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Welcome to the 10th edition of the *Life & Style Magazine*: a dose of coastal luxury from Ballito and beyond that serves as a sun-kissed antidote to the autumn chill in the air.

As a milestone issue, Volume 10 represents a significant new direction for our mag, positioning it as a future-facing, luxury lifestyle publication that exemplifies the notion of "the Ballito way of life".

Under the theme of *PARASOL* - "an umbrella against the sun" - the latest issue is a celebration and exploration of wide open spaces, adventures under open skies... and the scent of sunscreen.

-Ed.

Mike Charles

@mike_charles_media

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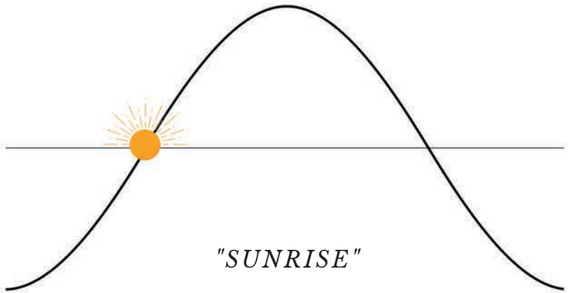
PART I

SPACES



Off-grid. Still connected. Real farm living in Ballito.

FAIRVIEW
ESTATES

A COASTAL FARM LIFESTYLE

In a world where urbanisation is rapidly taking over, it's rare to find a place where nature and luxury can coexist in perfect harmony. But that's exactly what you'll find at Fairview Estates: a 480-hectare development.

As a secure residential farming estate, Fairview offers wholesome nature-based living with large sites starting from 20,000 sqm. Originally a farm, Fairview Estates has been transformed into a secure, eco-conscious development that offers a return to traditional farm living. The values that underpin the estate are centred around the need to live with the freedom of space.

Located just outside the picturesque coastal town of Ballito, known for its beautiful beaches, friendly village atmosphere, and warm weather all year round, Fairview Estates is the perennial playground of the young and young at heart, (it's also home to Holla Trails, extensive nature trails of over 375 km for running, hiking, fishing, horse-riding and mountain biking). With the goal of being completely off-the-grid within sight, it is the only real farming estate on the North Coast with agri-1 zoning and offers the most relaxed pet policy.

King Shaka International Airport is a mere 15-minute drive from Fairview Estates and is the third largest airport in the country, being directly connected to more than eight international destinations as well as a short 50-minute flight to the economic hub of Gauteng. This means you can commute to Gauteng during the week and be back on the farm to slow things down for the weekend (you can even treat yourself to a round of golf at either Simbithi, Umhlali or Zimbali Golf Courses, before jetting back on Monday morning).

Investing in Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal presents an opportunity to tap into the economic potential of the region. With two industrial zones, including Dube Trade Port and Richard's Bay Industrial Development Zone, the area offers attractive prospects for investors looking to establish a business or expand their existing operations. The region's strategic location, access to major transportation networks, and mild, sub-tropical climate make it a prime destination for investment and the reason it has become a popular “semigration” destination.

By living at Fairview Estates, you're not just investing in a property; you're investing in a way of life and leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.
By living authentically with both our actions and words, the freedom of boundless, barefoot and fancy-free living is truly enjoyed with peace of mind.

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FAIRVIEW
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A SHEER LINEAR **FEAST**

By Stephanie du Preez

PHOTOGRAPHY **NICOLAS BALETA** | CONSTRUCTION **PDK PROJECTS**

TAKE A PEEK AT THE LATEST PROJECT BY OLALA INTERIORS, DELIVERING A UNIQUELY MODERN CONTEMPORARY INTERIOR WITH POWERFUL RESULTS.

A most gorgeous welcome! Surrounded by nature in the beautiful KwaZulu Natal Valley of a Thousand Hills, this expansive home received an injection of pure creativity and a very modern update by the OLALA INTERIORS team.

This next level revamp was commissioned to create a harmonious flow between functional and aesthetic design. Persuasive attention to each and every detail throughout the home ensured a flexible and uber functional makeover.

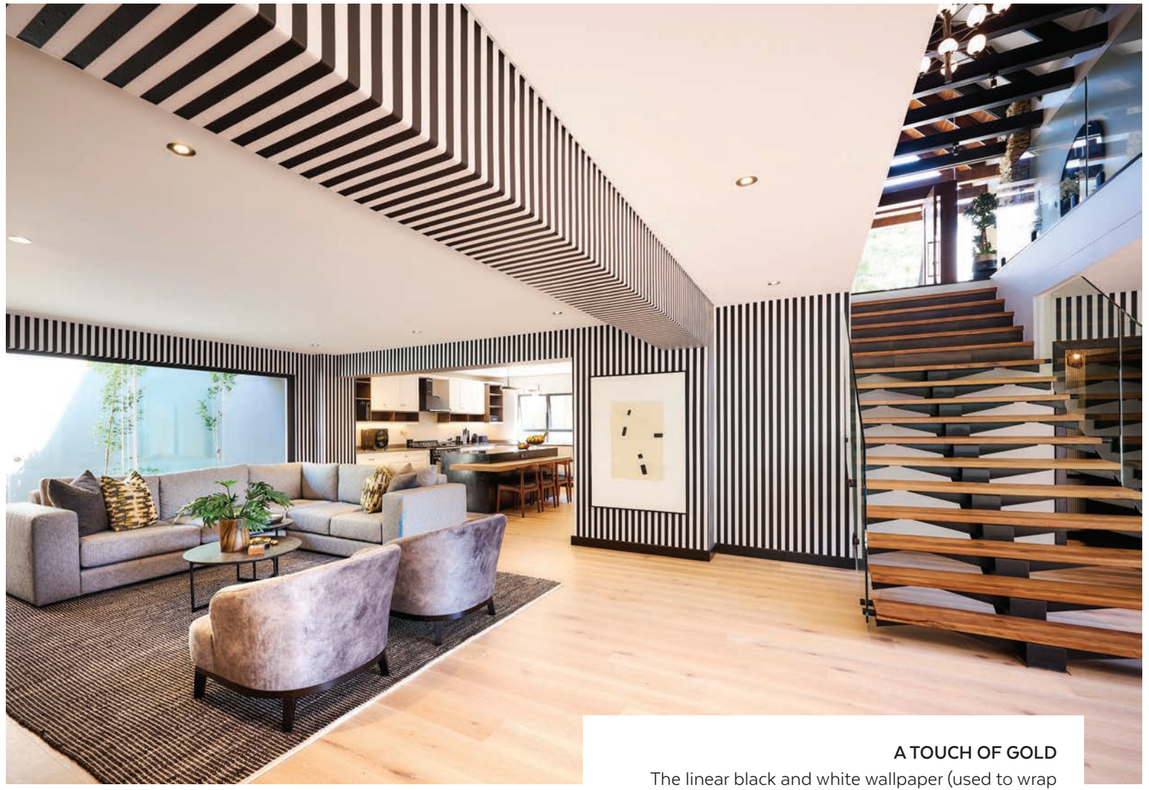
The clients' brief was simple and direct. They requested a strong combination of black, gold and cream white colours and wanted a striking and welcoming feel upon entering the home.

Natural, textural elements soften the strong monochromatic palette. Incorporating light natural wood flooring, soft, sheer window treatments, plenty of reflective surfaces, supple fabrics with lush rugs and velvety upholstery, all elements work together to lift the entire scheme and bring a sense of open space and lightness not usually associated with the use of so much black.

This project showcases the exceptional design, manufacturing and professionalism of the OLALA INTERIORS team. **"We aim to deliver thoughtful, personalised and functionally well designed interiors that result in joy-filled living"** - this has been fabulously achieved by respecting the clients' preferences and tastes.

THE ART OF BLACK

One of the highlights of the project was the living room with its plush sofas upholstered in a decadent velvet. The monochromatic palette of black and white with shades of grey offer a study in contrasts. Matt anthracites, glossy blacks, reflective and textured surfaces - materials were meticulously selected with a tactile and texture based criteria.

