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A man with glasses, wearing a brown sweater and blue trousers, is reclining on a large, light-colored modular sofa. He is holding a tablet and looking towards the right. The sofa has deep tufting and several pillows, including a dark one. To the left of the sofa is a small, round, dark side table with a modern, glowing lamp and a glass of water. The background features a wall with vertical wood slats and a large window with sheer curtains on the far left. The floor is covered with a dark, patterned rug. In the foreground, the back of a black armchair is visible on the left, and a glass coffee table is partially seen on the right.

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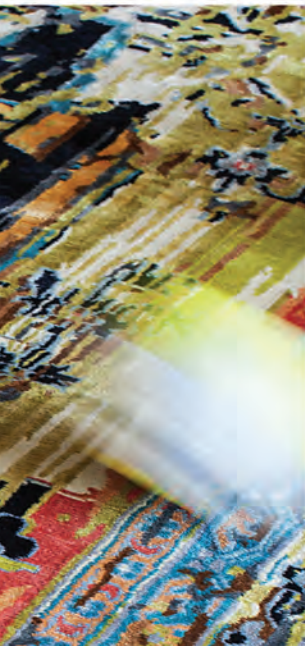




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# EDITOR'S NOTE

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I'm halfway through my first year of being an “empty nester” – and I have survived.

I've also been able to know exactly where to find my phone charger, mascara and face wash, which has its advantages. However, going through a mound of photographs we unearthed recently, of when the kids were little and squishy, made me very teary. I was so happy to have them home for the holidays and didn't moan when I couldn't find something (even my favourite perfume).

Are you planning to go away with friends or family for the long break? Perhaps you'll hang around town; there's so much good stuff on and we've got some great staycation ideas for you. *Les Misérables*, *Shrek* and *Mister Maker* have all been great hits recently, so make sure you check what's on – see our print calendar or our website for all the details. I'm already looking forward to Kylie and Queen (with Adam Lambert) at the F1 this year.

This past month I've made a last-ditch attempt (three times a week, in fact) at getting toned up with a personal trainer. I'm fine with weights, but still not keen on the whole jumping up and down part of exercising. In this issue a few readers share their personal training experiences, and we feature a fitness entrepreneur who's been a client and friend for nearly ten years. She knows how to motivate me and I love working with her (as long as she doesn't make me do star jumps!).

Have a wonderful summer – or winter, depending on where you're from!



Rebecca

REBECCA BISSET  
Editor-in-Chief



# SOAR



Left to right:  
Friedrich Wilm '63  
Carmen Onstad Matthews '60  
Elaine Wales Koch '70  
Llewellyn Woodford '63

## A TRADITION OF INNOVATION

Singapore American School alumna Elaine Wales Koch remembers kampong villages, black and white bungalows, colorful Peranakan art, and a country on the verge of independence and rapid growth. In 1956, Elaine's parents were part of a pioneering group that founded Singapore's first American school in a Rochalie Drive home. Over 60 years, SAS and Singapore have both grown into icons of innovation and progress. For Elaine and thousands of alumni across the globe, SAS and Singapore will always be home. The hallmarks of an SAS experience continue to be unparalleled possibilities, lifelong friendships, and a foundation for success and happiness.



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Singapore American School CPE Registration Number: 196400340R Registration Period: 22 June 2011 to 21 June 2017  
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Websites: [expatliving.sg](http://expatliving.sg) | [expatliving.hk](http://expatliving.hk) | [xmag.sg](http://xmag.sg)

**Printed by**

Ho Printing Singapore Pte Ltd ([hoprinting.com](http://hoprinting.com))

**Published by**

Expat Living Publications Pte Ltd  
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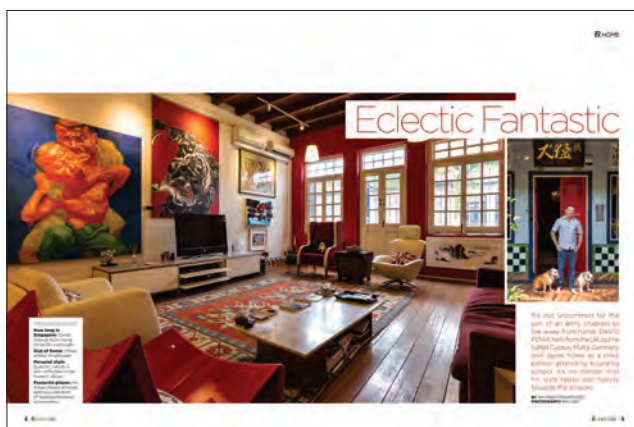
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# What's New



## Garden Gala

You don't need to have a green thumb or even a garden to enjoy the **Singapore Garden Festival**, a smorgasbord of garden and floral displays. As much artistry as nature, there's something for everyone stretched across nine hectares at Gardens by the Bay. Check out the balcony garden displays, fantasy and landscape show gardens, the orchid extravaganza and 50 creative terrariums. 23 to 31 July. [singaporegardenfestival.com](http://singaporegardenfestival.com)

### Heritage Trails

We'd recommend walking these trails, but even if you take an armchair visit via the website you'll explore oodles of Singapore history, culture and heritage. Choose from dozens of tours, including Geylang's awesome food, World War 2 battle sites or the bungalows of Sembawang – or discover Singapore's formidable founding women. The website is excellent, and of course there's an app to guide you through the streets – just download **Singapore Heritage Trails** on iTunes. [roots.sg/visit/trails](http://roots.sg/visit/trails) ▲



### All at Sea

What remains to be discovered under the water? A new exhibition at the **Singapore Art Museum**, *Odyssey: Navigating Nameless Seas* dives into the oceans of the world and reveals them through the creative eyes of contemporary artists. Until 28 August 2016. [singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://singaporeartmuseum.sg) ▲



### All the Colours of the Rainbow

We're giving you the heads up early, because **The Colour Run** is so incredibly popular that it sells out very quickly. It's billed as the happiest 5km race on the planet, and you can expect a tropi-colour theme on 20 and 21 August, plus lots of laughs and selfies! The run starts at 4pm on Sentosa, and festivities wrap up at 10pm. Entry is \$65 per person. [thecolorrun.com.sg](http://thecolorrun.com.sg) ▲





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# This Month

## SHOPPING & FAIRS

### Singapore International Water Week (10-14 JUL)

This global platform aims to share and co-create innovative water solutions. The biennial event gathers stakeholders from the global water industry to share best practices, showcase the latest technologies and tap business opportunities. **Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands.** [siww.com.sg](http://siww.com.sg)

### Singapore Garden Festival 2016 (23-31 JUL)

This biennial event marks its tenth birthday this year, and will bring award-winning landscape and garden designers, florists and horticulturists from around the world, to work alongside Singapore's own talented horticulturists. Tickets available from the Singapore Botanic Gardens or Gardens by the Bay. **Gardens by the Bay.** [singaporegardenfestival.com](http://singaporegardenfestival.com)

### #IONFoodie Travels (UNTIL 31 JUL)

Explore the world on a culinary food adventure at ION Orchard, with the #IONFoodie "Foodstagram" contest and one-for-one deals through the mall's own app. Shoppers can also follow the journey of local food blogger, Miss Tam Chiak, as she explores ION Orchard's treasure trove of dining options. **ION Orchard, 2 Orchard Turn.** [ionorchard.com](http://ionorchard.com)



## SPORTS & FITNESS



### Runninghour 2016 (10 JUL)

After a successful launch last year, this run is back with more exciting elements to celebrate its meaningful cause. With the goal of integrating people with special needs into the community through sports, this is the first and only mass running event in Singapore where participants run alongside visually, intellectually and physically challenged runners. **Angsana Green, East Coast Park.** [runninghour2016.com](http://runninghour2016.com)  
[rozann@asiapwerkz.com](mailto:rozann@asiapwerkz.com)

### The Mizuno Ekiden Race (16 JUL)

The race returns for a second instalment this month, with runners set to compete against the clock, running from one station to the next within a specific time. Runners, supporters and members of the public can look forward to the Matsuri race village, where they can enjoy Japanese gourmet foods and cultural activities. **The Promontory at Marina Bay.** [mizunoekiden.sg](http://mizunoekiden.sg)



### Singapore International Triathlon (16-17 JUL)

If you want to test your physical ability and stamina, this event is for you: athletes from all over the world will participate in this three-stage cycling, running and swimming race. Or, head down to support them at **East Coast Park.** [triathlonsingapore.org](http://triathlonsingapore.org)

### Pocari Sweat Run 2016 (23 JUL)

Returning for the fifth consecutive year, the Pocari Sweat Run has a special mission for runners in 2016: to complete the final leg of Pocari Sweat's 380,000 journey to the moon. Run either 5km or 10km, with each step contributing to the moon mission. Registration closes on 1 July and supporters are welcome. **The Float @ Marina Bay.** [pocarisweatrun.com](http://pocarisweatrun.com)

### Yoga at Open Farm Community (27 JUL)

Beat Mondayitis with a yoga session at the lovely Open Farm Community and be more calm and relaxed for the rest of the week. Mondays, 7pm to 8pm; \$35 per session or \$300 for 10 sessions. For more information and registration, email [yoga@saakalya.com](mailto:yoga@saakalya.com). **Open Farm Community, 130 E Minden Road, Dempsey Hill.** [openfarmcommunity.com](http://openfarmcommunity.com)





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## DANCE, DRAMA & THEATRE

### Cameron Mackintosh's *Les Misérables* (UNTIL 17 JUL)

Set in 19th-century France, *Les Misérables* is the unforgettable story of heartbreak, passion and the resilience of the human spirit, and has become one of the world's most popular musicals. Tickets from Sistic. **Esplanade Theatre.**

### Lucerne Symphony Orchestra (3 JUL)

One of Switzerland's oldest and most popular orchestras is making its way to Singapore. With soloist Khatia Bunianishvili and conductor James Gaffigan, this is a concert not to be missed. Tickets from Sistic. **Esplanade Concert Hall.**

### A Little Nightmare Music (7 JUL)

Classical music not your thing? This show may make you think again. It's filled with virtuosity, enchanting music and outrageous humour, as the nightmares of the musicians unfold. Tickets from Sistic. **Victoria Theatre, 11 Empress Place.**



### Every Singaporean Daughter (15-17 JUL)

*Every Singaporean Daughter* aims to bring the untold narratives of women living in Singapore to the stage. Its writers spent more than six months crowd-sourcing stories from various walks of life, for an honest theatrical presentation of the current issues faced by women here. **KC Arts Centre, 20 Merbau Road. unsaidsg.peatix.com**

### Wild Rice: Singapore Theatre Festival 2016 (30 JUN - 24 JUL)

An event dedicated to celebrating contemporary Singaporean theatre. Head along to enjoy hilarious, heart-breaking, witty and whimsical works that showcase new and original local writing. **Lasalle College of the Arts, 1 McNally Street. singaporetheatrefestival.com**

### Selena Gomez Revival Tour (27 JUN)

Selena Gomez made her mark in entertainment by conquering film, music and television at an early age. As a recording artist, she has sold over 45 million copies of her songs worldwide and most recently released her album *Revival* to critical acclaim. The album debuted at number one in the US and features singles "Same Old Love" and "Hands to Myself". **Singapore Indoor Stadium. sportshubtix.sg**



## FAMILY

### ISS Summer School Discovery (4-29 JUL)

Your kids could be building the next gen of cyborgs, creating a masterpiece in papier-mâché or directing their very own blockbuster movie. A range of activities with an emphasis on discovery are on offer at this exciting summer school, aimed at children four to 18 years old. Each day has been designed as a learning journey, with mornings of language immersion and afternoons filled with hands-on experiences in science, technology, arts, crafts and sports. **ISS International School, Paterson Campus, 25 Paterson Road. isssummer.edu.sg | summerschool@iss.edu.sg**

### Camp Asia Summer Camp (13 JUN - 2 AUG)

Bookings are now open for summer camp at Stamford American International School. Camp Asia has a wide selection of holiday camps including Multi-Activity, Super Soccer, Super Chef, Drama Academy, Mad World of Science and more, for children aged three to 16 years. **Stamford American International School. campasia.asia | info@campasia.asia**

### Courses at Expat Kitchen (7-28 JUL)

As ever, this renowned cookery school has a host of courses to choose from this month, including Gluten Free Baking, Vegetarian, Curry Club, Vietnamese and Fish Frenzy. Now, get that apron on! **9 Norris Road #02-01. expat-kitchen.com**

### Kids Camps at Expat Kitchen (13-27 JUL)

This culinary playground, designed for children of all ages, covers essentials such as handling food and eating healthily. Children will learn to whip up age-appropriate recipes with experienced industry trainers, while mastering mixing, measuring, kneading and, of course, tasting! **9 Norris Road #02-01. expat-kitchen.com**

### First Code Academy (UNTIL 29 JUL)

Coding seems very *en vogue* at the moment and is said to aid in building creativity, computer skills and logical thinking. Encourage your kids to learn coding this school holiday with these innovative kids' camps in Scratch, mobile app development, web programming and more! **#04-13 Stamford Court, 61 Stamford Road. hellogsg@firstcodeacademy.com | firstcodeacademy.com**



