finest seat in the house with a statement chair that delivers on both form and function. In an array of shapes and sizes, textiles and textures, a beautiful, sculptural chair does double duty as a piece of art.

Style TIP.
A bold chair holds its own in the corner of a room with just a few complimentary pieces around creating a stylish nook.



Image of the Knitty Lounge Chair by Mooi, from \$14,355 from Ecc



1. Resene Quarter Spanish White, from **Resene ColorShops** | 2. Ghost Chair by Kartell, POA from **backhouse** | 3. Cabana Chair by Timothy Oulton, \$5719 from **Dawson & Co** | 4. Cape Lounge chair by Warm Nordic, from \$4745 from **Good Form** | 5. Spade Chair by Please Wait to be Seated, \$1595 from **Slow Store** | 6. Chromeo Chair by Sarah Ellison, \$2750 from **Slow Store** | 7. Ekstrem Chair by Varier, POA from **David Shaw** | 8. Framed Armchair POA from **Citta** | 9. Sacha Chair by Resident, \$2990 from **Simon James** | 10. Puffy Lounge Chair by HEM, \$11,395 from **Tim Webber**

CAPTURE THE EXTREME



Nobody's story is the same. Everyone has their own individual struggles and challenges to overcome. We'll never know the inner turmoils others are going through, although maybe we should take the time to find out sometime. One way or the other we find ourselves in this very moment. Some sitting in a waiting room reading a magazine, others on the side of a cliff. One person presses the shutter and captures the moment. The other flicks the page, onto the next thing.



Red Bull Illume
Photographer:
Christian Pondella,
Athletes: Beth
Rodden & Katie
Lambert, Location:
Yosemite Valley, CA,
United States



Red Bull Illume Photographer: Ted Grambeau, Athlete: Rodrigo Reinoso, Location: Teahupo'o, French Polynesia



If you're an extreme sports photographer there's one big competition you should aspire to dominate, and that's the Red Bull Illume, the world's largest imagery contest that celebrates adventure and action sports. The competition has run for 17 years now and welcomes everything from skaters to spelunkers. An international body of judges take the images and judge them within ten categories. They don't have the names or individual stories that made each image happen. They judge it purely on its artistry. The winners this year feature ice climbers, kayakers, surfers, bikers, skaters and other athletes in some of the world's wildest environments. The grand prize this year went to Australian photographer Krystle Wright who convinced the Red Bull Illume Judging Panel consisting of more than 50 renowned judges with her shot of climber Angela VanWiemeersch illuminated in a crack, deep within Long Canyon, Utah, United States. She is the first female photographer to take the top spot, after numerous high placing entries over the years.

Her response is indicative of how under-celebrated this particular craft has been. "This is incredible. I wanted to earn my place in this industry and my work to get recognized. Red Bull Illume is the only platform that truly recognizes what we do."

Every photographer who entered is a winner in my book. Cause they're all photographing what they love. Naw isn't that cute. How about a less schmaltzy answer. Choosing which pictures to include in this piece was difficult because there were no weak contenders, even among the runner ups.

For those that want to support the competition further there is the limited edition Red Bull Illume 2023 Photobook. It showcases the top 250 images alongside the stories and biographies of the top 50 finalists. That includes Ydwer van der Heide, an incredible photographer who was made quadriplegic after a nasty foil surf session accident. Being paralysed from the chest down and being wheelchair dependent hasn't stopped his drive to find and capture amazing shots.

The book is a super limited run of just 2,500 items individually numbered and stamped, so don't be surprised if they're already all gone.

Available at store.cooph.com



Red Bull Illume Photographer: Jan Faßbender, Athlete: Jann Hinz, Location: Cologne, Germany

“In the end of 2017, my life came to a turning point. While on a trip to Chile I was diagnosed with brain cancer.”

“Back in Germany I underwent surgery and started my long term recovery.”

“This personal crisis made me question my photography work and subsequently led me to redefine my approach. Since 2020, I am focusing heavily on personal artistic projects that unify my deeply rooted architectural photography skills with my passion for action sports.”

Jan Faßbender



Red Bull Illume Photographer:
Filippo Frizzera, Athletes:
Marco Diliberto & Nicola
Donini, Location: Andalo, Italy



"I'm sweating,
cold sweating.
The tension
suffocating the air
is vulnerable to
being cut with the
tip of my ice pick."

When shooting Mason Gardener climbing above The Remarkables, NZ, Australian photographer Julian Morgan put his body on the line. As the light and his subject began to fade, he knew he needed to take the shot. "Mason flakes an arm, the pump causing him to vent out a pained scream as the blood drains. It was now or never, the frame is only centimeters off. In a split decision, I rip the screen out and thrust the back of the camera into the rock behind me."

Red Bull Illume Photographer: Alvaro Herrero López-Beltrán, Athlete: Skanda Coffield-Feith, Location: Tulum, Mexico



Red Bull Illume Photographer: Kevin Molano, Athlete: Nataly Lucano, Location: Parque Nacional, Bogotá, Colombia




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Red Bull Illume Photographer:
Alvaro Herrero López-Beltrán,
Athlete: Skanda Coffield-Feith,
Location: Tulum, Mexico





SACRE BLEU! LA DESTINATION DE VACANCES IDEALE!

WORDS BY CY SINDERSON

It's funny, we are SUCH creatures of habit! Whenever it's holiday time we go straight to the airline sites and start scuffing around looking for great flight deals to Fiji, Rarotonga and maybe Tonga or Samoa too – especially if we have family or friends there.

Yet so many of us overlook the other brilliant holiday option right under our noses with all the same beautiful beaches, crystal-clear lagoons, scenic golf courses, delicious food options and rich cultural experiences we get at all the other Pacific Island destinations – but, it's even closer to home...

In fact, New Caledonia is so near it's even part of the same underwater Zealandia continent as us; which also means it's got the shortest go-to travel time of any Pacific Island – it only takes about twenty minutes longer to fly there from Auckland than it takes to the Chatham Islands or even Invercargill!

Un petit peu de France dans le Pacifique

So how come we don't know as much about New Caledonia as the other Pacific nations, especially seeing as it's so close by? You can thank our Anglo-centric school system for that as New Caledonia has a long history with England's arch enemy; the French.

Yes, despite the incongruous Scottish name – thanks Captain Cook! – New Caledonia is actually home to the Kanaks and various French peoples. In fact, New Caledonia is so French it is actually part of France – well, kind of as the locals have been running a never-ending series of independence referendums that can only be described as 'inconclusive'.

It seems that the New Caledonians want to have their gateaux and eat it too. And why not? If we had the chance to eat French food, wear their fashion and listen to their Europop we'd seize it tout suite! It sure beats greasy chips and duffel coats any day!



A capital start

Been to France before? If not, then New Caledonia's capital and largest city Nouméa is the perfect start for you, as it is a bit like having a French village handily placed right here in the Pacific. So everything you'd expect to find in France from the smell of freshly baked baguettes to passionate intellectual discussions in the cafe is right here – along with bright blue skies and palm trees, which are an awful lot harder to find in Paris. And of course, there is an abundance of that wonderful export the French gave to the world: Romance. It really is like Nouméa was designed with a little amour in mind!

Above: DoubleTree by Hilton Ilot Maitre Resort

Left: Koulnoue Village

Bottom: Hilton La Promenade

Beyond Nouméa

Of course, there's a lot more to New Caledonia than just Nouméa as the main island of New Caledonia – Grande Terre – is the largest island in the Pacific outside of the bigger nations of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. So big in fact, it is more than five hours drive from top to bottom and can be split into several regions, each with its own unique look and feel:

West Coast

Did we mention that New Caledonia is romantic? Well, what more symbol of this do you need than the Heart of Voh – a completely natural Valentine heart-shaped clearing formed by mangroves, a truly amazing sight. The Heart of Voh is north along the coast after Bourail, while further south is the amazing Giant Fern Park where you can enjoy all of its amazing biodiversity from one or more of the many hiking or biking



trails that wend their way through it. Or, you can play golf, as there's a lot of great courses here in the West! Another highlight of the western region is Green Island, a UNESCO World Heritage site and an incredible haven of many species of animals protected by the island's marine reserve status.

East Coast

Fancy an old school road trip? Then head East as this region has plenty of things to see and do on the way including amazing waterfalls and great diving spots. There's even a classic old car ferry along the way. You need to keep your wits about you though as part of the road is one way for certain times of the day and the other way for the rest!