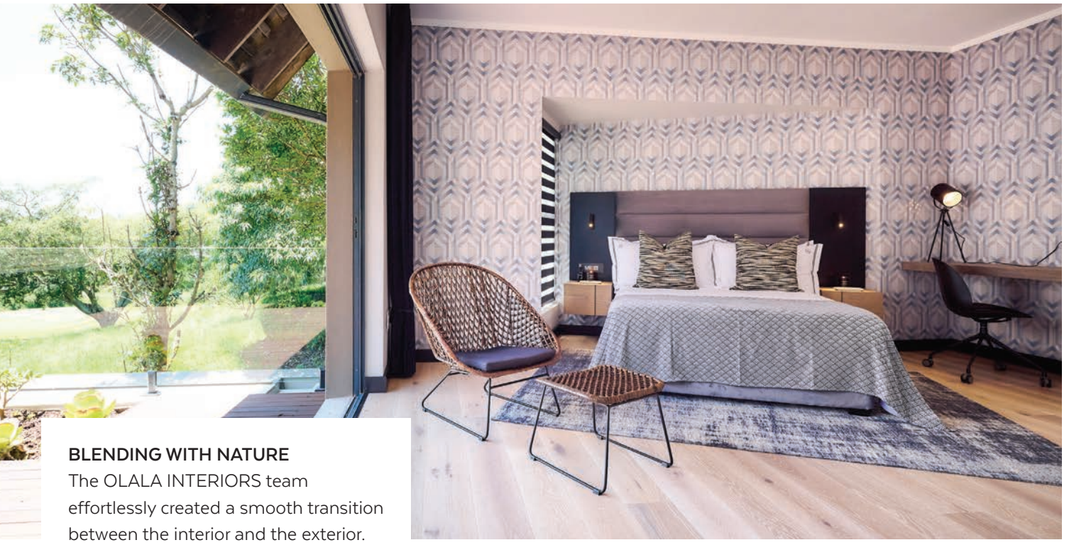


A TOUCH OF GOLD

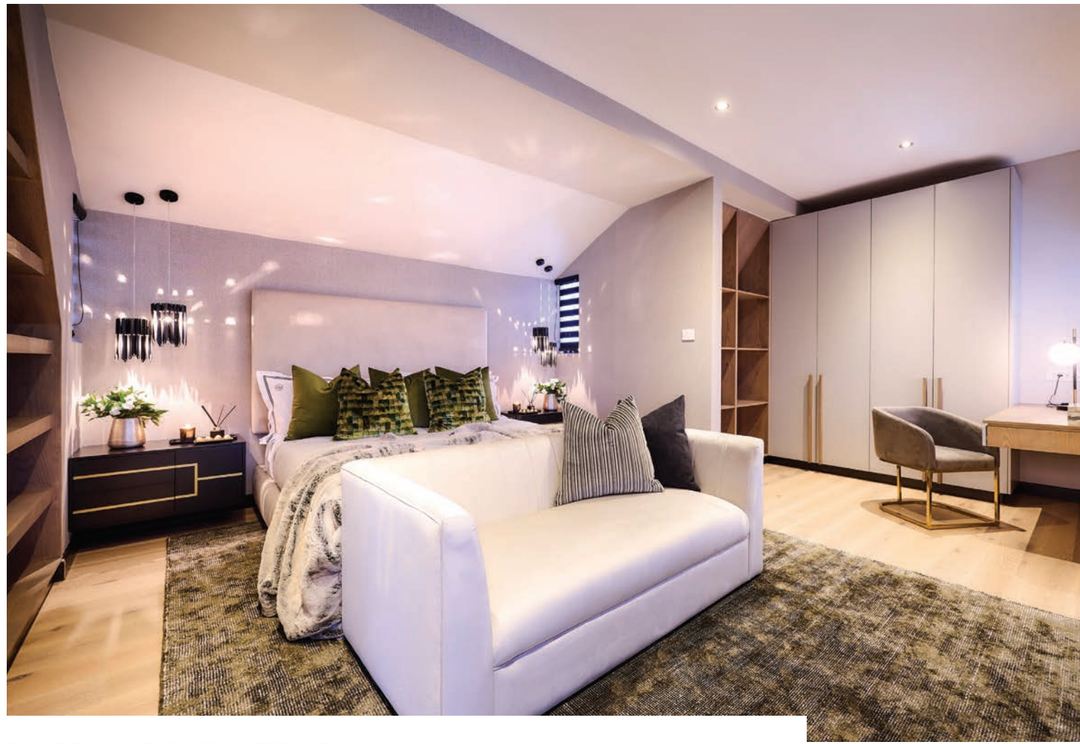
The linear black and white wallpaper (used to wrap and hug the walls), locally curated abstract art, accent lighting and knotted rug - all repeating the black and white with hints of reflective gold.

DINNER IS OH SO STYLISHLY SERVED

Continuing with the monochrome scheme, the dining area is resplendent with statement lighting and gorgeous art. A bespoke 12 seater solid oak dining table is surrounded by custom made Carver chairs upholstered in a short pile, woven tufted key design velvet. The server, designed by OLALA INTERIORS and manufactured by Built by Design, is balanced by two pieces of art by Gift Dlamini titled 'Outstanding 1 and 2'. The gold leaf on black artwork is by Bron Stoffberg.



BLENDING WITH NATURE
The OLALA INTERIORS team effortlessly created a smooth transition between the interior and the exterior.



BEAUTIFULLY COMBINED MATERIALS
Artfully integrated storage and cabinetry (all designed by OLALA INTERIORS and manufactured by Built by Design) with careful attention to artificial and natural light, ensures that the bedrooms are luxuriously cosy while maintaining a minimalist look. Plush throws and the use of fabulously soft textures offset the angular, modern lines. All stylishly underpinned by niche rugs.

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TAKE IT UP A NOTCH @

THE STUDIOS

The Studios at Lifestyle Centre (Ballito's iconic open-air shopping centre) incorporates a mix of interesting stores and offerings in a beautifully designed, multi-functional space. This unique area was custom-made for locals to meet, connect and enjoy an exceptional experience.

Upstairs at The Studios, two innovative and collaborative concepts - in the form of FITPOD and Next Level - make clever use of a mixed-use mezzanine level against a beautiful backdrop....

FITPOD is a collection of fitness and exercise studios, offering world class instruction and training, all under one roof. There's functional fitness, yoga classes, Zumba, rebounding, Pilates mat classes or private and semi-private sessions on state-of-the-art BASI equipment with a number of qualified instructors. There are also a wide variety of dance classes on offer, ranging from modern and Latin to Irish, Bollywood, and even belly-dancing.

FITPOD is coordinated and managed for those who choose to live healthily, move their bodies, and feed their souls - whatever their chosen exercise regime. FITPOD is also an Accredited Vitality Fitness Facility, which means that you can earn Discovery Vitality points for every class that you attend.

Find out more or sign up to book classes via Octiv at:
www.ballitolifestylecentre.co.za/fitpod/

Next Level presents a welcoming collection of meeting spaces in a casual, unpretentious, yet sophisticated environment in which to connect with colleagues, professionals, friends and like-minded acquaintances.

The concept comprises a selection of creative and memorable venues for business meetings, work-shops, hobby clubs or intimate social gatherings. Four stylish meeting rooms, each individually decorated, are equipped with the latest technology for the best connectivity and audiovisual experience.

Offering a choice of board-room or lounge type venues, Next Level's spaces are optimally designed to comfortably seat groups ranging from 8-12 people.

With backup power during load shedding, meetings and gatherings can go ahead without disruption and in air-conditioned comfort on the North Coast's hot summer days. Of course, good coffee and great food options are also on hand from the Coffee Lab downstairs, as well as some retail therapy in the form of the gorgeous stores at The Studios and surrounding Lifestyle Centre.

Not your average meeting space and so much better than any board-room or conference venue, everything is literally taken to the next level.

