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EDITOR'S NOTE

It takes me a while with some songs to hear certain lyrics correctly. For example, with Taylor Swift's "22", there were a few weeks when I would sing gaily that it was a "perfect night to dress up like hamsters".

For those familiar with the song, you'll know it's supposed to be "hipsters". It's not the only song I've done it to, but luckily most of my singing is done in my car, and the only people that can hear me are my daughters. They think it's very amusing and they generally wait a few weeks before they correct me.



The other day I was stopped at a red traffic light having a lovely sing when I realised that a man in a van to the right of me was watching me and laughing. I stopped and smiled sheepishly at him – luckily the light changed to green so I could escape. It's supposed to be good to make people laugh, though, right?

It's definitely my mother's genes; she once shouted out quite loudly at a quiz that the galaxy in question was "the Milky Tray".

We can all get the wrong end of the stick and misinterpret things, and we want to make sure that we're hearing you loudly and clearly – we want to know who you are and what you hope to see in the magazine. You can like us on Facebook, follow us on Instagram, or email us about any subject (including any story ideas you might have for an upcoming issue) at editorial@expatliving.hk.

Unbelievably, it's nearly halfway through the year. Have you planned a nice holiday to get away from the humidity? If you haven't organised anything yet, remember there's a heap of travel advice in the mag, and even more online at expatliving.hk.

Rebecca

REBECCA BISSET
Editor-in-Chief

STAY UPDATED ONLINE

NEWS – WHAT'S GOING ON?

Read the latest Hong Kong happenings

EVENTS CALENDAR

Having a party or promotional launch? Head to www.expatliving.hk, find the calendar and click to post an event.

WHERE TO BUY

A list of retail outlets where you can buy the latest copy of *Expat Living*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

THROUGHOUT JUNE The Faust Festival 2015. faustworld.com

6 JUNE Summer Holiday Shopping at The Fringe Club. shoppinghongkong.blogspot.hk

21 JUNE Father's Day various restaurants and venues throughout Hong Kong

1 JULY Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day

3–5 JULY July Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival. discoverhongkong.com

10 JULY–16 AUGUST International Arts Carnival 2015, various locations. ticket.urbtix.hk

15–21 JULY Hong Kong Book Fair. hkbookfair.hktdc.com

23 SEPTEMBER Robbie Williams Live in Hong Kong, AsiaWorld Arena. hkticketing.com.hk



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IT'S FINALLY HERE...

The summer is finally here again meaning it's a great time to organize the holidays, summer camps, dragon boat races and much more. What's better than doing these whilst enjoying the warmer weather? Perhaps it's also time to take field trips within Hong Kong and "re"-discover the beauties it offers which can easily be forgotten. Amazing properties can be found while wandering through Hong Kong. If you find one you would love to make your home, we are just a phone call away.

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★ **Showcase Features:** Each issue, our **home showcase features** provide a through-the-keyhole look into some of our readers' lifestyles and their interior design decisions. If you'd like us to profile your own home – whether it's beautiful, quirky, historic or modern – and you're willing to be interviewed and photographed, drop us a line at info@expatliving.hk.

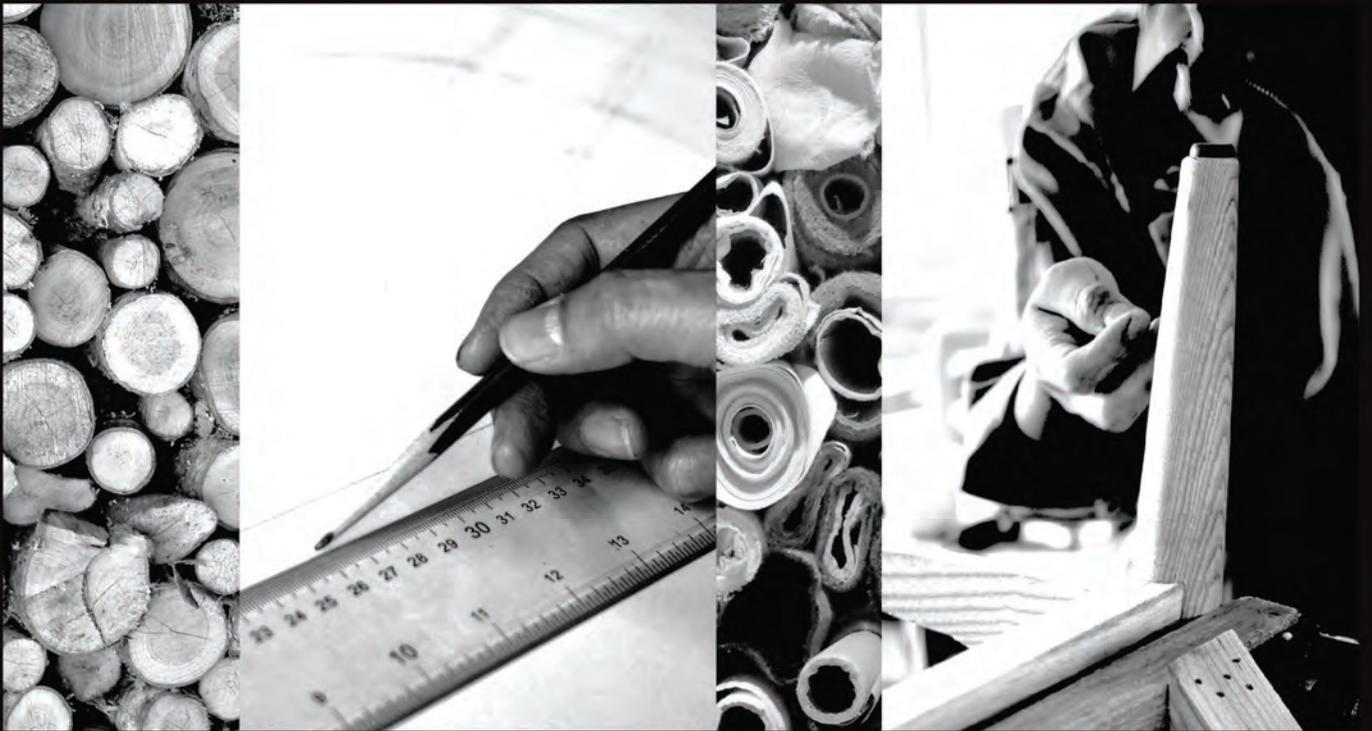
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WHAT'S NEW

Hot products, events, ideas & more



Health Hotspot

The Adventist Medical Center is a one-stop medical clinic operated by Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, which offers services in general medicine and specialist consultations. The clinic features a variety of advanced medical facilities to accommodate a range of outpatient minor procedures, diagnostic screenings, and wellness assessments. Unit 1606-1610, 16/F, Hang Lung Centre, 2-20 Paterson Street, Causeway Bay. adventistmedical.hk/en/main ▲

CLASSIC CUSHIONS

This month sees the introduction of a new collection of cushions for art lovers, exclusively available at **Tequila Kola**. With a four-generation legacy of designing and manufacturing tapestries in the fine French tradition, the Jules Pansu company is the first and only weaver allowed to create a collection of tapestry, cushions and accessories from the paintings of Pablo Picasso, Miró, Magritte and Kandinsky. These collections combine the traditions of tapestry and museum art with the modern flair of young designers. From HK\$780. Designer Showroom, 1/F, Horizon Plaza, Ap Lei Chau. **2877 3295 | tequilakola.com**



JOURNEY IN STYLE

If you're heading away for the summer and your luggage is looking a little worse for wear, it might be time to treat yourself to something new. Serapian's elegant range of **travel luggage**, suitcases, clutches and bags come in a range of vivid colours – from pillar-box red to two-tone monochrome. Each Serapian travel piece is handcrafted by Italian leather craftsmen employing traditional skills handed down through generations; this ensures that every piece will serve as a faithful companion for many years to come, no matter how much you're on the road. Rife House Ground Floor and Mezzanine, 7 On Lan Street, Central. serapian.com ◀



KEEP CALM AND ZERO WASTE



WASTE NOT WANT NOT

If you're keen to do your bit to help the planet, you'll want to take part in Hong Kong's first annual **Zero Waste Week**, in which globally acclaimed experts, including Paul Connett, author of *The Zero Waste Solution* and co-star with Jeremy Irons in the film *Trashed*, and others will be coming to talk rubbish, so to speak. We've got the key dates here:

- 11 June: Global Zero Waste Summit at Cyberport
- 12 June: Zero Waste Youth Conference at Cyberport
- 13-14 June: Family open days with healthy, eco-marketplace at Cyberport

The Arcade, Cyberport, 100 Cyberport Road, Hong Kong. Admission is free. **3166 3111 | arcade.cyberport.hk**



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Home & Property



WHAT'S NEW Eye-catching designs & inspiring ideas

THE STYLE FILE

OvoStudio's new sofa and **solid wood furniture collection** will offer a fabulous, stylish addition to all kinds of interiors. Aside from its beautiful appearance and feel, solid wood has the colours, grains and textures that can match perfectly with any earthy hues in a room, providing a welcome and homely look, while also fulfilling the required functionality of modern living. Check out the collection at 2002 Horizon Plaza, Ap Lei Chau, or G/F, 1 Wan Chai Road, Wan Chai. **2529 6020, 2527 6088 | ovostudio.com.hk** ▼



BLISSFUL BEDS

What could be more versatile than a sofa bed? Happily, gone are the days when they tended to come with dodgy springs and lumpy mattresses. Today's sofa beds offer both comfort and style, and TREE's examples are no exception to this. The **Flip Out** sofa is a mash-up of sustainable style and late-night comfort, perfect for when your summer barbecue turns into a sleepover. 28/F, Horizon Plaza, Ap Lei Chau. **2870 1582 | tree.com.hk** ▲

BEAT THE HEAT

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VINTAGE ARRIVALS

Add a touch of vintage glamour to your living room with **Rimba Rhyme's** newly arrived European glass coffee tables made in France and Italy. They are originals from the 1970s and early 80s, created from luxe materials such as lacquered brass, steel and lucite. The metals have softened and acquired a fabulous patina of age – perfect for today's sought-after retro interior look. Visit the Facebook page for more pics of the new stock. **facebook.com/pages/Rimba-Rhyme-Home** ▲

SUMMER
BREEZE



An easy, breezy new summer trend

Staying cool, calm and collected in the soaring summer temperatures might be easier this season thanks to our mouth-watering range of new furniture and accessories in pleasantly cooling hues. The Summer Breeze collection hits stores this month in delicious ice-cream shades of turquoise, lavender and tangerine, blended with soft earth tones and cool whites to refresh dark, winter-weary rooms.

Live beautifully

indigo
LIVING

Eye for Design

Interior designer, art-lover and Hong Kong enthusiast JOHN McLENNAN shows us around his Pok Fu Lam pad.

By Tara Jenkins; photography by Ken Wong



John McLennan is enthusing about Ping Pong 129 Gintonia, a new specialty gin-and-tonic bar in the up-and-coming neighborhood of Sai Ying Pun. It's a funky little spot melding old-world Hong Kong with a modern Mediterranean vibe: a curious mish-mash of cultures, influences and aesthetics that has resulted in a hip place with unmistakable style – and apparently the gin and tonics are also a must!

It's little wonder John feels at home there; as a long-term expatriate he's had more opportunity than most to sample different cultures, and the roomy Pok Fu Lam apartment he shares with wife Jen and children Jameson and Kelsey, bears witness to his twenty-year stint in Asia. There are imposing pieces of colonial furniture from Sri Lanka, delicate antique filigree and wooden doors from India, quirky artworks from Cambodia, an altar table from Beijing. But combine these carefully curated Asian pieces with McLennan's passion for contemporary interiors, and the apartment décor suddenly takes on an interesting new dimension.

"I keep the basic pieces, but I change the look and trends every season," explains the affable Canadian, who is the founder and creative director of local home and lifestyle company Indigo Living. "I'm always adding new pieces of furniture, whether it's a cushion, a lamp or even a sofa; I'm always testing, trying, seeing what works. So it's never perfect and it's never finished, but it's always comfortable!"

Relaxing in style

Comfort is John's mantra – something he applies to everything sold at Indigo Living as well as his own home – and his living space is indubitably mellow and relaxed. "You don't want to walk into a home and be afraid to touch or sit on anything," he explains. "Instead, you want people to feel instantly relaxed, be able to put their feet up on the coffee table and enjoy a glass of wine. Furniture is to be used; it shouldn't strictly be a showpiece".





The gorgeous blue sofa in question is a current Indigo Living piece, but John's testing it out with a new fabric that can be easily removed and dry-cleaned. Bright cushions from the store add dynamic colour, including one emblazoned with a yellow cockatoo – the trend for all things tropical is big at Indigo Living this season – but it sits comfortably alongside the dark wood Asian furniture, and a contemporary club chair in the corner (also Indigo Living). A flue-less fireplace quietly

burns next to the chair, making it the perfect place to curl up with a book in the evening, and the flickering flames only add to the apartment's mellow vibe. The fire is from a Canadian company, Bioflame, and John installed one in Indigo Living's Shanghai store before deciding to replicate it in his own home. Having access to the best products and contractors within the interiors industry is definitely a perk of the job!

Opposite the sofa is a tranquil landscape bathed in an alluring, late

afternoon glow. "My wife and I went on an amazing trip through Burma, where we sailed across a lake and then hiked through this dense forest of pine trees," explains John. "There were old British houses and horses and carts; it was like going back in time. When I saw this artwork it immediately reminded me of where we'd been." The painting has a clever dual function though: slide it across the wall on specially constructed hooks, and it reveals the TV.

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Acquiring art

Every piece of art in the apartment has an interesting story behind it, and many were found during holidays abroad; John ruefully admits he can't resist sticking his head into curio, antique and furniture shops whenever he's away. So the elegant, spindly sculpture behind the sofa came from Paris; the compelling photograph of the dancer was a birthday present from Jen following a trip to Angkor Wat; and a large abstract in the hallway is from a buying trip to China. "We were in Beijing in 1992 and

a Chinese friend of ours suggested she take us to visit an artist colony based in an abandoned pig farm," recalls John. "We felt obliged to buy something, so I chose a painting by a little-known (at the time) artist called Zhang Huan. Some time afterwards I was reading an article about an up-and-coming artist who was pushing boundaries by painting with ash, and wearing suits made out of raw meat, and I realised it was the same guy!" The painting is now worth much more than he paid for it, but John isn't interested in resale value. "I don't look at art as

an investment; I buy what I love and if it increases in value, great, but I don't plan to ever sell my pieces," he says.

Art and aesthetics have always played an important part in John McLennan's life; he contemplated becoming a fine artist himself prior to dabbling in urban planning and architecture before settling, late, on a career in interior design. "I feel for my fourteen-year-old son and his contemporaries, who are already worrying about their future careers," he says. "I didn't find out what I wanted to do until I was 40!" McLennan's



had the last laugh though; Indigo Living is hugely successful and continues to grow, although it's obvious its founder puts his heart and soul into the business. "I asked my son if he'd like to take over the company one day, and he said, 'No! You work too hard!'"

There are more pieces from Indigo Living in the tranquil master bedroom, which is dominated by a huge upholstered bed studded with silver nails, and made up in cool, inviting natural linen edged with blue. Fresh, summery cushions with botanical prints

are piled on the bed, and the cream curtains and blinds (made by Wang On Curtain Company in Kowloon City) are edged with a smart, steely blue. An easy chair in the corner is covered with another botanical design, and a huge Sri Lankan armoire anchors the room and provides the perfect counterpoint to the modern bed, bedside tables and lamps.

A compelling, colourful image of a man's face stares out from besides the bed; John came across the painting in an alleyway in Vietnam. "I immediately loved the bright colours, but it's true

I instinctively choose art that depicts people's faces. My wife says I'm not allowed to buy any more! However, hanging in my office I do have a landscape painting by Drew Burnham, an artist who spent time near my father's summer cottage, on an island just outside Vancouver, Canada. By the way the light hits the scene and the way it's painted, I know instantly what time of day it is, what time of year it is, and what the temperature feels like. To me it feels very personal, and reminds me of my childhood at the cottage".



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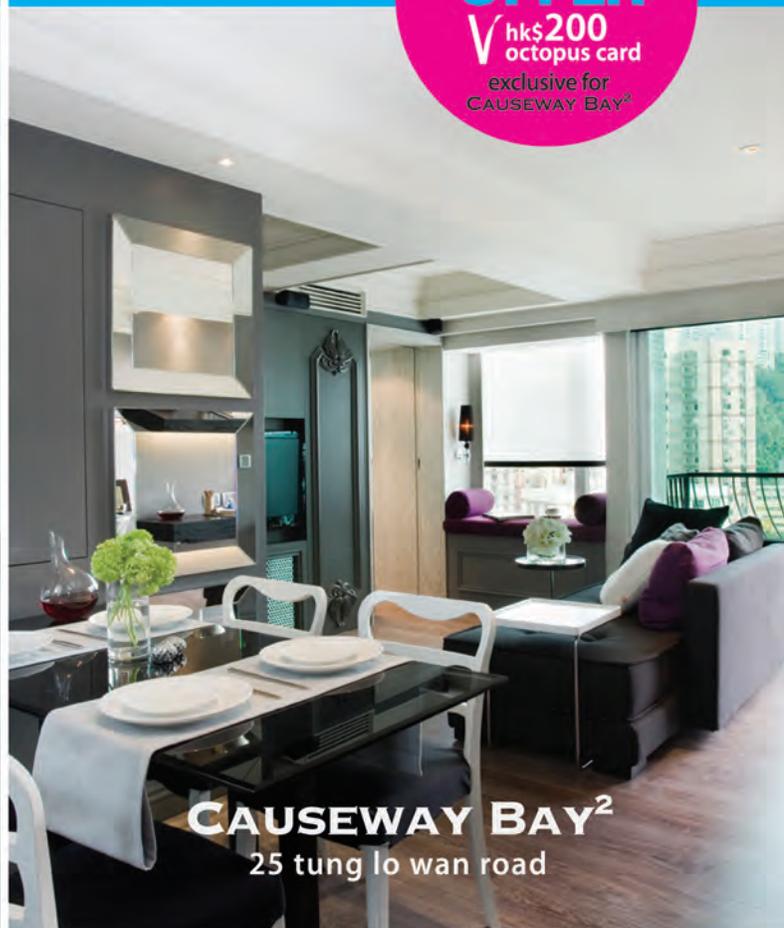
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John grew up at the cottage and has a deep affection for the place. "There's no electricity; solar-heated water is pumped out of the ground to a water tank, and there are designated jeeps that carry people's goods back and forth. When we go, the kids take off their shoes and don't put them back on for a month. They run, they raft, they play, they climb trees and they learn about what they don't have here!"

Hong Kong highlights

But while part of his heart will always be in Vancouver, John's a big fan of his adopted city. An enthusiastic and talented paddler, he says he spends four days a week on the water, and there's much else he's enthusiastic about when it comes to Hong Kong. "I love the city, but I also love the fact I can be outside of it in five minutes – up on a hill, or on the water. I love the fact there's a thousand different restaurants that are always changing, and that there are so many different people here, from a huge variety of countries. When we entertain we can have ten different nationalities around our dining table!"

John continues: "Hong Kong has so much to offer, so explore – don't spend all your time on the island. Kowloon has interesting neighbourhoods, amazing hikes, and there's so much else to discover." In the spring, for example, John took his children strawberry picking in Tai Po. It might not be the first Hong Kong-based activity that jumps to mind, but he maintains that not only was it fun, but the strawberries were delicious. "They were small but they tasted like candy! We took them home and had them with ice cream, and we made strawberry pie and strawberry crumble".

So does he plan eventually to return to that idyllic outdoors lifestyle by the Canadian seaside? "I've lived overseas for too long to move back to Canada for good. I need to be able to travel and see different places, do different things. When I first started working I envisaged my retirement home as a ten-bedroom mansion somewhere on a beach. Now I'm thinking I'll need a two-bed city apartment; maybe three beds, for when the kids come to visit! And perhaps a small hut on the beach!"

Sounds like this seasoned expatriate won't be leaving Hong Kong any time soon.