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## ART

### Multifarious Solo Exhibition by Si Jae Byun (UNTIL 3 JUL)

Si Jae Byun's paintings are influenced by subjects as diverse as construction sites and chromosomes, but her main interest is in the co-existing realities these objects can suggest: inside and outside, physical space and psychological space, and the natural and man-made worlds. **Chan Hampe Galleries**. 328 North Bridge Road, #01-21. [chanhampegalleries.com](http://chanhampegalleries.com)

### The Wormhole Art Show (6 JUN - 17 JUL)

The Wormhole is the sequel to Hyperdimension from the Tales of Pao narrative, created by art and design studio Aheeoee. A Machiya has come through a wormhole and landed in the centre of Liang Court! What will it look like? Head to this unique show to find out. **Liang Court Level 2 Event Space**. [dorcas@ahoeoe.info](mailto:dorcas@ahoeoe.info)

### A Legend Begins (19-22 JUL)

During this performance, students can learn about traditional Chinese instruments: woodwind, percussion, bowed strings and plucked strings. This play tells the story of the legendary founder of Singapore, Sang Nila Utama, and features live traditional Chinese music. **Recital Studio, The Esplanade**. [esplanade.com](http://esplanade.com)

### Christianity in Asia: Sacred Art and Visual Splendour (26 MAY - 11 SEP)

The world's first exhibition on the history and spread of Christianity through Asia presents 150 fascinating artworks spanning 800 years. The rare and priceless objects come from over 20 institutions in six countries. Ticket prices vary. **Asian Civilisations Museum**. 1 Empress Place. [acm.org.sg](http://acm.org.sg)



## HOME



### Lilytopia Floral Display (3 JUN - 10 JUL)

This stunning floral display is the fourth in a series of music-themed floral displays at Gardens by the Bay. Embark on a musical odyssey around the world and celebrate the harmony of nature as the Gardens' floral displays come to life to the beat of *taiho* drums, the retro tunes of the jukebox and the pulsating rhythms of tribal dance. **Flower Dome, Gardens by the Bay**, 18 Marina Gardens Drive. [gardensbythebay.com.sg](http://gardensbythebay.com.sg)

### Lasalle College of the Arts: Short Courses (UNTIL 27 JUL)

Lasalle offers short courses with one of the widest range of personal development and enrichment classes in Southeast Asia, comprising over 80 classes across a broad spectrum of subjects. The classes are designed for beginners and hobbyists. There will be no assessments, but personal exploration is highly encouraged. **1 McNally Street**. [admissions@lasalle.edu.sg](mailto:admissions@lasalle.edu.sg)

### From the Stacks: Highlights of a National Library (ALL MONTH)

Each year, the National Library holds a major exhibition – this year's showcases more than 100 rare artefacts dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries in Singapore. Many of these manuscripts, documents, maps, photographs and more are being displayed for the first time to the public. **National Gallery Library**, 1 St Andrew's Road. [nlb.gov.sg](http://nlb.gov.sg)



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# Plan Ahead



## SuperMom Bazaar 2016 (12-14 AUG)

This epic baby fair is held annually for new and expectant parents looking for really good deals, expert advice and support. Last year's bazaar featured over 200 exhibitors, 8,000 brands and 50,000 products for pregnancy and baby's first year – and this year's is shaping up to be just as big. **Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre.** [info@riseandshine-expo.com](mailto:info@riseandshine-expo.com)

## New Balance Run On Singapore (20 AUG)

Back again after its successful inaugural staging in 2015, this year's New Balance event will cover a longer distance of 7km as well as the 1km option. Are you ready to push yourself? Registration is already open for this, the seventh leg of a regional race series. **Gardens by the Bay (East).** [nbrunon.sg](http://nbrunon.sg)

## Puma Night Run Singapore (27 AUG)

This night race is set against the backdrop of the redeveloped Seletar Aerospace Park and includes new 6km and 12km routes along the fringe of Seletar Airport and through clusters of preserved black-and-white colonial houses. Up for grabs are prizes worth \$10,000, plus all participants will enter a lucky draw to receive attractive prizes, including a pair of return air tickets to Europe. **Seletar Aerospace Park.** [puma-nightrun.com.sg](http://puma-nightrun.com.sg)

## Rise & Shine Festival 2016 (12-14 AUG)

Explore, learn and have lots of fun at one of Asia's biggest enrichment and play festivals. Three days of educational entertainment will surely keep the kids busy! **Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre.** [marketing@riseandshine-expo.com](mailto:marketing@riseandshine-expo.com)

## More Than Monkeys Exhibition (7 MAR – 25 SEP)

In honour of the Year of the Monkey, the Singapore Philatelic Museum is showcasing an exhibition designed for children and families, to explore the world of our primate friends through stamps (there are 300 on display!) and other philatelic materials, plus puzzles and various educational activities. **Singapore Philatelic Museum, 23-B Coleman Street.** [spm.org.sg](http://spm.org.sg)

## Van Cleef & Arpels, the Art and Science of Gems Exhibition (UNTIL 14 AUG)

This unique show explores the relationship between the science of mineralogy and the art of crafting the finest jewellery and gems. Over 450 pieces of jewellery selected from the Van Cleef & Arpels Collection are on display over seven themes: couture, abstractions, influences, precious objects, nature, ballerinas and fairies, and icons. **Marina Bay Sands.** [marinabaysands.com](http://marinabaysands.com)

## Annie (24 AUG – 4 SEP)

One of the world's best-loved musicals comes to Singapore this month, so book early! Feast your eyes and ears on classics such as "Tomorrow", "It's a Hard Knock Life" and "Easy Street". Follow the story of little orphan Annie and her orphanage friends, and discover how she escapes from the clutches of the horrid Miss Hannigan! Tickets from Sistic. **Mastercard Theatre, Marina Bay Sands.**

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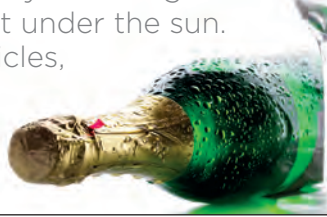
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# LETTERS

## Best Letter

We want to hear from you! Send us your thoughts on the magazine, or on any subject under the sun. For his thoughts on one of our articles, **Yum Shoen Liang** wins a bottle of champagne.



## Hellfire Corner

I refer to Amy Brook-Partridge's article "Homes with a Story", in the May 2016 issue of *Expat Living*, in particular Beverley's reference to the location of "Hellfire Corner". In Jonathan Cooper's book, *Tigers in the Park*, the location of Hellfire Corner was actually at the junction of Sime Road and Lornie Road, not Adam Park.

It is so named because the Japanese artillery targeted that exposed area, making it particularly hazardous to cross.

Beverley is correct in that the Adam Park area up to Peirce-MacRitchie was the scene of very heavy fighting up to the British surrender. The Cambridgeshire Regiment was in defensive position around Adam Park while the Suffolk Regiment was around Bukit Brown.

Coincidentally, another article in the same issue, "From Belgium with Love", also referred to another battle site that is similarly described in *Tigers in the Park*.

Yum Shoen Liang



Heart-warming words from our fabulous intern, **Natasha Kadarusman**:

"Interning at EL has been such an amazing experience for me. I learnt a lot of things, like how much effort and time it *actually* takes to put a print magazine together and maintain a website at the same time!

Also, interning here meant that I got to read a lot of content. Whether it was about 'things to do in Singapore' or 'why I need a beauty oil in my skincare routine', I learnt something new every day.

The magazine really does reflect the people who work behind it. Everybody is super nice, smart, and loves what they do: making EL such a great read. I am very grateful for the experience I had with them all."

**Ed:** Thanks for highlighting the correct location of Hellfire Corner! Turn to page 46 in this issue to find Amy's profile interview with Jon Cooper, reflecting on his legacy as he prepares to leave Singapore.

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### Reader photo of the month

Frankitas clutches posted by @willowandhuxley



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# HOME & PROPERTY

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**Home Showcase:** Design Intervention's Andrea Savage lets us in to her stunning home



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**Black & Whites:** Jon Cooper discusses the importance of battlefield archaeology

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**Sitting Style:** Find out why these readers chose their stylish seats

65

**Shopping:** Feast your eyes on our roundup of living room home designs



# What's New



Hello Kitty!  
Nab some second-hand style from Hock Siong – find out more on p.56

## Time for Tea

Add some Swedish sophistication to your teatime with this new collection from **kikki.K Homewares**. The range incorporates natural wood, speckled matt porcelain and polished brass. The simple and stylish pieces include teapots, cups and milk jugs, as well as vases, wooden trays and a glass water-bottle with cup. The collection is available at **kikki.K, ION Orchard, shop 44-46, B2** and **kikki-k.com**.



### Singapore Style

Check out these fun designs from **Little Red Dot Cushions**. Using Singapore-centric designs, the range includes cushions, tea towels, placemats and aprons. The company's online store has recently launched, so head to **littlereddotcushions.com** to browse the products and pick up a gift or two.



### Club Street Cool

Lifestyle boutique **Vanilla Home** has opened a new showroom at **63 Club Street**, showcasing its range of home décor, including hand-cut crystal glasses from Germany, sterling-silver picture frames, leather trays and lamps from Italy. And don't miss the "jewel box", where Porta Romana lamps and chandeliers are on show in the central atrium.



### Designer Décor

Encouraging innovation in new design, **Louis Vuitton** has commissioned established and emerging designers to create a collection of travel-inspired objects, Objets Nomades. Consisting of prototypes, limited editions and unique objects, the collection includes lamps, a bed and this hammock, by Atelier Oi. To find out more, head to **louisvuitton.com**.







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# Tips on Arrival

**Property Guru's** CHANG HUI CHEW passes on five pieces of advice for expat arrivals looking for a home.

## 1 Look for properties close to public transport

Singapore has some of the world's highest prices for cars, and it may not be worth buying one when you first arrive. While Uber, Grab and the various taxi services are convenient, living close to a transportation hub like an MRT station means easier, cheaper access to almost anywhere you need to go.

## 2 Consider the taxman if you're thinking of buying

If you're contemplating buying rather than renting, remember to account for taxes and duties. Foreigners need to pay a 15 percent "additional buyer's stamp duty", on top of the three percent for regular stamp duties. Selling the property within five years will also cost you up to another 16 percent in "seller's stamp duties".

## 3 Do your homework before viewing properties

Many property websites, including ours, will indicate price trends for the area in which you're looking to buy or rent. Check them out and use them as a starting point to negotiate with your

landlord or seller. It's a tenants' and buyers' market now, so it's definitely a good time to be looking for property.

## 4 Understand what is usually provided when renting a unit

Most condo rentals here come "partially furnished". This is commonly understood to mean that the kitchen will have cabinets, a refrigerator and a stove with a ventilation hood. Light fixtures, bathroom fixtures and curtains are also part of the deal. A washer and a dryer might not be included, although you can always request them from the landlord. Some tenants request items such as television sets and beds, but these are not generally provided.

## 5 Negotiate for short tenures and favourable exit clauses

For new arrivals in Singapore who aren't sure about which area they want to live in, we suggest requesting a shorter lease tenure. Typically, landlords would like to lock your agreement in for two years, but there's no harm checking to see if options are available. You can also negotiate for a no-penalty notice period if you want to walk out of the lease before it expires.

### Five popular expat areas

- *Marine Parade and Joo Chiat:* Highlights of these neighbourhoods include easy access to the beach at East Coast Park, quaint Peranakan shophouses and a plethora of bars, restaurants and supermarkets.



- *Downtown Singapore:* Living in the downtown core, one is never far from nightlife, art galleries and museums.
- *Bukit Timah:* A sleepy enclave close to Orchard Road, Bukit Timah is popular with expats due to the variety of international schools in the area.
- *Tiong Bahru:* Singapore's hippest area, it juxtaposes Art Deco flats and eateries with chic bars and cafés.
- *Bishan:* Only a quick jog or bike ride away from MacRitchie Reservoir Park, this urban oasis is close both to nature and to city convenience. *ℳ*

For more information on searching for a home in Singapore, visit [propertyguru.com.sg](http://propertyguru.com.sg).





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# Savage Style



ANDREA SAVAGE's home oozes luxe style; unsurprisingly, since she's partner and project director at award-winning interior design house **Design Intervention**. She tells us how her home reflects her international background, and how she managed to create an apartment that is vibrant and eclectic downstairs, and contemporary and calming upstairs.

BY AMY BROOK-PARTRIDGE  
PHOTOGRAPHY JO ANN GAMELO







Who lives here:

Andrea Savage, husband Cameron and son Julian.

Country of origin:

Andrea was born in Kenya and grew up in Australia.

How long in Singapore:

16 years.

**Size of home:** 2,500 sq. ft, three bedrooms.

**Andrea's personal style:** Vibrant, eclectic, understated luxury.

**Style of home:** A reflection of the family's international background, the space is harmonious and uncluttered. Andrea's connections with both Africa and Australia are recurring motifs.



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The breakfast table is Andrea's favourite spot in the house, where she can fling the doors open and be right next to nature

From fashion model to interior designer and project director, to resident judge on the hit reality television show *The Apartment*, Andrea Savage is clearly a lady who can turn her hand to many a task. Her home in Mount Faber is one such project – having bought the property in 2013, she has since transformed it into a family home that combines their heritage with her own innate sense of style and design.