Find out more or make a booking enquiry at:
www.ballitolifestylecentre.co.za/nextlevel/

AI-TITTUDE

Under the Cover with Editor Mike Charles

"For our 10th edition of the magazine, we need a cover image that really communicates that we're taking things in a new direction with the mag." I nodded as the head of our media group laid out the brief...

"We need a striking cover model and a photographer who gets what we're all about, and who knows how to capture the attitude of coastal luxury exemplified by the Ballito way of life. I mean, Annie Leibovitz would be great, but I'm pretty sure she's booked up with Vanity Fair shoots until the end of the year." Yeah, I thought. Also, I had already blown our photography budget. Getting any A-list photographer and/or cover model was looking sketchy.

I'd been doing a lot of research into the latest advances in artificial intelligence (AI) software, and a crafty idea occurred to me: what if I could could direct a photo-shoot without the need for an actual photographer (or, for that matter, a real model or even a camera)?

The idea of a virtual, AI-powered cover shoot was born. American Cosmo had done one a while ago... Had anyone done one for a South African magazine before? Probably not. Certainly not for our market. Anyway, it was bound to be a "first" of some kind, so we'd claim it!

But how were we going to do it? Well, I had a bash at using a text-to-image software called DALL.E (created by OpenAI - the same organization behind the phenomenally popular ChatGPT). The results were... bad. Mildly terrifying, actually. Spookily distorted anthropomorphic figures that had no place on the cover of any magazine... Maybe my directions just weren't specific or descriptive enough? I was looking for a "detailed, wide-angle, full-body photo of a beautiful young woman lying on a beach lounger wearing Gucci sunglasses under a parasol umbrella; lots of head room; luxury magazine photography in the style of Annie Liebovitz; dark blue background; studio lighting; 4K resolution". Too niche?

I tried prompting another AI image-creation platform called Midjourney - this time with much better results, but still needing some work. For one thing, there were too many fingers (AI has a real problem with fingers... Weird, but true). Feet were also an issue (you'll notice that we tastefully cropped our model's foot out of the final cover). I used DALL.E's AI image-extension feature called "outpainting" to expand the background and then used an AI-powered program called Pixelmator Pro to magically upscale the final image to magazine-quality resolution without losing any detail or clarity. After that, there was still the need for good ol' Photoshop to perform a hand-transplant and to smooth out a few image glitches. Sheesh!

It was a labour of love (and necessity), and I'm quite chuffed with the image we settled on for this issue's cover. I'll be keeping budget aside for a real photographer for our next issue, though. Annie Leibovitz: call me!

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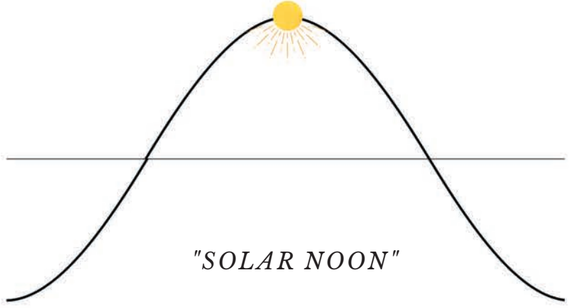
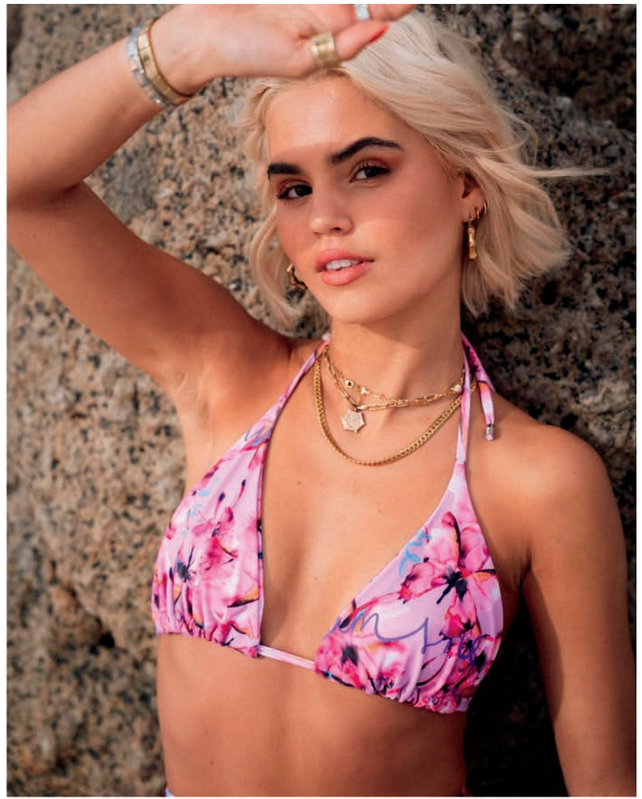
Grecale Trofeo - engine: V6 90° 3000 cc - max power: 530 hp - max torque: 620 Nm - max speed: 285 km/h - 0-100 km/h acceleration: 3.8 secs - fuel consumption (combined cycle): 11.2 l/100 km - CO_2 emissions (combined cycle): 254 g/km.

PART 2

ARCHETYPES





Gabby Larsson

PERSON OF INTEREST

Ballito's Multi-Hyphenate "It Girl" Is Just Getting Started...

&

• Previous Page: Gaby sporting one of her own designs from the first I Am She Apparel collection (photo by Michael Kopp).
•Below: A sunset moment (photo by Carolyn Broom - Kale Photography).

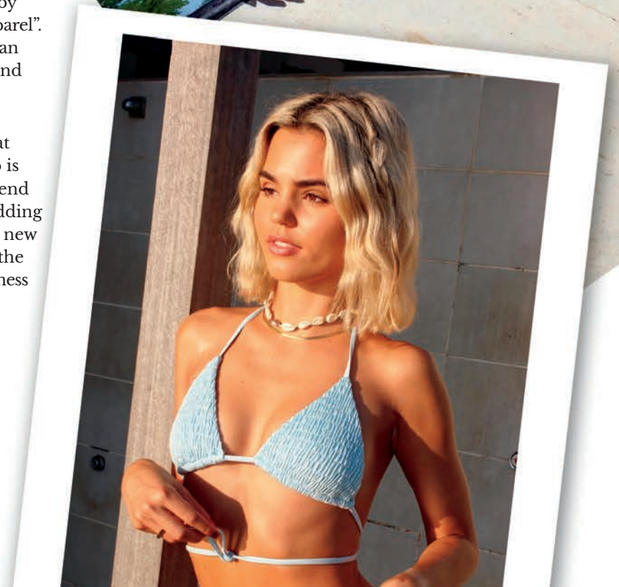
Influencer. Entrepreneur. Creator. Marketer. Model. Swimwear-designer. Down-to-earth girl-next-door. Just a few of the labels that one could try pin to Gabby Larsson: the dynamic beach babe / brand-ambassador / businesswoman who defies easy categorization.

"Multi-tasker" is a label that definitely seems to fit, though. She continues to raise her profile as an in-demand model doing work for major brands like Pepsi and boutique local labels alike (check out her work for Cape Town-based Burnt Studios).

She's also put her BA Honours degree in Fashion Design to work by launching her own body-positive swimwear brand: "I Am She Apparel". There have been forays in hospitality (last year saw her launch an organic cafe & health bar) and there's a bustling list of brands and businesses that call on her savvy digital marketing services too.

At just 23 (soon to be 24, she is quick to point out), Gabby has at times called Santiago (Chile) and Cape Town home, but Ballito is now where her heart is. Newly engaged to her longtime boyfriend — the equally multi-faceted Ballito boy Travis Strydom — wedding bells are set to ring in 2024. Between now and then, she's got a new swimwear collection to drop, more exciting developments on the fashion design front too (resort-wear, anyone?), and more new business opportunities to explore.

While she's turning heads, Gabby's clearly keeping her own head firmly on her shoulders and enjoying where her journey is taking her... One thing's for sure - she's only getting started. Watch this space.