Above: Chateau Royal
Left: Green Island



Right: Planche à voile, © John Carter

Right Below: Ouvéa, © Ethan LI



~~~~~

**The Great South**

this is the area around Nouméa so is the easiest to access of them all. The landscape looks different around here with its rich red soil and is ideal for hiking and biking with plenty of scenic trails to explore. Plus, you can do a bit of kayaking here and even whale watching if you come between July and September.

**The Islands**

Loyalty Islands and Isle of Pines. If you like lounging about on pristine sand beaches, soaking up the sun and sipping pina coladas then this is definitely the region for you!



How to get there

New Caledonia is actually very easy to get to as local airline Aircalin fly up to five times a week from Auckland to Nouméa with a flight time of under three hours. To make it even more tempting for us active types, Aircalin have a unique ‘sporting allowance’ of an extra 23kg of luggage for gear like mountain bikes and golf clubs – and this comes on top of the standard allowance of 23kg for your normal luggage (on Aircalin operated flights only). Very sporting indeed!

You’ll be flying in new planes, as Aircalin have a fleet of spanking new Airbus A320Neos and of course, the in-flight meals are French inspired – naturellement! So, next time you’re hankering for an overseas break, don’t just settle for the usual suspects try somewhere with a little more Gallic flair. Pack your beret and onions and head off to our own France of the Pacific – New Caledonia. Bon voyage!



 Mouli Beach, Ouvéa. © Maurilio PARMESANI NCT

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# new caledonia

Pacific heart

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# SAME SAME But Different

So often I hear people ask; is Tasmania really quite like New Zealand?

WORDS BY CY SINDERSON

The answer I always give is; well, yes and no. Sure, the weather is similar and the landscape is also not colossally V-A-S-T like mainland Aussie - but that's kind of where the comparisons end. Whilst their countryside is super picturesque like ours; it is also jam-packed with the kookiest collection of bizarre wildlife you can't even begin to imagine - especially coming from a country that can only boast a handful of dull-coloured native birds. Checking out Tasmanian endemic flora and fauna really is like watching a Looney Tunes cartoon after reading a 19th century novel! If you're into exotic wildlife then Tasmania is definitely the place to come - it is the home of the (in)famous Tasmanian devil after all! Although, unlike the Looney Tunes version, the real one doesn't spin around like a dervish whenever it gets mad. Sorry to disappoint! There are also quolls along with a bunch of other animals you won't be able to see anywhere else.

Tasmania is also a really easy place to get around as it's compact enough to be able to drive around pretty much every corner. The whole island is roughly the size of the North Island from Wellington up to about Rotorua so that's about perfect to cover off over a few days or so to catch everything worth seeing. And there's a lot to see and do so let's break it down into regions:

**Above:** Wineglass Bay

**Left:** Duck Reach Power Station Bridge, Cataract Gorge Reserve

**Right:** World Heritage Cruises

Above **Right:** MONA

© Emilie Risteovski

© Tourism Australia





© Lisa Kullenburg



© Hasselblad H&AD, Jesse Hummford

## Hobart and the South

Unless you're rowing over, you'll start in Hobart – Tassie's capital and easily the largest town on the island. Two things you must, must do here are; to go to the Salamanca Market on a Saturday to sample some of the local gins, whiskies and wines. You'll also find plenty of locally hand-made ceramics, clothing and jewellery here too if that's your thing.

Just outside of Hobart is Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary. It's not just a place to see Tasmania's unique critters up close, like the famous Tasmanian devil, but it's a sanctuary with a big heart. Since 1981, they've been all about helping injured and orphaned wildlife get back on their paws so when you visit, it's not just a fun day out, you're also supporting a great cause. A little bit further out is The Tasmanian Devil Unzoo, a one-of-a-kind spot that flips the traditional zoo concept on its head. This Unzoo is all about letting wildlife live as naturally as possible, without cages or boundaries. It's a place where the animals come and go as they please, offering a unique and authentic experience of Tasmania's native wildlife.

The other absolute must-do in Hobart is to take a trip to:

## MONA

Whoever said art needed to be boring? Certainly not anyone in Tasmania anyhow as the Museum of Old and New Art – or MONA – is not only a wonderful immersion into all things weird and wonderful, it will keep you entertained all day with two restaurants, several bars and even its only cellar door - Morilla Winery.

Even if you don't think you like art David Walsh's \$110m private collection of art and antiquities is a spectacular and inspiring viewpoint into the mind of the museum's fascinating and entrepreneurial founder.

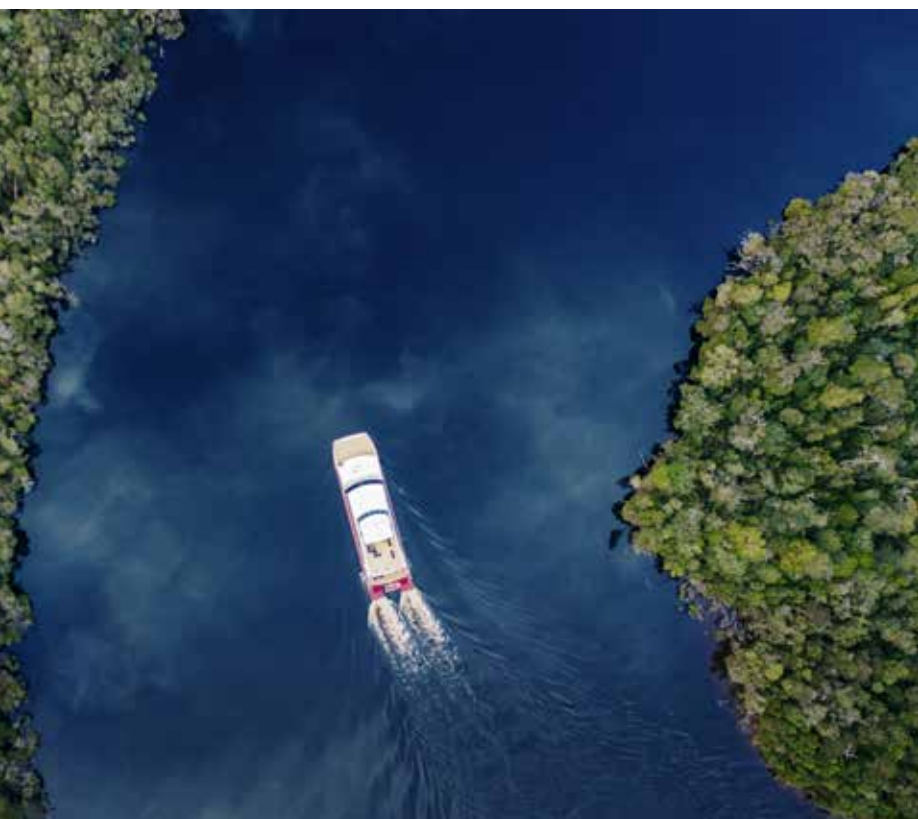
If you want to add even more pizzazz to your experience, there is even a MONA like a Rockstar package. This includes return Posh Pit ferry tickets from Hobart, cocktail and glad-handing on arrival, VIP access to some mind-bending James Turrell artworks, and a long lunch and drinks in the Faro Bar and Restaurant.

MONA is only a few kms up the road from Hobart and is totally worth checking out, you can drive there or take the ferry. Just make sure you download the O app before you go as it has a bunch of useful info about all the art on it – and they don't have any explanatory notes on the walls. Plus, if you're there in June, you can catch their winter feast and nude solstice swim.

### WHERE TO STAY:

## MACq 01

Now here's a hotel with a difference – and the perfect off-beat accompaniment to a city with MONA! MACq 01 is situated on the old Hunter Island, one of the earliest sites of European settlement in Tassie. Running with this thought, the owners have turned MACq 01 into the first storytelling hotel in Australia with all the walls and halls inside covered with snippets of all the history, tales and fables that got Tasmania to where it is today. You can see remnants of that history all around the MACq 01 too with its surrounds of docks and convict-built sandstone warehouses - while the waterfront rooms also get awesome views of both the River Derwent and kunanyi / Mount Wellington.



# Launceston & the North

Foodie? Then the North is for you with plenty of award-winning restaurants featuring local farm-fresh produce – and, of course, some simply fantastic wines to wash it down with. Handily, the North is also home to the renowned Tamar Valley where exceptional wineries such as Pipers Brook and Janz Tasmania call home.

The big smoke up here is Launceston, one of Australia's oldest cities as it was settled in 1806. As you might expect, that means there's plenty of well established stuff to check out in town. A good place to start is the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery which covers everything from the local Aboriginal culture and colonial history through to more modern stories and natural science research.

So much learning can give you a pretty fierce thirst so make sure you put enough time aside to pop into James Boag's Brewery which has been brewing the region's favourite ales since 1883.



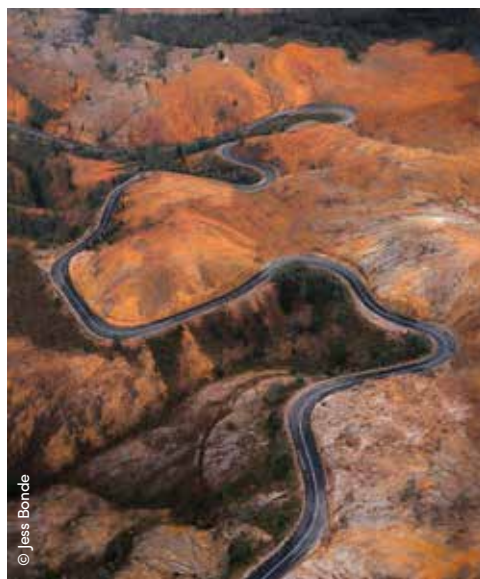
© Jason Charles Hill

## Go West

After some good old adventure? Tasmania's West Coast has you covered. You can embark on white-water rafting expeditions on the Franklin River, enjoy cruises down the serene Gordon River, and hike through ancient rainforests to discover 1,000-year-old Huon pines.

In the stunning wilderness of Cradle Mountain you will also find Devils@Cradle, a conservation powerhouse dedicated to the Tasmanian devil and its relatives, the Eastern and Spotted-tail quolls. This place isn't your average animal park. It's where you get to see these intriguing creatures in an environment that closely mirrors their natural habitats.

The West Coast also has its own Queenstown. A town rich in mining heritage and a captivating moonscape terrain that is almost out of this world.



© Jess Bonde



© Lauren Bath

### WHERE TO STAY:

## Peppers Silo Launceston

Peppers Silo Launceston is what happens when you combine contemporary luxury with Tasmanian farming history. Originally grain silos, the structure has been ingeniously repurposed into a stylish 4-star hotel with a very special twist. The result is a stunning modern fitout with true heritage. Its unique location by the Tamar and North Esk Rivers also provides a tranquil setting close to the CBD. But before you venture off into town for dinner you have to try the on-site Grain of the Silos restaurant, developed by celebrity chef Massimo Mele, which is a celebration of Tasmania's freshest seasonal produce.

**Above:** Pipers Brook Vineyard

**Above Left:** Aerial of Road into Queenstown

**Left:** Tasmanian Devil Joeys

**Right:** Saffire Freycinet Marine Oyster Farm Experience

**Above Right:** Binalong Bay



## The East Coast

Tasmania's East Coast, is just the spot for combining the joys of good food with the call of the wild. The Bay Restaurant in Freycinet offers up stunning dishes from local ingredients including the famous Seafood Tower for Two: Melshell oysters, poached scallops, tiger abalone, cold-smoked salmon, pickled mussels, clams, smoked ocean trout and grilled whole fish. The Furneaux Restaurant in St Helens is also a celebration of all things Tasmania but it adds a French and modern twist. The result is fine dining art on a plate.

The East Coast has a myriad of activities including hiking trails that wind through ancient forests. Kayaking on the crystal-clear waters of Wineglass Bay could have you forgiven for thinking you are floating over glass, while the Bay of Fires with its fiery orange lichen-covered boulders contrasting against the azure blue of the sea will have you feeling like you are walking through a painting!