Explaining why she picked the three-bedroom, two-storey condo on the West Coast, she points to the proportions of older buildings as a big draw. “Older properties can be graceful and spacious, and the interior architecture is often interesting, featuring attractive creative design elements – I love the French doors and arched windows upstairs, for

example. Older buildings are also structurally sound and maintain their quality despite their age.”

With the bones of the property in good condition, Andrea set about gutting every single room – the plan was to use motifs from her background to link the two very differently designed floors. “We love cooking and entertaining, so the kitchen had to be open-plan to facilitate conversation when needed, but also to be able to allow for privacy for more formal occasions.”

In contrast to the dramatic and glossy elements of the downstairs living area, the bedrooms and study have a softer, calmer palette, sharing neutral tones, textured materials and lacquered finishes. “The clean lines have a more contemporary Art Deco vibe, elegant and chic yet still with great visual appeal.”



Fornasetti's sun motif wallpaper injects a wow factor into the bar area.



## Glamour on the ground

As soon as you enter Andrea's home you're hit with the luxurious playfulness of the place, from the marble herringbone flooring to the Fornasetti umbrella wallpaper. The wallpaper's palette of pink, mustard, purple and cobalt reinforces the key accent colours.

From the hallway you enter the open-plan living, dining and bar area. Most of the furniture and furnishings are bespoke, apart from a few items such as the zebra dining chairs, the Platner coffee table and the art. Using a wide mix of textiles, including silk and velvet, in a variety of rich colours that contrast against the natural backdrop of the tree canopy outside, Andrea has created a unique living space. "My favourite spot is the breakfast table here – it's a small table for two; and when we fling open the French doors, it's heaven!"



**"I love our home! It's different, vibrant yet calm, fun yet sophisticated, serious yet quirky"**

Although the bar area integrates with the living and dining areas, its colour palette marks it apart from the other areas with dramatic effect. Gold, black and animal print mixes with sun motifs – just the right combination of warmth and glamour. The space under the stairs houses the wine fridge, ice machine and integrated bar fridge.

The marble herringbone flooring unifies the living areas with the kitchen, a relatively small space with no natural light. To overcome this, Andrea added a special-effect blue Venetian plaster ceiling and mirrored cabinetry to increase the light and space.

## Upstairs allure

The cobalt blue in the kitchen continues on the staircase walls, alongside a bespoke carpet that names Andrea's family members and the countries they've lived in, from childhood to present day. When you reach the upstairs floor it's clear that the colour palette has changed. The study set into the landing area has palm-leaf wallpaper, and Andrea's love of African print is evident in the repetition of zebra hide on the table top, with bespoke gold trim.

Then there's the serene master bedroom. "We wanted our room to be more contemporary but calm and sumptuous at the same time, and still





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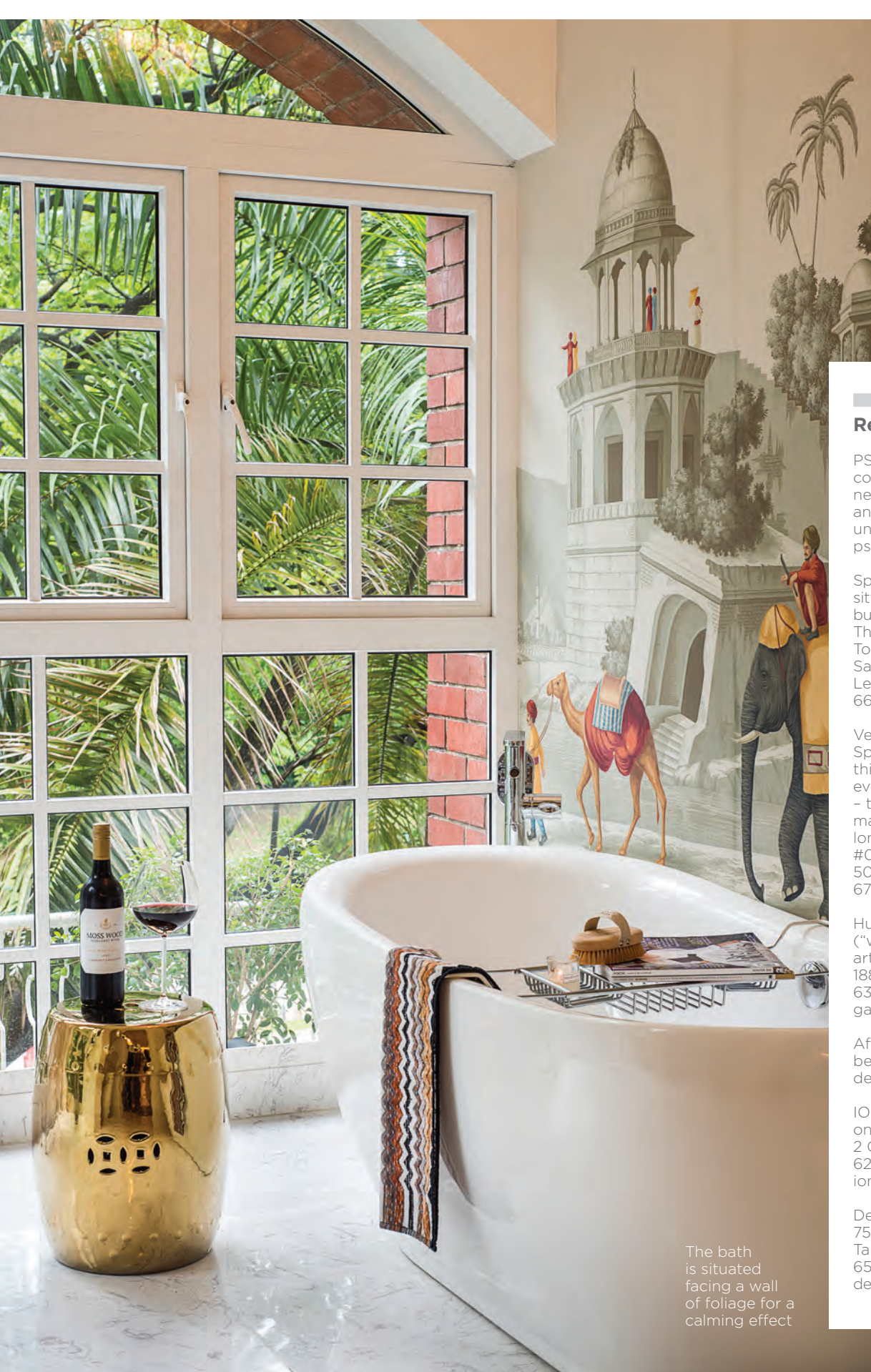


**“Older properties can be graceful and spacious, and the interior architecture is often interesting”**

have the elements of restrained opulence.” To achieve this, velvet drapes frame the arched windows, and a white fur throw at the base of the bed and the multi-buttoned velvet headboard add a sensuous and tactile element. Gold tones are echoed through the wallpaper and bedside tables. The television is also neatly hidden in a customised cabinet, which sits beyond the foot of the bed – at the press of a button it appears and disappears.

It comes as no surprise that Andrea is very happy with her own home project. “I love our home! It’s different, vibrant yet calm, fun yet sophisticated, and serious yet quirky.” *el*





## Recommendations

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pscafe.com

Spago ("lovely - like sitting on a mountain top, but a sophisticated one! The décor is great too")  
Tower 2 Marina Bay Sands,  
Level 57  
6688 9955

Vedure Face, Body & Nail Spa ("I've been going to this spa for years and every service is amazing - their pedicures and manicures last the longest")  
#04-06 Wheelock Place,  
501 Orchard Road  
6732 6448 | vedure.com

Huue Gallery Crystal ("wonderful selection of art")  
188 Bukit Timah Road  
6334 2805  
galleryhuue.com

Africa ("this has to be a top bucket-list destination")

ION Orchard ("still is a one-stop shop")  
2 Orchard Turn  
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ionorchard.com

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designintervention.com.sg

The bath is situated facing a wall of foliage for a calming effect





# Battlefields of the Black-and-Whites



BY AMY BROOK-PARTRIDGE

The 19 black-and-white houses of Adam Park were the backdrop to some of the heaviest fighting in Singapore during World War II. **The Adam Park Project (TAPP)**, set up by JON COOPER in 2009, has been instrumental in highlighting the importance of battlefield archaeology to Singapore's history and heritage. Having spent the last seven years unearthing an array of battlefield artefacts, Jon is now preparing to return to Scotland with his wife, Alison, for her job. He tells us what he hopes to leave behind.

**Last time we spoke to you, back in 2012, you mentioned that finding a mural in one of the houses that had been used as a wartime POW chapel would be a particular focus of TAPP. What progress have you made?**

The mural is the cherry on the icing on the cake for Adam Park. After six years of research, a discovery of a post-war aerial photograph identified the bombed-out building shown in the contemporary sketches of the chapel house as being 11 Adam Park. The next question was whether the murals had survived; this work would break the bank and extend the project, but had to be done. A private sponsor who had been hooked on the story after helping with the metal detecting stepped in, and we were able to engage a conservation team (Maek Consulting) that set about stripping the paint layers in search of the mural.

Finally, we managed to uncover the remains of the mural in March of this year. It was wonderful to see Padre Andrew's work revealed again after 74 years, and more importantly to show indisputable evidence that the chapel did exist.



### What have been the highs and lows of your work here?

TAPP has been about realising the potential for battlefield heritage in Singapore, and the 2012 exhibition at the National Library was the first time Singapore had revisited its World War II battlefields through archaeology. While it was humbling to see how the artefacts could be put on display, the exhibition was always a temporary event. Fortunately, the archaeology continued to come out of the ground – literally in bucket loads at times – and the word went out that other sites nearby might also yield a treasure trove of WWII memorabilia. Other heritage organisations and WWII enthusiasts came forward to request help and guidance, and we were able to share methodologies, survey results and research material.

The biggest disappointment was to witness the destruction of Hill 130, Bukit Brown, and all the defences built by the 4th Suffolks. We may have also lost the last traces of the mortal remains of men who went missing on that site. The government did allow a team on the site to look for the remains, but resources and time were woefully inadequate.

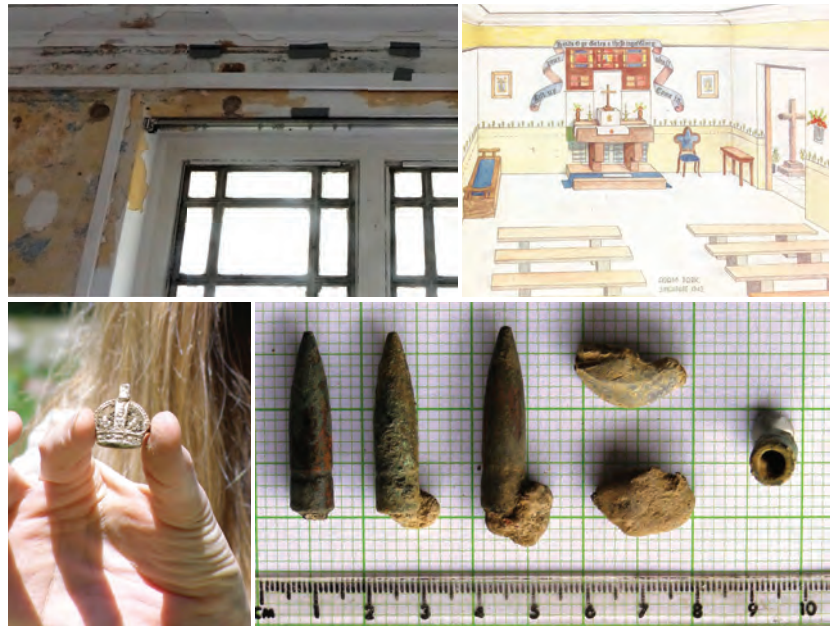
My greatest memory is of taking Private Jack Jennings, 1st Battalion Cambridgeshires, around his battlefield some 74 years after he had fought there. We ended up finding the location of the trench from which he emerged after three days of combat and surrendered to the Japanese. Jack said he had only come this one last time because he knew we were doing the work; I was so honoured to be sharing these memories.

### What are your plans for once you return home to Scotland?

I hope to complete my 16th-century projects, replicating what we have done in Singapore on a series of Scottish sites. I've worked hard to develop a cradle-to-grave approach to the development of the battlefield sites, from the research and onsite surveys to designing and curating the virtual museums, writing the books, leading the education packages and developing the tourism potential. Hopefully, I can take all this experience and put it to good use protecting sites in the UK, and I will undoubtedly return to Singapore in the future.

### What happens to TAPP now?

It was always the plan to bring the work to a conclusion and to break up the project team. We have concentrated on things we could guarantee to deliver, such as books and websites, and hope the momentum



#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Uncovering the mural; a sketch of the original Withers Payne Chapel; pieces of ammunition; King's Crown badge found in 16 Adam Park

generated by these initiatives will persuade other organisations to join in, knowing that much of the hard background work has been completed.

I'm hoping to establish a WWII Heritage Society in Singapore, where a group of like-minded individuals can gather to discuss and coordinate the protection, upkeep and development of battle sites across the country. It would act as a platform for discussion and a coordinator of WWII-themed heritage work. I hope the team would be seen as the Centre of Excellence for the research and development of WWII heritage sites.