Clockwise from Left:
Radiating summer vibes while modelling the Latte Set from core collection of activewear label Burnt Studios. • Travis Strydom popping the question in Bali. • The Priscilla bikini top designed by Gabby for I Am She Apparel • Leaning back and catching rays on Clifton Beach. • Hands up for a grogeous green number from circular fashion hub Onrotate. • Gabby sporting her self-designed Priscilla bikini from the first I Am She Apparel collection (photo by Michael Kopp). • A quintessential bronzed/bikini moment (photo by Savanah de Beer Photography).

@gabbylarsson
*@iamsheapparel_*

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RED HOT

Retail Therapy

When the weather takes a turn for the worse on the KZN coast, a little retail therapy is always in order. Gateway Theatre of Shopping has earned its reputation as the ultimate fashion, entertainment and dining destination in Durban. With over 430+ stores, 70 eateries and a host of exciting entertainment, visitors are spoilt for choice. During a recent rainy-day shopping excursion, our style editor spied these hot picks.....

1. TAG Heuer - *Carrera x Porsche RS 2.7* - Price Available On Request • **2. Mont Blanc -** Great Characters Enzo Ferrari Special Edition Fountain Pen M - R18,700.00 •**3. Nespresso -** Essenza Red Mini Automatic Espresso Machine - R1,999.00 • **4. M.A.C -** Glow Play Blush New Year Shine - R600.00 • **5. LEGO -** Art: The Rolling Stones - R2,599.00 • **6. GUESS -** Retour Mini Top Handle Flap Handbag - R1,999.00 • **7. Apple -** iPad (10th Gen) WiFi 64GB in Pink - R9,999.00 • **8. Scotch & Soda -** Vivi Sneaker Pink - R3,099.00 • **9. SMEG -** Dolce & Gabbana Electric Citrus Press - R8,799.00.

GATEWAY
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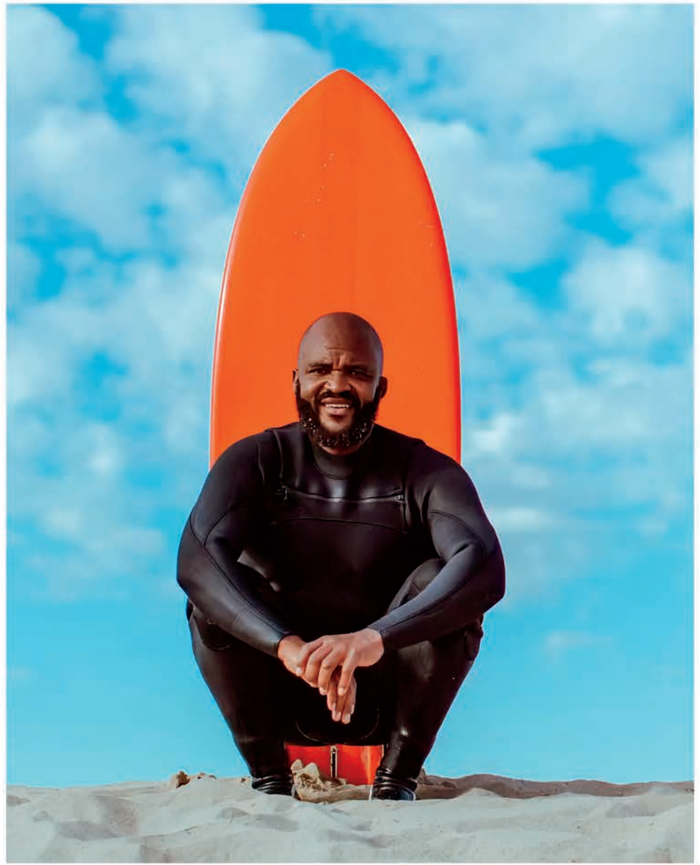


ON BOARD

Selema Masekela

• *Selema tackles some sand dune sprints on Venice Beach. • Photos (this page and previous): Matt C Bauer - mattcbauer.com*

The name Masekela carries serious weight. If you're a fan of jazz, you'll know that the music and legacy of the late Hugh Masekela still reverberates around the world. If you were born after 1990 though, there's a good chance that another personality comes to mind when you hear the name...

Born in 1971 in California, Selema Masekela (the only son of 'Bra Hugh') spent his teenage years in Southern California, where he was first exposed to the adrenaline-fuelled worlds of surfing, snowboarding and skateboarding.

Selema got his break as a TV host and commentator in the late 1990s with the launch of the X Games on ESPN.

Initially going by the moniker of "Sal" Masekela, he quickly gained a following for his energetic and knowledgeable commentary on action sports, and would go on to cover a wide range of events, from snowboarding to surfing.

@selema

Ah, yes, surfing. Over the years, Masekela has become known for his work as a champion of African surf culture in particular, traveling extensively and working to promote surfing and highlight the unique contributions of African surfers to the global surfing community.

In 2017, Selema co-founded Mami Wata: a ground-breaking African surf lifestyle brand that serves as a platform to showcase African surf culture, while supporting the work of African organisations such as Waves for Change and Surfers Not Street Children.

As a prominent black surfer and an international media personality, today Selema is a role model for black and minority surfers around the world, inspiring them to pursue their passion for the sport and to overcome the obstacles they may face in a predominantly white and male-dominated industry.

While his trailblazing surf safari continues, we're just happy to be along for the ride... Surf's up, Selema.

SOMETHING HOLY

Words: Dan Charles
Photography: Angela Ricciardi

The first time that I ever saw Alice Phoebe Lou live was when she performed at the Central Methodist Church in the Cape Town CBD in 2017. I can't recall too many details about the show because a lot of life has happened since then (remember that collectively-traumatising global shut down?) but what I can remember was that the church pews were packed to capacity like a newly-opened box of cigarettes and I can remember the reverent stillness and quiet that fell over everyone in the crowd as the band played that night.

It was the kind of quiet that gently falls over an entire room like a weighted blanket and swaddles everyone within a shared sense of warmth and solace. It was the kind of quiet that buildings like the Central Methodist Church were built for - the quiet that comes when witnessing and allowing in something sacred. *Something holy.*

Although there aren't many details that I can recall from that show that, there was one moment that I can still remember vividly: when Alice took the opportunity to seize the quiet that had been cultivated amongst the audience in the Central Methodist Church to share a particularly vulnerable son. The song hadn't been given a title yet and was not written with the intention of ever being released (although it would later be released on Alice's *Sola* EP under the name *Haunting*).

It was written as personal means of catharsis and self-soothing with lyrics that bluntly addressed a trauma that Alice had recently endured - the kind shared amongst so many other women that would eventually instigate the overdue societal reckoning of the #MeToo movement only a few months after that performance took place.

Played without the accompaniment of her band, the song's skeletal chord structure felt both brittle and bold in it's tenderness and Alice sang with a voice that carried the simultaneous serenity and rage of a placid river that had been set on fire - harnessing her hurt and washing it away all at once. Her sharing that felt like a real gift and was a true a testament to the trust that was built between her and the audience within the quiet of that room.

For those that may not know, I should probably clarify that Alice Phoebe Lou is not some kind of gospel musician (although I can understand if I might have led you to believe so, I did spend a lot of time talking about a church). Gospel music is meant to make one feel closer to God, whereas listening to Alice's nostalgia-saturated songs of connection, intimacy and empowerment can make you feel closer to yourself and and to the people the you care most about.

Starting out as a busker on the streets of Berlin, Alice would recall seeing the effect that her songs had on the passerby who would stop and listen to her in an an interview with the Seattle, Washington-based radio station KEXP in 2019:

"There's just moments where you see it in [somebody's] face that they're going through something or have had a really hard day and they are just moved very deeply and needed some sort of catharsis and needed to just stop what they're doing and just sit down and have a cry or whatever it is that allows them to release whatever's happening."