And for stargazers, the clear nights on the East Coast offer a celestial spectacle like no other. Lying back on a deserted beach, under a blanket of stars, is the perfect way to end an adventurous day, especially after a Seafood Tower for Two.



### WHERE TO STAY:

## Saffire Freycinet

As you can imagine, the Freycinet National Park is pretty out-of-the-way in order to preserve the natural habitats of all the animals. But luckily there's an award-winning all-inclusive luxury resort, situated bang smack in the middle of it! Saffire Freycinet is one of the only luxury accommodations in Australia actually located inside a National Park so all you have to do to see Tasmania's unique wildlife up close is stroll a few metres from your room! Saffire Freycinet offers 20 luxury suites, many tailored experiences and packages plus a day spa and stunning views of the Hazards Mountains.




## How to get to Tasmania

Getting to Tassie and other dream destinations around the world from New Zealand is a breeze with Qantas. They offer daily flights from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown along with world class all-inclusive service, inflight-dining, award-winning beverages and the latest films and entertainment on every trip. Plus, with ergonomic seating, warm hospitality and a top notch reputation for high standards of safety, you will be travelling in class and comfort. And given just how much there is to do in Tasmania this is exactly how you want to arrive.



© Tourism Tasmania & Rob Burnett



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# TASMANIA

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# Five Star Asia

## EXPLORE, RELAX, AND ENRICH

Asia, much like Europe, is a massive playground just waiting to be explored. It offers a little bit of everything. White sandy beaches, mountains, some of the busiest cities on the planet, you want it they've got it, and it's closer to New Zealand than Europe to boot. More importantly it can all be done in the cradle of opulence. Get 5 star service from one end of your trip to the other. Your hotel or resort can be such a draw that it's the entire reason for the trip. With that said no matter what country you happen to find yourself in there is a massive array of sights, sounds, and tastes to be experienced.

Continuing on from our euro-centric series from last issue we've found some of the best five star resorts and hotels from this corner of the world to kickstart your next adventure.



# Aman Tokyo

TOKYO, JAPAN

In the midst of Tokyo's bustling heart, where neon lights flirt with the sky, sits Aman Tokyo, a sanctuary for those who like their serenity served with a slice of cityscape. Just about an hour's drive from Tokyo Narita Airport — or a slightly quicker jaunt from Tokyo Haneda Airport — this hotel is perfect for the luxury traveler who thinks 'zen' is a lifestyle choice rather than a philosophical pursuit.

The design of Aman Tokyo is what you get when minimalism meets money. Its interiors are a masterclass in understated luxury, with each space meticulously curated to evoke calmness. The rooms and suites are as spacious as an oligarch's yacht, offering unparalleled views of the Tokyo skyline, which you can admire while contemplating whether to have sushi or sashimi for dinner.

Amenities here are as subtle and refined as the art of Japanese tea-making. The spa is an oasis of tranquility in the midst of urban chaos, offering treatments that promise to rejuvenate even the weariest of souls. The hotel also features a restaurant where the food is so artfully presented, you'll hesitate to disturb its perfection for something as mundane as eating.

Located in Tokyo's Otemachi district, Aman Tokyo is a stone's throw away from some of the city's most iconic landmarks. It's an ideal base for those who want to explore the city or simply gaze down upon it from a luxurious eyrie.

The best time to visit is either spring for the cherry blossoms — a natural event so beautiful it could make a grown investor weep.





# Rosewood Hong Kong

HONG KONG

Rosewood Hong Kong, a beacon of luxury in a city that's already too fancy for its own good, sits majestically along the Victoria Harbour. This towering accomplishment in hotel engineering is conveniently a mere 35-minute Rolls-Royce drive from Hong Kong International Airport. It's the perfect spot for those who enjoy breathtaking views and the constant reminder that they are, in fact, not the richest person in the room.

The design of Rosewood is what happens when modernity decides to have a steamy affair with Chinese tradition. Each of the 413 rooms and suites is a tribute to Hong Kong's colonial past and its present status as a hub for people who have more air miles than sense. The rooms offer stunning views of the harbour, which you can gaze upon and ponder life's big questions, like why your caviar isn't quite as tasty as it used to be.

For amenities, Rosewood Hong Kong boasts eight restaurants and lounges, each offering a culinary journey that's as varied as the accents you'll hear in the elevator. The spa, which offers treatments more rejuvenating than a politician's career after a scandal, is a sanctuary for the stressed and overworked souls.

Rosewood's location is its crowning glory. Located in the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui, a district known for its shopping, nightlife, and ability to make you feel like you're not spending enough money, the hotel is a stone's throw away from some of the city's best attractions.







# Four Seasons Bangkok at Chao Phraya River

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Bangkok, a city where chaos and tranquility coexist like an odd couple, is home to the Four Seasons Bangkok at Chao Phraya River. Merely a 40-minute game of dodging traffic from Suvarnabhumi Airport, this resort stands as a haven for those who think serenity is best served with a side of opulent extravagance.

The design of this waterside wonder is a harmonious blend of contemporary chic and traditional Thai elegance, much like a perfectly balanced Thai curry. The resort's architecture whispers 'sophistication' so loudly, it's almost rude. Each room and suite is an ode to plush comfort, offering views of the river that are as calming as a cup of herbal tea after a day of hectic shopping.

Amenities? Oh, they've got amenities. From a sprawling pool that's as inviting as a billionaire's yacht, to a spa where your stress is massaged away until it's just a distant memory, the Four Seasons Bangkok doesn't skimp on pampering. The dining options are a gastronomic delight, offering everything from street-food-inspired dishes to haute cuisine, because why have one when you can afford both?

Located on the banks of the iconic Chao Phraya River, the resort's location offers a picturesque escape from the city's frenzied pace. It's like stepping into a postcard, except the postcard has a 24-hour concierge and room service.





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# Autumn's Table



Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's latest culinary creation, "How to Eat 30 Plants a Week," is a cookbook that marries mouthwatering recipes with a mission for better health. Across 80 recipes, Hugh's book makes the ambitious goal of incorporating 30 different plants into your weekly diet seem not just achievable but tasty.

The book is underscored by a foreword from gut-health expert Tim Spector, who endorses Hugh's plant-rich approach as not just delicious but scientifically sound for boosting gut health, energy, and overall well-being. By suggesting a wide array of plant-based foods alongside select meats and fish, Hugh's recipes encourage a broader, more adventurous consumption of nutrients, which research suggests can lead to reduced illness risks and improved brain function, among other benefits. The chapters, ranging from hearty soups and salads to balanced meat and fish dishes, serve as a guide to making every meal an opportunity to enhance your health through the power of plants. Here are three meals to kickstart this week's 30 plants.

RECIPES BY HUGH FEARNLEY-WHITTINGSTALL | IMAGE BY JONATHAN RING | RECIPE IMAGES BY LIZZIE MAYSON

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# Creamy Roast Cauli and Cashew Soup

This is a deliciously creamy white soup, packed with lots of lovely alliums (leek, onion, garlic), which get roasted with the cauli. If you have time, leave the cashews to soak for a few hours to soften – they'll blend to a smoother finish. The garlic topping is a great addition and can be made ahead, but it's by no means essential. The soup is lovely on its own, or with a dollop of my Seven-plant pesto.

## SERVES 4

---

100g cashew nuts  
1.2–1.5 litres hot vegetable stock  
1 large cauliflower (about 1.5kg), trimmed and cut into small florets, leaves kept  
2 leeks, trimmed and cut into chunks  
1 large onion, roughly chopped  
3 celery sticks, roughly chopped  
1 tsp cumin seeds  
2 tbsp oil or melted fat  
5 sprigs of thyme, leaves picked  
Sea salt and black pepper

### GARLIC OIL TOPPING

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, finely sliced  
2 tbsp sunflower or pumpkin seeds (or a mix)  
A pinch of dried chilli flakes

### TO FINISH

A small handful of chives, finely chopped, and/or parsley

Put the cashews into a bowl, pour on 1.2 litres hot stock and leave to soak for at least an hour.

Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C Fan/Gas 5.

Put the cauliflower florets into a large roasting tray, along with their roughly chopped leaves (if they're in good nick). Add all the other veg and the cumin seeds. Add the oil or fat, season well with salt and pepper and toss the veg to coat lightly.

Transfer the roasting tray to the oven and roast for 20–25 minutes until all the veg are tender and golden.

In the meantime, make the topping. Put the extra virgin olive oil into a small saucepan with the garlic, seeds, chilli flakes and a pinch of salt. Place over a medium heat and heat gently for just a minute or two until the garlic starts to turn pale golden. Immediately take off the heat and pour the garlicky oil into a bowl. Leave to infuse until the soup is ready.