### History Book

As part of his Singapore swansong, Jon has written a book, *Tigers in the Park*, which focuses on the Adam Park estate over one year and gives a snapshot of Singapore's history in 1942 through the windows and from the verandahs of the houses. The book has been developed alongside a virtual museum that is part of the TAPP website, and readers are encouraged to go through the book with one eye on the website.

"It's a tribute to all the men who fought in the battle or served time there as POWs, as well as the civilians who lived and worked on the estate. I hope they're happy with the account," says Jon. *EL*

For more details about TAPP, head to [adamparkproject.com](http://adamparkproject.com); to buy the book, go to [ethosbooks.com](http://ethosbooks.com).





**How long in Singapore:** David moved from Hong Kong 20 years ago.

**Size of home:** Three-storey shophouse.

**Personal style:** Eclectic, which is also reflected in the house's décor.

**Favourite pieces:** His Adam Neate artwork, and his collection of bulldog-themed accessories.



# Eclectic Fantastic



It's not uncommon for the son of an army chaplain to live away from home. DAVID POWE hails from the UK, but he called Cyprus, Malta, Germany and Japan home as a child, before attending boarding school. It's no wonder that his style tastes lean heavily towards the eclectic.

BY AMY BROOK-PARTRIDGE  
PHOTOGRAPHY KEN TAN





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“I can’t say there was any sitting down and thinking about what I was trying to create here,” says David of his Blair Road shophouse. Inherited family pieces are mixed with an impressive collection of artwork and Asian décor. Then there are the bulldogs, which pop up all over the place, including his beloved pet Daisy who passed away and is pictured on a plate, and the figurine collection in the master bedroom. The whole house shouts fun, reflecting David’s personality.

As we sit in the back courtyard area, David admits the house can be dark and a little gloomy. To combat this, the courtyard roof was reworked, creating a lighter area to have coffee in the morning and drinks

in the evening, complete with fishpond. The front living room and dining room are mostly used for entertaining; it’s upstairs, in the second living room, where David spends much of his time.

A self-described history buff, David’s location in the Tanjong Pagar area means he’s well placed to indulge his interest. “The area is known to have housed minor officials. The other end of the street was built in the 19th century, but the houses at this end were built in the 1920s, so this one isn’t even 100 years old. Having fallen into tough times, the street really only started to become gentrified in the 1970s.” Now, most of the houses on the street have benefited from extensive renovations, adding light and modern functionality.







The multi-layered composition on the wall by the window, Ship of Fools by Adam Neate, is one of David's favourites



Rather than hanging paintings on both sides of this wall, David used wallpaper to brighten the area up. The glass door of the bathroom at the end features paper that lights up at night.







## Putting down roots

Arriving in Singapore from Hong Kong in 1996, David switched from a career in banking to setting up a financial services executive search company, a brave move in the midst of the Asian financial crisis. "I just didn't want to be a manager, particularly when it came to firing people, and there was a lot of that at the time." As time went by and David realised that his company, Strategic Search Partners, was a viable business, he then had the confidence to look into buying a property.

Initially, he considered a house on Keong Saik Road ("until a giant rat ran past the front door"). He knew of Blair Road through a friend who lived there. "I went round and thought, wow! – if I could ever afford it I would love to live here." Having bought at the lower end of the market, David says he's never regretted it from a financial point of view. "I'd highly recommend buying property here if you can do it – once you acquire something and commit to it, it becomes a real anchor to living in Singapore. It was a good decision and has definitely added to the quality of my life."

It's not just setting up his own business and purchasing property that have been sound decisions for David; he also has an eye for art, although he is at pains to say that he buys for love and not for investment. He began bolstering his collection in Hong Kong, with two particular paintings that have gone up significantly in value. However, when he moved to Singapore he didn't realise just how much of an effect the climate would have on them, and he ended up selling one piece to save it from ruin. Now the living room is home to some of the larger pieces in his collection and is consistently air-conditioned to protect them.

The walls in Bulldog House, as David has named it, are covered with pictures, paintings and décor pieces. They range from paintings reminiscent of the Old Masters, to multimedia contemporary works and Asian-influenced accessories. Then there are the splashes of bright colour – bright pink in the downstairs living room, hot red upstairs and a bright mural in the courtyard outside. The house may have some dark nooks and crannies here and there, but with such a mix of aesthetics David has managed to create a warm and exciting home that the word eclectic doesn't quite cover.





## Recommendations

Cure ("what the chef manages to create is truly delicious")  
21 Keong Saik Road  
6221 2189  
[curesingapore.com](http://curesingapore.com)

Le Carillon de L'Angelus  
24 Ann Siang Road  
6423 0353  
[lecarillondelangelus.sg](http://lecarillondelangelus.sg)

Fullerton Bay Hotel  
("for cocktails")  
80 Collyer Quay  
6333 8388  
[fullertonbayhotel.com](http://fullertonbayhotel.com)

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# Secondhand Story

BY AMY BROOK-PARTRIDGE  
PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL BERNABE

A mere five-minute walk from the offices of *Expat Living*, secondhand furniture store **Hock Siong & Co** is a gem for those in search of a bargain. We sit down with manager BRILLYN TOH to find out why her father set up the business and how it has become a hipster haven.

## Who started Hock Siong and why?

It was set up by my father, Toh Chin Siong. From my grandparents' time, we were already a family of *karung guni* (rag and bone men) that collected old newspapers, clothing and electrical appliances from landed properties and HDB flats. However, with the competition of brand new yet cheap items from China, the *karung guni* business was facing its sunset. In 1998, during the Asian Financial Crisis, my father's business failed and he switched to buying used hotel furniture. From that time, we dealt in secondhand goods from the hotels such as furniture and kitchenware.

Other than our history of dealing with used items, we are in this business because we believe in recycling. The items from the hotels are good quality and usually still in good condition, and can therefore be reused or repurposed. We also believe in creating a better standard of living for our customers – some may not be able to afford brand new furniture of the same quality. At Hock Siong we aim to sell our customers good quality products at a fraction of the price so that they too can improve their quality of life.

## How have you seen the business grow, both in terms of size and popularity?

My father is a traditional Chinese businessman who is illiterate in English. When the business first started, our staff was predominantly loyal and hardworking, but found it difficult to communicate or market our products to a wider audience.

In 1994, when I was six years old, I started to follow my father around to collect newspapers and clothing from used-item collection points set up by the town council at the void decks (HDB ground-floor community spaces). As the eldest child, I witnessed how tough it was for my father to manage the business by himself over the years. After graduation, I decided to help him, and I initially began marketing our business through Facebook, which was a free and upcoming social media platform back then.

**“We aim to sell our customers good quality products at a fraction of the price, so that they too can improve their quality of life.”**



Since then we have managed to reach out to a wider crowd of customers who are English-speaking, and we're able to share with them our entrepreneurial spirit, our focus on recycling and also snippets of interesting old traditional business in Singapore. Slowly but surely we have been able to sell our products better and faster, and we're also able to create added value by expanding into up-cycling products.

Some of my customers tell me we are even becoming "hipster"! But, regardless of whether an aunty or uncle, or a young or old person walks through our doors, we're happy to serve them.

#### Where do you source your products?

Up to 80 percent of our products come from hotels and 20 percent from private owners. We buy good-quality wooden items from private owners who usually call or write in to us to tell us they have something to sell.

#### Secondhand stores aren't an unusual concept for expats, yet in Singapore it seems they are. Why?

It's because of the preconception that these secondhand items can only be second-best. The idea of recycling isn't strong in local culture, compared to Japan or the West. We are, however, confident that the idea of recycling and buying second-hand items is heading in a more positive direction. With the use of the internet and social media platforms, consumers are able to access information about the benefits of recycling, and to witness and be involved in the process of recycling and up-cycling.

#### Do you provide other services apart from retail?

One of our core services is the refurbishment and up-cycling of our products. We repaint and repurpose obsolete items such as television cabinets by customising them with shelves and making them suitable for current usage. We also provide free delivery for purchases above \$300.



#### What are some of your more unusual pieces of furniture or décor?

We have many, but the most unusual ones include two giant Liu Ruo Wang sculptures that are more than two metres tall. We also have an old-school scale, circa 1950s or 1960s, for weighing meat, and a Wahl standing hairdryer from the 1960s.

#### What are your plans for Hock Siong?

The spirit of Hock Siong is made up of products and people. Many customers tell me that they don't have something particular in mind – instead, they just come by the store to feel the vibe, chat with our staff and see what's in for the day; and they usually end up buying something.

My plans for the future include involving more of our Hock Siong community in the business. We recently set up two community events here, in collaboration with the students from the National Technological University (Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information). That really gave me the confidence in our strong support base to do more activities that will benefit our customers in the future. We like to think of ourselves as a *kampong* for our customers! *el*

153 Kampong Ampat  
6281 8338



# PERFECT Perches

Did you know that the *gluteus maximus* is the largest muscle in the body? Clearly it's important to rest that hard-working muscle, so why not do so on a great piece of furniture? Find out why these expats chose their sofas and chairs for some inspiration.

PHOTOGRAPHY KEN TAN

## Rie Ruby and Christian Stentoft, Danish

We recently moved to Singapore and, as this is our first home together, we wanted to invest in something that would stay with us for the long run. We were looking for a sofa with high quality and timeless design, with the versatility to fit into any home or living space. As we are both Danish, and Danish Design has a legacy of having the exact qualities we look for, it was a natural choice for us to track down the store in Singapore.

The customer experience was great. The staff were very helpful and flexible in delivering the sofa quickly, which was important to us. We bought the Eilersen Play Tower in a dust-green fabric. The beauty of this piece is that it's not just pleasing to the eye and very comfortable, it's also very functional. Not knowing where we might be living three years from now, the fact that it is both a sofa and a daybed makes it versatile and able to fit in anywhere. Its back support is made up of adjustable cushions, which is ideal for both sitting and cuddling up in. The service and selection at the Danish Design store was excellent, and we will definitely go back there.

Danish Design  
#06-03 Century Warehouse, 100E Pasir  
Panjang Road  
6270 8483 | [danishdesignco.com.sg](http://danishdesignco.com.sg)

The beauty of this piece is that it's not just pleasing to the eye and very comfortable, it's also very functional





**Olivier and Pascale Moreau, French (with sons Gabriel and Camille, daughter Garance and helper Cherrylou)**

We already had a sofa on our terrace but it didn't really fit, so we replaced it with tables and two chairs from Dreamweave. Our home is very modern and spacious, with the kitchen and dining area leading to the outdoor terrace. We wanted to recreate the space into a jungle-like green area with many plants, so it was important for the new furniture to be suitable for that.

We were lucky to find out about Dreamweave just by walking into Millenia Walk mall. The quality of their products is high, the prices are affordable and the colour of the chairs was exactly what we were looking for. Pascale and myself often sit on these chairs and have a drink when the kids are asleep, and our helper enjoys relaxing on them. The kids also love to play on them – we actually only bought



Dreamweave's furniture is perfect for our peaceful little jungle

one chair initially, but had to get another one because they fought over who got to sit in it!

We're definitely thinking of getting more chairs in the future, which guests will also appreciate. As for choosing what furniture to buy, it's important to think

about the atmosphere you want to create. For us, Dreamweave's furniture is perfect for our peaceful little jungle.

Dreamweave Concepts  
#01-34 Millenia Walk,  
9 Raffles Boulevard  
6333 1669 | dreamweaveconcepts.com

**Kim, Canadian, and Tom, American, with daughters Kacey and Sadie Hartwig**

When we moved to Singapore a few months ago, we needed to buy several pieces for our new place. We were looking

for a couch that would fit the space and give us maximum seating.

My friend had an amazing couch that was extremely spacious and comfortable. When I asked her about it, she referred me to Felicia at Gallery 278. After meeting

with Felicia, I was convinced that this was the perfect piece for us. It's a modular sofa that we can move around and make fit into any room. We were sold by its versatility. Felicia was extremely helpful when it came to choosing a colour, and also showed me how to put colours together to create different looks. I'm very pleased with the service provided and would recommend Felicia and Gallery 278 to anyone with questions regarding their décor needs.

The couch has become a favourite spot for everyone in the house. It's nice that we can all gather there at once. It's a wonderful place to have a movie night and has allowed us to spend more quality family time together. As we're settling in, I'm keeping Gallery 278 in mind for other pieces we may need. Thanks to Felicia, we were able to find everything we were looking for – style, comfort and versatility. Our tip is not to sacrifice any of your needs when looking for a couch!

Gallery 278  
278 River Valley Road  
6737 2322 | gallery278.com

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### Shoba Martin, Australian

"We already had two beautiful, traditional sofas that we had custom-made in Melbourne. Although they were still in excellent condition, their chenille covers felt too warm in the tropics. We wanted a fabric cooler to the touch, and so we sought out the Belgian linen from the House of AnLi. We read about it in *Expat Living* magazine – a wonderful resource!

We chose a natural colour, a lovely white fabric with a cool undertone and a tight linen weave. We're thrilled with the newly upholstered sofas and have recently bought more linen for cushions from the House of AnLi. The steel blue will coordinate beautifully with the new blue palette of the living room, as well as the new, vibrant and modern floral armchairs. I love Kit Kemp's interiors, and had her designs in mind when we coordinated our living room's makeover. During the entire fabric selection process, Panagiotis from House of AnLi was also patient and knowledgeable – truly a joy to work with.