With the aid of collaborators within the Berlin music community that she would befriend and recruit into her band, her initial blues/jazz/folk inspired balladry would evolve into a tapestry
of lush, grooving and experimental arrangements that would blossom on her seminal sophomore album Paper Castles in 2019 - an ethereal, independently-released album filled with songs that sound like acid-soaked psalms for the ones devoted to honouring the gentlest of feelings. Having received immense critical acclaim, Paper Castles catapulted Alice and her band across the globe - playing over 100 shows across 4 continents that year.

Unfortunately, the trajectory of Alice's touring schedule was suddenly halted along with the rest of the world during the pandemic. However, the process of readapting her creative process resulted in the writing and recording of her two latest albums, Glow and Child's Play - two albums that capture the warmth and gentleness of Alice's sound to tape and see her exploring the topics of love mover honestly and unflinchingly than ever before in her discography.

Earlier his year, Alice returned back to South Africa for the first time in three years for a large-scale performance at The Old Biscuit Mill that would allow her hometown audience the opportunity to witness these new songs that provided them a sense of joy and solace during the aftermath of the pandemic live for the first time - while also having all the profits made from the shows donated to Rape Crisis and The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children. When the show sold out within a matter of days, Alice organised another, more intimate performance, at The Homecoming Centre Theatre to give as many people the chance to come together for the sake of her music before she goes back to touring the globe and working on yet another album.

I was one of the many people that missed out on the first show but, as Alice started playing on the modest stage of The Homecoming Theatre, I could feel the same quiet that fell over everyone in the crowd at the Central Methodist Church years ago. Something sacred. Something holy.

www.alicephoebelou.com
@alicephoebelou
Alice Phoebe Lou's new single "Shelter" is available now on all streaming platforms.

SURF FLICKS & CHILL

"Seaweed" Steve's Surf Movie Watchlist

I am often asked what I do when it gets too hot out on the beach to be productive without getting a third-degree sunburn... When the weekend sun is high and the UV rays are at their peak, you could do worse than heading home to pass the time watching surfing movies.

So what's the hype around surf movies about? Well, the best surf movies can open your eyes, expand your mind and serve as the catalyst for a lifelong surfing obsession. It starts with chronicling the history of surfing and then it moves on to the evolution of different surf styles and the boards that go with it.

Older films like The Endless Summer, Barefoot Adventure, Gidget and Beach Party are a few of the films coming out of the 60's era that give you an insight into the fun aspect of the sport in the era of Rock 'n Roll music that influenced the "surfing safari" lifestyle back then.

Next came the 70's with shorter surfboards, the after-effects of Woodstock and rock music that inspired films like Morning of The Earth, Five Summer Stories, Crystal Voyager and Tales from the Tube. These brought in the era of the "soul surfer". As we progressed further and surfboards began to evolve into high-tech, lighter equipment, surfing began to change, allowing surfers to bring skateboarding moves into the sport, which had never been thought of in the early 70's.

Then came the 80s, 90's and 2000's with developments in full swing and we were eventually able to get our hands on camera equipment like the GoPro, which started a frenzy of home-made movies and pushed the boundaries of capturing different angles on a wave.

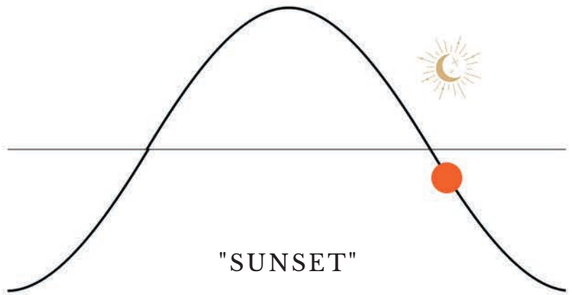
Today we have drones that have taken the place of vastly expensive helicopters to film aerial footage from up close, and so we get to the modern films of today which are mind-blowing epics. Modern big wave surf films are somewhere between a good thriller or a horror movie as you watch the intrepid few push to ride the biggest wave ever ridden. Then there's competitive pro surfing action that leaves you so pumped you need to take a jog to burn off the adrenalin.

Whether you are interested in trying to understand surf culture or if you actually want to learn to surf, start with a good surf movie and who knows where that will take you!

• Words by "Seaweed" Steve Honneysett –
Host of the Weekday Surf & Weather Report on Radio Life & Style.

PART 3

RITUALS



THE ADULTS ARE PLAYING

How LEGO is Winning Over Adults Across the World

I remember my very first LEGO set. It was set number 6268, The Renegade Runner, a pirate ship, with cloth skull 'n crossbones sails and four little pirates holding little plastic cutlasses. I was about six years old when I got it for Christmas, and I remember being absolutely spellbound, spending hours meticulously assembling the bits and pieces, then weeks more sailing it through endless made-up stories of derring-do.

Like many people who grew up with LEGO, my love for the little clickable bricks has far from faded with time. Since the late 90's, adults have fast become a major market for LEGO, fuelled by vast online communities of fans and fanatics. Gen -X, the first age group to grow up with LEGO, led the charge, and while it took the toymaker a bit of time to •catch on, it wasn't long before LEGO made adults (and their disposable income) an active target for their products. From a complex scale model of the Land Rover Defender to gorgeous reproductions of famous landmarks, intricate LEGO flower bouquets, a massive Star Wars Thai Fighter and more, LEGO's adult-orientated builds are beautiful, challenging and designed to evoke maximum nostalgia.

Many of LEGO's most impressive set designs have come about as a result of the company's direct engagement with the wider Adult Fans of Lego community (or AFOLS, as they are known online) through the LEGO Ideas platform. This online portal allows hobbyists to submit designs directly to the company. If the design receives 10 000 bids of support from the Ideas community, it's pitched directly to LEGO, and if chosen, LEGO collaborates with the original designer to put it into production. The Lego Ideas programme has given us the gorgeous Lego Grand Piano, the Delorean from Back to the Future , and intricate, playable odes to popular sitcoms like Friends and The Office, and a working vintage typewriter.

But nostalgia is not the only driver of the adult LEGO market. Many adults are using LEGO as an effective tool for stress management. The meditative, tactile, creative process of assembling a LEGO set overlaps significantly with the popular principles of mindfulness. According to LEGO's 2022 Well Report, 78% of 32, 781 parents surveyed said that building LEGO helped them significantly with their wellbeing, while 76% said that LEGO was fundamental to their happiness. The combination of the soft clicking-together of the pieces, a clear set of instructions to follow, and an obvious and inevitable reward at the end of the process come together in a pastime which offers numerous mental health benefits – so much so that LEGO recently partnered with author Abbie Hendon to publish a mindfulness book called "Build Yourself Happy". Building LEGO helps you exercise problem-solving skills, engages your creativity and involves low to no stakes: unlike in real adult life, if you make a mistake building LEGO, you can simply pull it apart and start again. For adults who have lost touch with the importance of play in day-to-day life, LEGO stands as a fabulous reminder, delivering carefree hours spent in the present, well away from the worries of the day.

While LEGO's bigger sets may set you back a pretty penny – most range from R3000 to R6000 – if looked after well, they'll provide you and your family with hundreds of hours of calm, creative play at any age for many years to come, which, in this writer's opinion, makes LEGO well worth the investment.