Scrape the contents of the roasting tray into a jug blender, add the thyme leaves and tip in the cashew nuts, along with their soaking liquor. Blitz until smooth. Return the soup to the saucepan and reheat gently, without boiling. (Or you can blitz the soup directly in a saucepan, using a stick blender, as you reheat it.) Either way, add a dash more stock to thin the soup a little if it seems too thick.

Ladle the soup into warmed bowls and top each serving with a trickle of the crispy garlic oil and a sprinkle of chopped chives and/or parsley.





# Courgette Meatballs in Barley Broth

When courgettes are in season they come in abundance and I find myself trying to get them into a lot of meals. Here, they work very well grated and added to the meatballs, helping to keep them moist and tender. The meatballs are served in a delicious broth with barley, peas and beans, topped with a dollop of courgette raita

## SERVES 4–5

1 medium or 2 small courgettes  
(about 250g)  
500g lamb or beef mince  
2 garlic cloves, finely grated  
A small handful of parsley, leaves  
picked and very finely chopped  
1 tbsp dried oregano (optional)  
1 tsp fennel or caraway seeds,  
crushed  
1 egg, beaten  
Oil or fat for cooking  
Sea salt and black pepper

## PEARL BARLEY BROTH

2 onions, finely chopped  
1 large or 2 medium fennel bulbs,  
trimmed and finely chopped  
(optional)  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
100ml white wine (optional)  
1 litre vegetable or chicken stock  
100g pearl barley or quick-cook  
spelt, well rinsed  
100g frozen peas  
100g frozen broad beans or  
edamame beans (optional)  
Juice of ½ lemon, or to taste

## TO SERVE

Raita with added courgette  
Parsley and/or mint leaves  
Extra virgin olive oil

Coarsely grate the courgette(s) and toss with a good pinch of salt. Place in a colander over the sink for 20 minutes to draw out some of the water. Then squeeze out as much water from the grated courgette as you can with your hands.

In a bowl, combine the grated courgette, mince, garlic, parsley, oregano if using, crushed fennel or caraway seeds, some salt and pepper, and the beaten egg. Mix well and scrunch everything together with your hands until evenly combined.

Divide the mixture into 16 even-sized pieces and shape into balls, rolling them firmly in the palms of your hands. Place on a tray or plate and chill in the fridge for an hour to firm up a bit (if time). Heat a little oil or fat in a large heavy-based saucepan. When hot, brown the meatballs in batches over a fairly high heat, turning to colour evenly on all sides. Remove and set aside on a plate.

Now prepare the broth. Heat a little more oil or fat in the pan and lower the heat. Add the onions, with the fennel if using, and fry for 10 minutes until softened and light golden, stirring occasionally and loosening any bits of meat from the bottom of the pan. Toss in the garlic and fry for another 2 minutes, then add the wine if using. Now pour in the stock and bring to a simmer. Add the barley or spelt, with a pinch of salt, and simmer for 25–30 minutes until it is tender but still a little nutty. The grain will thicken the broth a little, but there should be plenty of liquid still in the pot – you can always add a splash more stock or hot water.

Add the meatballs back to the pot and simmer in the broth for 5 minutes. Add the peas, and broad beans or edamame beans if using, return to a simmer and cook for 2–3 minutes. Turn off the heat. Check the seasoning, adding salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.

Put 3 or 4 meatballs into each warmed serving bowl and ladle in plenty of barley, veg and liquor. Add a dollop of courgette raita, scatter over a few parsley and/or mint leaves and trickle on a little extra virgin olive oil to serve.

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# Courgette, Honey and Lemon Cake

The mighty lemon drizzle cake is everyone's favourite bake. This spin on it has the unlikely inclusion of courgettes, which balances the sweetness and keeps the cake nice and moist too. It's also a great way to make a dent in a glut of summer courgettes. The lemon drizzle topping makes it irresistibly zingy. You can also serve the cake as a dessert with crème fraîche, summer berries and an extra trickle of honey.

## MAKES 8–10 SLICES

350g coarsely grated courgettes (about 2 medium)  
½ tsp fine salt  
150g wholemeal spelt flour  
100g fine plain wholemeal flour  
100g ground almonds or hazelnuts  
½ tsp bicarbonate soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
30g poppy seeds (optional)  
125ml rapeseed or coconut oil  
50g soft light brown sugar  
30g honey  
3 medium eggs  
Finely grated zest and juice of 2 lemons  
4 sprigs of thyme, leaves picked and chopped (optional)  
50ml milk

## LEMON DRIZZLE

Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon  
1 tbsp honey  
20g caster sugar

Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/Gas 4 and line a 1kg (2lb) loaf tin with baking paper.

Tip the grated courgettes into a fine-meshed sieve set over a bowl. Sprinkle with the salt and toss through (it will draw out moisture from the veg). Leave to drain for 20 minutes or so, then press the courgettes with the back of a spoon to get rid of a bit more water.

In a bowl, mix together the flours, ground nuts, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder and poppy seeds if using. Set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, sugar and honey. Beat in the eggs, one by one, then stir in the grated courgettes, lemon zest and juice, and the thyme if using. Now gently fold in the flour mixture, alternately with the milk. Pour the mixture into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 45–50 minutes until golden and risen.

While the cake is in the oven, make the lemon drizzle. In a small bowl, lightly mix the lemon zest and juice with the honey and sugar to combine without dissolving the sugar.

To check the cake is cooked, insert a skewer into the middle – it should come out clean. As soon as you take the cake from the oven, spoon the lemon drizzle over the surface. Leave the cake in the tin for 10 minutes then transfer it to a wire rack and allow to cool completely before slicing and serving.



Recipe extracts from **How to Eat 30 Plants a Week** by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall | Bloomsbury Publishing | \$54.99





# M2WOMAN JOURNEY *to* EXCELLENCE

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**G.J. Gardner.**  
HOMES

FRIDAY 31 MAY 2024  
12 - 4PM, AUCKLAND

M2woman Journey to Excellence develops Leadership, Resilience and Personal Growth to help people thrive. Creating a unique environment to build a shared commitment of aligned values & understanding with staff, customers & suppliers. This popular event is educational based with an all inclusive Friday afternoon of Expert Speakers, Lunch & Facilitated time to connect.

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# Schedule

**12:00pm** Lunch with Wine

**1:00pm** Welcome

**1:10pm** Keynote Presentation-  
"How to Lead A Multi-Generational  
Workforce"

**1:30pm** Keynote Presentation- "How  
to Build Personal & Team Resilience"

**1:50pm** Keynote Presentation-  
"Reskilling For An AI Future"

**2:10pm** 10 minute break

**2:20pm** Keynote Presentation-  
"My Career Path To Becoming A  
Professional Director"

**2:40pm** Panel Discussion

**3:25pm** Table discussion on key  
takeaways, best one wins the bouquet  
of flowers on the table!

**3:30pm** Cocktail Networking with  
nibbles

**4:30pm** Close

For bookings and more information

**JOURNEYTOEXCELLENCE.CO.NZ**



# Speakers

From October 2023

“You don’t have to be an expert in everything”

*Bindi Norwell, Group CEO, ProCare*



“I really like the metaphor of seeds of change, and I think that just thinking about the influence that all of us have in our day-to-day lives where we model behavior for other people, that’s influencing other people, and that’s really powerful.”

*Jacinta FitzGerald, CEO, Mindful Fashion*





“72% say having purpose and meaning in my work matters most,”

*Susan Peterson, Independent Director*



“Purpose: Inspiration towards a common good(direction) & Meaning: The day-to-day experience of your life (nourishment)”

*Professor Marjo Lips-Wiersma, AUT*

# Speakers

31 May 2024



*Hannah McQueen*



*Kristen Lunman*



*June McCabe*



*Laurent Sylvestre*

For bookings and more information

**JOURNEYTOEXCELLENCE.CO.NZ**



# Resilience, leadership, and personal growth

Hannah McQueen likes a big goal. The more audacious the better, and preferably several big hairy ones at once.

WORDS BY NADINE HIGGINS

Right now, the personal finance expert and founder of enable.me is re-writing her best-selling book, training for the Berlin marathon, establishing a farm, and working on growing the business from helping tens of thousands of people to helping hundreds of thousands.

"I'm a 'go big or go home' kind of person" she laughs, "Because I believe if you're going to try, you should make the payoff worth the effort!"

Phew. Hannah's boundless energy is enough to make you wonder what you're doing with your life. But we need to rewind a little.

The year is 2007 and, unknown to most people, the Global Financial Crisis is brewing – and so is Hannah McQueen's big business idea.

She and her husband Billy have just bought their first home and they're expecting their first child, son Cameron.

As a chartered accountant, Hannah decided to put her numbers-nous to work figuring out how to pay off the mortgage faster. But true to that 'go big' nature she didn't just tinker with spreadsheets, she approached Dr Jamie Sneddon at the University of Auckland and, 8 pages of calculus later, they had determined the fastest way to repay a mortgage with the least interest cost and the most flexibility. She patented the formula.

"I thought I'd cracked it, but for the formula to work you need a cash surplus – and I didn't have one. I was earning the most I'd ever earned; I could write a budget and colour code a budget – but I just wasn't inclined to stick to it!"