JOHN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Shopping

Indigo Living

6/F, Horizon Plaza
2 Lee Wing Street, Ap Lei Chau
2555 0540 | indigo-living.com

Wang On Curtain Company

44B Fuk Lo Tsun Road, Kowloon City
2383 9842 | wangoncurtain.com/eng

Bioflame

thebioflame.com

Restaurants

Cha Cha Wan

206 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan
2549 0020
facebook.com/chachawan.hongkong

Ping Pong 129 Gintoneria

129 Second Street, Sai Ying Pun
9158 1584 | pingpong129.com

Ham & Sherry

1-7 Ship Street, Wan Chai
2555 0628 | hamandsherry.hk

Galleries

Puerta Roja

15-17 New Street, Sheung Wan
2803 0332 | puerta-roja.com

Cat Street Gallery

222 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan
2291 0006 | thecatstreetgallery.com

Karin Weber

20 Aberdeen Street, Sheung Wan
2544 5004 | karinwebergallery.com 

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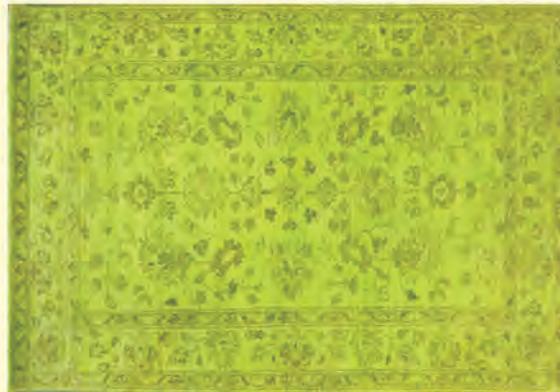
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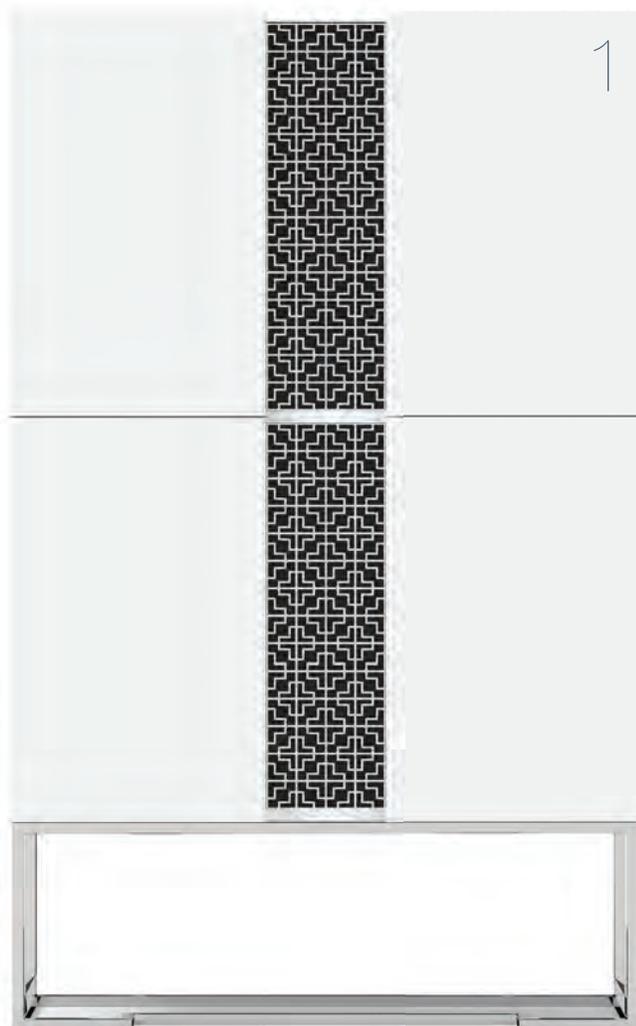
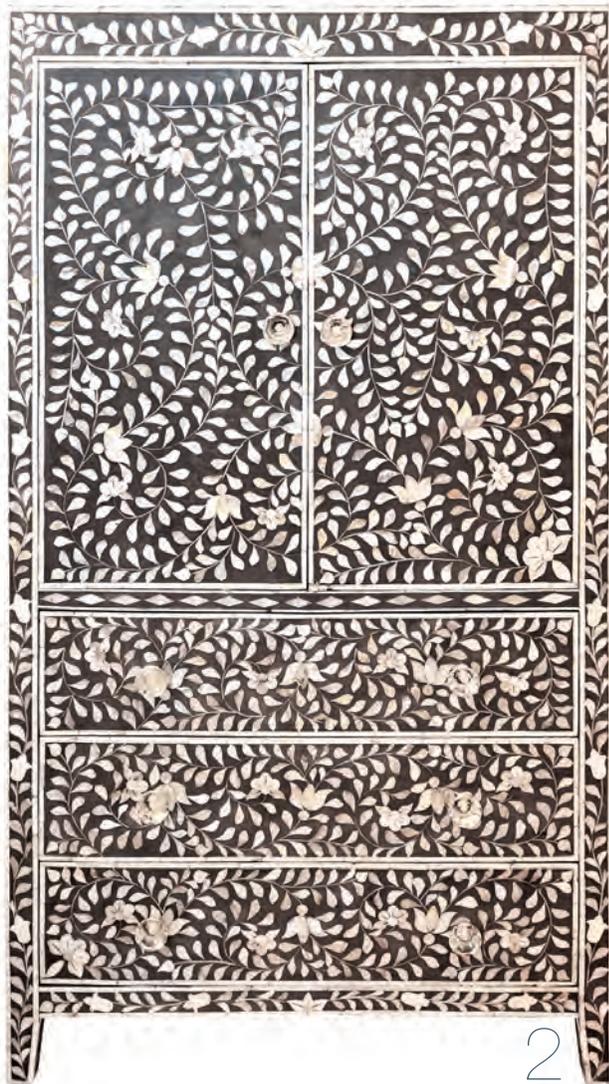
www.inside.com.hk

231, Landmark Prince's, Central, Hong Kong T 2537 6298

1201, Horizon Plaza Ap Lei Chau, Hong Kong T 2873 1795

G104, The Repulse Bay, Hong Kong T 2812 6685

Hide & Seek



We all have lots of “things” in our homes; sometimes we’re happy to display them, sometimes they need to be easily accessible – and sometimes we just want them out of sight!

Because these structures – containers or sideboards, for example – are mostly in view, they need to look good on the outside at least. Asian furniture gives us an even larger choice of options for beautiful storage pieces, whether it’s a bedside cupboard, a television console or a dresser for crockery – so beautiful, in fact, that they can even become the signature piece in the room.

Here are some ideas to help you make the choice of what would look and work best in your home.

1 These four-door cabinets, available in black, red and white, make a style statement but are also practical, with four spacious compartments inside. **Forbidden City**, 2556 8968, forbiddency.com.hk **2** Intricate and delicate, this grey and ivory floral mother-of-pearl inlay cabinet has two doors and three drawers. **Tequila Kola**, 2877 3295, tequilakola.com

3



4



5



6



7



3 & 4 The exterior doors of this cabinet – white leather with cast bronze dragon handles – lead to interior doors with embroidery based on a painting from the Forbidden City, and an inside chamber lined in silk and mirrors. **Forbidden City**, 2556 8968, forbiddency.com.hk **5, 6 & 7** When you need to store cushions or towels, or simply to hide “stuff”, these synthetic rattan storage trunks are useful inside or out, and available in white, natural and dark shades – the latter can double as a coffee table too. **Lift Lifestyle**, 3907 0386, liftlifestyle.com



8



9



10

8 Sideboy (also available in Tallboy and Fatboy versions), a creation by designer Tim Webber, has a retro look but the kind of clean lines that suit most décor styles. **Okooko**, 2870 1132, okooko.com **9** This classic Madison cabinet in walnut wood is customisable from three units, so you create something that perfectly suits your space. **Tequila Kola**, 2877 3295, tequilakola.com **10** The Petro side cabinet makes creative use of textures and colours. **OVOhome**, 2526 7226, ovohome.com.hk **11** This sideboard has a set of three drawers with shelves either side for maximum storage, and a design featuring the Chinese motif of victory. **Forbidden City**, 2556 8968, forbiddencity.com.hk **12** This Carlotta TV cabinet in solid oak is sleek and practical, and currently available for half price in a sale. **Stockroom Furniture Outlet**, 2817 0999, stockroom.com.hk



11



12



13 A two-door black dresser that is perfect for showing off your treasures and hiding the rest. **Bowerbird Home**, 2552 2727, bowerbird-home.com **14** This 16-drawer cabinet, made of recycled wood, is fun, practical and environmentally friendly. **OVOSTudio**, 2527 6088, ovostudio.com.hk **15** A freestanding wardrobe that is transportable, and therefore always useful for mobile expats. **MADE**, 2517 0722, madehk.com **16** This retro-style bedroom setup in the Madison range is versatile and easily movable. **Tequila Kola**, 2877 3295, tequilakola.com **17** Now for something completely different, a Bonhams nine-drawer chest in solid oak. **Stockroom Furniture Outlet**, 2817 0999, stockroom.com.hk



18



19

18 Modern, practical and versatile, this piece is perfect for making the most of smaller living spaces. **Okooko**, 2870 1132, okooko.com
19 The Tool Box is ideal for compartmentalising and storing many things, from sewing to DIY gear. **TREE**, 2870 1582/83, tree.com.hk
20 Another variable combination, these modules can be mixed and matched to suit whatever it is you need to store. **TREE 21** Laundry should always be hidden, and this round basket is attractive and practical. **TREE 22** The Brighton chest of drawers ("Linen Antique") in mango wood is perfect next to a bed or in a living area. **InsideHK**, 2873 1795, inside.com.hk



20



22



21

23 Industrial bookshelf in wood and iron, **Bowerbird Home**, 2552 2727, bowerbird-home.com **24** We all need bookshelves, even if they don't just hold books, and this one from the Pacific range is in solid oak but doesn't look heavy. **Stockroom Furniture Outlet**, 2817 0999, stockroom.com.hk **25** This Delabole step-cut storage unit can be used in nearly any room of the house, with soft mango-wood tones that will suit most décor styles. **InsideHK**, 2873 1795, inside.com.hk **26** The Kasama bookshelf is another stylish piece that won't take up space in your place, physically or aesthetically. **Indigo Living**, 2555 0540, indigo-living.com **27** The ARC bookshelf is more of a statement piece, and can be used creatively to display or hide. **MADE**, 2517 0722, madehk.com

23



24



25



26



27





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Sand

Between the Toes

By Kate Farr; photography by Helen Jenkins

A relaxed family home with some surprisingly chic additions make the Shek O pad of CAT BENTOTE a beachside retreat with a difference.

Stepping into the Bentote family's eclectic and stylish Shek O home, it's easy to see what first drew them to this tranquil beachfront corner of Hong Kong. Along with six-year-old Imogen and three-year-old Ethan, Cat and Andy originally relocated to Stanley from Shanghai, where they had spent four years soaking up the city's vibrant culture and international lifestyle.

In Cat's own words, "After a year in Stanley enjoying long-forgotten favourites in the grocery store we began to miss China and all the mind-blowing things we experienced there each day. In a smaller and quieter way, Shek O offers the same authenticity and uniqueness," and so the family once again upped sticks and headed to their current location, an 1,800-square-foot ground-floor apartment in Shek O village.



Settling in

Ideally positioned midway between the children's schools, it was immediately apparent that the new location had plenty to offer the family. "Shek O has great walkability and standout eateries, plus the beach, the surrounding hikes and the playgrounds. Yes, the parking is a nightmare in summer, and sometimes – on my sixth trip of the day up and down Shek O road – I find myself gritting my teeth, but the views out of the window are so spectacular that I quickly unclench!"

Although the family's Stanley apartment was larger than their current home, their new home offered that

rare-in-Hong Kong combination of good value with excellent flow and efficiency. A few nips and tucks to the space, including installing a new IKEA kitchen and creating a spectacular garden out of an old parking space allowed the Bentotes to make the space their own, while preserving plenty of the character that had attracted the family to the property in the first place.

From the ancient bamboo railings on the balcony to the mismatched floor – a reminder of the building's previous life as two separate dwellings – the property is about as far from a cookie-cutter Hong Kong apartment as it's possible to get. A long hallway



leads to an open-plan living and dining room, with virtually all the other rooms opening off this space, creating a central hub for the family and making the most of the apartment's abundance of natural light and seaside views.

When it comes to décor, design-loving Cat and Andy's tastes are eclectic, but surprisingly practical. Cat says, "Much of our furniture was bespoke-made in Shanghai by Kava Kava Home and ASIG Design, and it has stood up to five house moves and hauling up and down balconies on ropes beautifully! Here in Hong Kong, we added a few pieces from TREE, Indigo Living and Bowerbird, and try to keep IKEA mostly to the kitchen."

Living room and bedrooms

The striking central family space acts not only as the heart of the home, but also as a living gallery to display the family's collection of original artwork. The Bentote's impressive collection is carefully curated, comprising Shanghai-bought replicas, young British artists sourced from the Royal Academy's summer exhibit and emerging contemporary Chinese artists, including one piece in red, ochre, black and gold so large that it gives the entire living space its theme. The room also features a DLM table, bar stools by Hay and a contemporary lime-washed dining table that Cat has



"now hidden under a Cath Kidston oil cloth, as it doesn't fit in at all!"

The children's bedroom is generously sized, allowing space for sharing without squabbles, and is furnished with a combination of bespoke and high street finds, including a striking turquoise Chinese-style bookcase and toy cabinet and bedding by Joules and ASpace. The kids' room benefits from its own cute Jack-and-Jill ensuite bathroom, which Cat accessorised with a statement Jonathan Adler shower curtain and baskets by TREE.

Mum and Dad's room is no less of a welcome sanctuary, with a statement black chinoiserie bed and bespoke drawers from Kava Kava Home, a reclaimed wooden bench from TREE, replica Arne Jacobsen desk lights by J4Kids and White Company bed linen adding an air of tranquillity.





Alfresco space

The outside of the property features a talking-point garden, with bamboo walls, an artificial turf lawn, a decked area with comfortable sofas and a bar for entertaining – and a hot tub with a story!

Cat elaborates: “We bought the hot tub from Toto Living for our Stanley rooftop and the company was great, visiting several times to assess whether a huge crane could lift the single-piece six-person tub up four storeys. Thank goodness they returned to help it make the move to Shek O! At one point it looked like we’d need a large crane to lift it down from our Stanley rooftop, a lorry to transport it to outside Shek O village and then eight strong men to transfer it by hand onto a smaller truck that would make it through the narrow village lanes. Fortunately, the lorry made it through the village and so the hot tub made it to our new home!”

When it comes to explaining why their self-proclaimed “beach shack” holds so much appeal, Cat doesn’t hesitate: “Our home suits our lifestyle, enabling us to be all together even when enjoying separate activities, and the sea view means that even when it’s too hot to be outside, we’re still by the beach.”

Add in a family lunch in the garden and a glass or two of champagne in the hot tub, and Shek O seems like a little slice of paradise on the Southside.





Cat's

Recommendations

Home & Garden

Bowerbird

Unit 5, Level 2, 2 Lee Lok Street,
Ap Lei Chau
2552 2727 | bowerbird-home.com

Homeless

homeless.hk

Indigo Living

6/F, Horizon Plaza, 2 Lee Wing
Street, Ap Lei Chau
2555 0540 | indigo-living.com

Loveramics

Shop 207, Level 2, The Pulse,
28 Beach Road, Repulse Bay
2994 1289 | loveramics.com

Manks

3/F, The Factory,
1 Yip Fat Street, Wong Chuk Hang
2522 2115 | manks.com

Marimekko

G/F, Lai Chi Building,
42-52 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay
2203 4214 | marimekko.com

Tai Ping Carpets

taipingcarpets.com

Tori Murphy linens and cushions

torimurphy.com

Toto Living

21/F, Gee Chang Hong Centre,
65 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen
2580 1758 | toto-living.com.hk

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ASpace

aspace.co.uk

M50 Art Hub, Shanghai

m50.com.cn

Kava Kava Home

kavakavahome.com 



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Spice Up Your Home

Some people start furnishing their homes from the ground up – that is, they buy the carpets first and then buy the sofa or the artwork to match. Others buy everything together at the beginning, and then when things are feeling a bit bare (and cold), they start looking at rugs.

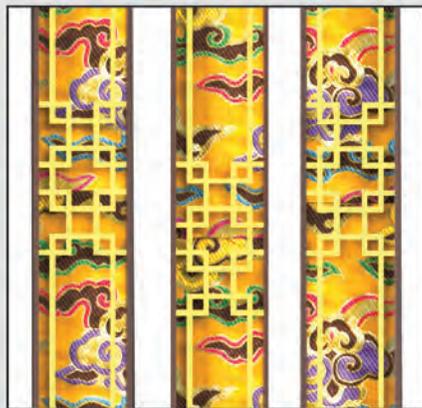
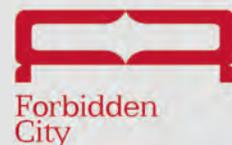
However you do it, an antique carpet is probably one of the most versatile items you'll ever buy, and it's easy to move to another country if you relocate. They're also said to increase in value over time – in recent years, the prices have been really good, so maybe it's time to have a look.

These Gabbeh carpets from the southwest of Iran, and available at Carpet Buyer, have an ancient heritage, but still manage to look modern. With strong graphic designs and rich earth tones they will tune in with contemporary, antique or retro themed rooms. They're also woven from 100 percent handspun wool so are easy to clean and hardwearing, not to mention deliciously thick and soft underfoot. The yarn is coloured using natural plant dyes, which makes the carpets environmentally friendly too. Sizes vary, but a typical carpet can measure around 1.6m by 1.3m – perfect for those smaller rooms or to make a terrific impact when combined in a larger room.

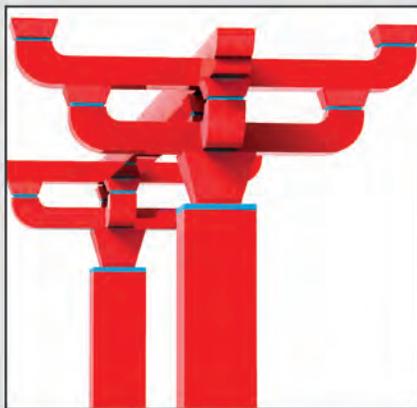
Find Carpet Buyer at 1718, 17/F, Horizon Plaza,
2 Lee Wing Street, Ap Lei Chau.
2850 5508 | carpetbuyer.com



Contemporary Chinese Furniture



Wall Art



Dougong dining Table



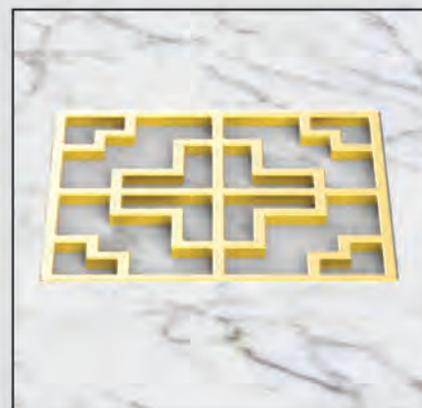
Four Door Cabinet



White Leather Cabinet



Hardwood Cabinet



Marble Coffee Table



Sidetable with Drawers



Happiness Dining Table



Display Coffee Table

Furniture collection by Forbidden City includes Cabinets, Sofas, Beds, Sideboards, Shelves, Dining Tables, Chairs and Tray sets.
Forbidden City Showroom has been selected by 《Louis Vuitton City Guide》 as one of its favourite places in Hong Kong.

Unit 1401A, 14th Floor (above Cartier Store), 18 Hysan Avenue, Causeway Bay (MTR Exit F), Hong Kong.
Open Mon-Sat: 2-7pm, Sun: By appointment Tel: 2556 8968 www.forbiddencity.com.hk

For the Children

Yes, we know that little ones get a lot of stuff, but there's still something quite satisfying about making their rooms look cool and playful. So even if you use the excuse that it's "for the children", make sure you have fun while you're doing it!

1 Place cute and fluffy accessories on a 30-year-old hand-painted teal shelf to make it even more appealing. **InsideHK**, 2873 1795, inside.com.hk
2 The Adele bed in mango wood is ideal for a sophisticated youngster and suitable as a guest bed too. **InsideHK**
3 This dimmable LED Globe Lamp has a USB connection so it can be plugged in to a computer, battery pack or power point, making it educational and functional. **Kokoon for Kids**, 2518 8382, kokoon.biz
4 While the Noah toy box doesn't require you having two of every kind of toy, it does mean that toys can be hidden away in style. **Indigo Living**, 2555 0540, indigo-living.com
5 This funky Eero Aarnio Ball Chair is made of fibreglass with velvet upholstery – pure indulgence. **Stockroom Furniture Outlet**, 2817 0999, stockroom.com.hk
6 Colourful and eco-friendly, these wool carpets don't shed, which means they'll last forever, even with everyday vacuuming and simple spot-cleaning using household detergent. **Carpet Buyer**, 2850 5508, carpetbuyer.com



FURNITURE FOR KIDS

7 Bunks are always fun, and this one, available in white/birch or white/walnut, is elegant and versatile too, configurable into a loft bed or a twin for added flexibility. **Okoko**, 2870 1132, okoko.com **8** The Oeuf mini library, available in white/birch or white/walnut, offers sleek, stylish and practical storage for children's rooms, with a fun design and easy-to-reach height. **Okoko** **9** The Intex Blossom Chair is not only inflatable but lightweight and easy to move wherever it's needed, and available in fuchsia or turquoise shades that will suit any girl's room. **Kokoon for Kids**, 2518 8382, kokoon.biz



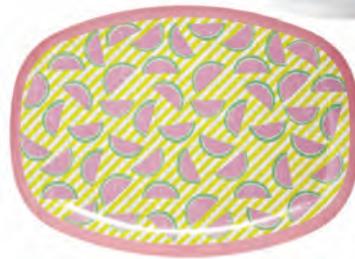
10



14

10 This Geuther Fresh range gives a peaceful balance to what can otherwise be a very hectic place. **Mama's Dear**, 2989 9290, mamasdear.com **11** Multi-purpose melamineware in a Watermelon print not only looks good but is robust – useful for anywhere that children are. **Indigo Living**, 2555 0540, indigo-living.com **12** Glow-in-the-dark wands for after-lights-out fun. **Indigo Living** **13** The neutral style of the Archie three-drawer chest will last the kids until they fly the nest. **Indigo Living** **14** These shaggy carpets, available in various shades and sizes, are easy to clean and make for a safe play zone. **CarpetBuyer**, 2850 5508, carpetbuyer.com 

11



12



13





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Market Update



Letizia Casalino,
Hong Kong Sotheby's
International Realty

While Mainland China's property market is suffering from an oversupply of property stock, Hong Kong continues to launch new developments in the primary market across many districts. These developments are fetching billions of Hong Kong dollars in just a matter of days as developers offer low-price strategies in order to offload the stock.