• *Words by Shamon Devry.*

BRAIN ESSENTIALS

Nutrients Your Brain Actually Needs

Our brain takes up around 2% of our body weight but uses up to 20% of our daily energy! In order for it to perform its daily functions, our brain requires specific nutrients (often in large quantities). Our overall diet plays a crucial role in brain health, particularly when it comes to preventing conditions such as depression and dementia. Researchers are continually identifying the key nutrients for brain health. They have even been working on a scale called the Brain Essential Nutrients (BEN) scale, to determine where a food sits in relation to how good it is for your brain.Whilst this scale isn't fully realised yet, researchers have outlined 7 essential nutrients for your brain that you can focus on getting more of right now:

• MAGNESIUM

As it's the fourth most abundant mineral in your body, are you even surprised that magnesium is first on the list? Magnesium is crucial for energy production and, as we know, the brain uses a LOT of energy. Magnesium also regulates important communication processes between nerve cells in the brain. There may in fact be other roles in brain health that magnesium plays, as deficiency has been found in those with conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, depression and anxiety, and even traumatic brain injury.
Where to get it: green leafy vegetables (such as spinach and kale), as well as legumes, nuts, seeds and whole grains
If you need to supplement: choose Magnesium L-Threonate as it has been shown to be the most effective for increasing magnesium concentrations in brain cells

• OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS

Omega 3 fatty acids are vital for brain health but cannot be made within the body. Instead, we must obtain them from our diet. Interestingly, on an evolutionary scale a diet that is high in fish has been correlated in humans with the development of a bigger brain. Brain cells with a high level of omega 3 fatty acids within their cell membranes are thought to be better at communicating with other brain cells. Omega 3 fatty acids also play an important role in reducing any potential inflammation in the brain that would interfere with brain health.
Where to get it: fatty fish, olive oil, flax seeds and flax oil, walnuts, and soybean oil.
If you need to supplement: 1,000 – 2,000 mg of omega 3 fatty acids is a good place to start, but no more than 3,000 mg daily unless directed by your healthcare practitioner.

• VITAMIN D

A very clear link has been established between Vitamin D deficiency and increased risk for dementia. Deficiency in Vitamin D has also been linked to conditions such as depression, autism and schizophrenia. The mechanisms are rather complex, but it is clear that if you don't get enough time in the sun you may run the risk of poorer brain health.
Where to get it: moderate sun exposure (10 – 30 minutes of midday sunlight, several times per week), salmon, tuna, egg yolks, and mushrooms.
If you need to supplement: choose vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) and supplement at an appropriate dose to raise your blood level as determined by a blood test. At the very minimum it should be 400IU per day.

• ZINC

Zinc is one of the most abundant minerals in the central nervous system and plays a vital role in maintaining its health. Zinc works as an antioxidant, promotes the formation of nerve cells, supports nerve cell metabolism and supports the immune system. Zinc also helps activate dozens of enzymes that are involved in nerve cell metabolism. Deficiency in zinc affects conditions such as stroke, cognitive decline, traumatic brain injury, and depression, and contributes to declines in cognition and learning.
Where to get it: zinc is found in seafood, red meats and chicken. Other good sources are beans, nuts, wholegrains, dairy and fortified breakfast cereals.
If you need to supplement: the recommended dose for the average adult is 8mg for women and 11mg for men.

• CALCIUM

We typically think of calcium in relation to bone health, but it plays an important role in the brain too. Calcium is important for healthy signalling between nerve cells, which affects the formation and retrieval of memories.
Where to get it: Dairy products are a great source of calcium, but other good sources

include almonds, hazelnuts, pistachios, beans, figs, quinoa, broccoli and kale.
If you need to supplement: getting calcium through your diet is considered more important that supplementing with it, but if you have been advised to take a supplement then stick to no more than 1000mg per day.

• B VITAMINS: THIAMINE, FOLIC ACID AND VITAMIN B12

B vitamins aren't well stored by the body, so we do require regular intake of B vitamins from our diet to maintain a healthy level within the body. Thiamine (Vitamin B1) helps the body's cells produce energy, especially in the brain and nervous system. Thiamine also plays a role in the conduction of nerve signals. Folic Acid is also crucial for proper brain functioning, and plays a role in preventing memory loss, and mental and emotional disorders. Folic acid is also though to slow down age-related memory loss and decline.
Vitamin B12 deficiency has been associated with memory loss particularly in older adults. It has also been shown to impact mood disorders as well as age-related cognitive decline.
Where to get them: top dietary sources of B vitamins include meats (especially liver), seafood, chicken, eggs, dairy, legumes, leafy greens, seeds and fortified foods.
If you need to supplement: a good quality B complex should be able to provide you with all that you need. The best form of folic acid to choose will be methylfolate, and the best form of Vitamin B12 will be methylcobalamin. Ideally stay away from the cyanocobalamin form of Vitamin B12 as it is not as well absorbed.

• VITAMIN K

Often called the "forgotten vitamin", Vitamin K is very important for cognitive functioning and brain power. Higher circulating Vitamin K concentrations have been associated with better brain functioning in older adults. Supplementation with Vitamin K has even been associated with decreased rates of depression and anxiety, and improved spatial memory and learning.
Where to get it: Vitamin K can be found in high fat dairy products, egg yolk, liver, fermented foods, broccoli, leafy greens like spinach and kale, basil and even chilli powder.
If you need to supplement: the form of Vitamin K that appears to be more beneficial is Vitamin K2 (menaquinone), so ideally choose one containing this over the more common form Vitamin K1. The starting dose for K2 is 100 mcg daily.

GOOD FOODS FOR A HEALTHY BRAIN

Good nutrition is absolutely essential for healthy brain functioning.
A high quality diet that contains a variety of foods that are as unprocessed as possible should stand you in good stead when it comes to keeping your brain performing well. If, however, your diet and lifestyle are not quite where they should be, or if you have any pre-existing conditions that are negatively affecting you, then it is well worth considering a high quality supplement (or two) to make sure you have the nutrients you need for your brain to thrive.

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TO THE BRIM

South Africa's Marvellous Milliners

I am a woman who wears many hats - literally and figuratively. I have a healthy collection of headwear piling up in my closet including a furry green beret I picked up in a secondhand store (not raspberry, I'm afraid, and certainly not stolen), a handmade bonnet, and a fire-engine red bucket hat gifted to me by the owner of my favourite local coffee shop.

As an admirer of hats, I am also an admirer of the milliners behind the functional and fantastical designs that adorn peoples' heads. If you know what a milliner is without having to Google it... well, hats off to you, my friend. Enviable vocabulary aside, did you know that South Africa has produced some of the most creatively-minded and stylishly-headed milliners on the market? Here's a look at some local milliners worth tipping your hat to.

CRYSTAL BIRCH

As a Cape Town resident, I have had the pleasure of seeing Crystal Birch in the flesh. I am pleased to report that her personal style is as fabulously eccentric as her unique hats are.

Birch owns and operates The Hat Factory (formerly known as Parisian Milliners), a Cape Town millinery which is over 85 years old. Here, her elegantly quirky designs come to life as berets, boleros, and boaters in a startling array of bold colours, feathered fringes, and captivating textures. Birch is far from a mad hatter, though.

Her hats embody classic shapes with a delightful twist. Where else in the world might you stumble upon a docker beanie - the micro-beanie favoured by indie kids with cold ears - fashioned from luxurious felt? If haute-couture had a healthy sense of humour, you'd find its expression in Birch's designs.

ALBERTUS SWANEPOEL

If you want to get ahead, get a hat. More specifically, get a hat from fashion's favourite milliner, Albertus Swanepoel. Swanepoel is a South African-born milliner living and working in New York, where he produces some of the most well-worn hats in the world.

Well... Well-worn, or worn well? His hats have graced the heads of Brad Pitt, Emma Watson, and Adwoa Aboah in editorial and cover shoots. He has also collaborated with the darlings of New York fashion design, including Carolina Herrera, Alexander Wang, and Proenza Schoeler.

As for the designs themselves, Swanepoel's hats tend to embody simple, Ameri- cana shapes in elevated form. The Duckie hat is a baseball cap reimagined in an oversized shape and hand blocked in fur felt. The Black Sheep is a wittily-craft- ed, silk-lined trapper made in soft faux fur.

By Swanepoel's own qualifications, his designs are "about being handmade (not home-made), witty (not funny) and nowadays (not nostalgic)". Swanepoel currently resides in a Manhattan apartment he shares with his life and business partner, Eddie Marquez, and their cat Pooks.

SIMON AND MARY

The Simon and Mary brand is self-described as “a heritage brand for a new generation”. While Simon and Mary was established in 2014, the brand was born from a family that has been in the millinery industry since 1935.

Their Johannesburg factory fashions new designs from classic shapes made with the same trusted machinery used in the 1960s by machinists who are passing the trade down to their children.