She had a hunch she wasn't the only one in that situation, so her next mission became to figure out why – which opened her eyes to the role

psychology plays in financial success.

She set about cracking the code of why we do the things we do - or perhaps why we don't do the things we know we should do - when it comes to money.

"I'm a shopper, and despite being financially literate and having the best of intentions, simply knowing what to do was not enough to actually make it me do it! So, I wanted to know what would shift the dial".

The result was enable.me and its coaching-based approach to financial advice. They refer to themselves as 'financial personal trainers' – their coaches work with you to optimise every element of your financial life, ensure you achieve your goals and stretch you to achieve more. Their success lies in focussing not just on the numbers but on what motivates you, your



"I think you can **achieve your goals** a lot faster when you have someone who can be really direct in their observations, but you're not **offended by the bluntness** of those observations!"

financial tendencies, your mindset, and your money personality.

"What motivates me as a shopper who likes big goals would possibly frustrate someone who was a saver or a plodder and terrify someone who was very risk averse".

What works for each individual is different, depending on how you're wired. "Sometimes once you know what to do, and the sequence of actions required, you're away laughing."

But for many, it's inherently emotional, and often confronting.

"You need to feel safe in the process," Hannah says, "And beyond that, you need to believe that your effort can translate into results before you're willing to bother trying. When your history suggests it's not possible – that is, you've never managed to make progress before – that can make you hesitant to start".

So erm, how do you change that mindset when you don't have the best track record?

"I think the most powerful tool to change your mindset is seeing evidence that it is possible. So, we ask a client to adopt our proven methodology, and lean into it. To trust the process and their coach for the first three months and when they see how quickly their efforts make a difference, a more positive money mindset is much easier to adopt."

Launching the business in the midst of the financial crisis, with her infant son quite literally on her hip, proved no impediment to its growth.

"I'd fly to Wellington to see clients with (son) Cameron in tow. We'd take the bus into the city because as a start-up we didn't have the money for taxis. But you make it work".

## LEVELLING UP

Hannah's belief in the power of a coach is not a case of 'do as I say, not as I do'. In fact, she has more than one.

Even as a financial coach, she uses one herself "because accountability is crucial when you want to make sure things get done!" she explains.

A running coach helped her knock off her first marathon (in New York, no less) – and is now helping her train for her second (Berlin this time).

Then, as the enable.me's growth demanded more and more of her, and after 2020 and the pandemic's upheaval left her feeling drained, she employed a business leadership coach.

"You can get lost in the intensity of business growth" she explains "You lose time for yourself, you lose time to reflect, to make intentional choices. So much of what is important to you isn't done deliberately because you don't have much time to be deliberate. So, I wanted to take it back to 'why am I doing this, why am I here, what does success look like and what do I want to define me?'

"I knew I needed to invest in myself, and understand what I stood for, so I could hold on to that when times were challenging, and it could feed back into the behaviours required to get me there. I also needed to find that '6th gear' to fuel me for the next step forward with enable.me".

The business needed fuel, too. While it was undoubtedly successful with thousands of clients singing its praises, Hannah was eyeing even bigger and hairier goals.

"I knew we were only scratching the surface of the number of people who could benefit from our approach. But to reach more people and that 'next level' – that requires infrastructure and capital, as well as the space to be able to think creatively".

Hannah decided that she, and enable.me, needed a partner.

## LOCKDOWN CONVERSATIONS

In the midst of yet another Auckland lockdown, Hannah was approached by Mark Ennis, the Managing Director of AdviceFirst, an investment and risk advice company based in Wellington, and owned by listed company AMP.

"Mark said, I hear you're the best in the business at what you do – to which I replied, 'you heard right!' – because I truly do believe that".

Over many conversations they discovered the two companies had similar values and they shared a desire to put many more people on the path to a better financial future.

In April last year, the two companies merged – a move that's helped set in motion that next phase of expansion.

Parent company AMP is trusted by many of New Zealand's biggest employers to provide their staff with KiwiSaver and insurance and now plans to level up that support through a new workplace financial wellbeing platform which capitalises on the expertise of all three companies.



"Together enable.me, AdviceFirst and AMP are aiming to help hundreds of thousands of people with Moneyfit.me. It encompasses wraparound financial literacy support through digital coaching, online learning, an intuitive tracking app and masterclasses."

"So many employers are finding that staff are financially stressed, which feeds into lots of negative outcomes like poorer health, lower productivity, and higher staff turnover. Most people assume earning more solves all that, but once you get past the point where you can make ends meet, more money is seldom the answer. You need to fix your financial foundations first, and that's what we're doing with Moneyfit.me'.

The programme is designed to be accessible, digestible, and relatable. "It democratises financial success" Hannah says. "I want us to be able to help all Kiwis get ahead faster, whereas to date that has been limited to those who have money already or who are on the property ladder. The goal with Moneyfit.me is that it will give hope to our young people who right now feel as though everything is out of reach and don't know where to start. I think it has the potential to help bridge the widening gap between rich and poor."

It also embraces the no-nonsense, plain-speaking approach that Hannah has become renowned for with her clients and in her many media appearances.

"If I can't explain it to you in a way that you understand, well I'm not explaining it right – and that is the standard we hold all of our coaches and advisers to".

## BUILDING RESILIENCE

Building a company from the ground up and managing it through both a financial crisis and a pandemic (while raising two children) requires a significant amount of resilience.

So too does being a woman trying to do things differently in an industry that's still dominated by men.

"You get used to hearing 'no' and for people to underestimate you or doubt you can do it".

But Hannah has a secret weapon in avoiding making other people's doubts her own – her Mum, Lor, who recently retired from enable.me having worked in the business since its inception.

"I think you can achieve your goals a lot faster when you have someone who can be really direct in their observations, but you're not offended by the bluntness of those observations! Mum is that for me."

She adds "My husband is a brilliant sounding board too - but he's possibly too gentle with me!"

Resilience also has an important role in your finances and is a key pillar of the work enable.me's coaches do with their clients.

"Most people don't have the financial resilience required to be able to weather the curveballs and financial sucker punches that life inevitably delivers."

While people often associate financial resilience with having emergency savings as a safety net - and that is important - it goes beyond that.

"Financial resilience is also crucial when

trying to grow wealth, it doesn't just de-risk the impact of the different decisions people might make, it can also allow them to be more ambitious and still feel safe in the process."

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Hannah's entire career has revolved around helping others map out their futures and prepare for retirement, so what does she see in her future?

Well, it involves a few things she once would never have imagined!

"We're getting some Kunekune pigs, I'm actually enjoying feeding the chickens and our little Fox Terrier, Chi Chi has helped me overcome a lifelong fear of dogs. It's not something I saw coming, but it's nice to be able to surprise yourself – and your partner – by being capable of 180-degree change!"

But don't confuse that idyllic picture with Hannah putting herself out to pasture.

True to her 'go big or go home' nature, far from taking her foot off the gas, she's putting the pedal to the metal.

"My goal is to create a global financial coaching business" she says, her energy infectious. "I want society to be better off for my contribution".

Given enable.me's partnership with AMP and AdviceFirst, and Hannah's voracious appetite for audacious goals, you wouldn't be wise to bet against it.

**For more information head to [www.enable.me](http://www.enable.me)**

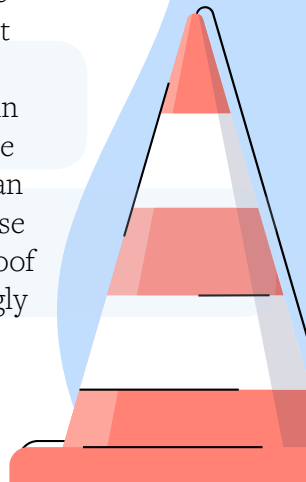


# BRICK BY BRICK PLANK BY PLANK

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One of the most popular assets women invest in, is bricks and mortar – property in other words. It may be a humble abode, to house you and your family. Alternatively, it might be an investment property, chosen to fund your retirement. Irrespective of what we spend our dosh on, we all buy property with the view it will increase in value. Unfortunately, despite being considered safe as houses, there’s no cast iron guarantee you’ll make money through buying real estate. Many buyers in recent years have found this out. Investing in dirt is no different from investing in other asset classes – it comes with risk. You can take steps however to minimize your risk - to arm against losing your hard-earned coin. At the same time, you can increase your chances of making your dollars and cents grow. To help you in these objectives, I’ve recounted below the main factors I consider when purchasing a roof and four walls. These matters have seen my investment in property do exceedingly well, hence I feel comfortable sharing them with you.