The volume of sales has declined in the secondary market as investors have preferred the primary market, not only due to the lower prices, but to take advantage of being able to purchase such modern apartments. This is true for both Hong Kong properties and internationally with investments in Europe or the US.

Europe has become more attractive to Hong Kong investors wanting to buy property, with the Euro losing more than 20 percent against the US dollar. The same has been seen in the hospitality industry where Asian investors have shown great interest in buying hotels across Europe.

In the leasing sector, the Western and Eastern districts of Hong Kong, as well as Mid-levels, have seen new buildings become available and "older" buildings being revamped, which promises good stock for this summer's peak season. A few gems are seeing the light as well, offering a good mix of product for anyone who is either new in town or wishes to move from their current place. The summer season can be quite hectic, therefore any new product will attract new tenants in no time.

Hot Properties



OPEN SEA VIEW

District: Pok Fu Lam
Sale price: HK\$15M
Size: 1,003 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 3 (1 ensuite)
Bathrooms: 2
Sole Agent

This modern-designed apartment has a combined living and dining room that opens to a nice-sized circular balcony, ideal for enjoying alfresco moments, sunsets and sea breezes. The kitchen is well designed and equipped, and the master bedroom and two other bedrooms look out to tranquil greenery.

To view properties, call Hong Kong Sotheby's International Realty at +852 3108 2108

TOP OF MID-LEVELS

District: Mid-Levels West
 Sale/Rental price: \$17.5M/\$69.5K
 Size: 594 sq. ft
 Bedrooms: 1 (1)
 Bathrooms: 1

Located at the top of Mid-levels West, minutes away from the new Sai Yung Pung escalator and MTR, this residence has had a chic contemporary renovation throughout, including its private terrace off the living room and private rooftop. A great investment in the new upcoming area of SYP.



RARE ON THE MARKET

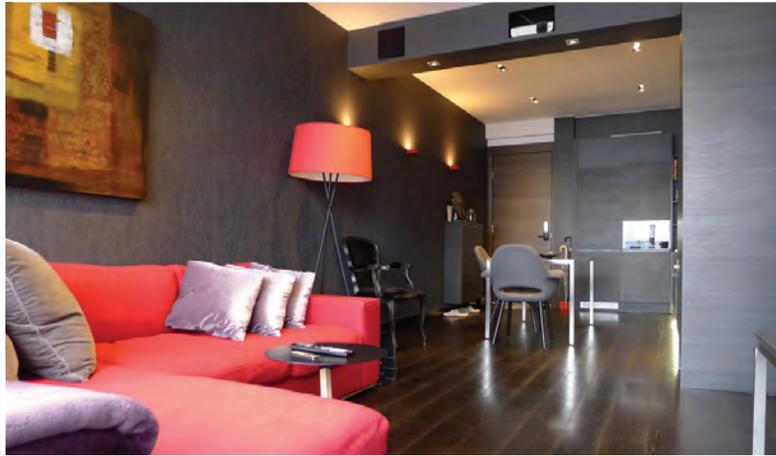
District: Happy Valley
 Sale price: \$25M
 Size: 1,274 sq. ft
 Bedrooms: 2 (1)
 Bathrooms: 2

Ideally located in Happy Valley, close to transport options and dining establishments, this spacious two-bedroom apartment with car park has full-sized windows that provide views stretching from the nearby low-density properties in the area. There are spacious rooms throughout, with modern finishes.

To view properties, call Hong Kong Sotheby's International Realty at +852 3108 2108

SUPERB DESIGN

District: Quarry Bay
Sale price: \$20M
Size: 821 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 1 (1)
Bathrooms: 1.5



This superbly designed and conveniently located apartment is perfect for a couple. Smartly and tastefully renovated, with views to the nearby Tai Koo area, the harbour and distant Kowloon Bay, it has a spacious master bedroom, an open kitchen with built-in appliances, and a balcony off the living and dining room.

STUNNING GEM

District: Repulse Bay
Sale price: \$71.8M
Size: 1,875 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 3(1)
Bathrooms: 2



Located in a quiet location close to the beach, this luxury three-bedroom unit in a full-service building has magnificent mountain and sea views, with a spacious and bright living and dining room with a high ceiling. The modern kitchen is equipped with top-of-the-line appliances, and there's a balcony off the living area.

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STREET TALK

An insider's guide to life in their 'hood.



NAME: NATALIE ROBINSON
ORIGINALLY FROM: London
OCCUPATION: Lawyer/ Blogger

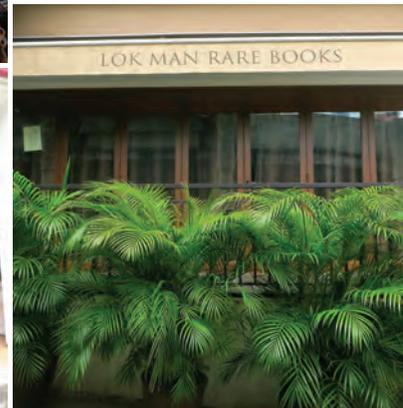
Where do you live?
Chancery Lane.

Closest MTR station?
Central.

How long have you lived here?
Just over two years.

Why here?

I first walked along Chancery Lane just after I moved to Hong Kong, around six years ago. I was on my way to Pure Yoga and decided that this would be my ideal place to live in the city – a peaceful little pedestrian street, slap bang in the middle of Central. A few years later after spending three months looking for a new flat, my estate agent (Naomi at Nest Property) called to say she had the perfect flat for me; when I discovered it was on Chancery Lane, I knew it was meant to be!



THE SCENE



When you walk out of your place, the first thing you see is: Cranes and scaffolding peeking above the brick wall that used to surround Victoria Prison. The former Central Police Headquarters just in front of Chancery Lane is in the process of being converted into an arts and retail complex which should finally open next year.

The closest store to your front door is:

Lok Man Rare Books – a tranquil bookworm's paradise crammed full of first editions and an eclectic collection of rare and unusual tomes on any and every subject imaginable.

Your neighbours are great, but you wouldn't mind a little less:

Construction noise on Saturday morning when I'm trying to have a lie in.

The unofficial uniform of your street is:

Lulu Lemons and yoga mats – Chancery Lane is basically a thoroughfare to Pure Yoga.

If a celebrity moves in next door, it will most likely be:

Someone tiny (the flats are all shoebox-sized walk-ups along the street) who likes yoga just as much as spinning around a dance floor in a minute pair of gold hotpants. I guess it's got to be Kylie.

When you're in need of a dose of culture, you:

Scuttle a couple of doors down the street to 10 Chancery Lane Gallery – a great little gallery space that always houses interesting contemporary exhibitions.

If you're missing home, you:

Head to M&S just down the hill, on the escalators. There's nothing like some buttered crumpets and a packet of Percy Pigs to alleviate a dose of homesickness.

A mandatory stop for taking out-of-town guests is:

The porcelain shop just around the corner at 17 Staunton Street. Packed from floor to ceiling with every variety of blue and white china, this is the ideal spot to take visiting friends and family to stock up on inexpensive crockery. Just make sure you're not held responsible for them going over their luggage limits; I always come away laden down with shopping bags.

You'd swap houses in a second with:

One of the owners of one of the stunning properties on the Shek O headland.

A common myth about your neighbourhood is:

That it's noisy. Sandwiched between Caine Road and Wyndham Street, it certainly should be. But, after the building site packs up for the day, when you open the window, you can genuinely hear the birds singing rather than the rumble of buses and the blare of horns.

If you're ever woken up at night, it's almost always due to:

A stray crew of Lang Kwai Fongers wandering back up to the Mid-Levels after a few too may bottles of Champagne in Dragon-i.

A massive late-night rager on your street is likely to involve:

A new exhibition at the gallery which tends to involve a very chic art crowd spilling out onto the street and sipping wine well into the night.



We want to know about where you live. Don't be shy! Send an email to contribute@expatliving.hk with "Street Talk" in the subject line. Include your name and street, and we'll be in touch.

THE SUPERLATIVES

Your hands-down favourite neighbourhood joints are:

Too many to mention, but numbering among my current faves are:

- On Caine, for day-to-day essentials; Pacific Gourmet for organic fish and meat; Il Bel Paese for Italian wines, cheeses and cured meats; and Eric Keyser for the best French bread in the city plus my nemesis, freshly baked cherry and pistachio financiers.
- For a long lazy brunch, Posto Pubblico on Elgin, or if it's cool enough for a Bloody Mary or two alfresco, the terrace at Aberdeen Street Social.
- Places that make my credit card weep: Edit (67 Hollywood Road), Christian Louboutin (10-12 Wyndham Street) and Joyce Beauty (Queen's Road Central).
- Come nightfall, I love informal dinners and strong cocktails at Yardbird on Bridges Street and 121 BC on Peel Street, late night drinks at Wyndham The 4th, Stockton and Salon Number 10. If you're up for further debauchery, head for a midnight feast at notoriously tricky-to-find 001, tucked behind an anonymous black door in the wet market; believe me, their grilled cheese sandwich washed down with the perfect Earl Grey martini more than compensates for managing to hunt this speakeasy down.

You won't find better local food than at:

I'm not a huge Chinese food fan in general, but my favourite modern Chinese restaurant is Ho Lee Fook at the junction of Elgin Street and Hollywood. You can't beat a bowl of their mindblowingly great "Mom's 'mostly cabbage but a little bit of pork' dumplings", and just think of all the luck you're absorbing sitting beneath the wall of waving lucky cats.

The strangest thing you've ever seen on your street is:

A set of students using the street to paint huge pro-democracy banners just before the protests at the end of last



year. The whole street was paved with five-metre-long signs, each painstakingly painted with pro-democracy slogans.

The best bargains in your neighbourhood are:

Caty on Caine Road – a jewellery boutique – literally a hidden gem. Whether you want a pair of elegant cocktail earrings, a bling-tastic statement necklace or a pair of A-list-worthy dark glasses, Caty has you covered; and best of all, the prices won't make your credit cards wince.

The guiltiest pleasure in your area is:

The Diner on a Arbutnot Road, dangerously just a hop, skip and jump from my front door, and which serves up the best burgers in town and a sinfully enormous American breakfasts (think buttermilk bacon pancakes, breakfast burritos and Fat Elvis Waffles). And don't get me started on the milkshakes – hello, Malted Malteser Milkshake; delicious in a cup and truly worth every last calorie!

One thing you'd never change is:

The cheerful cardboard box man who diligently spends all day collecting, sorting and bundling up cardboard around the city to be recycled, and always smiles and waves whenever we walk past.

But one thing you wouldn't mind seeing go is:

The cranes and diggers. The building work has been going on at the former Police HQ ever since we moved in. I'm super excited for the new arts and retail complex to throw open its doors and will be very pleased not to see a muddy building site out of my window every morning once it's finished.

The city gives you \$5 million to soup up your street. You use it to:

Plant rows of palm trees and clouds of Bougainvillea along the Victoria Prison Wall to make it feel even more of a leafy oasis in the heart of the chaotic city.

Why should your neighborhood be featured in a guidebook?

It generally does feature in guidebooks in some way or another, though I think people should focus less on following the well-trodden tourist route around Central, and instead just wander down random alleyways and windy back streets keeping their eyes peeled. In Hong Kong, you're just as likely to stumble upon a creaky old antique shop selling priceless relics, as you are to uncover a day-old molecular mixology joint that even the most in-the-know HKers haven't cottoned on to yet. **31**

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20 YEARS



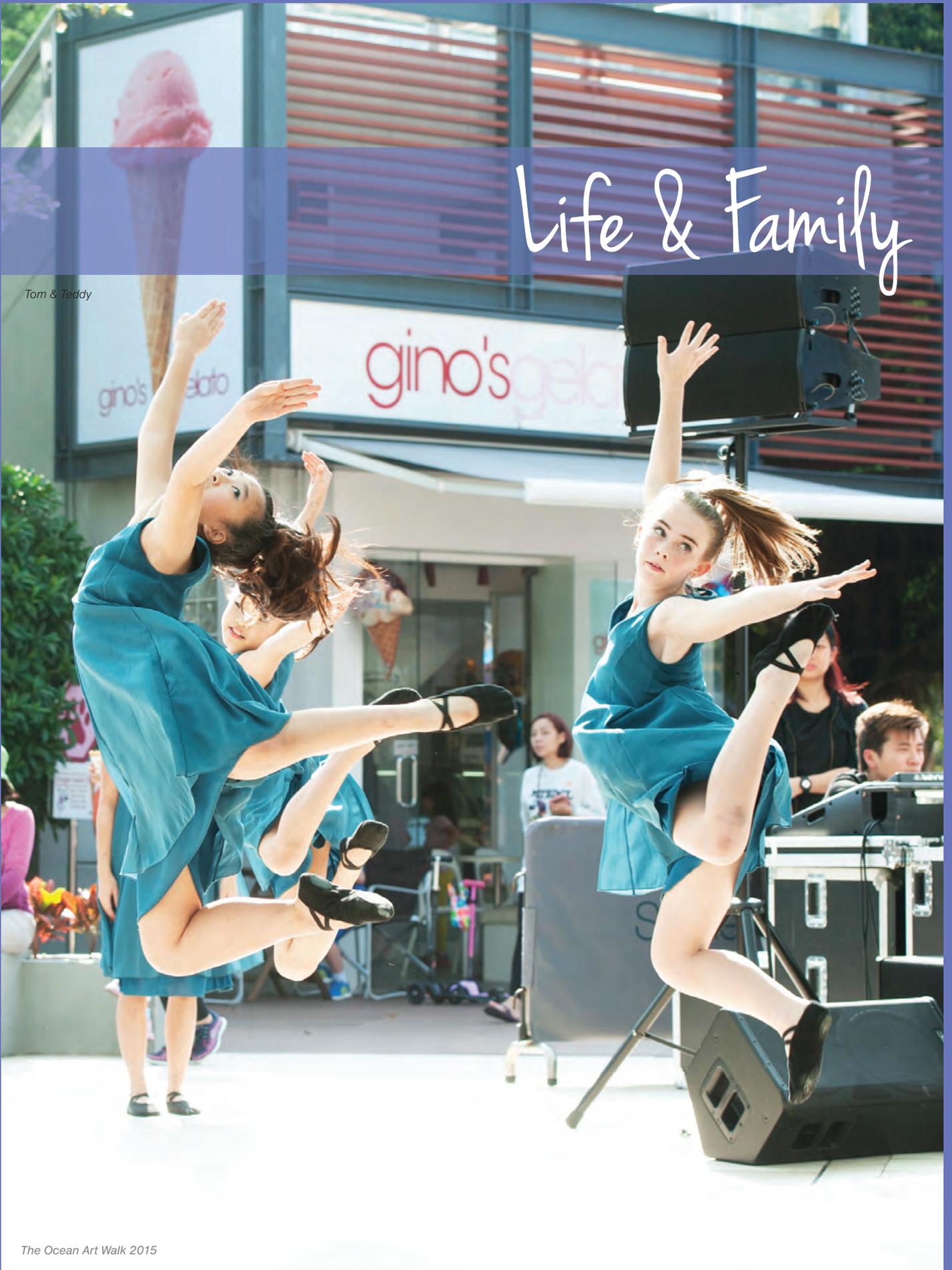
Building, Being, Becoming

At Australian International School Hong Kong, we pride ourselves year after year on the outstanding academic results of our graduating class in both the HSC and IB Diploma. Over 98% of our graduates go on to study at top universities in Australia and throughout the World.

This year, we celebrate our 20th anniversary and the continued success of our students as they pursue personal excellence within the classroom and beyond.

Life & Family

Tom & Teddy



WHAT'S NEW Something for all the family to enjoy



MORE FUN AT FUNZONE!

With the recent opening of a third location, Hong Kong's favourite indoor play centre **FunZone** offers additional spaces and activities for young, curious and active tots to learn, develop and express themselves. FunZone, along with its partners – including Spotlight Studio, Twinkle Dance Company, Kindermusik, Rugbees and Minisports – offers more exciting scheduled classes throughout the week, available in all three venues. It's suitable for everyone from newborns up to five-year-olds, and children can be enrolled in anything from yoga to Zumba! funzone.com.hk ▲

TECH TIME

2015 got off to a great start at **Tutor Time International Nursery and Kindergarten's** Suffolk campus. After a bit of a makeover, the campus now boasts new playground equipment and wall art for the students, and a few new toys for the teachers too. The interactive digital projector and centralised audio system make story and song times more fun than ever – not to mention the teaching benefits for the older children. To see the campus for yourself, head to their open day on 27 June, between 1 and 5pm. 9 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong. **2529 1188 | tutortime.com.hk** ▼



STAYCATION TIME?

Keen for a break from home without the stress and cost of travel? Might be time for a staycation then. **V Hotels and Serviced Apartments** operates a collection of boutique serviced apartments in the prime locations of Causeway Bay, Happy Valley and West Kowloon. The properties, which have already won a "Best Serviced Apartment" award this year (from GoHome.com), offer a wide spectrum of décor, style and layout, so you can choose what works best for you, or for any visiting family or friends who might be on the lookout for accommodation. Book now with the code DASA15 at reservations@thev.hk or call 3602 2388, and you'll also receive a V Octopus card with pre-stored value of HK\$200. thev.hk

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE ... OLD?

There's a reason why antique jewellery is also called heirloom jewellery: it's designed to last and to be worn by generations. In recent times, antique or vintage jewellery has become particularly popular; from famous examples such as Kate Middleton's sapphire engagement ring to lesser-known examples straight out of your grandmother's jewellery box. If you're thinking about refurbishing or remaking a piece you haven't worn, or are looking for something new with a vintage look, **Haywards of Hong Kong** can design and handcraft a piece that will also be considered a family heirloom one day. 233 Hollywood Road, Hollywood Centre, Room 904, Sheung Wan. **2545 4400 | haywards.com.hk** ▼





SUMMER COURSES 2015 AT HONG KONG PARKVIEW ENROLMENT STARTS NOW

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- Mini Sports
- Swimming
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- Art & Gymnastics
- Tiger Tennis
- Rock Climbing
- The Island Glee Club
- Multi-sports Camp
- Hot Shot Tennis
- Chinese Kung Fu

Date: 29 June - 21 August **Sign up before 14 June and receive 10% discount.**

Membership packages are available.



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Email: pv03@hongkongparkview.com

Address: 88 Tai Tam Reservoir Road, Hong Kong
Website: www.hongkongparkview.com



Playtime!

Summer's here and that means afternoons at the pool, splashing about outside, and weekends at the beach. And with school holidays just around the corner, you're going to need a few tricks up your sleeves to keep the kids cool and occupied! With everything for bubs to bigger kids, the new **Bumps to Babes** summer range is a good place to start stocking up for the hot days ahead.



1 Sun-shade pool, 2 years+, \$325 **2** Zoggs float jackets, available in small (2 to 3 years) or medium (4 to 5 years), \$398 **3** Giraffe spray pool, 3 years+, \$299 **4** Scrunch buckets, 12 months+, \$80 **5** Bucket and mill or pump set, 12 months+, from \$165 **6** Play tent, available in princess or pirate, 3 years+, \$275 **7** Lil'star shade baby pool, 1 to 3 years, \$225 **8** Joy rider, 6 years+, \$175 **9** Seaside sand and water mill, 12 months+, \$225 **10** Mustela sun care range, from \$150.

Bumps to Babes has three stores in Hong Kong, located in Central, Ap Lei Chau and Stanley. 2552 5000 | bumpstobabes.com

TUTOR TIME SUMMER PROGRAM: PROJECT REBOOT T2T2

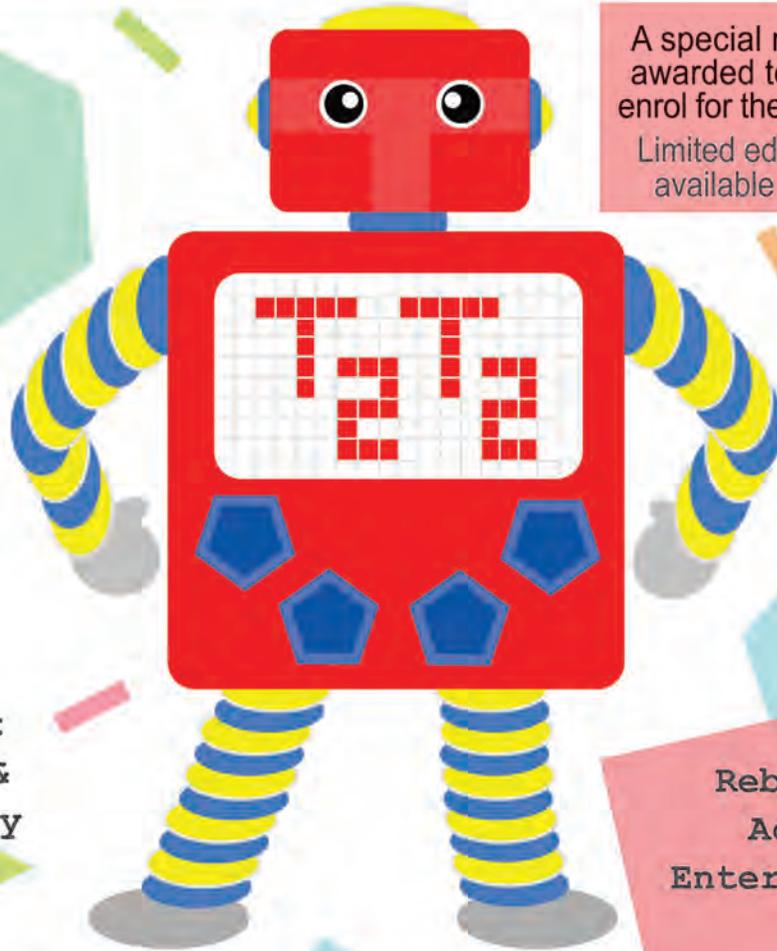
July 27th - August 21st, 2015

Reboot 1:
 Mechanical
 Engineering

Reboot 2:
 Science &
 Technology

A special robot patch will be awarded to all students who enrol for the Summer Program.