The heritage narrative is the golden thread which winds its way through the concept and the execution of the Simon and Mary brand. Their playful designs reference everything from classic Western silhouettes like the cowboy hat to the European pith helmet, now updated in jewel tones and pastel felt.

By marrying modern, local colours and historical silhouettes, Simon and Mary pay homage to the metropolitan, urban history of Johannesburg on a continent which has seen many hats traverse its wooded hills and grassy plains.

• *Words by Mia McCarthy.*

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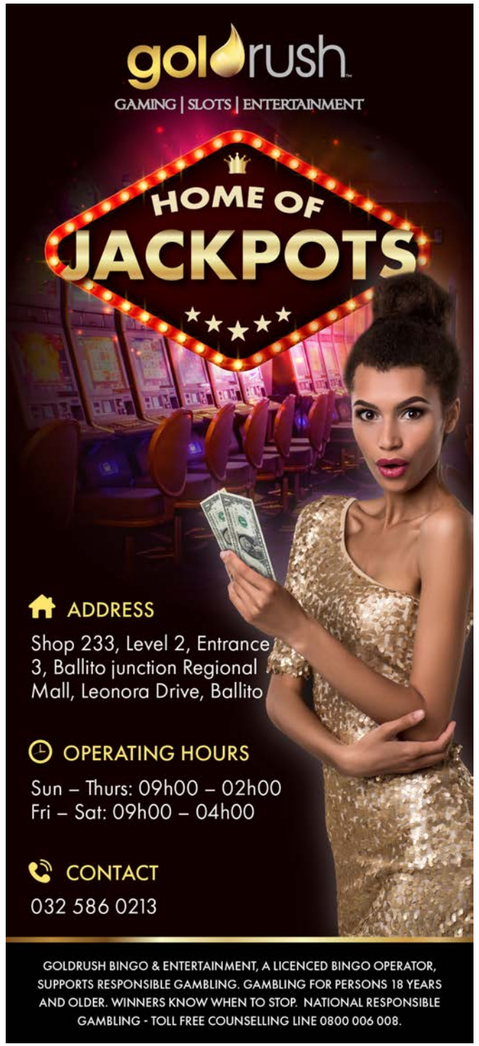
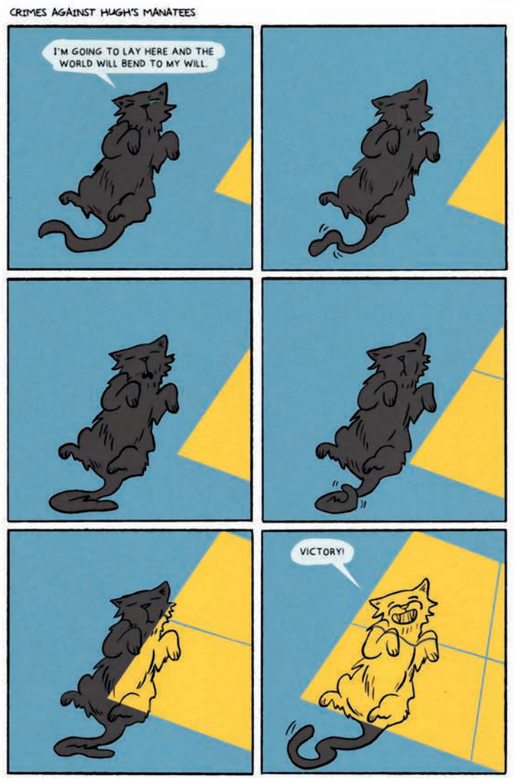


THE LIGHTER SIDE

... of Life & Style



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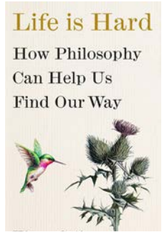
This Month's Book And Music Recommendations

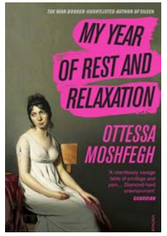
Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

Barbara Kingsolver is back with a laser-sharp retelling of the classic Dicken's tale "David Copperfield". Set in the mountains of Appalachia, Demon Copperhead follows the charming, handsome, exceptionally smart lost boy narrator as he navigates the trials of coming-of-age in a modern world which never had a place for him. Expect Kingsolver's characteristic sweeping narrative style, razor-sharp wit and gorgeous imagery.



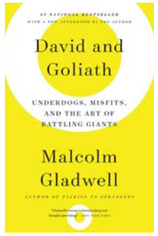
Life is Hard: How Philosophy Can Help Us Find Our Way by Kieran Setiya

In this wonderful meditation on the human condition, Kieran Setiya shows how philosophy can help us navigate the difficulties of everyday life with warmth, grace and hope. From pain and loneliness to grief and injustice, Setiya draws on ancient and modern philosophy, fiction, social science and more to encourage us to acknowledge what it means to be alive.



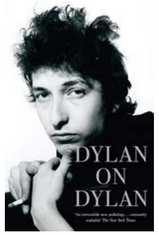
My Year of Rest and Relaxation by Ottessa Moshfegh

An odd, fascinating and exceptionally moving piece of work, My Year of Rest and Relaxation by Ottessa Moshfegh is a powerful novel that looks at grief with a strange slant. Struggling to process the death of her mother, the nameless narrator decides to sleep for an entire year, under the influence of a mad cocktail of prescription medications obtained from the world's worst psychiatrist. Emerging only to eat food from the bodega down the street from her Manhattan apartment, the narrator emerges into the aftermath of 9/11, healed and rested, but with new reasons to grieve.



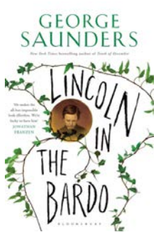
David and Goliath by Malcolm Gladwell

This wonderful piece of non-fiction by star author Malcolm Gladwell tells stories of underdogs, misfits and outsiders taking on the big guys and beating the odds. Find out how David actually managed to beat Goliath according to science, and enjoy a host of seriously satisfying examples of ordinary people triumphing in extraordinary circumstances. Gladwell's way of the looking at the world is always fascinating, and this work is no exception.



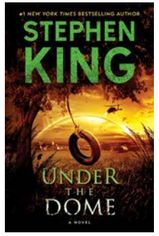
Dylan on Dylan edited by Jeff Burger

Often enigmatic, sometimes cranky, always brilliant, Bob Dylan is a towering creative figure who still looms large in the cultural landscape. Dylan on Dylan is a chronologically arranged collection of interviews, speeches and press conferences, offering a deep insight into Dylan's thinking and creative process. It's a truly fascinating read, and a must-have for any Dylan fan.



Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

This curious, beautifully written experimental novel from George Saunders is our pick of the week. Winner of the Man Booker Prize 2017, the story takes place during and after the death of Abraham Lincoln's son Willie, who finds himself stuck in the in-between after passing away.
A deeply haunting meditation on grief, loss and love.



Under the Dome by Stephen King

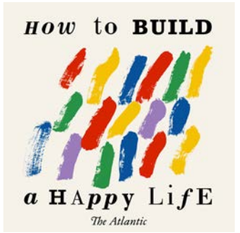
King has long been the rockstar of the horror world, and perhaps some might equate him to literary fast food. But a slightly trashy, thoroughly riveting novel is exactly what makes a good book for the weekend reading list. In this story, a mysterious impenetrable dome appears around a small town, locking the residents within it. Nothing can move through it in either direction, including air. As the residents descend into violent factions, they must do whatever they can to survive.

If you're looking for something new to read or s omething fresh to listen to, we've got just the ticket!

Here is a collection of some of our favourites.

"Grapevine"
by Weyes Blood

We challenge you to find a more stunning track to sink into this week. Weyes Blood (aka Natasha Laura Mering) is an American singer-songwriter whose ability to weave sweeping narratives into gorgeous arrangements has her positioned to become one of the greats.
"Grapevine" is an unforgettable track which showcases masterful levels of musicianship, while digging deep into the world of the emotive.