WORDS BY JANET XUCCOA



## BIG INFLUENCES ON REAL ESTATE

Understanding the elements that influence property prices is the first step to minimising risk and increasing wealth. Real estate that's in a country with a stable government and legal system, tends to appreciate at a greater rate of knots than those countries that suffer from volatility. This is because individuals will always seek to minimise their exposure to risk, particularly the risk of having their property seized through laws enacted by a government in power, lawfully or otherwise. New Zealand is a country that has established democratic governments and settled law for the most part. These aspects attract foreign investment in the property market as we all know.

A country's taxation system also affects how property is viewed, both from a home and an investment perspective. When a nation's taxation system supports and favors real estate, preferment as a choice of generating wealth will be heightened, driving people to choose property over other asset classes. When

supply is limited, you can expect this to result in property price increases. If you apply this to Aotearoa you can see why investment in property has been so popular.

Lastly, cultural norms and values are factors that influence an individual's investment behavior and choice. I think it fair to say, many Kiwis aspire to getting their feet onto the property ladder. Home ownership and owning an investment property or two, is culturally acceptable and viewed as desirable.

Summing up, the big influences that serve to make property purchasing and investing attractive operate in Kiwi Land.

## NOT ALL PROPERTY INCREASES IN VALUE AT THE SAME RATE

Some properties experience greater price increases than others. Clearly, if you're going to buy a home or an investment property or go

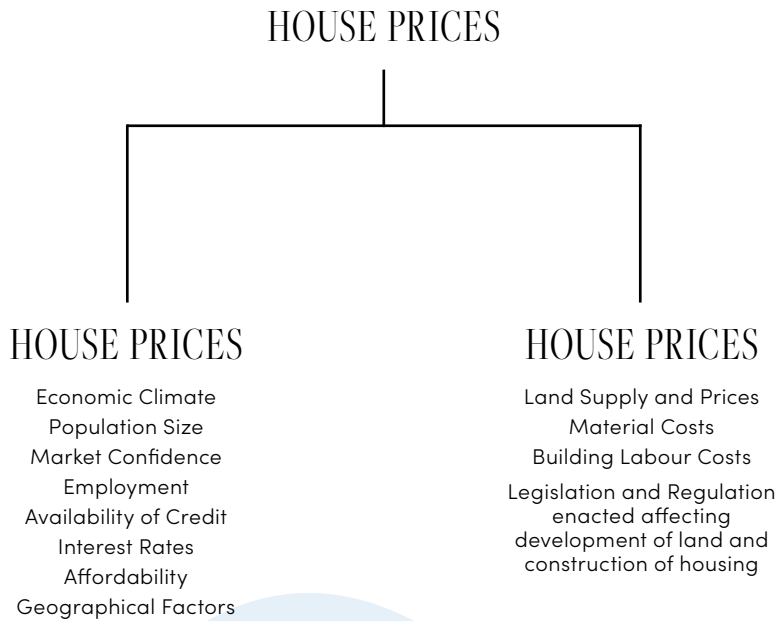
into developing property, you want to be in the area that enjoys the largest increases in value in the shortest space of time. Price increases, that is capital growth, aren't the only things you have to consider however if you're intending on buying investment property. The rental return the property produces is also important. Much like capital growth, cash returns can vary from property to property.

Regardless of what camp you fall into, both homeowners and property investors want to maximise the capital growth and rental returns their property achieves. On the basis you'd like to know how to stack the deck in your favor in these regards, keep reading.



## A PICTURE SPEAKS A GAZILLION WORDS

If we start with the big picture, we see rises and falls in property prices are caused by a myriad of factors but mostly by the natural change that occurs in demand and supply. Demand is influenced by the state of the economy, population size, market confidence, employment, availability of credit, interest rates, affordability (house prices to income ratio) and geographical factors. Supply on the other hand tends to revolve around land supply and prices, material and labour costs and legislation and regulation that permits land to be developed and more housing to be created. The chart below encapsulates these elements nicely:



**“If you have your eyes open and your ears to the ground, you can predict the next location that’s likely to experience an increase in property prices.”**

Because space is limited and likely so is your time, I’ll elaborate on only a couple of these elements. The moo-la aspects we’ll leave for another day.

**Population Size:** Demand for housing is affected by population. Population is derived from three sources – natural growth, migration, and immigration. When the size of a population changes, so in general does house prices. That is, as population grows, so does the demand for housing. Everyone has to live somewhere after all. If housing is in short supply in an area where demand is growing, prices tend to travel one way – upwards. The opposite is also true. A dwindling populace can result in a decline in demand and ultimately, a drop in prices where supply outweighs the need for housing.

Applying this element to hedging your bets so the property you buy increases in price, you’ll want to purchase in areas where population growth is a natural phenomenon. By this I mean through people being born in a particular geographical area. This is because if the natural population is so strong it creates a demand of itself, the area won’t be reliant on migration or immigration to create the demand for housing. Consequently, if the population in an area grows through natural means that causes the area to suffer a housing shortage, property prices are likely to continue to appreciate. Additionally, demand won’t be reliant on bolstered migration and immigration. This is important because it de-risks your investment to a degree. Demand for housing that affects prices won’t be affected by unfavorable immigration policies enacted by the government of the day.



**Employment Opportunities and Income:** Most of us need to work to stack our coffers, earning enough money to keep body and soul together. Frequently, workers choose the area they intend to live in based upon the employment opportunities available to them. Cities tend to offer more prospects than smaller areas. People also seek to earn as much as possible from their job. Generally, urban areas offer higher salaries than smaller geographical ones. Employment prospects and high levels of income can positively affect properties capital values. This occurs when buyers who have the money compete to acquire a property. When several properties in an area rise in price, other properties in the same area frequently enjoy increases too.

Putting these two factors together, if you want to increase the chances of your property enjoying solid capital growth rates, purchase in a geographical setting where there's plenty of employment opportunities, where higher salaries are on offer, and where a large number of highly paid employees dwell.

**Geographical Factors:** Other than employment opportunities, factors such as good schooling, access to different transportation methods, proximity to central business districts and features such as parks and beaches are attractive ingredients for a population. These ingredients serve to draw people to an area, creating demand. On the basis housing supply is short in that location, prices will increase as demand grows. It's for this reason I investigate what an area has to offer and what type of people want to live in the area I'm considering purchasing in.

**Location Forecasting and Spending:** Did you know Governments, local authorities (eg: Councils) and some companies like Fletchers, spend thousands of dollars carrying out forecasting and formulating reports as to expected population growth and corresponding infrastructure needs? That's

not all either. Companies who are intent on buying land in an area, more often than not consider the demographics of the expected population in that location before they move in and build houses, supermarkets and petrol stations. They want to know what the race, gender, individual status, family composition, age and incomes are of the expected population as this reveals who their potential customers are and what prices they are likely to pay for the goods and services on offer.

Frequently a lot of the information gathered by the above parties is available to the public. Demand for housing, business development capacity, urban development activities, etc can be accessed by asking Councils and searching the net.

Understanding what the plans are for an area, be it roading, parks, amenities, and housing, can assist you in identifying where the anticipated population growth is. This permits you to buy in those areas at a much lower price than if you buy after the population growth has occurred. So a tip is to get in at the bottom, before the area develops and people start flocking to it, creating increased demand and pushing up prices. That way, the house you buy will enjoy a capital price increase as the area develops and the demand grows. Stonefields in Auckland is a true example of this.

**Locality Wave:** Following on from the above point of forecasting, sometimes if you have your eyes open and your ears to the ground, you can predict the next location that's likely to experience an increase in property prices. You do this by identifying the suburbs that have already enjoyed increases

in prices and then buy in the neighboring locations as price increases are likely to flow in waves to those adjoining localities. This occurs because those that can't afford to buy in the areas that have spiked in price will seek the next best alternative. Usually, this is the adjoining suburbs. Buyers will purchase in the neighboring suburbs because those geographical areas will suit their purse. Through buyers shifting their buying to the adjoining suburbs, increased demand results and so does increase house prices, assuming a limited supply of property is on offer.

On the basis you purchase in an area yet to experience an increase in demand, you'll likely buy at a price below what you would otherwise pay once the increased demand occurs.

## SUMMARY

Much has been written and taught about property, particularly how to grow wealth through real estate. There are millions of books on the subject and just as many opinions. This article merely brushes the surface, providing points to ponder, which I've successfully applied in buying homes and investment property. Of course, to do either, most of us have to beg and borrow, usually from Banks and other lending institutions. Much like buying real estate, there's some street smarts to getting a loan but that's a subject for another day. In the interim, good wishes from me building your financial future, brick by brick, plank by plank.