Limited edition robot toys are available while stocks last.



Reboot 3:
 World
 Geography

Reboot 4:
 Active
 Entertainment

Tutor Time has a new friend! T2T2 is a discarded robot we found behind our school! Join us for a summer of fun learning how to repair, communicate with and entertain T2T2!

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Full Immersion Bi-Lingual English and Mandarin Program

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 (School bus available)

Hong Kong Side:

Tutor Time Braemar Hill: G/F & LG/F Braemar Hill Shopping Center, 45 Braemar Hill Road, Hong Kong
Tutor Time WOW Central: 1/F, Garley Building, 45-53 Graham Street, Central, Hong Kong
Tutor Time Mid-Levels: Shop A-B, G/F Botanical Court, 5 Caine Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong
Tutor Time Red Hill - Tai Tam: 101, 1/F Red Hill Plaza, 3 Red Hill Road, Tai Tam, Hong Kong

Kowloon Side:

Tutor Time Kowloon Tong: No.1 Dorset Crescent, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tutor Time WOW Kowloon Tong: 9 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

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Open House

Central : 6 June
 Braemar Hill : 13 June
 Kowloon Tong & Red Hill : 27 June
 Time : 1:00pm - 5:00pm (RSVP)

ON THE PAGE

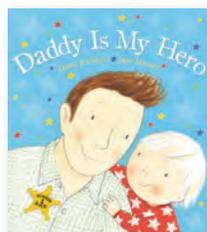
Looking for a good read? Here's our monthly roundup of the written word.

FATHER'S DAY

Daddy is My Hero

Dawn Richards and Jane Massey

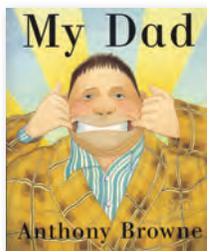
This is a tender and touching tribute to all heroic dads out there. A little boy explains why his dad is the best dad in the world, giving examples in everyday life – preparing a meal, giving a bath, playing games and reading stories; soon, though, his dad becomes a cowboy, a pirate and a knight fighting greedy dragons and aliens.



My Dad

Anthony Browne

A brilliant, humorous look at fatherhood from a child's point of view. "He's all right, my dad," begins the narrator, pictured only in the final painting, receiving a giant hug from the object of his affection. Each page celebrates one of the father's qualities or accomplishments, illustrated with wit and panache. Even in his bathrobe, dad seems capable of anything.

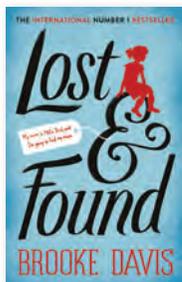


FICTION

Lost & Found

Brooke Davis

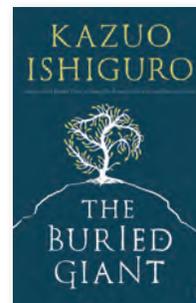
Australian Brooke Davis sent publishers into a bidding frenzy with this stunning debut novel of heavy themes handled with a quirky, light-hearted touch. Millie, 7, has been abandoned in a department store by her mother. Agatha, 82, and Karl, 87, have both lost the loves of their lives. These three very different grieving characters end up on a journey together to find Millie's mother.



The Buried Giant

Kazuo Ishiguro

In Britain, shortly after the time of King Arthur's ruling, an elderly couple, Axl and Beatrice, set off across a troubled land to reunite with a son they've not seen in years. They can't remember the reason why they're estranged, but it's happening to all civilisation. The characters they meet along the way each hold a key to their quest.



The Girl On The Train

Paula Hawkins

Rachel glimpses the same happy couple from the window of her train to work every morning, giving her a sense of familiarity strong enough to invent names for them: Jess and Jason. But one morning she sees something shocking and goes to the police, causing inescapable consequences. Hailed as the next big thing since *Gone Girl*, Paula Hawkins' first novel features flawed characters and psychological twists.



The Goldfinch

Donna Tartt

Dark, poignant and unforgettable, this Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is masterfully written. After young Theo survives a tragic accident that kills his mother, and is abandoned by his father, he's taken in by a friend's wealthy but strange family. From there, Theo's journey into manhood includes vivid characters, mesmerising language, and breathtaking suspense, while exploring themes of love, loyalty, art and family.

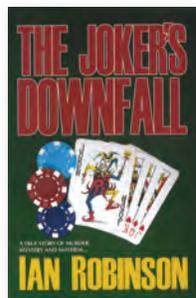


NON-FICTION

The Joker's Downfall

Ian Robinson

With its plot twists reminiscent of a thriller, it's hard to believe this is a true story – and that it happened right here in Hong Kong. Written by a forensic accountant who was instrumental to the court case involving the Carriam Group, the book highlights corruption and fraud involving governments, agencies, bankers, lawyers, and high rollers living on the edge. You'll never think accountants lead boring lives again.



Mrs Money Penny's Financial Advice For Independent Women

Mrs Money Penny

A writer for the *Financial Times*, Mrs Money Penny has put together a book that inspires you to take control of your finances and your life. She gives easy and wise advice on all manner of money matters, such as how to increase your income, cut your grocery bills, start a business, save a pension and lots more, all without being boring.



Terry O'Neill's Rock & Roll Album

Terry O'Neill

Regarded as one of the most influential celebrity photographers of all time, Terry O'Neill has been shooting iconic names since the 60s. This impressive album comes with Terry's personal insights of musicians that other photographers couldn't get close to, such as Elvis, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, David Bowie and Sinatra. A beautiful and unique collection.



Mumpreneur

Annabel Karmel

Annabel Karmel is the guru of kids' food, and her huge empire was started from scratch at her kitchen table. By combining her own insights and experience with those of other well-known successful women in this new book, she provides a platform for mums to gain the confidence and skills to juggle the demands of motherhood while building a thriving business.



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WHAT ARE YOU READING?

To tell us what books are piled up on your bedside table, or what you've recently downloaded to your Kindle, dash off an email to info@expatliving.hk.



Nicole Lade,
Australian

THE LUMINARIES BY ELEANOR CATTON, FICTION

Genre?

Historical mystery, set in 19th century New Zealand.

How did you get hold of it?

First I lobbied my book club to read it, then I borrowed it from the library.

How far have you got with it?

Finished, finally – it's 832 pages!

Verdict?

I loved it. It's slow and slightly confusing at the start because there are so many characters, but then it picks up pace and the author cleverly recaps the story throughout so that you can't put it down.

Recommended?

Highly. Don't be put off by the page count. It's definitely deserving of the 2013 Man Booker prize it won.



Sue Olivier,
South African
and Australian

THE GINGER TREE BY OSWALD WYND, FICTION

Genre?

Historical novel

How did you get hold of it?

It's been on my "to read" list for a while. Not my usual fare, but it is largely set in Japan and I have a soft spot for all things Japanese.

How far have you got with it?

I'm almost done, and at the stage that I start reading it more slowly so that it lasts longer; not wanting it to end is for me always a sign of a good book.

What do you think of it so far?

It started slowly, and I wasn't sure whether this was going to be a historically correct tale or whether it would turn into a human story. Given time, it turned into a *great* human story. It paints a vivid picture of a very strong woman surviving alone, against all odds, in Asia in the early 1900s.

Recommended?

It is a great read, and I would most certainly recommend it. It's beautifully written and takes you on an unusual journey that haunts you till you can pick the book up again.



STYLE HUNTER

Forget the catwalk, the shop windows and the fashion bloggers. Sometimes, the best place for style inspiration is out on the streets. Our style hunter roams Hong Kong, camera-in-hand, ready to snap expats who exude individuality. This month, personal stylist **Ellen Lobler** shares her alternative wedding fashion tips – boho style.

Bohemian-style weddings are having a huge moment, and they require a totally different dress code than traditional ceremonies. Don't get caught out when an invitation falls on your doormat. Here are some tips to look the part:

- The good news is that your feet aren't going to hurt for hours due to dancing at these weddings. Go barefoot, or wear pretty flip-flops or sandals – not your usual Havaianas! If you prefer to wear heels, opt for a wedge to prevent your heels from sinking into the sand or grass.
- Style-wise, I'd recommend a crochet or lace floaty number, and pile on the accessories. Boho-style bangles, earrings and necklaces are plentiful in stores right now – check out Accessorize, H&M and Netaporter.com for inspiration.
- Tousled hair or a floral or braided headband will instantly put you on trend. Keep makeup to a minimum, and focus on bronzing skin and a slick of lip-gloss. Shimmering body oil from Nuxe gives the perfect glow – and don't forget: a good manicure and pedicure will be essential.

**Looks modelled by Nanette Zwann, Real Estate Agent
Photography by Anne Wilmot Bowkis**

Styling:

- White dress: H&M Coachella Collection
- Black and gold dress: Diane von Furstenburg
- Purple dress: Vava by Joy Han
- Coral dress: Vava by Joy Han
- Brown and gold earrings: Lane Crawford
- Sling-back wedges: Michael Kors
- Gold and beige wedges: Aldo
- Headbands: H&M

Ellen is a Dutch stylist and personal shopper in Hong Kong, and writes about the latest trends for stylebyasia.com.
loblerdelaney.com



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BIG IDEAS FOR TINY PEOPLE

SERA and PETINA of **TinyBitz** tell us how their baby-gifting brand got off the ground, and how it seeks to offer something new to the market.



Tell us about the company.

We're a boutique baby-gifting brand with the focus in bringing "thoughtful gifts for growing kids", and providing a convenient and breezy online shopping experience for busy urbanites.

Do you have a signature gift?

Our best-selling Growing Kit has been very well received among mothers and gift-givers alike. It's a set of three onesies, each in a different design and in different sizes (zero to three months, three to six months, and six to twelve months), so it's essentially a gift designed to grow with the babies! The Growing Kit comes in three versions: girls', boys' and unisex, and two size ranges (zero to twelve months and three to eighteen months).

What inspired you to start the business?

Our nieces and nephew. We were searching tirelessly for stylish, practical yet affordable gifts for them, and our friends were constantly asking for advice on where and what to get for baby showers. We also realised that babies outgrow their outfits too quickly – that fuelled the Growing Kit concept.

How easy was it to set up the company?

It took us two years from having the initial idea to the soft launch, and then another three months before we had our official launch in March 2013. It was a relatively easy and quick process! We've had production hiccups along the way, but this is when the phrase "keep calm and carry on" comes in handy; sometimes you just have to improvise as you go.

Do you each have different roles in the business?

Yes, it's a good match between our skill sets and personalities! Sera is the mastermind behind design, production and inventory management; Petina drives marketing and sales and general administration of the brand. We have a lot of respect for each other's expertise and we also get very hands on, from packing each and every gift set or hamper that gets sent out to running pop-up shops and the not-so-exciting monthly stocktake!

An Aussie connection

While both women were born in Hong Kong, they've also spent formative years in Australia. Sera studied Fashion at Sydney's Whitehouse Institute of Design, and established Sewn, a ready-to-wear women's fashion line; she continued her career as a Production Manager at a fashion house in Hong Kong. Petina majored in Marketing and Hospitality at the University of New South Wales, then honed her expertise in the pre-opening team at both Hilton Sydney and W Hotel Hong Kong, before becoming Senior Project Manager at Marc & Chantal Design, Hong Kong.

Got some tips for shoppers?

All orders receive free gift-wrapping in our custom-designed packaging. Shoppers can also leave us a gift message and we will include it in the gift. We offer free delivery within Hong Kong for orders over US\$70, and we do international delivery too.

Plans for the next few years?

We're currently stocked in Hong Kong and New York and will soon be available in Melbourne and Tokyo; we hope to continue to expand our distribution internationally, and also develop more gifts that will grow with the kids!

tinybitz.com 

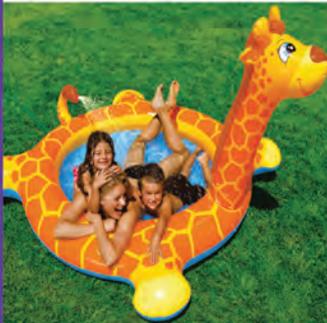


Summer time at bumps to babes



\$325

Giraffe Spray Pool



\$299

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PARTY TIME!

Between them, KATE, KAYE and BEV, the three founders of **Poppy's Trunk**, have six kids, so they know a thing or two about celebrations! After realising there was a demand for stylish and unique parties, they created their event-planning business in 2013, and have been making happy memories for their clients ever since. Here the co-founders tell us what it's like when every day at work is party.

What's in a name?

"The name 'Poppy's Trunk' came from the idea that a poppy normally has up to six petals, representing the six kids we have between us. And we think of a trunk as a treasure chest that is filled up with all sorts of goodies and surprises, which is at the heart of what we do.

"We are basically party designers. Our mission is to make parties look amazing so that the host and guests are left with a long lasting memory. Our services range from designing and producing personalised cards and invitations to custom-made party décor, such as backdrops, banners, goody bags, and bunting."

Not just for kids

"We started off doing lots of kids' parties as that is definitely where the big demand is, but this year has been an amazing year for us as we have been lucky enough to have been given the opportunity to work on several corporate events and weddings."

I want candy!

"Our most popular product is definitely our bespoke candy bars. We can proudly say that none of our bars are the same. So much passion is poured into each candy bar and every one is different and unique: from the colours of the ribbons to the type of candy used to match the

theme, no detail is left unconsidered. We are all frequent flyers and this works to our advantage, as we can source and bring home some really amazing stuff from all over the world to use in our parties, which really works to our advantage.

"Favourite candy bar themes would probably have to be the Circus and Princess themes. Having said that, our clients are pretty creative and we have had some really fun party themes, such as Ice Cream Parlour, Pampering Spa, and Old Shanghai. We basically work with the client's brief, so anything is possible!"

A sweet job

"We absolutely adore what we do. Every party is a new challenge and a chance for us to show off our passion, and we pour our hearts and souls into every job. As for the temptation, we have to admit that all three of us have a sweet tooth. We make it a point to do a taste test for everything we supply, so this business can be quite a threat to our waistlines, come to think of it – but we call it quality control! We are forever grateful for the chance to be able to make someone's special day that much more special. The big smiles on their faces make all the work worthwhile."

poppystrunk.com
info@poppystrunk.com

Dramatic Flair

As CLARISSA EVANS puts it, every child has their own “lovely uniqueness” – some just need more help than others to show it to the world.

By Brooke Chenoweth



On meeting Clarissa Evans at the head office of Starlit Voice, the creative arts organisation she founded two years ago, I was so impressed by what she has achieved that I was ready to hand over both of my children – and if they had classes for adults, I would’ve signed up for those too!

Starlit Voice was created by Clarissa and Nicci Corrado in 2013. She freely admits that in the early days they worked out of the back of taxis on the way to venues. The initial model offered drama and communication classes in schools as an extra-curricular activity (ECA). It has grown exponentially since then and now includes up to 20 local and international schools as well as in-house classes at their head office in Central and workshops throughout the year at various venues. Rather than being just another run-of-the-mill ECA provider, Starlit Voice has a team of professional practitioners who help students develop essential communication skills in the best way possible – by letting kids be themselves.

In 2015, Starlit Voice founded Drama School HK – the first vocational training programme in Hong Kong for young performing artists aged between 10 and 18. Together they form a creative hub that provides a pathway from childhood through to young adulthood

– a journey that can be started at any point, whether it’s at an ECA, private tutoring for LAMDA exams, workshops or at Drama School HK.

Clarissa is the sole authorised representative of LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art) in Hong Kong, working with them to bring examiners to Hong Kong throughout the year. They offer Communication and Performance examinations, designed to develop language, literacy communication and acting skills. Children as young as four can take the exams, but Clarissa stresses, “It’s important that a child comes out smiling. We never let them take an exam before they’re ready, and we prepare them so they get the best outcome.”

In a city where there’s so much pressure to perform and succeed, this approach is refreshing – and effective. Children really blossom when they achieve in this way. “Starlit Voice works because it’s made up of a team of trained professional practitioners who each bring something different but who all are able to identify, mentor and nurture the needs of each individual child”.

All classes are very inclusive, with children of all needs and abilities taking part. The LAMDA syllabus crafts a creative pathway to inspire spontaneity and draw out even the shyest child eventually. Through the

study of dramatic techniques, the classes teach children how to use their voices properly, going into the finer details of voice modulation and expression. They learn the importance of eye contact, facial expressions, and body language, and how to get their personalities across when talking to people – universal skills that they can take beyond school and into the world.

How often do we hear of otherwise outgoing children struggling through school entrance interviews? I only have to watch my own children squirm their way through interactions with adults to be reminded that the ability to really engage with others doesn’t often come naturally. Clarissa saw a need for classes that helped build not only communication skills, but confidence as well. Whether a child is reserved or really outgoing, the set work is tailored for each child to allow their personalities and individuality to come through. This type of teaching encourages self-awareness and reflective thinking, allowing children to develop their own special qualities.

As the children grow in confidence, they are given the opportunity to share what they’ve learned by running a “class” themselves at the end of term. “The students just love showing that they understand what we’ve been working on all term.”



“We’re able to identify, mentor and nurture the needs of each individual child.”

Clarissa has five children of her own, ranging in age from 13 to 23, and all of them have been through her classes and achieved high levels in the LAMDA examinations. As a mother and ex-teacher myself, I can only imagine the sheer determination it must’ve taken to achieve that with her own brood, and I have nothing but respect for both the method and the mother in question. At the heart of what she does at Starlit Voice is a desire to help children to feel good about themselves, by engaging with them and bringing their best selves to the surface. The fact that they have so much fun, and learn valuable life skills at the same time, is an added bonus.

Unit 1005, 10/F, Universal Trade Centre,
3 Arbuthnot Road, Central.
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SUMMER SCHOOL WITH A DIFFERENCE

If your kids are passionate about performing then they should join Drama School HK for a week of theatrical creativity in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This camp will provide the chance to work with professional practitioners and develop skills in core areas of performance and stagecraft. Over the course of a week, students will create a piece of theatre as well as getting the opportunity to explore the beautiful area of Chiang Mai and engage in an exciting variety of organised cultural and adventure activities that will make this an experience to remember. The best part is that parents can come along and take advantage of tailor-made activities, enjoy a relaxing massage or just lie by the pool.



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Breaking the Ice

When he's not working in digital marketing, French expat **CYRIL COUSTEUR** (pictured, second from left) enjoys socialising with fellow members of **InterNations**, a global expat community. Here he tells us more about it, including his role as InterNations Ambassador.

How did you hear about InterNations and what appealed to you about it?

A friend told me about it in March 2012. I joined up and attended my first social event, and I really enjoyed it as a way to meet other expats and make new friends.

After joining, you went on to become an InterNations "Consul", and then an "Ambassador"; tell us about that.

My favourite InterNations group when I first joined was one called "Dinner Nations". (I'm a big foodie.) I stepped up to the plate in mid-2012 and organised a dinner at a restaurant that was in the Hong Kong *Michelin Guide*. It was such a success that I became famous in the InterNations Community as the "Dinner Guy"!

Later that year, I was asked to be the Consul of Dinner Nations. In that role, I organised a dinner every month, with the help of my Co-consuls. I was then asked if I wanted to be an Ambassador, and was confirmed in the role in September 2013.

What do you do as an Ambassador?

I organise or co-organise one or two social events a month, and my role at the events is to be the host and help create a welcoming atmosphere. I also talk to members and help them meet new people. I'm basically the "ice breaker".



How does a person get involved in InterNations? Is it free to be a member?

Basic Membership is free and gives access to all the community features and social events (for which there is an entrance fee). There's also a premium Albatross Membership that allows you access to exclusive features and content, and free or reduced entry at all community events. If you progress to holding the position of Consul or Ambassador, you get Albatross Membership for free.

What's your own expat "trail"?

I was living in France before coming to Hong Kong, but I've now been here for more than 10 years. When I first arrived, I really wished I had access to something like InterNations. It would have given me the chance to meet new people more quickly, and to get tips on living here from other expats. I found settling in quite difficult, and it took me time to understand how it all works, how to find a job, set up a flat and so on. Some extra help would have been very welcome!

Where in Hong Kong do you live now? What do you like about it?

Jordan. I love it; it's very "local" and it has a really nice market.

What are some of your favourite InterNations events and activities?

I enjoy the monthly social drinks at our Global InterNations community events, and also the boat trips we hold in summer. These two events really help expats to meet and get to know each other; they also enhance the community feeling. In a big city like Hong Kong, you often meet like-minded people once and then you don't see them again; with InterNations' regular gatherings, you get the chance to catch up with recent acquaintances. The boat trip is very good as it's one of our full-day events and we have the chance to socialise with 100 people all day and get involved in activities together.

For more information about InterNations, visit internations.org.

ANIMAL HOSPITAL



From dogs in strollers to cats in overcoats, there's plenty of evidence about town that we really do love our pets. Another who does is DR ALANE CAHALANE, specialist surgeon at the recently opened **VSH** (Veterinary Specialty Hospital) in Wan Chai – Hong Kong's first dedicated surgical practice for small animals.

By Brooke Chenoweth





For many of us, our pets are as much a part of our family as we are. So it makes sense that when they're ill, we do what we can to make them well again.

But what happens when the family dog sustains injuries that are beyond the capabilities of the local vet? Or when your ageing cat still has nine lives but suffers from cataracts? Until recently, there wasn't much that could be done. With the exception of a few general practitioners, there were no specialist vet surgeons practising in Hong Kong.