"We are thrilled with the newly upholstered sofas and have recently bought more linen for cushions from the House of AnLi"

My advice is not to rush the planning. Try to get large swatches of the fabric during the selection stage and make sure you review the fabric in situ. I once made a horrible decision of buying upholstery fabric based on a small swatch, and regretted it from the

moment the chairs were delivered. Making a colour board is also helpful."

House of AnLi  
#03-13 Tanglin Mall,  
163 Tanglin Road  
6235 3851 | houseofanli.com

### Yvonne McNulty, Australian, with Mr Darcy on her lap and Bailey at her feet

"We were keen to replace our chocolate-brown sofa with one in a cooler hue to suit our new colour scheme. We needed a durable L-shaped sofa large enough for all four of us to sit comfortably. I also wanted a chaise, to make the room less cluttered.

I paid King Living a visit after I saw an advertisement in *Expat Living*. King Living is incomparable for quality, price and service. The staff know everything about the product, they listen to your needs, and ask sensible questions which you often don't think about until it's too late. The delivery men are also expertly trained and their service is like nothing else I've experienced in Singapore for the past 11 years.



"The dark granite colour is perfect for (sometimes messy) family living. The sofa is a dream come true for us and we love it"

We bought a Felix sofa with TouchGlide Technology and Gesture Control, designed for comfort with the Postureflex Seating system. Our Felix has smart pockets for the pocket accessory table and the sofa light, to hide all the cords away. The sofa's seating parts can be extended for more space. The fabric is protected from fungi, mould and mildew and is also water, oil and alcohol-repellent – absolutely essential as we live near the ocean. The dark granite colour is perfect for (sometimes messy) family living. The sofa is a dream come true for us and we love it.

My best advice is that less is more – go for fewer pieces, but ones of extraordinarily high quality. To save time, do the measuring at home and go to the showroom with a floor plan and dimensions."

King Living  
#01-00 Hong Aik Building,  
22 Kallang Avenue  
6805 4198 | kingliving.com.sg



"We have used OHMM since arriving in Singapore almost ten years ago, and the experience is always a pleasure"

**Paul, British, and Thi Liên, French, with children Joshua and Justine Margaillan**

"We were replacing an old sofa and wanted something stylish, clean and modern-looking that would fit into our space. It also needed to be convertible into a spare bed for occasional use.

We have used OHMM since arriving in Singapore almost ten years ago, and the experience is always a pleasure. Lilian and her team offer excellent but discreet service, allowing you time to ponder and form your own conclusions in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

Our new U-shaped sofa set with twin coffee tables was made to our exact size requirements. In our small conservatory-style room, it's important to gain as much seating as possible without feeling too cramped or claustrophobic. The result was exactly as we'd envisaged.

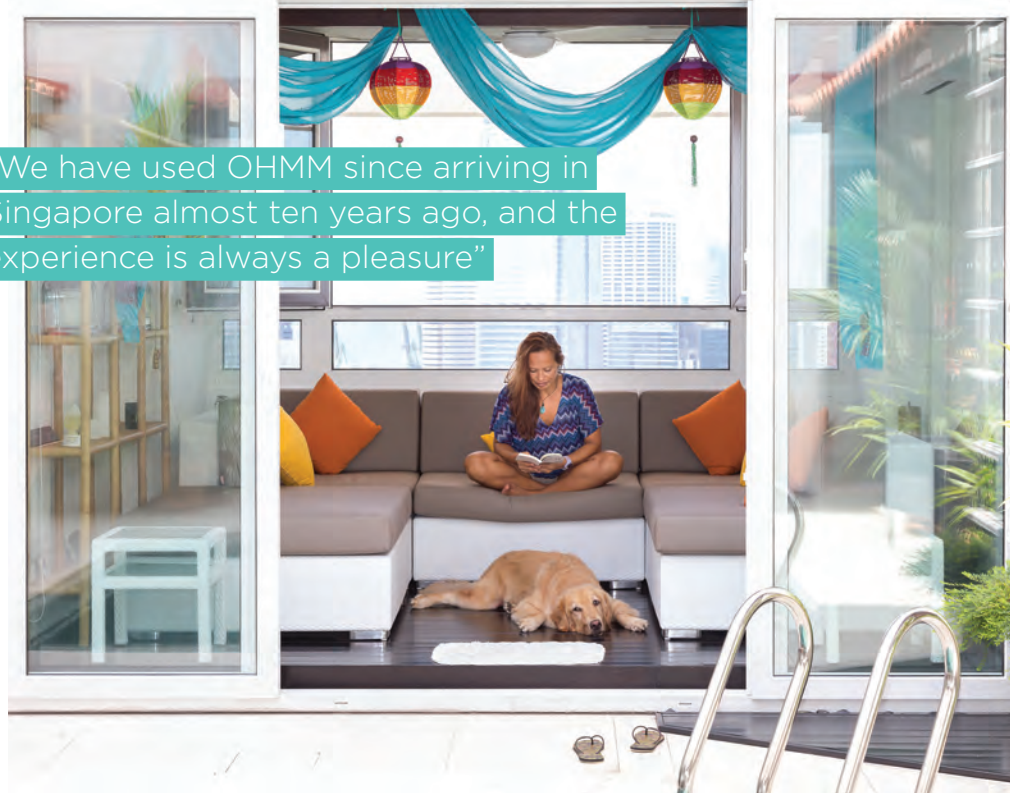
We also have an outdoor dining table and six chairs from OHMM on a lower-floor balcony. When the wood discoloured

slightly within a few months of purchase, OHMM was fantastic. They arranged for collection, left us a loan set and completely re-stained the wood, leaving it as good as new. Nobody could ask for better service than that!

It's important not to be rushed into a purchasing decision. Make sure you're buying exactly what you need and want, not

what the salesperson wants to sell you. At OHMM, you can always ask for something out of the ordinary or which is not displayed in the catalogues – they will usually find a way to satisfy your requests if at all possible."

OHMM International  
#03-09 Riverside Point,  
30 Merchant Road  
6836 2747 | ohmm.sg



**Tan Lee Lee, James Soh and daughter Soh Jing Wen, Singaporean**

"We were looking for a comfortable sofa that was easy to maintain. I knew of Pure Interior through my brother, who has worked with the boss Jestine on many projects. After they understood my style and budget, they did a presentation for the suitable furniture and overall left us very satisfied with their service.

"We are definitely enjoying the luxurious feel of the furniture in our new home!"



Besides the sofa and the armchair, we also got a coffee table, a dining lamp, a dining table and chairs, a circus night stand, a bed frame, a chaise longue, wall lamps, hanging lamps and a carpet. I was looking for soft, warm colours with a hint of fun. We chose furniture in earthy tones, with a splash of blue on the carpet and some gold detail on the sofa frame and the coffee table for a lavish touch. We are definitely enjoying the luxurious feel of the furniture in our new home!

As we've just moved in, we may consider purchasing more accessories from Pure Interior – perhaps a table or floor lamp and some plants. Many people tend to spend a lot of money on the carpentry work when it comes to interior design; but furniture and accessories play a very big part in making a house feel like a home, so they shouldn't be neglected. Home is where the heart is, and every little corner matters." *EL*

Pure Interior  
#01-01 Delta House,  
2 Alexandra Road  
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TORINO Large Corner Right



TORINO Chaise Right



TORINO Chaise Left



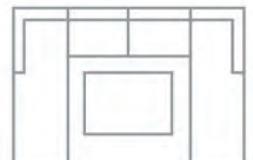
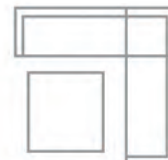
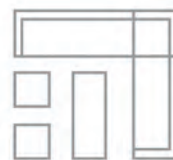
TORINO Large Corner Left

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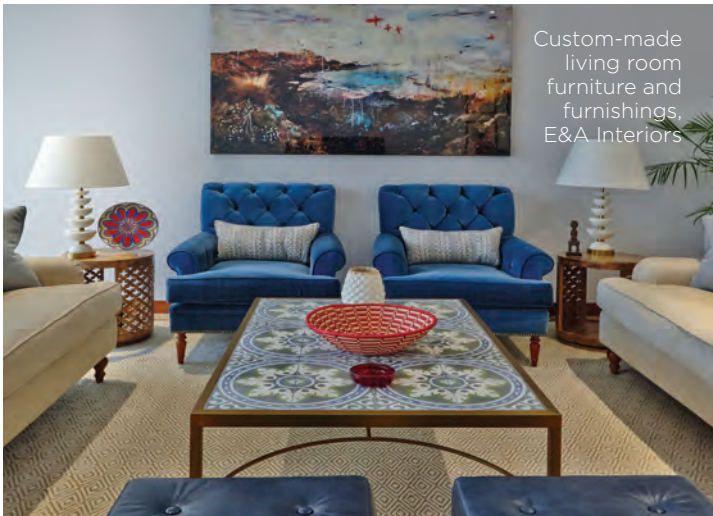
Design and build your lounge landscape with this Dacapo sofa, which comes in a variety of sections, Danish Design



# Living in Style

From sofas and armchairs to coffee tables and cushions, here's our roundup of living room furniture and furnishings in stores now.









Two-seater sofa  
in sand tones,  
Ethnicraft



Florentine Duomo three-seater sofa, Finn Avenue



Manchurian gate mirrored  
coffee table, Finn Avenue



Notre Monde  
nesting coffee  
table, Ethnicraft



Savoi sofa  
from Black  
Tie, Pure  
Interior



Cornwall three-  
seater sofa,  
Originals





Wendelbo  
Edge  
V2 sofa,  
Mountain  
Teak



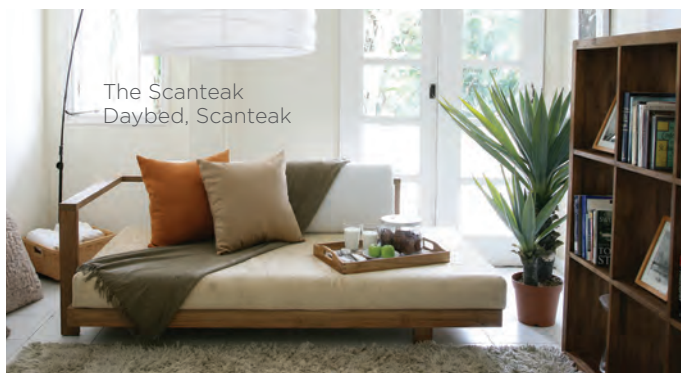
Swoon Chair,  
Danish Design



Italian-designed couture stitch and  
premium leather sofa, Lorenzo



Three-  
seater sofa,  
Taylor B



The Scanteak  
Daybed, Scanteak





Erato three-seater chaise in cream with oak legs, Galanga Living



Thalia chair, Galanga Living



King Cloud sofa, King Living



Baltimore white living room set, Teak & Mahogany



Latitude Lounge, OHMM



Quantum sofa in bronze, WTP



Natural wood shutters, Sunleaf Shutters



The Holm collection, Scantek





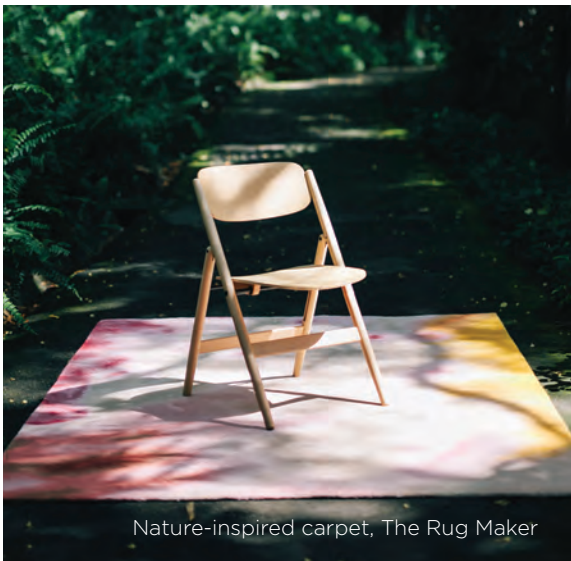
Pillows and  
throws,  
Gallery 278



Benson 1 coffee table, Arete Culture



Resin clam shell, Maissone



Nature-inspired carpet, The Rug Maker



Two-seater sofa and side  
console, Gallery 278





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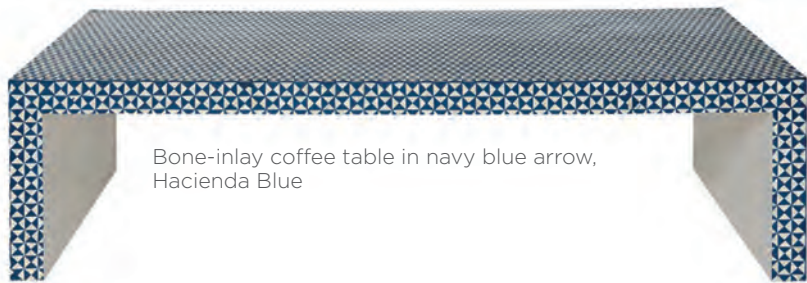
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table, Hacienda Blue



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House



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cushions,  
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Prato square nested coffee table, Originals



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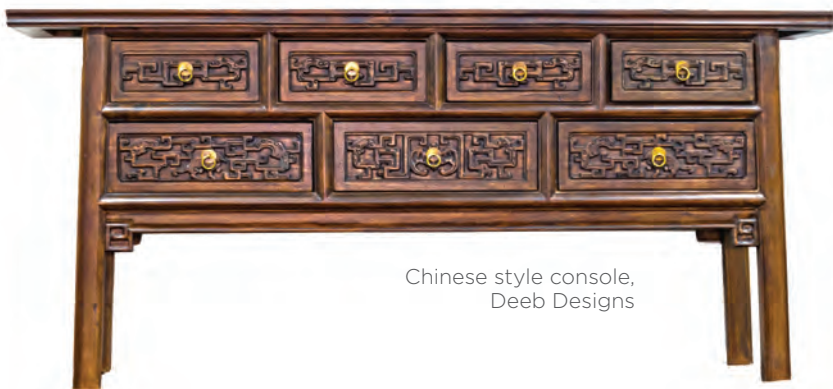
Solid suar wood coffee table, Woody Antique House



Animal cushions, House of AnLi



Solo coffee table, Rimba Gallery



Chinese style console, Deeb Designs



Ebony sofa set, Treasures of the Raj



# Directory



Silk cushions on a British colonial mahogany sofa, The Past Perfect Collection



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# STREET TALK

## AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO LIFE IN THEIR 'HOOD II

### THE SPECIFICS

**What street do you live on?**

Leonie Hill Road.