Janet Xuccoa is a successful professional, holding both commerce and a law degree. She acts as the Commercial Affairs Manager and Trust Advisor at Greenlion, a chartered accounting firm, helping people protect their wealth for themselves and their loved ones.

Over the years, Janet has written several books on money and trusts. Her book, 'Women & Money: Mastering The Struggle' is an easy read, furthering women's financial education and empowering them to build the financial lives they want to lead.



# PURE DRIVE

Lara Henderson clearly remembers the moment she realised she probably wouldn't be going back to corporate life after having her first child. "I had just emerged from the blur of the first four months of having a newborn, and I went out to meet with a mentor of mine."

"I had been working at BMW as the New Zealand Brand Manager for almost three years and we were talking about my next career move," she says. "I had been toying with the idea of going back into corporate and then I started telling him about this idea I had for a business. He could hear how excited and passionate I was about it and quickly stopped me in my tracks and said 'Just do that, just start that business.' It was the kick I needed to take the leap."

And that was the start of PURE MAMA, which despite only being in the market for two and half years is already available in the New Zealand and Australian online stores of the international prestige beauty giant, MECCA - and boasts fans like Kourtney Kardashian. It's a natural body skincare range focused on pregnant women to encourage them to take care of themselves, and their skin, while they are doing the very important job of growing another human.

It all came about when Henderson herself was pregnant and was startled at the lack of body care available for expecting women. "I went for a pregnancy massage and asked them what I should be using on my skin as it stretched and changed - they really had no idea and couldn't recall any quality brands. I looked

around in both New Zealand and Australia and found nothing that really resonated with me."

After tirelessly searching for the right products, Henderson was not only overwhelmed with conflicting information on the safety of ingredients, but was shocked by the amount of synthetic ingredients and fragrances that were being used. "It felt like an outdated market landscape that was failing to acknowledge the complexity of motherhood, especially around the physical and emotional changes women go through."

There were - of course - the pharmacy standards like Bio Oil and Mrs Palmers "but nothing that actually made me feel good, smelt amazing, and had high-quality natural ingredients. I continued to look online globally and there were some, but all highlighter pink and branded, cutesy balloons and full of questionable ingredients. Plus, not many focused solely on pregnancy, which made it really confusing."

Having worked in advertising agencies and marketing she understood what it would take to build a premium brand and sell a luxury product. She reflects on the moment she realised she was no longer talking, and



now actually building a brand from the ground up. “I knew there was no turning back after I went through the process of purchasing the URL from an American company. Being ambitious from the get-go, I knew I wanted the dot com to ensure we could go global - someone else had it so I had to pay 6K for the privilege which, back then, was a lot of money when you are on maternity leave and down to one income.” From that moment she knew she was all in, and right from the start had places like MECCA and Sephora in her sights. There was definitely a gap in the market and I knew we could build a beautiful brand to fill a white space for them.”

And so ensued two years of product development, research, brand refinement, packaging trials and everything it takes to get something like PURE MAMA to market. This was clearly time well spent as they sold out three months after launching online “That was proof of concept to me,” says Henderson “It was obvious we were on to something. Women often forget themselves in the pregnancy process, it’s all too often about the baby and finishing up work and doing all the millions of things women do when they hold the majority of

the mental load. We put ourselves last and we wanted to develop something that was not only great for the skin but a reminder to women to do something for themselves amongst all the madness.”

The unique blends they developed prioritised potent, natural ingredients commonly found in facial skincare such as Rosehip, Avocado, Raspberry Seed, Pomegranate seed oils and concentrated levels of Vitamin E. “These ingredients work wonders in promoting skin hydration, elasticity, and restoration.” says Henderson. They then combined these with well-established base blends of Coconut and Almond oils to introduce a novel, nourishing skincare range specifically designed for pregnant women and new mothers. Their product range includes the three times sell-out Belly Oil, a luxurious Bump Scrub, restorative Nipple Butter and a Magnesium Body Rub, alongside beautiful gift sets that have fast become a staple at any New Zealand baby shower.

And despite a beauty industry insider saying they were looking at three to five years before breaking into somewhere like MECCA, they were in conversations nine months after launch and available online

12 months later. “I navigated that first year with only one employee and my sister at my side who was working in corporate as a CFO at the time, and they still are a huge part of driving the company forward today. We had that conversation with MECCA and they soon realised that PURE MAMA was a brand that would work really well with their offering. Within half an hour they’d pretty much said ‘We’d love to have you’. It was amazing and somewhat surreal as I was only three weeks postpartum with my second child when I took that call.”

Of course, it hasn’t all been sunshine, rainbows and a hassle-free trajectory. While the core trio have an extensive background in sales, marketing, and finance, manufacturing is a whole other beast. “It was a completely new industry and we found ourselves constantly in uncharted territory, like realising there are 10,000 different ways to make a glass bottle - or 20 versions of the same colour when printing with different suppliers!” They’ve had their moments, like when they had to discard 6000 defective tubes. “Thankfully that was a one-off and whilst we learnt the hard way, we actually learned so much from that experience. As a team,



we are deeply committed to the integrity of our range across the board so we never settle on something unless we all love it, and would genuinely use it ourselves.”

Excitingly PURE MAMA is launching into the US and China this year. “We know that’s going to bring a whole new set of challenges - it already has! But we are conquering them one task at a time. We’re so ready for it and couldn’t be more excited!” And while the success and future expansion of the company is incredible, there’s also a secondary triumph in that this business is now run by a group of five women who all still have reasonably young children - along with the challenges that can bring. “We all have small kids - eight under sixes between us and we have this amazing understanding. We often chat late at night once the kids are asleep - and all fully understand if someone can’t make a meeting or deliver something when they thought they could. We all have the same hustle and same vision so we are always able to get everything done, even if it’s not in a conventional nine-to-five kind of way.”

It’s clear Henderson is incredibly proud and grateful for her team “We all bring our own expertise to the table and everyone completely understood my vision from the start - and understood where we are going on a global scale to be the number one premium pregnancy skincare brand in the world. I think some people thought we were going to sell at the Sunday markets” she laughs “But it’s not quite that.” It’s clear PURE MAMA has had big plans from the get-go.

And while being stocked in the hospital bag of one of the world’s most famous reality TV stars isn’t something you measure in financial reports, it was exciting to find out Kourtney Kardashian considered PURE MAMA a pregnancy essential “She’s known for being really particular about what she puts on her skin so it’s a pretty big buzz!” says Henderson. And all this from a company with a staff of five running from Papamoa and Auckland. It just goes to show that if you find a niche and have the determination to be the best, not only locally but globally, anything is possible.



# Ditch the Shame Game: Play by Your Own Rules

Rochelle Moffit, owner of Tickled Pink personal branding agency talks about the importance of living life on your own terms, and how it's helped her find genuine happiness in business, and everything she does.

**A**fter 20 years in business and with two divorces behind me, I've learned a few lessons - some harder than others. But perhaps the most valuable one has been the realisation of how important it is to march to the beat of your own drum, rather than anyone else's. Living a life that's authentically yours is essential to finding success and happiness in every aspect of your life.

Shedding the weight of others' expectations is unbelievably liberating. It's the secret sauce to not just surviving but thriving. When we make that crucial shift from seeking validation to validating ourselves, we unlock a level of confidence and authenticity that is magnetic. It's not about disregard for others, and their needs, but about striking a harmonious balance between supporting those around us and championing our own needs and aspirations.