Enter Dr Alane Cahalane, and the new VSH. Bringing with her years of experience in North America and the backing of VSH San Diego, a specialty practice established in 1990, Dr Alane and her team of specialists are filling a gap in animal care.

The purpose built, 14,000-square-foot facility offers 24-hour emergency care, and referral-only consultation and surgery. Alane stresses that the practice was designed to complement what's currently offered by the exceptional general practice community that exists here, not replace it. Since arriving in Hong Kong she has worked hard to develop relationships with the city's vets, and she believes that this practice will become the standard for veterinary medicine in Asia.

The hospital has staff on site 24 hours a day, and currently offers surgery and ophthalmology. From hip replacements to cancer treatment, diagnostics and minor procedures, the team at VSH can handle just about anything. They're hoping to expand into internal medicine and critical care later in the year.



A BETTER BEAR

Alane recently travelled to Chengdu, China, where she worked alongside the team at Animals Asia to perform a world-first surgery on Claudia the moon bear. Claudia was lame after fracturing a bone in her elbow; a team of "super vets" repaired the fracture in a series of surgeries, using the latest technology and a lot of compassion. Alane reflects on the once-in-a-lifetime operation:

"We created a 3D printed model of Claudia's fractured right elbow using the images from her CT scan. This gave me the opportunity to see and feel what her broken bone would look like at surgery; I had little means of knowing what her normal anatomy would be, including the location of major nerves, muscles and blood vessels. The 3D model made me much more prepared, and also helped me develop a plan for how to fix the bone.

I placed a large titanium plate and 10 screws to repair Claudia's fracture, and thankfully it went very smoothly – credit to the team at Animals Asia, and the 3D model. Claudia has recovered beautifully. I've seen videos of her walking in her den, lounging, and playing. I'm so humbled by the experience, and grateful to have been able to help."

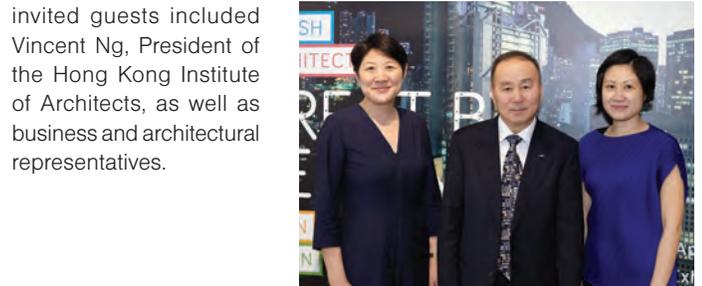
To follow Claudia's recovery or to find out how you can help, visit animalsasia.org.

VSH Hong Kong is at 1-2/F Lucky Centre, 165 Wan Chai Road, Wan Chai. 2408 2588 | vsh.com.hk 

AROUND TOWN



Cocktails for a Cause
 More than 100 guests gathered at a cocktail event hosted by Hong Kong expats Mina Martinez and Liza Beighley, raising over HK\$233,000 for the Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF). The APIASF is the only national scholarship fund in the US that focuses on providing scholarships for deserving Asian Americans.



Great Designs
 Great by Design, an exhibition organised by The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in partnership with the GREAT Britain campaign, was unveiled at a VIP reception hosted by RIBA President, Stephen Hodder MBE. Specially invited guests included Vincent Ng, President of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, as well as business and architectural representatives.



Festive French

Le French May had its opening celebration on 1 May in the Courtyard at PMQ, launching its 23rd edition under the theme “Essentially French”. The Jo Bithume Company treated guests to excellent music, while Le French GourMay restaurants and shops hosted cheese, delicatessen and wine booths.



Fun at Fiji Fizz

Link Universal teamed up with International Fijian 7s and 15s player Seru Rabeni, raising funds to build the first kindergarten in his remote hometown – Nasolo in Fiji’s Bua Province. Not only were guests privileged to meet some of the most legendary Rugby 7s players around, they also took part in auctions during the lunch. The Fiji Fizz event was also a great success, as sufficient funds were raised to start building the school in July this year.





Save Our Waters

The Ocean Art Walk 2015, a festival that uses art to illustrate the effects of human-caused climate change, was set against the beautiful ocean backdrop of The Link's Stanley Plaza. The art walk featured three large visual art installations made primarily with waste materials, a series of youth dance performances and a host of related film screenings. Members of the public were also invited to creatively contribute to a nail art mural and take an Ocean Quiz, which tested their knowledge about our waters.



Art for AWA

The recent Art "On the Line" event held by AWA Hong Kong saw an estimated 500 people viewing over 280 art pieces at The Space on Hollywood Road. The artwork was donated by female artists from at least 24 countries, all in celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the International Women's Year. Most of the items were sold by the end of the evening, raising over HK\$230,000.





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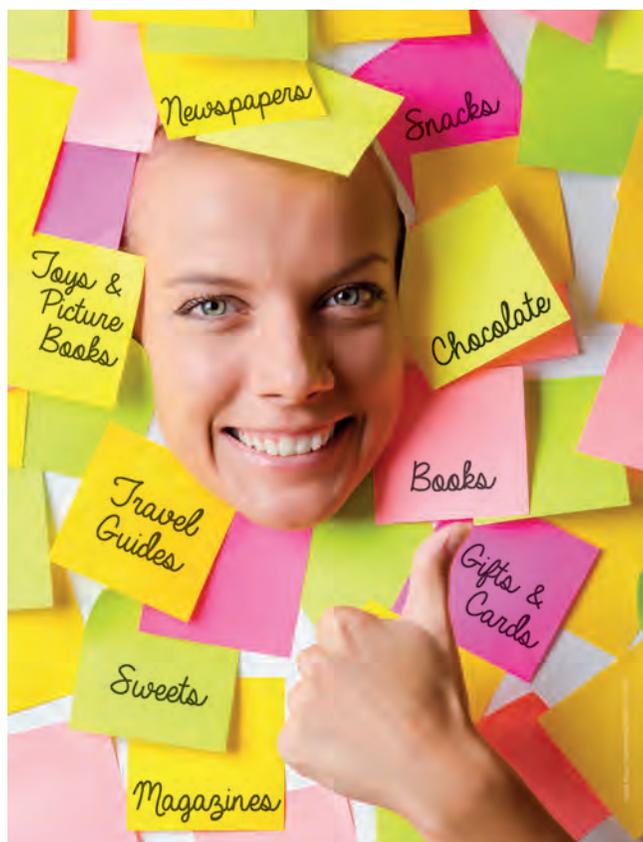
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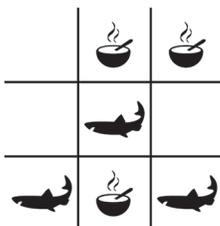
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In The Know: **INSURANCE**

Health insurance – it's one of those grown-up necessities that many of us don't think about until we need it or when it is too late! Living in a country as an expat can make the process a little more complicated, so we asked the experts at **Bupa Global** to answer some commonly asked questions, to make it a little bit easier.



I'm young and healthy, and I don't have a family yet; why would I need insurance?

You probably don't think twice when it comes to paying a premium for insurance on your car, right? Surely your health is more important. You should start your insurance when you are young and healthy. We can take care of your all-round health with a range of wellness benefits and preventive treatments included in our global health plans. If you take out insurance when you're older, or you leave it until you actually need it, the plan may exclude the sickness or you may have to pay extra to get your pre-existing sickness covered. And be aware the premiums increase with age!

I travel a lot; if I take out insurance with Bupa Global, will I still need travel insurance?

A global health plan in general provides a wider range of medical benefits with higher benefit limits than that of a travel insurance plan, so you can enjoy a broader coverage continuously, all-year round. With our global health plans, you won't need to worry about the cost of medical attention you may receive while abroad and we provide cover on medical evacuation and repatriation as

well. However, if you're concerned about coverage associated with your trip, such as personal belongings and trip delays, you might want to have travel insurance on top of your medical insurance, which is quite common among some of our customers who are frequent travellers.

We are new to Hong Kong, we have one child already and we are planning to have one more. What sort of package should we look at?

You may want to consider a plan that includes maternity benefits. Our Bupa Global Elite Health Plan covers you up to US\$30,000 / HK\$234,000 for maternity benefits. Also, this family-friendly plan can cover children under the age of 10 at no extra cost (two per paying parent), and it offers a premium discount when two or more members join the plan together.

I'm into adventure sports; can I still be covered under Bupa Global plans? Is there anything you don't cover?

Yes, our global health plans provide cover regardless of your profession or the sport or leisure activities you enjoy doing. We don't believe past health issues should stop you from enjoying your future. That's why, when you join

our global health plans, many pre-existing conditions can be covered.

Any other tips to help me choose the appropriate global health plan?

When looking for the right global health plan, there are several areas you should consider:

- Annual policy limits (Bupa Global offers up to unlimited annual policy limits)
- Geographic coverage – e.g., regional versus global coverage, including the US
- Coverage for other family members (does the package include maternity?)
- Whether you'd be covered for pre-existing, mental, hereditary, congenital and chronic conditions
- Look for a packaged plan that includes inpatient/outpatient and preventive benefits that are straightforward and hassle-free.

For more information on Bupa Global's health insurance plans, visit bupaglobal.com/en/international-health-insurance. 

Eat Well, Live Well: **3 HEALTHY RECIPES**

It seems everyone has their own food philosophy these days, but whether you're into paleo, raw food, vegan or gluten-free, the main message is that whole foods and clean eating are the way to go for optimum health. So we sourced some recipes that showcase just what it is these diets have to offer, and let the chefs explain why eating this way will have you looking and feeling amazing.



#1 Raw Food

EAT FRESH ORGANIC GREEN SMOOTHIE

"This is a perfect pre- or post-workout smoothie; the spinach provides a great iron boost as well as essential phytonutrients to help replenish vitamin and mineral levels. The nut milk provides a protein top-up and the bananas help boost your energy as well as potassium reserves, which will inevitably get sapped from an intense workout session. Potassium is a key mineral that plays a role in muscular energy."

– Mia Man, founder of Graciously Green and Eat FRESH.

Ingredients:

- 1 handful spinach
- 2 frozen bananas
- 1 small wild apple
- 1 cup nut milk

Method:

- Simply blend and enjoy!

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#2 Vegan BANANA MUFFINS

“When I started eating a vegan diet a couple of years ago, I thought it would mean giving up my beloved cookies and cakes. Fortunately, after a lot of trial and error, I’ve perfected some of my favourite vegan baking recipes; these muffins are so good, it’s hard to tell there’s no egg or butter in them. The best bit is they’re low in sugar too, so you can have more than one and not feel guilty!”

– Amelia Williams, writer and mother of two; converted to a vegan diet under the guidance of a nutritionist following illness and allergies.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup wholewheat flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bi-carb soda
- 3-4 very ripe bananas
- 1 tbsp apple sauce
- 1 tbsp almond butter*
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- ½ cup coconut oil, melted
- ½ cup vegan chocolate chips (I use Enjoy Life brand)
- 1 tbsp crumbled walnut pieces
(* If you prefer to make these nut-free, just add more applesauce or coconut oil)

Method:

- Preheat your oven to 180 degrees Celsius.
- In a medium bowl combine the flour, baking powder, and bi-carb soda.
- In a large bowl mash the bananas and add the vanilla, honey, coconut oil, applesauce, and almond butter.
- Fold the dry ingredients into the wet and mix gently to combine. Add the chocolate chips and walnuts if you’re using them.
- Pour into a prepared muffin tin and bake for around 20 minutes.
- Allow the muffins to cool before removing them from the pan, but they’re good to eat while the chocolate is still soft. Keep in the fridge once they’ve cooled completely.

#3 Paleo SWEET POTATO SALAD

“The basic premise of the paleo diet is clean eating, with a focus on whole foods – preferably organic – and no processed foods, grains or sugar. It sounds restrictive but once you get the hang of it and you realise how much more energy you have, you won’t look back. This salad is one of my favourite dishes, and it’s so easy to prepare. The kids love it too, which is always a bonus.”

– Suzanne Goodwin, photographer and avid home cook; follower of the paleo diet for three years.

Ingredients:

- 3 large sweet potatoes
- 4 hard-boiled eggs
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- ½ cup macadamia nut oil (or olive oil)
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp fresh chives, chopped

Method:

- Chop the potatoes into bite-sized pieces and cook in boiling water until soft. Drain and sprinkle with salt and pepper then set aside to cool.
- Peel the eggs and mash with a fork.
- In a jug, make the dressing by combining the vinegar, mustard and egg.
- Whisk the dressing and slowly add both oils; continue whisking until the liquid combines.
- Gently fold the dressing and chives into the potatoes, being careful not to turn it all into mash!
- Refrigerate until ready to serve. 🥗



Raw POWER

Paleo, CrossFit, TRX, Engine 2, P90X, HIT, 5:2 Fasting – DAVE FARRER has tried most of these in an effort to stay fit and healthy, and to keep up with his young boys. As a seasoned professional when it comes to trialling all manner of physical improvement methods, he recently went along to **Real Athletic Workouts (RAW)** to find out what they could do.

From personal experience, any health and fitness regime is great – up to a point. I would generally end up feeling slightly stronger, more energised and more satisfied with my accomplishments, but at the end of the day I was no closer to looking like celebrity trainer Tony Horton, no matter how I adjusted the lighting.

This brings me to the two key ingredients that are often missing from the glossy ads, the “before and after” shots, and the “get fit quick” methods promoted by gyms.

First: commitment. That might sound obvious, but there’s commitment and there’s Commitment. For example, I have a commitment to attend a work colleague’s farewell drinks on Sunday evening across town (provided I have nothing better to do), and I have a mortgage. Do you get my point? I’ve learnt that a Tony Horton body is only possible with the capital-C type of Commitment.

Second: personalisation. In my mind, my phone is about to ring and the board of the Australian Rugby Union is going to rectify an oversight and have me replace Israel Folau as Wallabies fullback. If I’m honest with myself, though, things are looking a little more dire as I approach 40. I sit down for a living, after all, and I carry some war wounds from my younger years. Let’s face it, we all have niggles that can stand in the way of getting reasonable results from hard work at the gym.



GETTING STARTED

First impressions count a lot. I want to be trained by someone who looks like they have Commitment of the capital-C variety. The team at RAW fits that bill; in fact, I quickly learn that it's a different kind of gym – more like a holistic personal training venue. As a client, you are personally assessed and your progress is tracked in detail to make sure that you see real results.

Jeremy, one of my trainers for the day, quizzes me about what I want to get out of my training. After I mumble something intelligent-sounding about getting leaner and improving fitness levels, Jeremy says simply, “So you want to get more ripped.” (I should have just said “I want to look like Tony Horton” and saved us both time.)

As it turns out, the RAW trainers can provide personal programmes for just about everything, from weight loss for a wedding day to post-pregnancy training, to pre-competition programmes for elite athletes. And they achieve some remarkable results, particularly with respect to dropping unwanted kilos in short periods of time.

FEELING THE PINCH

I've had a pinch test before, but the results I received were only rudimentary. After taking the test at RAW, however, I receive a detailed assessment of where my body is making fat deposits, which, I learn, is directly linked to hormone balance, diet and general wellbeing.

The mobility test is next; did I mention that I sit down for a living? Let's just say that the nods and smiles coming from the gallery say it all. Still, 4.5 out of 10 isn't that bad a score – is it?

Overall, my weight and body fat readings aren't too bad, but my sweet tooth seems to have given me some insulin hormone issues. Also, my boyhood injuries have left me a little lopsided, and my current job has made me stiffer than a four-by-two post.

Clearly the focus for me will be a mild rehabilitation aimed at increasing mobility, before I try to “power clean” 150 pounds. As Jeremy explains, for real and long lasting results, you need to condition the body first. There's no point turning up to the gym and trying to lift heavy weights or run 5km on a treadmill if you don't have the correct movement and balance in the first place. If you do, you'll get injured – and that's obviously going to set you back. RAW has access to a range of sports and medical professionals to really home in on your individual needs to give you a solid starting point, regardless of your fitness level.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Here comes one of the hardest aspects of the Commitment imperative: diet. This is where so many people, myself included, struggle. I'm guilty of finishing my kids' dinners; and if there's chocolate on offer, I'm there. RAW's personal trainers are on hand daily to help with diet and nutrition – even providing recipes and literature. They don't adhere to any fad

diets; it's about an individual dietary programme that will work for you. Furthermore, you're made accountable by means of a food diary; and, as I learn, you can't keep things from Jeremy!

Still, this isn't a military-style boot camp. If you know you're going to have a few wines with dinner or if Friday night is pizza night, fine. It's more about awareness of what you're consuming and when you're consuming it, and how it affects your overall health.

STRETCH IT OUT

Before my first session ends, I meet with Jared, RAW's in-house Fascial Stretch Therapist. I'd heard of FST before, but never experienced it. FST works on the fascial tissue, which is the body's connective tissue under the skin, and aims to increase blood flow, improve movement and stimulate the neural connections throughout the body.

Jared has me lie down on a massage table and then he goes to work on loosening up my hips and legs. The process itself is like having a personal stretching trainer. Jared can work out exactly where to focus his attention just by watching my earlier mobility assessment and by judging my reactions during the stretching process. After an hour on the table, my legs and posture feel 20 years younger. I only wish we could have spent the next hour on my shoulders!

MAKING THE COMMITMENT

Up until now, my attempts at physical improvement have been one-dimensional. I've tended to choose one aspect – diet, exercise or rehab – and neglect the others for a while. RAW has hit upon the core of physical wellbeing by incorporating all aspects of health management. The detailed personal approach really helps to motivate you to be committed (or, Committed) to whatever goals you're trying to achieve. It's not cheap, but this isn't just a membership; it's a personal training and wellbeing programme that feels more like joining a family than a gym.

Find out more at rawpersonaltraining.com, or visit RAW at 23/F, Winsome House, 73 Wyndham Street, Central. 



Everyday YOGA

Hong Kong is a city that asks its citizens to “work hard and play hard”. MELANIE B, owner of **Yoga BamBam**, a boutique yoga studio on Pound Lane in Sheung Wan, shares one of her favourite yoga poses that anyone can do at home, or in a quiet corner of the office, at any time of day.



VIPARITA KARANI (“LEGS-UP-AGAINST-THE-WALL POSE”)

Viparita means “inversion” and Karani means “in action”. This pose is a cure to over-demanding city life as it teaches us to do less and relax more. It’s a centering pose that helps us to rest, digest, recuperate and be ready to hit our busy lives in tip-top condition physically and mentally. Viparita Karani has all the benefits of an active inversion pose yet it is therapeutically restorative and therefore perfect to practice at home.

Method:

1. Get comfy: you will be in the pose for five to 15 minutes. Cover and support your body with blankets, and place a towel or eye-pillow over your eyes. If you’re feeling self-indulgent, add a dab of lavender to the blanket, or even place a piece of rich organic chocolate in your mouth.
2. Calm down: breathe through the nose on a pattern of four counts of deep inhalations to eight counts of soothing exhalations.
3. Surrender: the tension will melt away as the chocolate lovingly soothes the soul.
4. Relax: Listen to soft music, and enter into a state of meditation or simply enjoy the music.

Benefits:

1. It reverses the effects of gravity on the legs and the feet. Swollen ankles, varicose veins, tired leg muscles are all alleviated in this pose, and it also gives the heart a rest.
2. It’s great for athletes and “weekend warriors” as it helps to drain tension from the legs and keep the lower body flexible.
3. It has all the benefits of an inversion without the effort. It alleviates headaches and backache and actually is an energy booster that produces calm focus by letting gravity do all the work for us.

Variations:

1. If you’re stiff and you find it difficult to keep your legs straight, bend them.
2. If you want to stretch your inner thighs, open your legs as you rest them against the wall.

I love this grounding pose! I discovered it during my first pregnancy to help relieve my varicose veins. I also recommend Viparita Karani to business travellers; it’s a miraculous antidote against tight hamstrings, sore hips and lower backs, and stress. This nourishing pose works wonders on frazzled over-active minds and tired bodies. It’s a wonderful way to enter the world of meditation as it helps to bring clarity to the mind. As the heart rate slows down, the nervous system is appeased.

For more info on group classes and private classes, visit yogabambam.com. 

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EAST *Meets* WEST

Traditional Chinese medicine is hugely popular in this town, but for the uninitiated it can seem a little daunting. JUDY XU, a practitioner at **Oriental Health and Balance Health**, answered some of the more commonly asked questions about the centuries-old practice.

What does a typical TCM consultation involve?

Chinese medicine offers a wide range of therapies, such as acupuncture, herbal therapy and cupping. Before any treatment, however, a thorough diagnosis is essential. Diagnosis is based on the following four pillars:

- 1. LOOKING:** This includes an assessment of a person's emotional state and wellbeing, and body appearance and shape. One important factor here is a detailed look at the condition of your tongue, a reflector of your current health.
- 2. LISTENING:** In particular, we listen for breathing sounds, coughing and the sound of the voice; all are vital factors.
- 3. ASKING:** We assess your past medical history, and your environment in terms of places, people, nutrition and diet.
- 4. PULSE DIAGNOSIS:** A practitioner reads the state of individual organs and the balance of *qi*, blood, and *yin* and *yang* energy.



A holistic health consultation can then round up the TCM consultation. Achieving specific goals in your health is the starting point from which we explore your lifestyle, diet and emotional health. In addition, we explore your Chinese medicine body type to further understand the strengths and weaknesses of your body. During the holistic health consultation, we develop a personal health plan with a guide on your next steps, a report on what to eat, drink and avoid, and suggestions about which exercises and lifestyle changes will be most suitable.