**Exact words you tell a taxi driver to get home?**

"Leonie Hill Road, off River Valley Road."

**Closest MRT station?**

Somerset or Orchard.

**How long have you lived here?**

In total, about ten years.

**Why here?**

Not only is it a very safe neighbourhood, but it's also easily accessible with multiple bus stops only a two-minute walk away and two MRT stations in close proximity. Plus, there is a load to do right around the corner. A five-minute walk takes you to Great World City (a big shopping mall), while a walk along the Singapore River and its range of restaurants is only one bus stop away. Lastly, Orchard Road is right around the corner.

### THE SCENE

**When you walk out of your place, the first thing you see is:**

Condo after condo after condo.

**The closest store to your front door is:**

Though it's only a five-minute walk to the closest supermarket, Cold Storage at Great World City, it's quicker if you have a bike, which I highly recommend for this area.

**Your street would make the perfect backdrop for a remake of:**

Nothing. I'm not saying that my street is boring, but it's not exactly "movie magic" material.

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

Construction noise from the site of a new condo being built next door.

**The unofficial uniform of your street is:**

Shorts and casual T-shirt is the usual attire, seeing as my area is quite relaxed.

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

Hop on the MRT. Only a few stops away are Chinatown, Bugis and Little India, areas known for culture, food and clothing. Often, too, the shopping is far cheaper than at the big malls.

**If you're missing home, you:**

Walk to the closest pub, Muddy Murphy's, for traditional fish and chips with my family.

**You'd swap houses in a second with:**

The penthouse in OUE Twin Peaks; it looks absolutely incredible with its stunning view and spacious living room.

**A common myth about your neighbourhood is:**

There isn't one, really. All I know is that it's packed with expats and you aren't likely to see many locals.

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

In all honesty, I don't think I've ever been woken up at night by loud noises – and that includes construction, because the work tends to stop around 7pm.

**A massive late-night rager on your street is likely to be to had by:**

Some of the teens living in the area!





**Name:** Hannah Bainbridge  
**From:** London, England  
**Occupation:** Student



## THE SUPERLATIVES

**Your favourite neighbourhood joint is:**

Tony's Pizza – the pizza is amazing, and it's a very short walk from my house.

**You won't find better local food than at:**

313@Somerset's Food Republic, which has the best chicken rice in Singapore. Also, this food court is one of the biggest I've seen, so you're almost always guaranteed a table.

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

A clown casually strolling down the street, which I found a bit out of the ordinary. But he turned out to be heading to a children's birthday party.

**We love a good bargain. The best deals in your neighbourhood are:**

Electronics store Best Denki, which has regular sales and discounts.

**The guiltiest pleasure in your area is:**

The massive condo swimming pool, where I waste my days tanning and relaxing, and the ice-cream shops that are only a five-minute walk away.

**One thing you'd never change is:**

The location of my home: it's central and accessible and there is much to do in the surrounding area.

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

The building sites. It ruins the whole vibe of the neighbourhood!

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

Repaint each building with a bit of colour; this would add a little individuality to the neighbourhood. *El*





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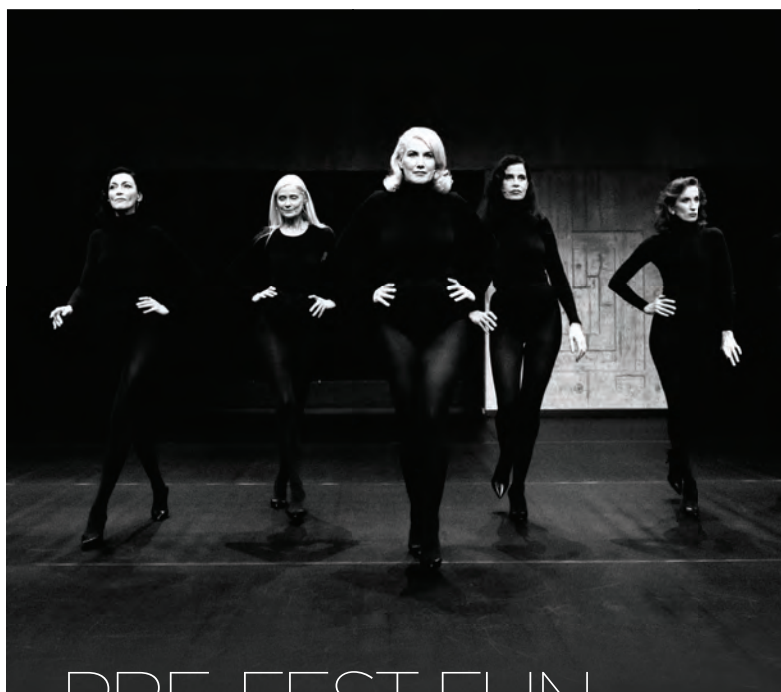
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**On the Page:** Get the scoop on some good reads



# On The STAGE

Here's what's happening on the Singapore stage this month



## PRE-FEST FUN

There's still time to take in performances at **The O.P.E.N.** (Open, Participate, Enrich, Negotiate) – Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) pre-festival, happening until 9 July. The event features a selection of talks, forums, film screenings (see page 90), exhibitions, concerts and other visual arts performances touching on this year's SIFA theme, "Potentialities", in a more casual and intimate setting than the main festival itself. Some highlights include *Models Never Talk* (7 to 9 July), in which runway models are given a voice, and *Ibsen: Ghosts* (6 to 8 July), a radical exploration of euthanasia. An O.P.E.N. pass is \$45 and gets you access to all programmes. For more information and ticketing, visit [sifa.sg/theopen](http://sifa.sg/theopen).

## AN EVENING ON BROADWAY

On 29 July, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) **Pops Concert: A Night on Broadway** will include a selection of tunes from *My Fair Lady*, *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music* and many more Broadway favourites, led by conductor Joshua Tan and featuring singer Rani Singam. See it at Esplanade Concert Hall. Tickets from Sistic. [sso.org.sg](http://sso.org.sg)



## SISTER ACT

Canadian indie-pop duo **Tegan and Sara** will grace The Star Theatre on 29 July with their Love You to Death Tour, featuring tracks like "Boyfriend", from their eighth studio album. The identical twins – who are both guitarists and pianists – are known for their indie folk-rock and synth-pop sounds. Tickets from Sistic. [livenationlushington.net](http://livenationlushington.net)



## THEATRE-FEST

Through 24 July, Lasalle College of the Arts (1 McNally Street) is the hub of **Wild Rice's Singapore Theatre Festival (STF)**, a celebration of contemporary Singaporean theatre. The line-up includes eight different plays written in and about Singapore that span different genres and forms – including the acclaimed *Hotel*, a two-part journey across time and history. Tickets from Sistic. To see the full schedule, visit [wildrice.com.sg](http://wildrice.com.sg).



## THE ART OF FIGHTING

From 13 to 24 July, 20 Shaolin monks, known for flawless fighting techniques that use Buddhist meditation, take the stage at MasterCard Theatres at Marina Bay Sands with a show that blends traditional Shaolin Kung Fu, careful choreography and see-it-to-believe-it physical theatre. Expect feats of physical endurance like handstands on two fingertips and breaking marble slabs with their heads. Tickets from Sistic. [baseentertainmentasia.com](http://baseentertainmentasia.com)



## Next month

### THE REAL DEAL

Grammy Award-winner **Kenny Rogers** brings his final world tour, *The Gambler's Last Deal*, to Singapore on 6 August, giving fans the opportunity to witness famous hits like "The Gambler", "Lucille" and "Lady" performed live. As a special treat, American country star Linda Davis will join the legendary Country Music Hall of Fame singer-songwriter on stage. See it at The Star Theatre. Tickets from Sistic. [unusual.com.sg](http://unusual.com.sg)



### ROCK ON

American alt-rock group **Weezer** heads to Singapore for a one-night-only concert at Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre on 15 August. Among the most popular bands to emerge in the post-grunge alternative rock era of the 90s, the group is known for infusing a quirky sense of humour into songs like "Buddy Holly", "Island in the Sun" and "Beverly Hills". Fans can expect to hear new singles like "King of the World" and "Thank God for Girls", plus other tunes from Weezer's latest *White Album*.



Then, on 16 August, American band **Panic! At the Disco** – led by frontman Brendon Urie – will take the stage at the same venue, bringing us its unique brand of alternative pop and rock sounds. Expect songs from the group's latest album, *Death of a Bachelor*, including "Hallelujah", "Emperor's New Clothes", "LA Devotee" and "Don't Threaten Me With a Good Time". Tickets from Sistic. [lamcproductions.com](http://lamcproductions.com)





# Classically Australian

A handful of the 94 members of the **Australian World Orchestra** (AWO) visited Singapore in April to perform a mesmerising musical prelude to their upcoming concert on 1 October. *Expat Living* sat down with AWO Conductor and Artistic Director ALEXANDER BRIGER and saxophonist CHRISTINA LEONARD, both of whom were unabashedly candid about how good this orchestra really is.

BY KATIE ROBERTS

At just five years old, the AWO is one of the world's youngest orchestras, but in its short time it has garnered some serious acclaim in international musical circles. These talented musicians have been led by some of the world's greatest conductors, including Sir Simon Rattle and Zubin Mehta, in performances in Australia and India. And now they're heading for Singapore.

This year, the conductor's baton has been handed to Alexander Briger – recently awarded the Order of Australia (AO) for services to the arts – who describes the AWO in a typically laconic Aussie way as a large group of musicians who are at the top of their game. “They have jobs performing in orchestras around the world, and they choose to come together once a year, as Australians, to play together,” he says.

The jobs he refers to stretch across more than 60 orchestras globally and include the Berlin Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Hong Kong Philharmonic. Alexander recounts experiences of running into Australians throughout the course of his conducting work. “One of numerous examples was in Dublin, when the principal violist came up to me in a break and said ‘G’day, mate!’ We all know each other, because the classical music world is tiny; it’s like a small country town.”

Christina Leonard agrees. “Often the musicians have grown up musically, and played in youth orchestras together; when we see each other there are hugs and tears, and we can’t wait to get back together and play.”







The AWO and Guest Conductor Sir Simon Rattle perform in Australia

Photo: Prudence Upton

“At the outset, the AWO was a dream,” adds Alexander. “Logistically, it seemed impossible, but everyone I asked to be involved said yes. In 2011, we pulled it together, it took off and we haven’t looked back. Our only difficulty is finding places for everyone who wants to play; there are so many musicians to choose from.”

And what music will they perform in Singapore? “We wanted to do some well known pieces that appeal to everyone, especially younger audiences,” he says. “So, we’ve included Ravel’s *Bolero*, which will feature Christina on saxophone. The second piece is a concerto for eight double basses – a first in classical music history – written by Australian composer Elena Kats-Chemin. Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony is the third, because it’s big, bold, brash and romantic, and represents the AWO and everything we are.”

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE SAXOPHONE

Christina Leonard plays a rose gold Yanagisawa saxophone and was the first Australian artist to be endorsed by the Japanese instrument-maker. Hailing from a small NSW country town, Christina says her father chose the saxophone for her.

“I started playing E-flat horn, an instrument that was handed to me at primary school and is something like a mini-tuba. But Dad couldn’t stand it; it wasn’t tuneful at all. So when I was about nine years old, he bought me a saxophone and I started playing. I was lucky to land an instrument that I was good at, and had a passion for.”

Christina is a saxophonist with both the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Australian Opera Ballet Orchestra and lectures at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She flew to Japan to have the saxophone custom-made and engraved with four butterflies that represent her four children. *EL*



See the AWO perform at the Esplanade Concert Hall on 1 October. Tickets from [sistic.com.sg](http://sistic.com.sg). [australianworldorchestra.com.au](http://australianworldorchestra.com.au)





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# Exploring Illness through Applied Theatre

This month's **Celebrate Drama!** festival provides a platform for new theatre-makers to create community theatre. It features workshops and youth-led performances such as *Stigma*, devised and performed by a youth ensemble of drama newcomers and students of Singapore Polytechnic's Diploma in Applied Drama and Psychology programme. We spoke to theatre practitioner and counsellor ROSEMARY MCGOWAN about *Stigma*, which touches on the theme of mental illness.