Sometimes as women, we spend so much of our lives thinking about what everyone else needs, we lose all sense of what we actually want, what truly makes us happy and what direction we want to take our lives in. Deciding how you want to live, and identifying what's truly important to you are the first steps towards living in a way that feels authentically yours. But to do this requires a level of honesty with yourself that goes beyond the superficial. There's a difference between what we think we 'should' want, like, believe



**“There’s a difference between what we think we ‘should’ want, like, believe and aspire to and what really makes our souls sing.”**

and aspire to and what really makes our souls sing. The corporate job, great car, big house and fancy clothes might have all the markers of what your peers deem as success, but if moving to the country and growing veggies while you run a baking business is what would make you really happy, you have to work out who you're living your life for.

It's the same with relationships. Especially if you're in one that's not serving you well. So many people stay in a bad situation to avoid the stigma of divorce, and I get that, as the societal pressure to conform can be paralyzing. But what I realised in my own situation was that the real failure was not in the eyes of others; it was in betraying

my own truth. I've lived through the fear of judgment, especially when facing the prospect of a second "failed" marriage but now it's pretty scary to think how my life might have played out if I hadn't left my previous relationships. My journey through mistrust and betrayal, to finding love again has underscored the power of honesty. It's the cornerstone of living life on your terms and if you let that fear of what people think overpower you, you can end up paying the price.

I also see this in business. Worrying about public perception or fearing failure can immobilise you. But here's the truth: every venture, every new product, every pivot to your plan is a step closer to discovering your genuine path, whether it's roaring success or a giant flop. Some of my businesses didn't take off, while others were amazing and generated great levels of income. The fear of judgment has never stopped me. Why? Because life is not about playing it safe; it's about playing it your way.

And this concept of being unashamedly you applies to everything, not just the big stuff. It needs to transcend everything you do every day. Saying no to the party you don't really want to go to, saying yes to the class you've always wanted to take or wearing those clothes that are a little different to current fashion. I see this regularly in my own life. For example, I'm a beginner skier, and frankly, I'm not great at it. I am fairly sure I look ridiculous on the slopes, feeling

like those memes that juxtapose how you think you look versus reality. But the joy comes from trying, from learning something new, and from giving myself and my kids the chance to experience the thrill of skiing. It's a testament to doing something for the sheer love of the experience, not for external validation. If you've always wanted to learn to salsa dance, or speak Japanese or learn to surf, don't let shame at what you might look like stop you from doing something that could enhance your life and bring you real true joy.

So, how do you embark on this journey from a shame mindset to being unshakably you if you've been living your life for everyone else up to this point? It has to begin with introspection and a bold willingness to question the narratives you've been living by. It's about confronting every facet of your life head-on, without hiding anything under the proverbial rug. It means detaching from the drama that doesn't belong to you (my mantra for this is "is this my monkey" and "this is not my monkey" - learn quickly to only give time to your monkeys) and focusing intently on your own narrative. Be honest with where you're at, why this is and where you really want to be.

It's also about setting boundaries that protect your energy and prioritise your well-being - finding courage in vulnerability, and allowing yourself to

step into your truth, even when it means walking alone. And most importantly, it's about embracing change as the only constant, viewing each setback as a setup for a comeback. It might feel strange, and even selfish, initially but it's entirely possible to live your life as you want it and still be a great friend, daughter, mother, colleague and partner. It won't always be easy; the path to living authentically and true to yourself will have plenty of ups and downs, but know that every step is a declaration of your strength and brilliance. Shame is a joy killer. It silences your inner voice, urging you to listen to societal whispers instead of your own desires and dreams. It's time to stop letting shame dictate your actions and start playing your own game.

So here's to embracing your unique journey, unburdened by the weight of shame. Start that hobby, make a plan to leave that unfulfilling job, end that toxic relationship, or launch that dream business. Your life's worth is not measured by your successes or failures, but by the authenticity and joy with which you live it.

I dare you to ditch the shame game and unearth that courage to live unapologetically with the resilience to embrace every part of your journey.

Remember, the only approval you need is your own.

**"Start that hobby, make a plan to leave that unfulfilling job, end that toxic relationship, or launch that dream business. Your life's worth is not measured by your successes or failures, but by the authenticity and joy with which you live it."**



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## 6 Things to Consider *with Digital Marketing in 2024*



**RICHARD CONWAY**  
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I don't think a year in the last decade has promised to disrupt digital marketing as much as this one. The rate of change and availability of new tools and automation are changing the game. Here are my top 6 things to consider when embarking on your strategy for 2024:

### MOBILE & SOCIAL - JOIN THE CONVERSATION WHERE YOUR AUDIENCE EXISTS

A staggering 85% of global mobile users regularly use social media platforms. As marketers, we know that engaging with our customers where they choose to be is the key to effectively reaching them. It should go without saying that responsive design and optimisation for mobile have been a priority for a few years. Content has become increasingly accessible and appealing across devices, with platforms like Instagram, Reddit, Discord,

Facebook, LinkedIn, and TikTok offering vast engagement opportunities. Brands willing to invest the time, energy, and strategy can engage authentically and consistently with their audiences, leveraging these platforms and their users to foster genuine connections.

### E-COMMERCE: THE DIGITAL MARKETPLACE

Almost everyone buys regularly from e-commerce websites. However, having your own e-commerce website is no longer enough. Amazon, social commerce, and things like Google shopping should be a big part of your strategy (depending on your target market).

Ensuring your website has unique copy, very high-quality imagery, and clearly displayed customer-centric terms of service (things like free shipping, returns, etc.) are non-negotiable—alongside a good choice of products, great user interface design, and usability.

### DYNAMIC CONTENT: BE DIFFERENT

High-quality images, infographics, videos, and podcasts are all excellent mediums for engaging with your audience. People have so much choice nowadays, so think about how you will make your brand stand out.

I've mentioned it a few times, but authenticity will win in 2024. Many people are taking shortcuts, utilising new technology to create content, images, and video at scale. Whilst leveraging technology is a no-brainer, relying on it to be the finished article is a recipe for disaster.

### AUTHENTIC CROSS-CHANNEL MARKETING

Consumers average nearly 7 hours online daily, making cross-channel marketing a critical element of any effective strategy in 2024. In my experience, a consistent, omnichannel strategy integrating search, social, email, and more proves to be most effective. Consistency in branding, messaging, and customer insight across channels allows you to utilise one piece of content in multiple ways whilst engaging with different audiences on different platforms in a consistent manner. With our own business,

we incorporate traditional channels like radio, newspapers, and magazines into most of our successful campaigns.

### EMAIL MARKETING: CHEAP, TARGETED COMMUNICATION WITH A HIGH ROI

Email marketing's demise has been predicted for years. However, with advanced segmentation, AI, and automation combined with informative, engaging content, email marketing provides a surprisingly large number of conversions.

Incorporating strategic thought and split testing headlines helps understand what messaging and cadence work. Think about sending out your email marketing to coincide with when your audience gets their paycheck from work (people always spend more after payday) and reward your loyal customers with the best offers.

### AI, AUTOMATION, AND MACHINE LEARNING

Finally, the big one.

AI, Chatbots, and other elements of machine learning are changing the game like never before. With a conservative prediction of 40% of businesses adopting an AI strategy in 2024, I believe it is a case of adapt or die.

Our business has invested a huge sum in understanding and adopting AI. The one caveat, however, is that it is not yet a panacea. To get the best from AI, you need a considerable amount of human input – after all, that's where the magic comes from!

It would be remiss of me not to mention the demise of third-party cookies, although it did not make my top 6 (because you should be over it already!). By now, all businesses should have a strategy to collect, store, and analyse first-party data. Many are going one step further and using predictive analytics and Mixed Media Modelling (MMM) to inform their marketing budgets and decisions.

Whatever you choose to do with your digital marketing in 2024, it is likely to be a big evolution from last year. As the saying goes, evolve or die!

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