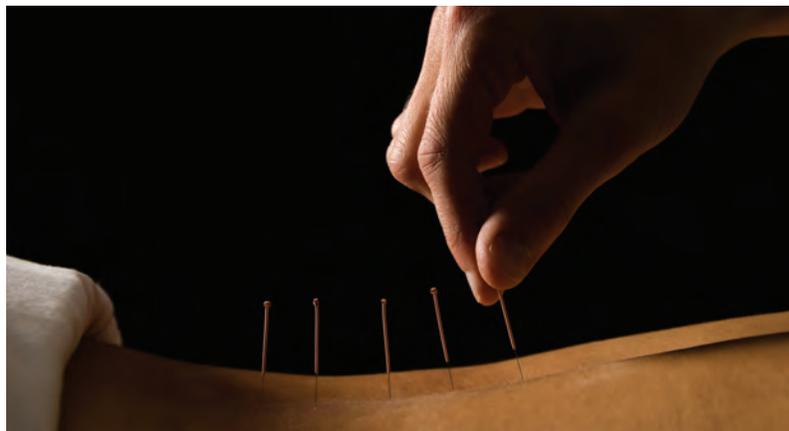
At Balance Health, we are fortunate to have a variety of hands-on, alternative medicine and mind-body therapies available that we can recommend for each individual, depending on their needs. This enables us to go beyond Chinese medicine and to integrate a much deeper understanding and healing of your body.

How many sessions would someone expect to have with a practitioner before noticing an improvement?

The treatment duration varies depending on your health issues and what you would like to achieve. Patients with a cold or flu who seek to cure the symptoms can see our Chinese medicine doctor once and recover within three to seven days. Patients who seek to treat, say, infertility would usually see our doctor over several months, with weekly appointments, as in that particular case we are aiming to restore overall body health and treat the root cause of an imbalanced body.

Are there any complaints or conditions that people in Hong Kong commonly come to you with?

Common conditions we see in Hong Kong include stress and anxiety, which we can treat successfully and relatively quickly with acupuncture. Stress is often the root cause of a weak digestive issue which can further manifest itself in weight gain, lack of energy, insomnia and so on. Apart from coughs and colds, we see many people suffering from



respiratory illnesses such as asthma, and also skin allergies. From a Chinese medicine perspective these are a result of a comparatively weaker immune system and a sign of a body that needs to be strengthened naturally.

Generally speaking, is there anything you can recommend for people who live here to stay healthy?

A strong body will be more able to withstand the harsh conditions of Hong Kong, be it high pollution, stress or long working hours. People who would like to assess their current body condition without seeing a doctor can try our online body-type test (chinesemedicinebodytype.com). It will assess your current body condition and indicate any imbalances you might have. Prevention is key, and our tool helps you to understand your body condition and indicates those areas that you might need to pay more attention to.

What is the biggest difference between TCM and Western medicine?

The ailments and disharmonies that are assessed in Chinese medicine are different to those in Western medicine. In Chinese medicine, one would not treat a vitamin D deficiency but instead look at enhancing the *yang qi* (essential energy) and organs that are out of balance. The result might be a balanced vitamin supply but achieved through different methods. Interestingly, to get more sun is one of Chinese medicine's approaches to enhance *yang qi*, which is in line with the Western treatment of increasing Vitamin D. At the end of the day, each system uses different methods and different strategies all with the same goal: achieving a healthy and balanced body.

705, 27/F, Universal Trade Centre,
3-5 Arbuthnot Road, Central.
2530 3315 | balancehealth.com.hk |
orientalhealth.com.hk 

Beauty Basics

By Verne Maree

Are lines appearing faster than you can say “pass the serum”? Unhappy about unsightly batwings, stubborn saddle-bags or a spreading waistline? Here are a few high-tech treatments to consider when a healthy diet and regular exercise aren't doing the whole job.

Problem #1: Lines and Sagging

Solution: Botox

Administered by injection, Botox is a minimally invasive treatment. It's not a permanent fix, yet that's an advantage in a way: if you don't like its effect, you don't have to live with it for too long.

If you do opt for Botox, it's vital that the right amounts are used, in exactly the right places. And if you start treatment on dynamic lines early enough, you can prevent them from becoming entrenched and permanent.

How it works:

Your face has some muscles that pull upwards and others that pull downwards. Botox contains a neurotoxin called botulinum that partially paralyses the small muscles associated with lines. By injecting small amounts of it into the downward-pulling muscles, we prevent them from working so well, thus allowing the upward-pulling muscles to do their job far better.



On the forehead, the downward-pulling muscles are located in an inverted pyramid from the hairline to the middle of the brows. Injecting them enables the upward-pulling muscles above each eyebrow to work more effectively, opening the eye-space beautifully.

For around the eyes, Botox can relax the muscles associated with the formation of crows' feet, to achieve a lifting effect. Although it's nice to have smile lines, Botox every now and then helps them from getting too deep!

Recovery:

Any prick-marks can be concealed with makeup. You'll see the effect from about 48 hours, and it will last for a good four months.

Problem #2: Loss of Facial Volume

Solution: Fillers

Human DNA has not caught up with the truism that 40 is the new 30, and 50 the new 40. As we age, we naturally lose facial volume as collagen production slows, elasticity is lost and youthfully plump cheeks migrate south to form ageing jowls.

Ageing, together with exposure to the sun and other damaging elements, causes the naturally present hyaluronic acid (HA) in our skin to diminish. As a result, the skin loses structure and volume, and lines and wrinkles form.

How it works:

Dermal fillers such as Juvederm Voluma, Restylane SubQ and Radiesse are injected to lift and contour facial features in a gentle, natural way that also reduces lines and wrinkles and improves the appearance of eye-bags. It takes between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the amount of filler required.

As dermal fillers are composed of HA, they restore the skin's youthfulness and elasticity by replacing what the skin has lost. What's more, aside from smoothing out lines and creating a lift, fillers can also be used as a nonsurgical way to remodel the nose or augment the chin.

Recovery:

The effect is instantaneous, and there's no real downtime – you can go straight back to your normal activities. Expect some short-term swelling, and perhaps slight bruising that makeup will cover.



Problem #3: Fat Arms

Solution: Tumescant Liposuction

America's First Lady, Michelle Obama, has put sexy, shapely arms firmly in the spotlight, showing off her own to good effect in sleeveless tops and dresses. We all want arms like that – especially in warmer weather, where there's no way and nowhere to hide unsightly flab.

To effectively remove stubborn fat deposits that are resistant even to rigorous exercise and strict dieting, tumescant liposuction is a good option. Apart from the upper arms, it's good for the abdomen, waist, upper back, hips, thighs and calves. It's also ideal for men who want to have unattractive fat removed from their chests.

How it works:

First of all, large volumes of very dilute anaesthetic (such as lidocaine) containing a capillary constrictor (such as ephedrine) are injected into the fat, causing the targeted area to become tumescent, or firm and swollen. Then, a stainless steel micro-cannula is inserted into the target area through a small incision to draw out the fat. Because the micro-cannula is so small – just three millimetres – it gives a smoother result than ordinary liposuction with a standard cannula. Best of all, it leaves no scars.

Recovery:

Bed rest is recommended on the day of surgery, and painkillers will be prescribed to alleviate any discomfort. You can shower the next day and go back to your normal activities by the third day, but you'll need to avoid swimming or any other immersion in water for a week or two to allow the small wound to recover.

And remember – always wear sunscreen!

What the letters mean: UVA (Ultraviolet A) rays have longer wavelengths than UVB rays and penetrate deeper into the skin, accelerating skin ageing, wrinkling and initiating and exacerbating the development of skin cancers. UVB (Ultraviolet B) rays have shorter wavelengths than UVA rays; they penetrate the superficial layers of the skin and are responsible for sunburns. SPF (Sun Protection Factor) refers to the amount of UVB protection a sunscreen offers. Note: SPF does not refer to UVA protection.

Tips for buying sunscreen:

- Choose a sunscreen with an SPF factor of at least 30. If your skin burns in 10 minutes without any sun protection, then a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 will provide protection for up to 300 minutes (30 x 10 minutes) before sunburn occurs. A higher SPF level may offer more protection but the increment in protection tapers sharply at higher levels.
- Look for a “broad-spectrum” sunscreen with both UVA and UVB protection.
- Those with sensitive skin should avoid sunscreen that contains alcohol, fragrances and chemicals like PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid and benzophenones), which can irritate the skin. 

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What is Osteopathy?

Osteopathy is a form of drug-free, non-invasive manual medicine that focuses on total body health by treating the neuromusculoskeletal system.

Osteopathic treatment is specific to the patient's individual complaint and involves soft tissue and manipulative techniques. You do not need a referral to see an Osteopath.



Hong Kong
Osteopathic
Association



Treatment

An Osteopathic treatment may include massage, stretching, joint mobilization and manipulation. Most Osteopathic treatment is gentle and should not cause undue discomfort.

For more information on Osteopathy and to find your internationally trained Osteopath visit our website:
www.osteopathy.org.hk



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Wine & Dine

WHAT'S NEW

New eateries, bars & more

SUMMER SALADS

Say goodbye to heavy winter comfort foods and get ready for summer with fresh and light salads! Head to **DK Cuppa Tea**'s newest outlet in Sheung Wan for a truly healthy menu specially created by a certified nutritionist, including five miracle fruit-infused detox waters (\$48 per bottle) and the "Unlimited Green Buffet", which features freshly cut hydroponic salads (\$148 per person for the salad bar). G/F, No. 19 New Market Street, Sheung Wan. ▼



MEATY FEAST

Dining Concepts and celebrity chef Richard Sandoval's latest experience has arrived, at **Braza Churrascaria Brazilian Steakhouse**. *Rodízio* is a method of serving different cuts of meat that originated from the south of Brazil in the early 1800s. The next best thing to flying down to Rio for a feast, this all-you-can-eat dining experience includes a variety of different cuts of meat, chicken and seafood served in succession in a continuous tableside service. Complement the meats with a range of starters and the restaurant's salad bar, and choose a wine pairing or a freshly-made signature Caipirinha as an accompaniment. 3/F, Grand Progress Building, 15-16 Lan Kwai Fong. **2890 9268 | diningconcepts.com/braza** ►



A TASTE OF VENICE

Hong Kong's first *bacaro* (Venetian wine bar) concept venue, **SEPA: Bacaro Veneziano**, has been embraced by HK foodies, and its new seasonal menu is a real treat. Created by Italy's youngest two-Michelin-starred chef, Enrico Bartolini, the new dishes follow the concept of *cicheti* (bite-sized traditional Venetian snacks). The existing menu has also had a makeover with a few new additions to make sure everything that gets put on the plate is fresh and seasonal. G/F, 61 Caine Road, Mid-Levels. **2521 9800 | sepa.com.hk** ▲

BELGIAN IS BACK!

After an absence of a couple of years, **Frites** Belgian beer and dining hall has finally reopened in Central, in a brand new location. Now on Wellington Street, a few minutes walk from the escalator, the new venue is a little over 7,000 square feet and includes its own Abbey Room, perfect for private events and dinners. 1/F, 198 Wellington Street, Central. **2217 6671 conceptcreations.hk**

Which Wine?

7 Summer Scenarios

EDDIE MCDUGALL is the award-winning winemaker, wine judge, columnist and TV personality behind **The Flying Winemaker** store located on Wyndham



Street. We called upon Eddie's decade of winemaking experience and in-depth knowledge of drinking trends to find out what we should be pouring as the weather heats up in Hong Kong.

#1 For taking to a barbecue

Roberto Voerzio's Priavino Dolcetto d'Alba 2012

Great with anything smoked, charred, fatty, juicy or bloody. (Writing that has just made me ridiculously hungry – and thirsty!)

#2 For sundowners on the roof

2008 Rose of Sharon Sparkling

Stop buying champagne and instead do sundowners with Sharon, from the Hemel En Aarde Valley in South Africa. Pink drops are the best!



#3 For a beach picnic

L'Armangia Moscato d'Asti 2012

A sweet and poppy wine that could fool anyone into thinking it's adult creaming soda. Enjoy with cucumber sandwiches or hummus and crackers. Works a treat!



#4 For drinking with a summer salad

Mahi Sauvignon Blanc 2013

This wine from Marlborough, New Zealand, is a great one to enjoy with the likes of beetroot, cucumber and feta.

#5 For afternoons by the pool

Sigalas Assyitko from Santorini Greece

Can't get to the Greek Islands this summer? Then laze by the pool wrapped in your towel (or toga!) and let the slight saltiness this white wine presents transport you. Got some fresh calamari? These two were made for each other.

#6 For drinking with friends on a balmy evening

Initial honest answer: beer! But if you're inclined to drink wine then go for a light red like a Pinot Noir such as Innocent Bystander from the Yarra Valley, Australia. People often associate balmy nights with only whites, but a light red, at times even sat on ice (though not super-chilled), wins out in my opinion.

#7 For Friday nights after work

Grover Viognier Reserve Blanc

You want something you can drink fast that has a tone of flavour so you can blow away the week gone by. I usually kick off with a Viognier – it's well known that I'm a sucker for this varietal, and since I'm also prone to be a bit of a wine rebel, I'd say that the Grover from India fits nicely here. **EW**

These wines are available online at the Flying Winemaker website (visit flyingwinemaker.asia and click on "Shop Online") or in-store at 6/F, Yu Yuet Lai Building, 43-55 Wyndham Street, Central.

The Taste Test

Djiboutii

2 Landale Street, Wan Chai
9449 0777 | djiboutii.com

Hidden away in a side alley off Wan Chai's Landale Street, **Djiboutii** is a little hard to find, but that hasn't stopped it from becoming one of the area's most popular nightspots.

Billed as a "Ghetto-Fabulous Urban Sanctuary," this relatively new venue was packed and pumping by 7.30pm on the Wednesday night we visited, which is always a good sign. We started with drinks, ordered from the signature cocktail menu. Unfortunately, our first choice, the **Mi Casa Es Tu Casa** was not available as they had run out of their five homemade juices – it's obviously a popular drink. The **Djiboulini** was lovely



and refreshing, while the **DJBluTea**, with lavender-infused vodka, cranberry tea and berry liqueurs, was a little too sweet for a pre-dinner drink.

The food is based on Mediterranean and middle-eastern cuisine, with a focus on barbecued meats and traditional small bites. Based on our waitress's

recommendations we ordered a **quinoa salad**, which was small but fresh and flavourful. The **quarter roast chicken** was beautifully marinated in lemon and garlic, and was very tender and tasty. We also shared a **Mix-Grill** – three different skewers served with tzatziki – and a **Djiboutii Platter**, with dips and Za'atar flatbreads. It was just enough food for two people, and all of it was very nice. We finished up with the only dessert on offer, the **homemade chocolate cookies**, which were wickedly delicious.

There weren't many patrons eating on the night we were there; most had come in for after-work drinks, giving the restaurant the definite vibe of being the starting point for a night out. The menu is limited, so it's perhaps better suited for snacking and drinking, rather than settling in for a substantial dinner.

This hip little hangout gets extra points for having a handbag hook under the bar, lovely decor (turquoise tiles, vintage leather stools, and Moroccan-style hanging lights), and a super-cool bartender who clearly loves his work.



MUST-TRY DISH:
Djiboutii Platter

Post 97

UG/F, 9 Lan Kwai Fong, Central
2810 9331 | post97.com

A bit of a Lan Kwai Fong institution, **Post 97** has been recently overhauled and transformed into a venue that promises “a spirited toast to the marriage of botany, booze, and food.” The concept is modern British/European food paired with exquisite cocktails in a Victorian-era setting.

The menu is surprisingly extensive and all plates are prepared to be shared. The pairing of food and expertly handcrafted cocktails is a unique concept and definitely worth a try. We tried five dishes between two, with accompanying cocktails. The **Octopus Lollipops** were tender, and the potato, marinated in the salt-water juices from the octopus, was lovely, with the right amount of kick coming from the paprika and aioli. Next came slow-cooked **Victorian lamb ribs**, with organic Greek yoghurt. The lamb

was fresh and juicy, and literally falling off the bone. The cocktail pairing was the **Punica Swizzle** – rosemary-infused vodka, pomegranate, lemon juice and syrup – which really complemented the flavours of the lamb. It was also beautifully presented, with a handmade ice bowl holding the pomegranate, and a stainless steel straw to keep the drink at the right temperature.

The vegetable dishes were equally impressive, and very creative. The **baby beets, goat’s curd, capers and Cantabria anchovies** was a lovely blend of salty, creamy and sweet, and was matched perfectly with the **Southside** – a blend of gin, mint, lime juice and syrup like summer in a glass. Roasted **sweet potato and jalapeno with grated quesco fresco cheese and yuzu dressing** was an interesting combination of flavours – Asia meets Mexico – and it all just worked together somehow; The **Detox Punch** was again the right cocktail for this dish. With gin, yellow bell-pepper juice, pineapple, lemon juice and agave syrup, this drink was fresh and light and tasted almost healthy.

We finished up with **rocky road** for dessert. It’s hard to go wrong when combining chocolate sauce, ice cream, biscuit and marshmallow. The **Botanist Brew**, by far my favourite cocktail of the evening, was a lovely end to the meal.

A lot of thought and effort has gone into creating dishes and drinks that work perfectly to bring out the best in each other. There’s a definite focus on elevating “pub food” to a new level, with healthier and more refined options than you would usually find on a bar menu. All of the ingredients are fresh and high quality, which really comes through. The setting is classy but cosy, and makes a refreshing change from some of the seedier venues nearby, and it’s the ideal venue for your next date night, girl’s night or any night where really good cocktails and food are your priority.

Brooke Chenoweth

MUST-TRY DISH:

Victorian lamb ribs, accompanied by a Punica Swizzle



Slow-cooked Victorian farm lamb ribs

Burger Circus

22 Hollywood Road

Soho, Central

2878 7787 | burgercircus.com.hk

Old-school American Diner charm has arrived in Soho's Hollywood Road – and not a moment too soon. Set in a 19th-century-style railway dining car, Burger Circus offers magical burgers, fries and shakes with all the bells and whistles.

Part of the Black Sheep Restaurants group, Burger Circus majestically juggles fun, flavour, novelty and nostalgia. The juke box churns out a mix of 1950s rock 'n' roll and 1980s fun pop while the busy servers whirl around every table with trays of warm juicy 5oz burgers and even warmer smiles.

The circus theme is not very evident in the dining car but comes alive on the menu. **The Shark Rider** (\$88) tuna melt and **The Flame Swallow** (\$88) spicy chicken burger sound fabulous but we felt we just had to dive in to more meaty classics.

The American Acrobat (\$75) elevated the humble cheeseburger to spectacular heights, **The Magician's Maytag Blue** (\$88) with crispy bacon and Maytag blue cheese was another supreme balancing act while **The Double Act** (\$98) itself was a juicy two-pattie delight under the big bun top! For a little lighter fun, **The Cannonbowl** is your favourite burger without the bun and as a salad with extra lettuce. Before ordering we were warned to keep our burgers half wrapped as the juices and special circus sauce squirt out with every bite – all part of the magic of Burger Circus. The fries were good but the **onion rings** were quite simply the best we have ever had – chunky, sweet onion in the crispiest batter; such a crowd pleaser.

Novel **house-made sodas** also got our attention; the Strawberry Basil was light and fragrant as was the Ginger. Mandarin Creamsicle and Cherry Limeade also sounded inviting – maybe next time, with a shot of vodka (\$30) for Dad, to spruce up the juice! Other drinks on offer include some show-stopping

Shakes: Coffee Toffee Crunch was a bit like a high-wire act without the net – if this combo of coffee ice cream and toffee brittle was the last thing you ever tasted you'd die happy! The jars of candy on the counter were more than just for show, as Sophia chose a milkshake with M&Ms and later another one with Oreos; Mars, Kit Kat, Maltesers and Reese's Peanut Butter Cup were also on offer. For the grown-ups, Spiked Shakes incorporating your favourite cocktail are a wonderful late-night idea.

Burger Circus is a heavenly piece of nostalgic Americana and how fitting that it's located in Hollywood Road. High on flavour and fun, it's a magical treat for young and old.

Karl Woodbury and daughter Sophia (8)

MUST-TRY DISH:

The Double Act with a side of onion rings 🍟





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ALFRESCO EATS

9 Notable Outdoor Dining Spots

Unlike most cities in Europe, Hong Kong's not really known for its alfresco dining scene, but there are still some great spots in town for open-air eating; we've highlighted some of the best of them here.

By Brooke Chenoweth

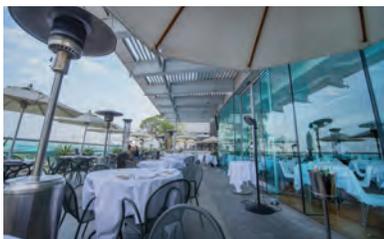


#1 Aberdeen Street Social at PMQ is a classy two-storey venue overlooking Hollywood Road. There's a large garden area and it's easy to forget that you're in the middle of Central! Bring the kids for brunch – but remember to book!

PMQ, G/F1, 35 Aberdeen Street, Central
2866 0300 | aberdeestreetssocial.hk

#2 DiVino Patio serves up rustic Italian fare, perfect for those days when you really do want an authentic European experience. If you squint your eyes and inhale the garlic bread you could almost be in Milan...

Shop 11, 1/F, BRIM 28, Causeway Bay Centre,
28 Harbour Road, Wan Chai
2877 3552 | divinogroup.com



#3 Isola at IFC is a bit of an institution. It's the go-to for special occasions or lunch with friends while out shopping. The buffet is legendary and so is the view.