**Applied theatre** is the practice of theatre and drama in non-traditional settings, or with marginalised communities. It challenges social and cultural issues such as health, education, housing, social welfare and criminal justice.

## **Tell us how you combine drama and counselling in your work.**

I have over 10 years of freelance experience, doing a lot of teaching and facilitating in schools. This involved the direct use of drama and theatre to look at specific issues and concerns that people – primarily young people – have. Because drama is naturally both cathartic and exploratory, my students often opened up to me about what was going on in their lives, or things that were troubling them. These often became themes that we focused on.

Since last September, apart from running the odd applied drama workshop, I've been a full-time addictions counsellor at The Cabin Singapore, so my work has evolved in this direction. I use elements of psychodrama in my work, and sometimes use role-play, so there's still some drama going on!

## **How did *Stigma* come about, and what can we expect from it?**

Chia Wei, my former student who is now on the Singapore Drama Educators Association (SDEA) committee, had volunteered to run a series of workshops with young people from the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH), culminating in a performance for Celebrate Drama! He and his co-facilitator, Shalyn Yong, approached me to mentor

and oversee their workshop and rehearsal process. They wanted to approach the topic of mental health and its perceptions, and needed guidance and support to delve deeper into these issues. Together, we started a workshop to get young people to express their own experiences with having mental issues, or anecdotes from friends and family. We realised that those stories converged with reports in the local media and raised similar concerns of stigma. For example, how are people with mental health issues talked about in the local news? How are they treated when they go into doctors' clinics? What do these young people actually live with every single day that we don't see? These are the questions that were raised – that the performance starts to answer, or at least gets people to begin discussing. The performance touches on a variety of mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. *Stigma* will challenge and confront your notions of mental health and what that means, as well as spark some important conversations that we should all be having, no matter our position in these stories. *eu*

Celebrate Drama!, a biennial drama festival organised by SDEA, takes place on 15 and 16 July at The Arts House. For more details and a full schedule, visit [sdea.org.sg](http://sdea.org.sg).



# On The WALL

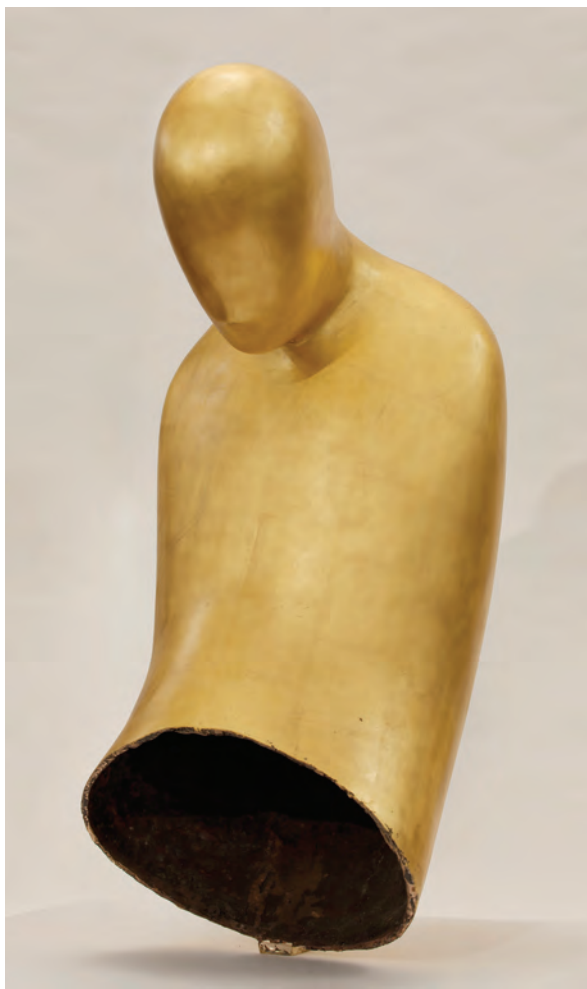
What's on in Singapore's art scene this month



If you're visiting National Gallery Singapore, head to the Roof Garden Gallery to take a look at the new *Totem* sculpture by Singaporean artist Chun Kai Feng, inspired by the concrete benches commonly seen around HBD estates – it'll be there until September.

## RELIGIOUS RENDERINGS

Until 11 September, the recently revamped Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) presents **Christianity in Asia: Sacred Art and Visual Splendour**, an exhibition that focuses on the history and spread of Christian art in Asia from the 13th to the 20th century. In addition to pieces from the ACM collection, over 150 items from museums and private collections in Portugal, Italy, France, Hong Kong and the Philippines are on display, including artefacts from the Musée du Louvre. Visitors can see a variety of artworks with different adaptations of well-established Christian themes, as interpreted by local artists, often blending European Christian subjects with local motifs. [acm.org.sg](http://acm.org.sg)



## GO FIGURE

Until 30 September, catch the **White on Black** exhibition at Partners & Mucciaccia, featuring works by Italian sculptor and painter Oliviero Rainaldi, known for his focus on human figures depicted in a simple style and flowing lines. These works were most recently showcased at Oliviero's Twins collection at Petronas Gallery in Kuala Lumpur and his Echos exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Shanghai in 2015. #02-10 Gillman Barracks, Block 6 Lock Road. [partnersandmucciaccia.net](http://partnersandmucciaccia.net)



# THE NEW AGE OF ART-BUYING

Demand for e-commerce is booming, and art is no exception, with many buyers swapping the in-gallery experience for online shopping. Spotting this trend, Australian expats Elena and Blair Thomson launched **Addicted Art Gallery**, an online portal selling contemporary art, urban and pop art, and original vintage posters (from \$500 upwards) that they've purchased from galleries, artists, auctions and art fairs around the globe. We asked them about the digitisation of art commerce and why it works for their business.

## What made you launch online as opposed to opening a physical gallery space?

Research and experience have shown us that online is the way to go. Technology is getting better and better, so high-resolution images of a piece, an independent condition report, a certificate of authenticity and a gallery that stands behind its art combine to give a high level of comfort to an existing client or a potential one. Also, we want to be international, and having an online platform makes us that. The other point to consider is that people are very often not in the same country as the artwork is, so it's a great way to reach new collectors.

We also feel that being online takes away the intimidation for those who aren't comfortable walking into a gallery. Our clients can browse at their own convenience.

Most art storage facilities function as mini-galleries these days, too. By that we mean there's usually an art viewing room or area within the facility where your art can be hung for clients to see.

## So, we should expect to see this online gallery trend continue?

We're seeing an increasing number of galleries giving up physical space in favour of going online. By 2019 the online art market is expected to be valued at an estimated US\$6.3 billion – that's almost three times more than in 2013. The Hiscox Online Art Trade Report 2015 showed that 49 percent of people purchased art from online platforms, up from 38 percent in 2014 – so, the market is definitely on the up.



More and more institutions and galleries are going online. Examples include Sotheby's and Christie's, both of which have enabled online bidding; and Artnet and Artsy, online resources for buying, selling and auctioning art.

## Does this mean the eventual extinction of the physical gallery?

We don't think so. Not everyone is comfortable buying online. There will always be people who love to go to opening nights and exhibitions.

## Can potential buyers view the works in person before committing to purchasing online?

Absolutely! We have taken clients to our art storage facility where they have been able to get up close and personal with the pieces.

## What's next for Addicted Art Gallery?

We are currently developing an app that will make the decision-making process even easier for existing and potential clients. It will allow our collectors to virtually bring the gallery into their own home or office.

[addictedgallery.com](http://addictedgallery.com)



# On The SCREEN

Here's our pick of this month's happenings on the big screen and small screen

## BIG SCREEN

### THE BFG (3D)

Directed by Spielberg and based on Roald Dahl's book of the same name, Disney's *The BFG* tells the imaginative story of a young girl and the Giant who introduces her to the wonders and perils of Giant Country. The film stars Mark Rylance, Ruby Barnhill, Penelope Wilton, Jemaine Clement, Rebecca Hall, Rafe Spall and Bill Hader. Opens 21 July.



### BAD MOMS

Amy (Mila Kunis) has a great husband, overachieving children, a beautiful home and a successful career, but feels overworked, exhausted and ready to snap. After joining forces with two other stressed-out moms (Kristen Bell and Kathryn Hahn) to get away from reality and responsibilities, she finds herself in a showdown with queen bee Gwendolyn (Christina Applegate) and her clique of seemingly perfect mothers. Opens 28 July.



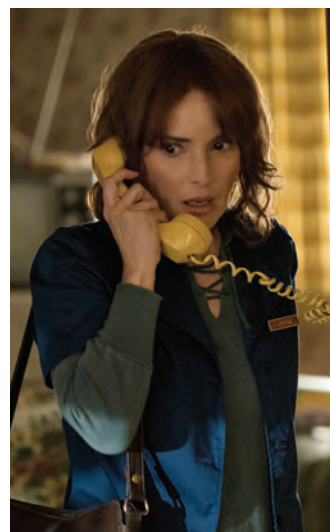
### FILMS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE

Until 9 July, catch a selection of international films at The Projector (#05-00 Golden Mile Tower, 6001 Beach Road), part of the **The O.P.E.N.** – Singapore International Festival of Arts' (SIFA) pre-festival. Among the highlights: Oscar-nominated *Embrace the Serpent* (3 July; Spanish, Portuguese, German, Catalan and Latin, with English subtitles), about a shaman and an American ethnobotanist's Amazonian journey; *Invisible* (6 July; Tagalog and Japanese, with English subtitles), which weaves together stories about undocumented Filipino workers supporting themselves and their loved ones with shady work in Japan; and *Tangerine* (8 July; English), an indie comedy-drama featured at the Sundance Film Festival, about two real-life transgender prostitutes in Los Angeles. The closing film is *Fire at Sea* (Italian with English subtitles), a documentary that captures life on Italy's Lampedusa island, the most symbolic border in the European migrant crisis; see it at the Capitol Theatre (11 Stamford Road) on 9 July. For schedules and ticketing information, visit [sifa.sg/theopen](http://sifa.sg/theopen).

## SMALL SCREEN

### STRANGER THINGS

Set in 1983 in the US state of Indiana, this brand new Netflix original series follows a mother (Winona Ryder) whose young boy vanishes into thin air. As friends, family and local police search for answers, they are drawn into an extraordinary mystery involving top-secret government experiments, terrifying supernatural forces and one very strange little girl. The eight-episode series premieres 15 July on Netflix.





# RuPaul's DRAG RACE BATTLE OF THE SEASONS

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# BRING ME THE HORIZON

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# On The PAGE

If you're looking for a good read this month, here are our thoughts on a selection of recent releases

## Luckiest Girl Alive

Jessica Knoll

Pan Books | 403 pages

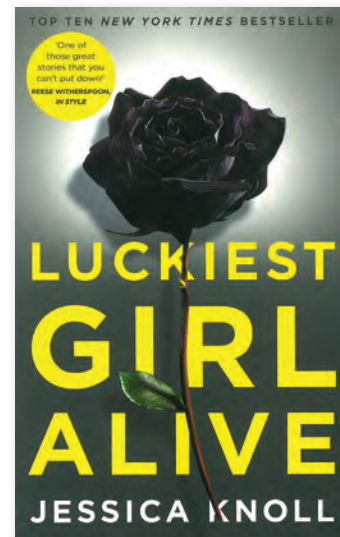
Flicking through a magazine and reading an article about the author of this book had really piqued my interest, but the article should have come with a spoiler alert, as it revealed the key hook to the story. It was, however, still a gripping read, and I managed to go cover to cover in a day and a half – on a childfree trip, I might add.

We meet the main protagonist, Ani FaNelli, as she's shopping for gifts to add to her wedding list. Her character is hard to warm to; she's manipulative, guarded and extremely complex. However, the book slowly reveals that a traumatic event in her past shaped her personality.

The story chops and changes from present to past and back again, creating suspense and intrigue. The author also cleverly builds up and then knocks down your preconceptions about Ani's character, from steely, successful persona to vulnerable mixed-up kid.

Encouraged to take part in a documentary about her past, Ani's character and her story are slowly shown to the reader. The documentary filming and impending wedding finally make Ani face up to who she really is, and even up until the last page you're not sure whether she will crack the façade she's kept up or hide behind it. Definitely a thrilling read.

– Amy Brook-Partridge



## Mud Between Your Toes: A Rhodesian Farm

Peter Wood

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform | 324 pages

This is a memoir about growing up gay on an African farm during the Rhodesian Bush War (1964-1979). Having lived in Zimbabwe myself, just after Independence in 1980, I could relate to a lot of this – the place names and lifestyle brought back many memories. But reading it as an “outsider” will paint a picture of a world not many people knew or know about. It shows the freedom and the nature (that was considered normal to those of us who grew up in Africa), and the complexity of living in a country as the “dominant race”. But, it also brings up thought-provoking issues about parenting, sexuality and bullying, which are relevant in most societies. It's written with wit and honesty, and left me wanting to know more. The book is currently only available through Amazon, and bookdepository.com, which has free delivery to Singapore.