"How to Build a Happy Life"
(Podcast)

This wonderfully thought-provoking podcast from The Atlantic investigates the ways in which we try to build a happy life, bringing in experts to discuss everything from the perils and promises of dating apps to what to do when our expectations don't match reality. It's a thorough, inspiring listen that may well prove useful!

"Immunity"
by Jon Hopkins

A brilliant collection of meditative electronic instrumentals masterfully produced by Jon Hopkins. This is the perfect album to work or study to, with beautiful, unintrusive soundscapes that will put you in a calm state of flow.

"Life on Mars? (Original Ending)"
by Name

If you're a collector of musical oddities, you'll find this one interesting! A new version of "Life on Mars?" has appeared on Spotify, featuring the original ending of the song, which includes raw tape from the studio session with a telephone interrupting the take.

"Likolo"
by KOKOKO!

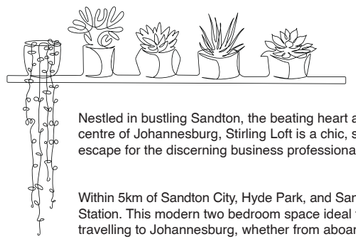
KOKOKO! is a cross-continental musical collaboration rooted in the Congo which is bound to make you dance. Blending African and Western elements, including synthesizers and instruments made of scrap, their music is deeply creative and infinitely enjoyable. Our favourite single is the exceptional "Likolo". If you're looking for something a little different to add to your listening rotation, give this track a try!

"The Orbiting Human Circus (Of the Air)"
(Podcast)

The Orbiting Human Circus of the Air is a very special piece of work. How do you make a beautiful fiction podcast? Julian Koster has worked it out. The premise is simple: Atop the Eiffel Tower, a lonely janitor stumbles into a series of alternately surreal and comic adventures as he becomes part of a mystery. But the storytelling, the sound design and the music (the music!) are what make this a truly memorable listen.

"Palaces of Montezuma"
by Grinderman

If you're a Nick Cave fan, you'll love Grinderman, a project consisting of Cave, multi-instrumentalist Warren Ellis and bassist Martyn P. Casey. "Palaces of Montezuma" is one of the lead singles off the album "Grinderman 2", and it invokes a golden era of joyful rock 'n roll that takes full advantage of Cave's signature lyrical mastery.



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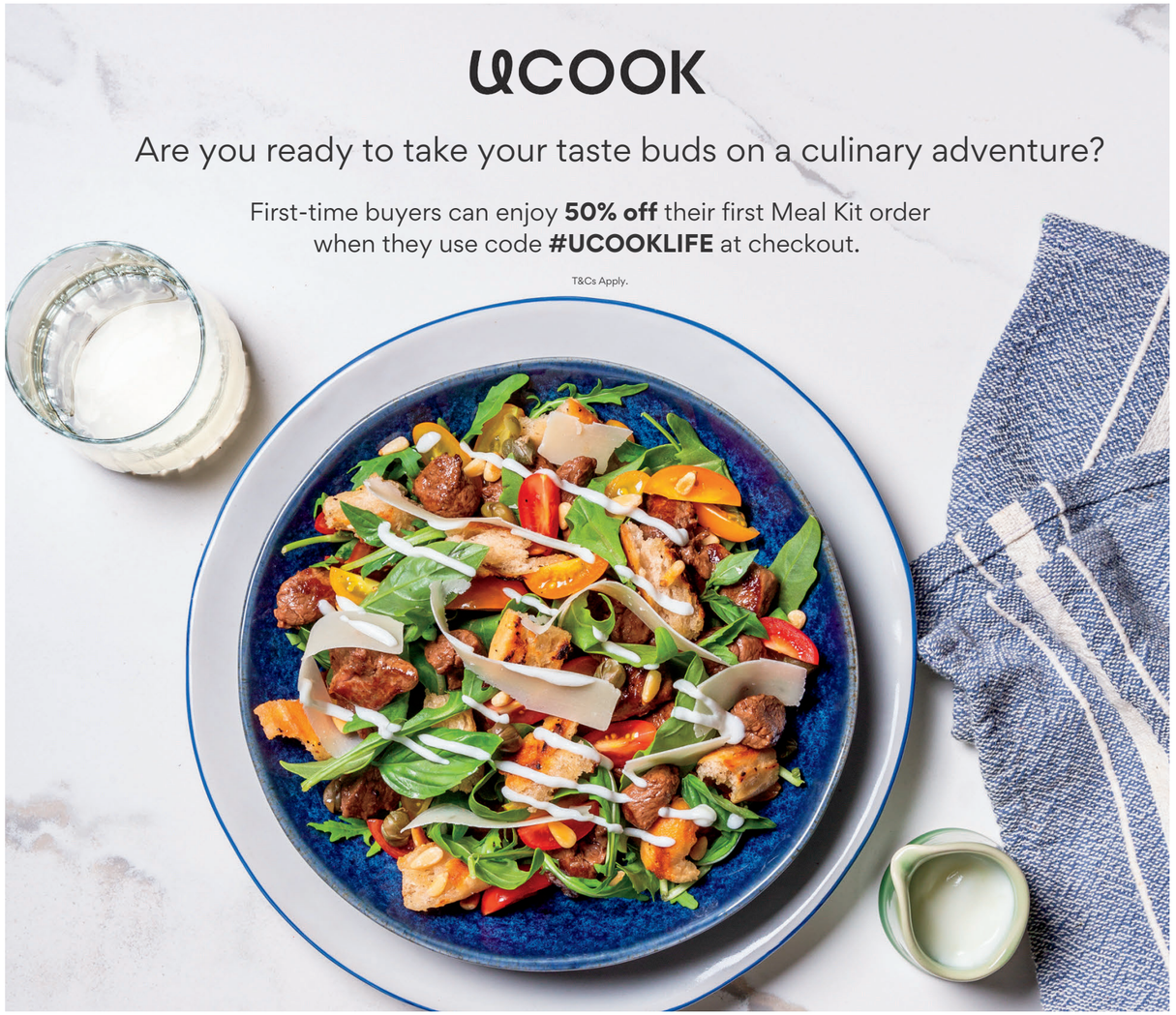

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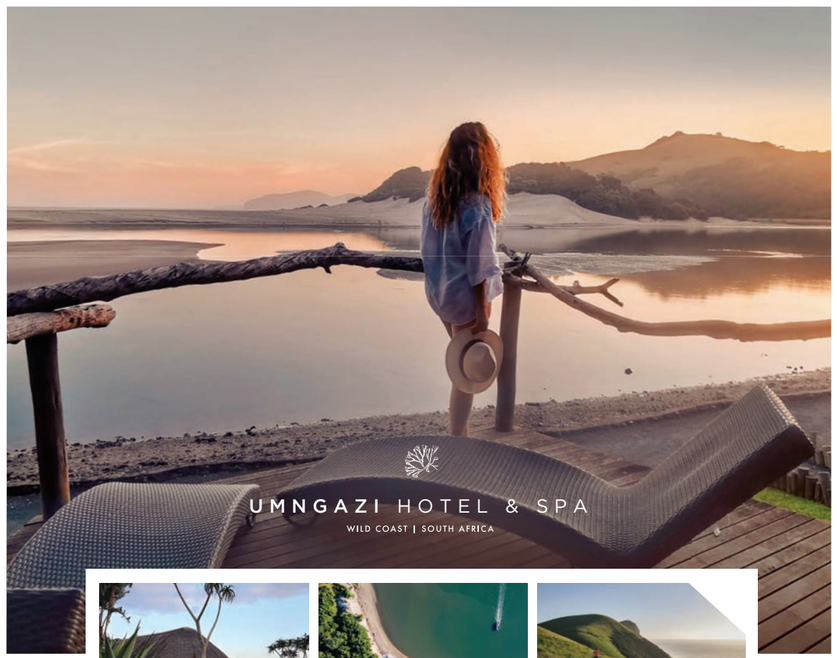

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