Shop 3071-75, Level 3, IFC Mall, Central
2383 8765 | gaiagroup.com

#4 Spices at The Repulse Bay serves authentic Asian cuisine in a pretty garden setting – think palm trees and tropical flowers. It's a great place for a bite of lunch before hitting the beach.

109 Repulse Bay Road, Repulse Bay
2292 2821 | therepulsebay.com



#5 Duddells is a Michelin-starred fine-dining venue that's synonymous with class and sophistication. It also has a divine outdoor terrace where you'll want to spend hours sipping old-school cocktails.

Level 3, Shanghai Tang Mansion, 1 Duddell
Street, Central
2525 9191 | duddells.co



#6 Ai Molo brings a little piece of New York to Kowloon, and any time of day has a pretty spectacular view of Hong Kong island. The name means "at the dock" in Italian, entirely appropriate for this restaurant by the sea.

Shop G63, GF Ocean Terminal, Harbour City, TST
2730 7900 | diningconcepts.com



#7 Épure is another exquisite European experience, with light, seasonal French dishes on the menu. The outdoor area is a modern French garden overlooking the harbour, and is pretty special by day or night.

Shop 403, Level 4, Ocean Centre, Harbour
City, TST
3185 8338 | epure.hk

OUT OF TOWN

#8 One-ThirtyOne overlooks Three Fathoms Cove in one of the most beautiful parts of Sai Kung. The restaurant offers French fare using seasonal, local produce, and has a garden and a private dock; you can arrive by taxi, boat or even helicopter.

131 Tseng Tau Village, New Territories
2791 2684 | one-thirtyone.com

#9 Lantana is a bit of a local secret on Lantau island's Cheung Sha Beach. It's easy, all-day dining with pizza, pasta and salad. Throw in a glass of rosé and it's the ultimate summer date-night.

40 Cheung Sha Lower Village, Cheung Sha,
Lantau | 5465 5511

Did we miss any? Email us at info@expatliving.hk and we'll add your favourite to our list online! 📧

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Travel

WHAT'S NEW

Hot destinations & great holiday ideas

Africa Awaits

Travel operator Scott Dunn has specialists who can help tailor-make a honeymoon of a lifetime, taking into account your budget, timing and the kind of things you'd like to experience. One unforgettable itinerary is the **Southern African Honeymoon**, which combines the inspiring Victoria Falls, the big game of Botswana's Savute – including getting up close with the wildlife from a luxury mobile camp – and the deserted beaches and warm Indian Ocean of Southern Mozambique, where incredible fishing and world-class diving are just a couple of activities you can add to your agenda. The itinerary even includes a night at one of Johannesburg's top hotels, The Saxon, and dinner at one of the best restaurants in the country. scottdunn.com ▼



ROUGHING IT

Housed in a 17th-century Roman bourgeois building in the heart of the Italian capital, newly opened hotel **G-Rough** looks at the city with a nostalgic eye while keeping contemporary design firmly in mind. Design Hotels' only member in Rome, G-Rough captures 400 years of architectural history in ten suites that feature a signature rustic-meets-refinement effect. The hotel is located in historical Piazza di Pasquino, on the edge of the famous Piazza Navona, with a string of cool bars, restaurants and cafés on its doorstep. Rates from EUR 405 (HK\$3,500). designhotels.com ▲



GREAT TRAIN JOURNEYS

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the **Rocky Mountaineer**, the largest privately owned luxury tourist train in the world. From your glass-domed GoldLeaf coach, you'll have the best seat for viewing the wild beauty of Canada's West and the majestic Canadian Rockies. Choose from over 45 vacation packages, including five unique rail routes, and iconic destinations in the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada. It's no huge surprise that, in 2013, *Travel+Leisure* magazine recognised the Rocky Mountaineer as one of the world's "Dream Trips". For more details, contact your local travel agent. rockymountaineer.com ▲

CRUISE EUROPE

Concorde Travel has announced a new itinerary for the Fred Olsen cruise ship, *Braemar*. The 14-night **Rivers of Spain and France Voyage** departs Southampton on 16 July 2016, before sailing up the Guadalquivir River to berth in the heart of Seville. The cruise then continues to Lisbon, Portugal, and Avilés, Spain, before the boat berths in Bordeaux. The final port of call is the historic city of Rouen on the River Seine, where guests can explore local monuments and museums or even take a side tour to Paris. The cruise starts at £1,599 per person twin-share basis, for an inside cabin. Contact Concorde Travel at and ask for Robert or Graham for more information; Graham has cruised frequently with Fred Olsen Cruises. 7/F, Galuxe Building, 8-10 On Lan Street, Central. **2526 3391 | concorde-travel.com**



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CHINA TOP TEN

China provides some of the most diverse holiday options of any Asian country. Here, Hong Kong-based luxury tour operator **Lightfoot Travel** picks its top ten spots around the Middle Kingdom, most of which can be done as long weekends. What are you waiting for?



1 SHANGRI-LA, YUNNAN

Considering its towering snow-capped peaks, vast plains and striking Tibetan architecture, you can see why the fictional utopia depicted in James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* is reportedly based on these lands. The people, culture, cuisine and sheer expanse of open space will take your breath away; literally – the area lies at an average altitude of over 3,000 metres above sea level.



2 CHENGDU, SICHUAN

One of the prettier cities in China, Chengdu is a haven for food lovers with its fiery hot pot and tasty street snack culture. There are several panda sanctuaries just a short drive away, and trust us, there really is nothing cuter than baby pandas clambering, rolling and play-fighting with each other. The city serves as a gateway to the northern lake area of Jiuzhaigou, as well as hikes to picturesque Mount Emei, the highest of China's four Sacred Buddhist Mountains.



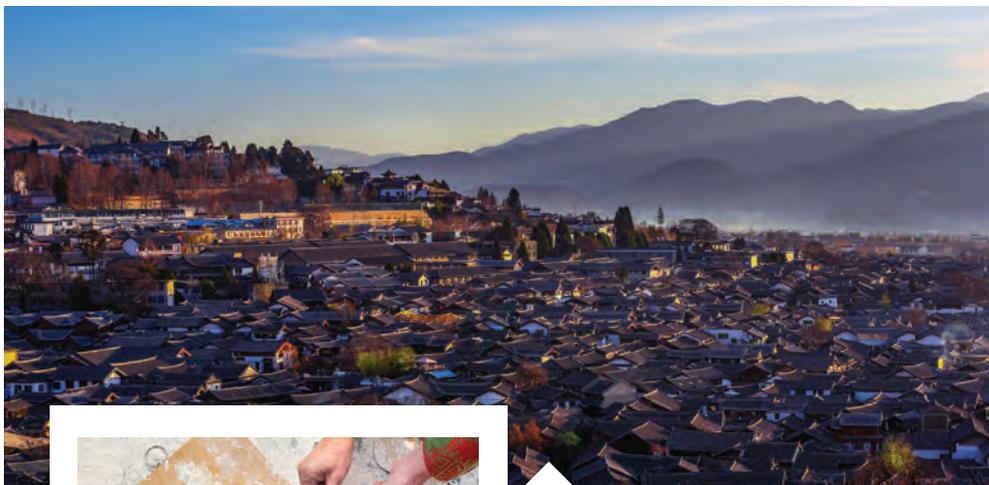
3 YANGSHUO, GUANGXI

The landscapes depicted in just about every Chinese scroll, Yangshuo's karst mountains and lazily winding rivers are the ideal spot for an extended weekend trip from Hong Kong. Stay at charming little boutique hotels, go rock-climbing, bike through rice paddies, raft down the Li River and make sure to try the Guilin rice noodles that the region is famous for.



4 ZHANGJIAJIE, HUNAN

Zhangjiajie is most notable for being one of the places that inspired the floating Hallelujah Mountains in James Cameron's blockbuster movie *Avatar*. The National Forest Park is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



7 LIJIANG, YUNNAN

The fabled old town of Lijiang is full of cobbled streets, shingled roofs and little shops all set against the backdrop of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. Beat the throngs of tourists by exploring the town at dawn, and then escape to quieter villages, famous for Naxi black pottery, where you can observe old artisans at work. Also highly recommended is a trip to the nearby Tiger Leaping Gorge, spending a night at a simple guesthouse and waking up to spectacular views at sunrise.

5 BEIJING

Beijing is a wonderful place to spend a few days, exploring all the city's lesser-known spots in addition to its famous historic sites. Wander through the 798 Art District; spend a night in a campervan alongside crumbling sections of the Great Wall; explore the hutongs, or alleyways, via an old German sidecar; or stay at the luxurious Aman at Summer Palace, with private door access to the park that enables you to enter before and after opening hours, thereby escaping the crowds!



9 XI'AN, SHAANXI

Constructed between 246 and 210 BCE, the site housing thousands of terracotta warriors was only discovered in 1974 by local farmers. A place that pictures definitely do not do justice to, it's worth a weekend trip from nearby Hong Kong. Other activities in the area include cycling along the historic city walls, or hiking up nearby Mount Huashan, one of China's Five Great Mountains.

6 LHASA, TIBET

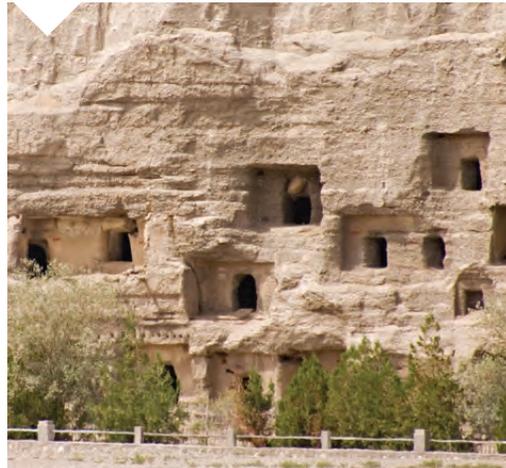
Way up high on the Himalayan plateau, Tibet is a world unto itself. Visit landmarks such as the Potala Palace and Jokhang Temple, but make sure to get out of the city and experience the sheer rugged beauty of this exceptional province. Namtso Lake is Tiffany-blue in colour, ringed by snowy peaks and grazing yak herds; Everest base camp is a six-to-eight-day trek away (the less adventurous can opt to drive); and we saw the most stars here out of any other place in China.

8 SHANGHAI

A bustling metropolis juxtaposing the old with the new, Shanghai has something for just about everyone. Spend a day pottering through the tree-lined streets of the former French Concession, lined with stunning colonial mansions and a host of bars and restaurants – Shanghai is synonymous with food, in our books. Take a day trip to the nearby water villages, or venture further out to the towns of Hangzhou and Suzhou, referred to as "Heaven on Earth" in an old Chinese saying – a bit of an exaggeration, but admittedly very pretty!

10 DUNHUANG, GANSU

Definitely off the beaten China path, Dunhuang was formerly a major hub along the ancient Silk Road, and is now best known for the rock-cut caves that are dotted throughout the surrounding desert. The Mogao Caves, or Grottoes, are perhaps the most famous, and contain incredible examples of Buddhist art. Gansu Province is also home to the westernmost end of the Great Wall at Jiayu Pass, which can be incorporated into the same trip. A great itinerary for history buffs.



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Traversing TAIWAN

BROOKE CHENOWETH makes the most of her first – and, by the sounds of things, definitely not her last – taste of Taiwan.

Taiwan is one of our closest neighbours, and with dozens of flights there from Hong Kong every day, each one taking less than 90 minutes, I'm a bit embarrassed to admit that I'd never visited the place. I rectified that recently with a tour run by **Country Holidays**, and this island nation won me over pretty quickly.

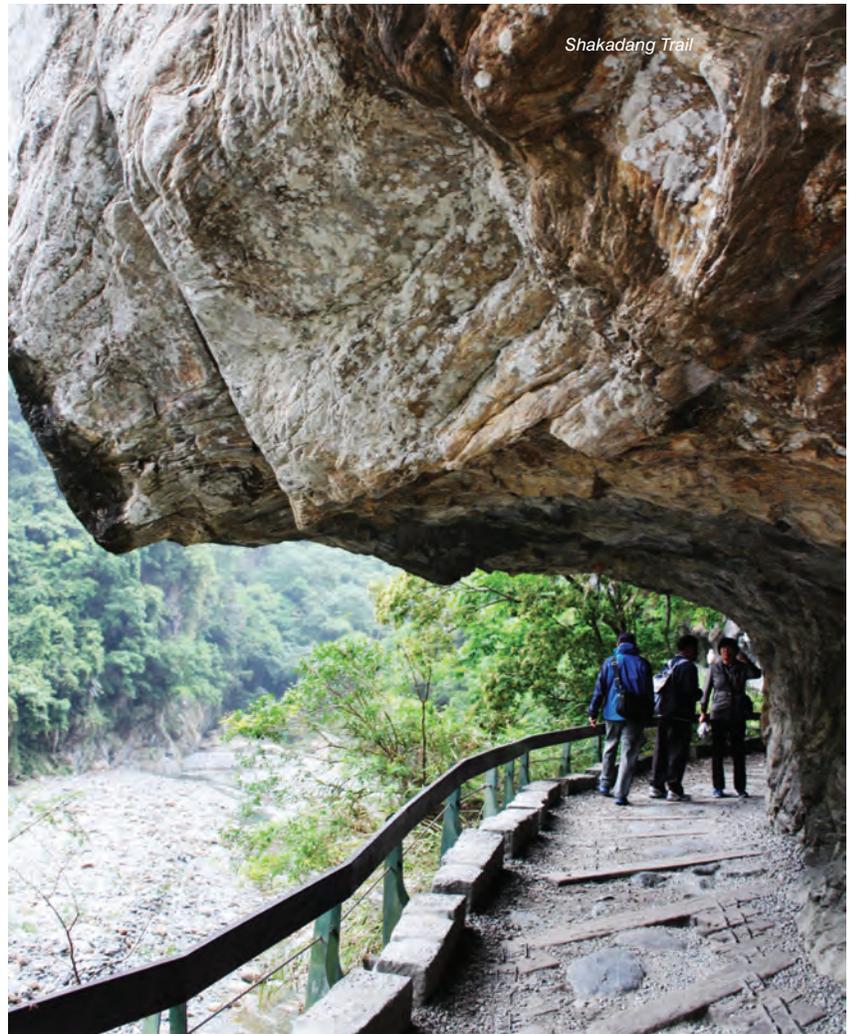
My tour started in Taipei, and from there we drove three and half hours south to Hualien – the gateway to Taroko National Park. The scenery along this stretch of coast is stunning, the road rising higher and higher above the Pacific Ocean. There are countless spots to stop for photos along the way, including Qingshui Cliffs, but on the day of my trip south we saw nothing but fog and kept driving till we reached Taroko Gorge.

A Gorgeous Gorge

Taroko Gorge runs for 19km through Taroko National Park. It's an incredibly popular spot with tourists, mainly for its spectacular natural scenery, but also for the easy hiking trails dotted along the gorge. Some of the more challenging hikes require a permit and a certain level of fitness. For those not in possession of either, it is possible to have a driver or taxi take you to the start of each trail, and either meet you somewhere along the way, or at the end. A number of spots are simply worth stopping for a look at the stunning rock formations and waterfalls. There's an interesting history to the area and it would be worth travelling with a guide to learn more about how some of the hiking trails came to be.

We trekked the Shakadang Trail, a 4.5km trail carved out of the cliffs by hand by local Aborigines in the time of Japanese occupation. It's a flat trail and easy enough for all levels of hiker. The water running through the Shakadang River below is crystal clear and a stunning blue-green colour, and this trail allows you to get up close and personal with the amazing rock formations and sub-tropical plants that line the gorge.

Swallows Grotto is another easy trail, and equally breathtaking – it includes caves, so hard hats are recommended (they can be borrowed at the entrance). The trail follows a narrow passage of marble and limestone, with vertical walls either side. Over millions of years as the cliffs formed, tiny holes were created in these walls and they're now home to thousands of swallows, which swoop and call out as they fly through the gorge. It's a beautiful spot but sadly its proximity to the highway – not to mention the sheer number of tourists – has driven many of the birds away.



After a day of hiking and driving (followed by more hiking and driving), Silks Place Taroko is a very welcome sight. This five-star hotel offers just about everything a weary traveller could ask for. Fully refurbished in 2010, Silks is a bit of an oasis – it seems to appear out of nowhere, right beside the gorge, and the rooms on that side have full-length windows where you can sit and watch the water stream past, or the birds and butterflies catching the breeze. When the mist descends in the evening, the effect is atmospheric and tranquil.

The hotel's Wellspring Spa, also with windows overlooking the gorge, offers a selection of massages, perfect after a day's hiking. Unfortunately, it was fully booked on the night of my stay, so I settled for a bath in spring water with natural salts, provided in every room. I followed this with an incredibly relaxing sleep in the biggest bed I've ever seen.

Another highlight of the hotel are its pools, including a heated indoor pool, with a separate kiddies' area, and an outdoor rooftop pool, with four individual Jacuzzis. The Jacuzzis are a great place to kick-start the day, watching the swallows, and warming up before heading further up the mountain range.



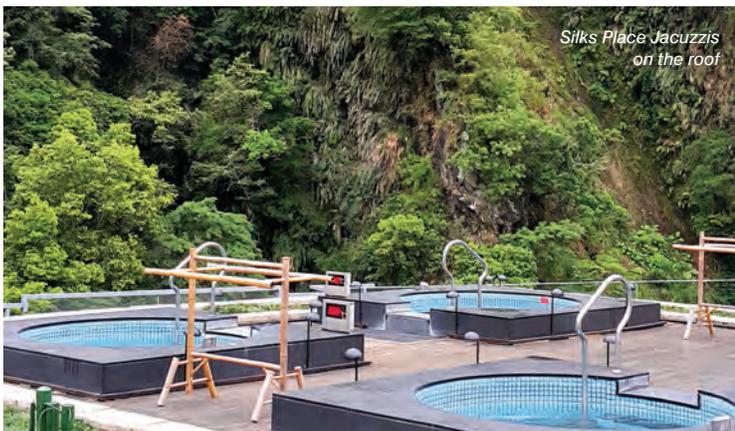
Swallows Grotto



Silks Place outdoor pool



Silks Place Suite

Silks Place Jacuzzis
on the roof

Time to Climb

From Silks Place we continued inland and across the mountain range, which involved a lot of uphill driving on twisty, narrow roads. We did have to stop for deep breaths of fresh mountain air fairly frequently, but the scenery slowly changing from sub-tropical to alpine, and the ancient, giant cedar trees were good excuses.

We stopped to do some hiking at the base of Mt Shihmen, a 3237m peak with stunning views across the Huehuanshan National Forest and mountain range. Having failed to check the forecast ahead of time I was not expecting it to be five degrees, and was dressed inappropriately for both hiking and the weather. I cannot stress enough how important it is to be prepared when doing this kind of trip! Still, I made it to the top and it was well worth the effort. Having gone from 800m above sea level to that altitude was a struggle though, and if you're considering doing any kind of serious hiking in the Taiwanese hills, I'd recommend staying further uphill and giving yourself a day or two to acclimatise. And did I mention you should pack warm clothes?

Escaping the fog and the chill that was rapidly seeping into my bones, we headed happily downhill. We stopped for lunch at Cingjing farm, in Ren'ai township. This area is like something out of a movie – with sweeping, *Sound of Music*-style vistas of the mountains. A few enterprising locals have capitalised on this ambience and built traditional chateaux, complete with European gardens, just in case you want to pretend you're in the Swiss Alps and not the middle of Taiwan. Cingjing Farm is part tourist spot, part educational centre, with sheep, horses and peacocks on display. It's a huge hit with kids and a great way to break up the journey. Lunch can be had cheaply at the markets next door.



Silks Place

Lakeside stay

We arrived at Sun Moon Lake by mid-afternoon, and on checking into The Lalu, the day's driving and hiking suddenly felt very far away. Located on the lake's Lalu Peninsula, the hotel's location was once reserved for the holiday house of Chiang Kai Shek – and clearly he knew how to pick a prime spot.

The Lalu is a work of art as much as a hotel. Each room has a spectacular view, and the infinity pool on the ground floor looks as if it blends seamlessly into the lake below; the whole complex has a Zen-like vibe.

Determined not to miss out on a massage, I booked ahead at The Lalu Spa and it was well worth it: 75 minutes of sheer bliss in serene surroundings, as night fell over the lake. For the price (HK\$1,000), I also got to use the spa facilities, including steam room, Jacuzzi, sauna and baths.

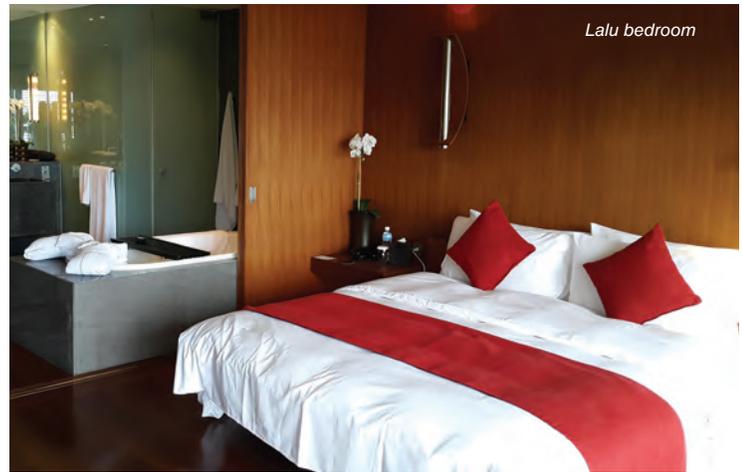
The food at the Oriental Brasserie was excellent – so many options and cuisines. There's also a traditional teahouse on-site, by the koi pond overlooking the lake, and The Lobby Bar is great for sundowners or snacks. The hotel's guest rooms are incredibly spacious and well fitted out, as you would expect from a five-star hotel.

One activity worth doing here is cycling – you can hire a bike from one of the many rental places in the town. It's possible to cycle around the entire lake, a distance of about 30kms, or you can stick to the 6km of bike paths and enjoy great views of the water and the local wildlife. Another way around the lake is by boat; hundreds of small boats ferry tourists around every day.

There are plenty of hiking trails and family-friendly activities in the area too. Kids can try the cable car from Ita Thao pier, the scenic railway from Jiji, the Tan-nan Firefly Ecological Park, and woodwork at Checheng. I settled for a short trek to the top of Ci-En Pagoda and was rewarded with permission to ring the giant bell at the top.



The Lalu Teahouse



Lalu bedroom



Sun Moon Lake bike track,
photo by Sam Liu



Lalu facade



Ci-En Pagoda



I always seem to end up on a bike on these trips! Photo by Sam Liu



The Lалу Teahouse

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The Independent (UK) 27 September 2014

“ Golf Hotels: the Big Six”

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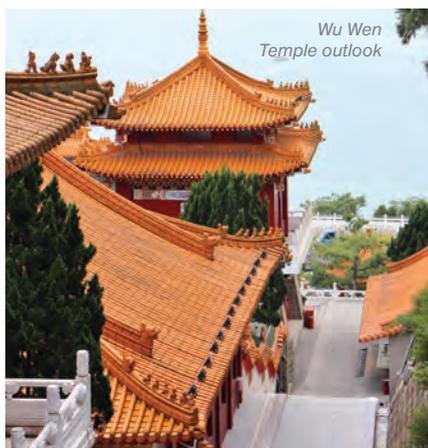
The Heart of Asia

Both The Lalu and Sun Moon Lake had a very calming effect on me, and it was with great reluctance that I left them behind for my flight back to Hong Kong. As a first-time visitor to this stunning country, there was something reassuringly familiar about the place. It's similar to Hong Kong in a lot of ways, but very different in others. I appreciated the expertise and the organisation that came with being on a guided tour – not speaking Mandarin would have made the trip far more stressful if I'd attempted it alone! The proximity to Hong Kong and the number of flights a day make it possible to explore a little pocket of Taiwan over the space of a long weekend, and that's definitely something worth doing as often as you can.

Wu Wen



Wu Wen Temple outlook



Cing Jing Farm, photo by Sam Liu

Photographers at sunset, Huehuanshan, photo by Sam Liu





5 THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

#1 All Shook Up

Taiwan sits on an active fault line so earthquakes are frequent. There were three while I was in Taipei, and while the city is built to withstand them, they can give you a bit of a fright. Read up on what to do in an earthquake and download the weather bureau's app (cwb.gov.tw/eng) before you go so you'll be prepared and save yourself an anxious night of Googling!

#2 Chinese for Dinner

Eating is a national pastime. Except in the major tourist areas, very few restaurants have English menus. If you're lucky there'll be a picture menu and you can point to what you want. Otherwise you may have to rely on the kindness of strangers to help you order. As a vegetarian, this was how I ate most meals. Like in many Asian countries, the best food is to be had on the streets; check out where the locals are eating and follow their lead.

#3 The Not-So-Restful Room

In many hotels you'll find luxurious Japanese-style toilets, but in public restrooms the facilities are much more basic. Be prepared for squat toilets, and BYO toilet paper, antiseptic wipes, and thigs of steel.

#4 Timing is Everything

April to May and September to October are the best times to visit Taiwan. The climate is much like Hong Kong, with rain in the summer months and cold weather in the winter, although the mountainous areas remain cool year-round. There are over 10 million visitors to the country each year – four million from mainland China. Many of the more popular tourist spots are inundated (the National Palace Museum sees 10,000 visitors a day!), but travelling with a guide who knows the best visiting times (usually lunchtime) and how to avoid queues can save you a lot of time and angst, especially if you're travelling with children.

#5 The People Make the Place

The Taiwanese are friendly and welcoming. Those who couldn't speak English attempted to make themselves understood, and did so with smiles on their faces. My tour guide Sam retired from a corporate job a few years ago and works as a guide simply because he really loves Taiwan. His passion and enthusiasm for the place is infectious, and I got the sense that this national pride is the norm. Taiwan is a very safe place to travel, with a low crime rate, world-class public transport, and locals who are waiting to welcome you with open arms and share their fascinating country with you. 🇹🇼

My tour was organised by **Country Holidays Hong Kong**. For more information on their 6-day Taiwan Scenic Splendour Tour (or one of the shorter or longer itineraries available), call 2525 9199 or visit countryholidays.com.hk.

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LUXURY

on the Slopes

With its world-beating conditions and facilities, Europe is a fantastic choice for a skiing holiday; add in high-end accommodation (think hot tubs, roaring log fires, bubbling flutes of champagne) and you've got yourself a truly memorable escape to the snow. Travel operator **Scott Dunn** has 27 luxurious ski chalets in a variety of different shapes and sizes, situated in Val d'Isère, Courchevel 1850 and Courchevel 1550 in France, and St Anton in Austria. Here we profile five of them, and take a look at what you can expect during your stay.



#2 CHALET HUSKY

Exclusively operated by the Scott Dunn team in Val d'Isère, Chalet Husky is a brand new flagship chalet that raises the bar to a new level for luxury catered accommodation on the slopes. At over 600 square metres in size, Chalet Husky sleeps 14 people, and has a fabulous wellness area, large pool and indoor climbing wall.



#1 CHALET ARTEMIS

Chalet Artemis is a striking quasi-hexagonal chalet in St Anton, spread over four floors and 500 square metres, and with six bedrooms (all wired for sound and vision) and six bathrooms. This is Scott Dunn's flagship chalet, and as such it boasts a private cinema, indoor pool, massage room, hot tub, sauna and rooftop balcony.



#3 CHALET AMOURETTE

A fantastic chalet located in the exclusive Le Petit Alaska residence in the world-class resort of Val d'Isère, Chalet Amourette offers breathtaking views, spacious accommodation (sleeping six plus three) and an outdoor hot tub – a superb option for a special ski break.



#4 CHALET CHINCHILLA

Chinchilla is a fabulous luxury catered chalet with a more-or-less ski-in/ski-out location in the heart of Courchevel 1850, just metres from the Cospillot piste. It's an ideal retreat for a family ski holiday in the Trois Vallées, with accommodation for up to eight people.



#5 CHALET LE R

A stunning contemporary chalet in Courchevel 1550, and new to the Scott Dunn collection, Chalet Le R is a beautiful alpine retreat with a swimming pool, hot tub and sauna. Sleeping eight plus four people, this is ideal family skiing holiday accommodation in the Three Valleys.



CHALET SERVICE

All Scott Dunn chalets in Val d'Isère, Courchevel and St Anton offer chalet service, whether you're travelling as a couple, family or larger group. Here are just some of the things you'll enjoy over the course of a one-week stay with chalet service:

- A chef and host (or a combined chef/host in smaller chalets)
- A spirits bar on six evenings
- Champagne and canapés on six evenings
- A four-course dinner with tailored menus on six evenings
- Children's suppers
- Six pairs of carefully selected wines with dinner
- Afternoon tea on seven days
- In-resort driver service to take you to and from the ski lifts

Meanwhile, Scott Dunn's flagship chalet service includes a comprehensive range of gourmet food and drinks, luxury services and benefits, and even the option of additional experiences like no other – private heli-transfers to a resort, for instance, or a giant slalom race. Almost nothing is out of the question.

WINTER CHILDCARE

Highly trained private nannies are available to look after junior guests and give parents some downtime, or families can take advantage of the exclusive Scott Dunn Explorers kids' club in Val d'Isère. Either way, the childcare activities are organised and fun, with a balance of indoor and outdoor action; young ones are given a nutritious lunch, too, so mums and dads can stay longer on the slopes.

BECOME A SKIING STAR

All Scott Dunn chalets come with a GoPro HD camera, so you can film your exploits on the pistes and watch the results on screen in the chalet at the end of the day. Attached to a chest harness, these devices are easy to use, and are a fun way to see where you've skied during the day, or how your children are improving their skiing.

For more information on Scott Dunn chalets, contact their ski specialists through the website, scottdunn.com. 

BEST OF NEW ZEALAND

While New Zealand this month gears up for its peak winter season, the experts at **Lightfoot Travel** are already looking ahead to the warmer weather later in the year. Here are some of their top picks for outdoor activities, natural sights, beautiful lodges and top-notch food and wine in the Land of the Long White Cloud.

What to Do: One-of-a-kind Experiences

#1 ACTIVE VOLCANO LANDING

New Zealand is one of the only places in the world where you can land on an active marine volcano. Fly by private helicopter over the Waioatapu Thermal Reserve – New Zealand’s most colourful volcanic area, continuing on to dormant Mount Tarawera, covered with mighty domes and craters formed during its 1886 eruption. Next, head over to White Island with an expert guide who takes you past steaming fumaroles and bubbling activity, to the edge of the Crater Lake where you can view the roaring volcanic vent known as “PJ”. As the island is protected, very few companies have concessions to land on it, thus leaving it very much untouched and that much more special.



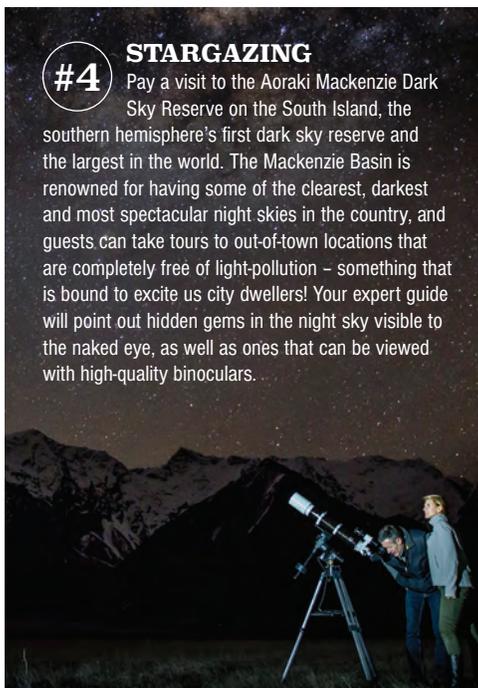
#3 SEAFOOD & WINE CRUISE

An extensive network of sea-drowned valleys off the northern tip of the South Island, the Marlborough Sounds is a strikingly beautiful region of sounds, islands and peninsulas. The best way to appreciate its size and distinctiveness is from the water, and if you’re on a cruise, why not choose one that serves up lovely wines and fresh local seafood? Marlborough is claimed by some critics to produce the world’s best Sauvignon Blanc, which pairs perfectly with the salmon, Tio Point oysters, Greenshell Mussels and Cloudy Bay clams also native to the area. This activity is particularly popular with seafood-loving Hong Kongers!



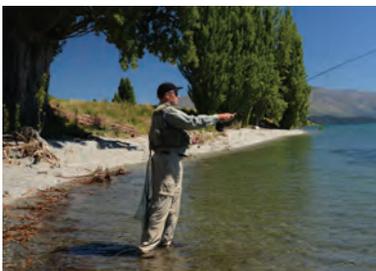
#4 STARGAZING

Pay a visit to the Aoraki Mackenzie Dark Sky Reserve on the South Island, the southern hemisphere’s first dark sky reserve and the largest in the world. The Mackenzie Basin is renowned for having some of the clearest, darkest and most spectacular night skies in the country, and guests can take tours to out-of-town locations that are completely free of light-pollution – something that is bound to excite us city dwellers! Your expert guide will point out hidden gems in the night sky visible to the naked eye, as well as ones that can be viewed with high-quality binoculars.



#5 GOLF

New Zealand is home to striking and naturally beautiful courses, and because the country’s population is fairly sparse, they tend to be largely uncrowded. Top of our list is the iconic Cape Kidnappers Golf Course, perched atop rugged cliffs with unique undulating fairways. Sister course Kauri Cliffs is also located on a cliff’s edge, with elongated routing to make the best use of the stunning sea views. Located outside Queenstown, Millbrook is another fantastic option that incorporates three 9-hole courses into a luxury lifestyle resort. The best time for golfing in New Zealand is between September and April during the warmer months.



#2 FLY FISHING

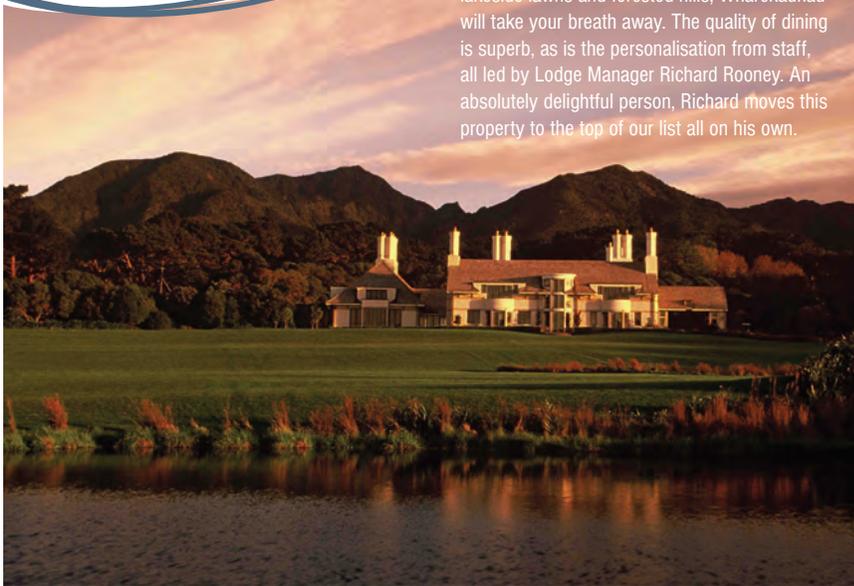
New Zealand’s North Island, and specifically Lake Taupo, has some of the best fly fishing in the world. With streams and rivers crisscrossing the area, there is plenty to choose from to suit all levels, and lessons are available for those looking to learn a few tips and tricks to bring in the biggest fish! Helicoptering into more remote areas is also an option for the most experienced anglers. The best time for wilderness fly fishing is December through March.

Where to Stay: Unique Lodges & Properties

#6

WHAREKAUHAU COUNTRY ESTATE, WAIRARAPA

A stunning Edwardian-style lodge set amidst lakeside lawns and forested hills, Wharekauhau will take your breath away. The quality of dining is superb, as is the personalisation from staff, all led by Lodge Manager Richard Rooney. An absolutely delightful person, Richard moves this property to the top of our list all on his own.



#7

OVERNIGHT CRUISE, DOUBTFUL SOUND

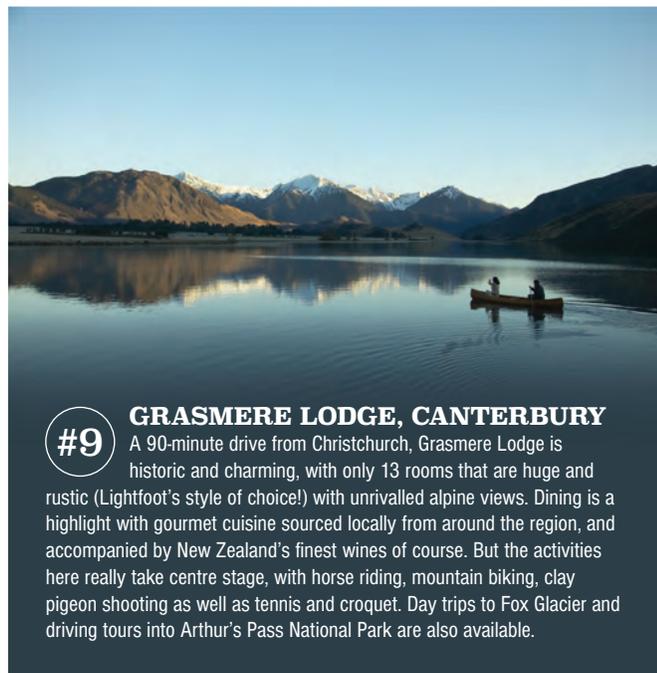
Quieter and much more intimate than nearby Milford Sound, which is full of operators, Doubtful Sound is the perfect spot to spend an evening aboard a boutique cruise ship. The sound's ancient glacier-carved fjords, deep valleys, waterfalls and craggy peaks are ideal for avid photographers, and those keen on wildlife spotting can observe dolphins, penguins, seals and sea birds.



#8

MINARET STATION, WANAKA

New Zealand's first luxury tented lodge, Minaret Station is situated in a glacial valley in the heart of the Southern Alps. Accessible only by helicopter, the property will appeal to adventure seekers really looking for that wild outdoors experience in classic *Lord of the Rings* territory. The lodge features wall-to-wall sheepskin carpets, gigantic beds, and private decks with hot tubs. Hiking, wildlife-treks, private helicopter tours, jet boating and fly fishing are all activities accessible from the lodge, as well as cooking and art lessons.



#9

GRASMERE LODGE, CANTERBURY

A 90-minute drive from Christchurch, Grasmere Lodge is historic and charming, with only 13 rooms that are huge and rustic (Lightfoot's style of choice!) with unrivalled alpine views. Dining is a highlight with gourmet cuisine sourced locally from around the region, and accompanied by New Zealand's finest wines of course. But the activities here really take centre stage, with horse riding, mountain biking, clay pigeon shooting as well as tennis and croquet. Day trips to Fox Glacier and driving tours into Arthur's Pass National Park are also available.

#10

MATAKAURI LODGE, QUEENSTOWN

Because no trip to New Zealand is complete without a visit to Queenstown, naturally one of its properties had to make it on to our list. Matakauri is set against one of the most sublime backdrops in the world. Right on the breathtaking Lake Wakatipu, views from each of its suites look out to the Remarkable, Cecil and Walter Peak mountain ranges. We particularly love the amazing outdoor infinity pool!

Lightfoot Travel specialises in family holidays, honeymoons, corporate travel and private villas in countries spanning seven continents. For tailor-made itineraries, contact them at 2815 0068 or visit lightfoottravel.com.

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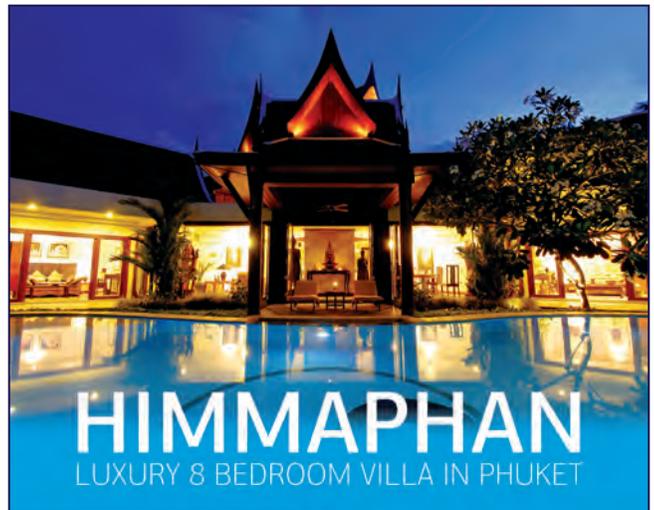
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Happy Snappers

By Lara Weston

I have two very photogenic children, aged three and five. They're blonde and brown-eyed, and have always been a subject of fascination, especially with mainland tourists. When our oldest was a baby we had an "incident" outside a shopping centre one afternoon. We were sitting eating ice creams, minding our own business when a man came up beside our table, turned his back to us, made rabbit ears with his fingers and smiled as his wife took a photo of him "with" my husband and son. We tried waving them away but they just smiled and kept snapping.

That's when I snapped. I leapt up from the table, shouting "No! No! NO!" and shooed them away like I was Kim Kardashian fending off paparazzi. My husband laughed at me but I was furious! When I thought about it later I realised I may have overreacted slightly, but it seemed so rude. It wasn't so much that they wanted a photo of an adorable chubby, golden-haired boy, it was the way in which we were treated like exhibits at the zoo – photographed without our permission – when we just wanted to enjoy our ice-creams in peace. Now I know how Kim feels!

Before our boys were born, people used to take photos of our dog. One year we took her to a festival and at one

stage we had such a crowd around us we couldn't move, as if she were a mini canine celebrity. It wasn't so much the paparazzi that bothered me, it was not knowing where those photos would end up (not to mention the fact that I never got to check the photos to make sure they got us at a good angle). I had visions of my dog ending up in a dog food commercial in Beijing. For a while there I was half expecting to see my sons adorning a billboard advertising mobile phone plans. I know now it's more likely that they'll end up in a random file on someone's computer, never to be seen again, but it's always bothered me slightly (and occasionally prompted slightly irrational outbursts).

I've mellowed a little since that first encounter. We've been mobbed at Disneyland, with as many photos taken of our two as Mickey and Minnie, especially the time we went with friends and their equally adorable, blonde haired, blue-eyed children, and we didn't object when our annual family photo shoot was interrupted by a group of tourists who stopped to take photos of us being photographed...

The one consolation for me is that, after five years of attempting to take photos of the boys myself, I know how difficult it is to get them to stand still for

long enough to capture the cuteness. These days, I stand back and count to three as would-be snappers pull out their cameras and I'm rewarded as the boys run in the opposite direction at the first sign of a flash. Now I'm certain that rather than ending up on billboards there are hundreds of blurry photos of the backs of my boy's heads in iPhoto Trash folders around the world. And I wonder what I ever worried about.

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