– Rebecca Bisset





# What are you reading?

To tell us what's piled up on your bedside table, or what you've recently downloaded to your Kindle, dash off an email to [amy.greenburg@expatliving.sg](mailto:amy.greenburg@expatliving.sg). It won't take long!



Jenilee Rawlins,  
British

## One Night in Italy Lucy Diamond

**Genre?** Fiction

**How did you get hold of it?** I was browsing in Times Bookstores and noticed it was a Sunday Times Bestseller, which caught my interest initially. I have a strong love of Italy, having worked there a few years ago, and a passion for Italian cuisine, so thought I'd give it a try...

**How far have you got?** I'm up to page 246 of 480.

**What do you think of it so far?** So far, I absolutely love this book. It's very well written, keeping me gripped and surprised, with the characters fully rounded and interesting. The last book I read by a different author was so predictable, so I like that this one acknowledges that the reader is a bit savvy.

The story focuses on three leading female characters, all currently having a different life crisis. Anna has recently been told that the father she's never met is Italian. Now, she's baking Italian goodies and swotting up on her vocabulary, determined to make it to Italy so she can find him in person. Catherine's deceiving husband has walked out on her and she's trying to pick up the pieces of her life. Sophie is an Italian teacher, who'd much rather be back in sunny Sorrento and escaping the tensions at home.

The book is hilarious at times, wise, charming – and nearly as satisfying as a homemade lasagne! It shows that, sometimes, life and love can surprise you when you least expect it.

It's a perfect book to relax by the pool with, or at a coffee shop with some Italian fare. I can't wait to get to the end to find out what happens! I also flicked to the back of the book, carefully trying not to see the ending, and saw that there are two pages of Italian words and phrases, and recipes for focaccia and tiramisu.



Rebecca Bisset,  
British

## Magical Malaysia Cathie Hearn

**Genre?** It's a beautifully illustrated alphabetical record of Malaysia; in fact, it was illustrated by author Cathie Hearn's daughter, Betty Harrison – both mother and daughter currently live in Kuala Lumpur. Each letter of the alphabet is a poem, written by Cathie, and then there's an index of names and places, which is helpful for newcomers and oldies alike. It makes a nice souvenir, leaving gift or gift for someone who is just starting out on the expat journey. Much of the index is relevant for Singapore, too.

**How did you get hold of it?** Through Amazon.

**What do you think of it so far?** It's clever and informative and I love the illustrations.





# Around Town



## Hollywood Comes to Singapore

Noël Coward's play *The Vortex* kicked off at The British Theatre Playhouse in April. Starring Jane Seymour, OBE, as well as leading British actors James Cartwright and Arthur Bostrom, the play's opening night was a private performance, followed by a charity gala show two nights later, attended by the British High Commissioner and the EU Ambassador.





## Fashion Frenzy

The Park Royal Hotel played host to the American Women's Association of Singapore's spring fashion show, Straits Chic. Clothing labels such as White Ginger, Attaby and Paperbag Princess were present, as well as Stones That Rock jewellery and Desti Saint bags. The highlight of the event was the runway show, which followed its long-standing tradition of featuring AWA members as models.



## Movie Night

To celebrate the start of the annual European Union Film Festival, the Delegation of the European Union to Singapore and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Singapore organised a reception and screening of the Dutch film *Admiral*. Director Roel Reiné was among the guests who watched the blockbuster based on the historic story of the Dutch East Indies and Admiral Michiel de Ruyter.





## Past and Present on Show

Colonial antique experts The Past Perfect Collection played host to a special exhibition of paintings, Contemporary Baroda, featuring seven emerging stars of contemporary art in India and brought together by Rukshaan Art. Guests enjoyed drinks and nibbles while viewing the striking artwork on display.



## Sip and See

Guests gathered at Dempsey Hill's REDSEA Gallery to sip champagne and toast The Kung-Fu Series, a solo exhibition by Chinese-born, Australian contemporary artist, Zhong Chen. Chen's vibrant paintings explore themes of cultural identity, belonging and place, with black, Chinese art-inspired calligraphic brushstrokes set against bright blocks of colour.



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## Cécile SPIRIT

Cécile Spirit is a French-Vietnamese contemporary artist. She now lives in Singapore where she is building her reputation as well as her repertoire of art. Cécile primarily uses drawing, painting and mixed media as medium, ranging from glue paint, wire, to stickers and many more.

Her work is characterized by vibrant colors, contrasting shapes and bold compositions.



[www.cecilespirit.com](http://www.cecilespirit.com) | +65 9839 6627 | [cecilespirit@gmail.com](mailto:cecilespirit@gmail.com)





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Applications for entry in August 2017 will open on 1 September 2016.

**Visit [www.uwcsea.edu.sg](http://www.uwcsea.edu.sg) to find out more and to RSVP for our upcoming open days.**





# LIFE & FAMILY



White & Black Trading

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Back to school in style

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**Singapore Insider:** A guide to Haw Par Villa

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**Big Issues:** What's the illegal wildlife trade?

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**School Days:** Tanglin Trust School CEO talks education



# What's New



Hot favourite! Yankee Candles' best-selling Lemon Lavender fragrance has just turned 10. [yankeecandle.com.sg](http://yankeecandle.com.sg)



## Continental Class

If you're in the market for a car with classy European style and sensibility, but one that is slightly easier on the hip pocket, take a look at the new **Renault** model, the Kadjar. A mouthful to pronounce, perhaps, but the French motor company has come up trumps with its first model to compete in the market for larger SUVs. The 1.5-litre turbocharged diesel engine boasts low CO2 emissions and fuel efficiency owing in part to the automatic engine cut-off when stopped – at traffic lights, for example. Well-thought-out safety features include a driver alert that warns of unintentional lane departures, plus six airbags, front and rear sensors, a speed limit alert and lots more.

It has Gaelic good looks too: sculpted LED daytime driving lights lend an upmarket feel and 19-inch sport rims on both the base and upper-end models offer a sporty edge. Inside, you'll find leather upholstery and the largest boot in its class. The LED digital instrument display can be customised for different colour and display modes, and the touch-screen sound system features Bluetooth for hands-free talking and playing the all-important Spotify. It even has air quality reports and a tyre-pressure monitor! From \$115,000 for the base model or \$123,000 for the Bose edition with moon roof; prices include COE. [renault.com.sg](http://renault.com.sg)



## Flowers for Every Day

New florist on the block, **Floweret Co.** delivers fresh blooms three days a week (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) or a daily bunch to ensure you receive the "market best". Kate Gallagher, an interior designer from Melbourne, set up the business in April and believes everyone should have access to affordable fresh flowers. Order online before 2pm for same-day delivery – and for a 10 percent discount during July, enter promotion code "EXPATLIVING" at checkout. [floweretcompany.com](http://floweretcompany.com)



## Captured Forever

Keen to capture special memories of your family? Check out **Littleones Photography's** new product range, which showcases the beauty and uniqueness of location photos. The collection uses fine-art canvas prints to create an unforgettable slice of Singapore. And it's easy! Just book your photo session, pick one of many popular locations and take a piece of Asia home with you. Quote "LOC16" for \$100 off the session fee. Valid until 30 September 2016. 6440 7568 [littleonesphotography.com](http://littleonesphotography.com)







Dr. Catherine Lee  
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Children & Adults (Braces & Invisalign)



**Children begin losing baby teeth at age 6.**


**Complex dental treatment can be simplified  
through an initial orthodontic screening  
when the first adult tooth appears.**

**Has your child been screened yet?**



*Free Your Smile!*  
**Braces and Invisalign®**

Provider of

 **invisalign®** (For Children and Adults)





Night Safari welcomed a 149kg female baby Asian elephant in May, the park's first elephant birth in six years

## A Day at the Zoo

Getting to the Singapore Zoo can be expensive by taxi or time-consuming by public transport. Recently launched is a **new bus service** operating to and from the Zoo and Tampines, Bedok and Sengkang on weekends and some public holidays ([zoo.com.sg/heartlandexpress](http://zoo.com.sg/heartlandexpress)). This is in addition to the convenient Safari Gate, which has bus pickups dotted around the city. And, just in time for the school holidays, check out the great deals offered in the new four-parks-in-one membership programme. [wrs.com.sg](http://wrs.com.sg)

### Olympians in the Making

Brighton Montessori aims not just for academic excellence but for an all-round education for children, and this much is clear from the new initiatives it has launched in 2016; these include Young Olympian and Young Gymnast enrichment programmes at Great World City, for children aged four to six years. Swimming lessons and gym enrichment classes are also available at selected centres. **6588 3883**

[brightonmontessori.com.sg](http://brightonmontessori.com.sg)



### Recognising Sporting Prowess

The Australian International School (AIS) is the only international school in Singapore to offer an **Athlete Development Program**, offering the top 1 percent of AIS sports performers the opportunity to train and receive coaching on a path to university scholarships and elite-level sport. Competitive sporting opportunities are offered across ten sports, 100 teams and 500 fixtures. Book a place at the Open House on 21 July to find out more. **6653 7906**  
[ais.com.sg/admissions/open-house](http://ais.com.sg/admissions/open-house)

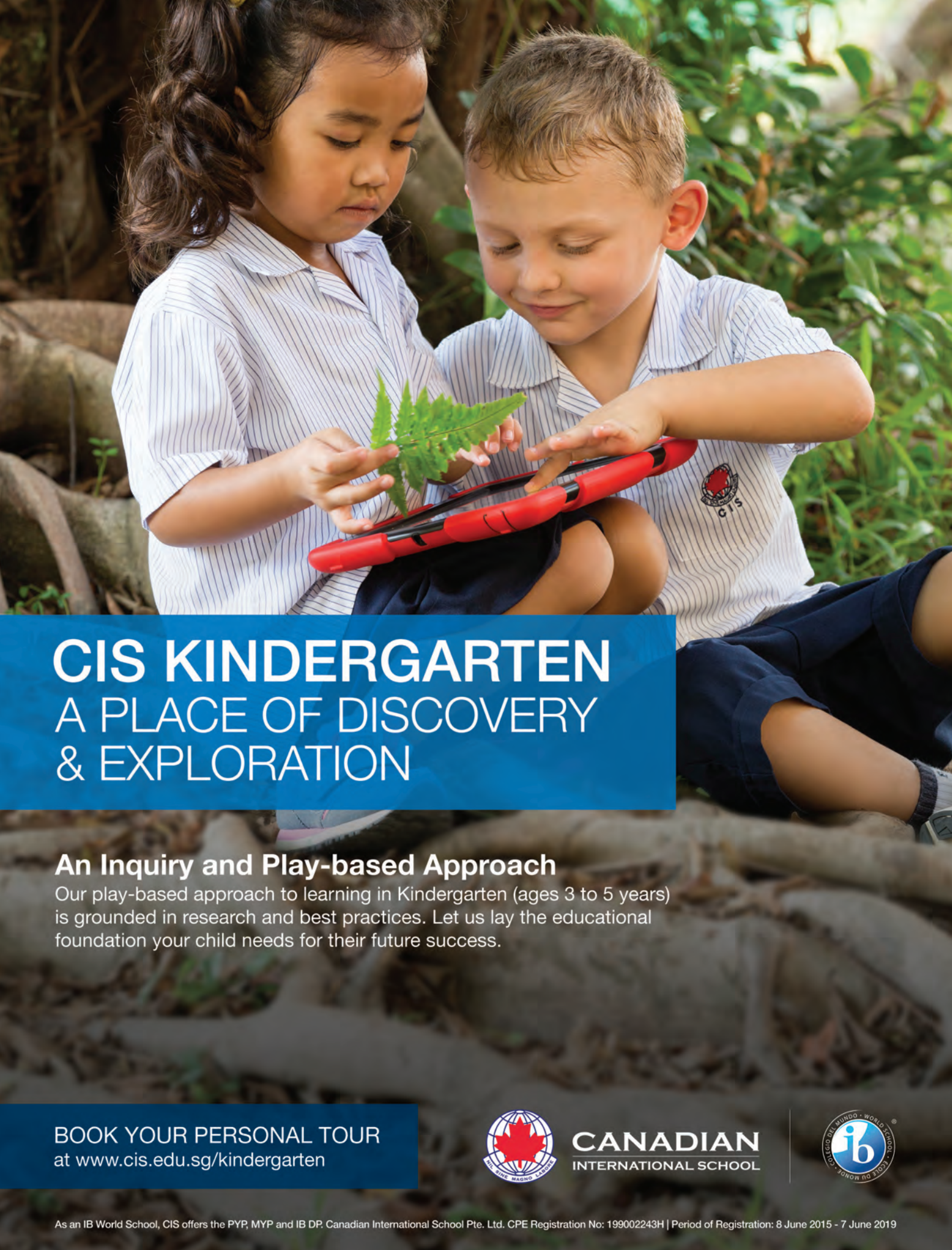


### School's Out!

Kids moaning that they're bored? July is a holiday month for most international schools, and if you're looking for last-minute inspiration for summer camps, things to do and an abundance of kids' activities, head to *Expat Living* online. Sports, cooking, music, technology, wildlife, arts and science – we've got options to suit every child! [expatliving.sg/kids](http://expatliving.sg/kids)







# CIS KINDERGARTEN

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at [www.cis.edu.sg/kindergarten](http://www.cis.edu.sg/kindergarten)



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INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL





# Environment Focus

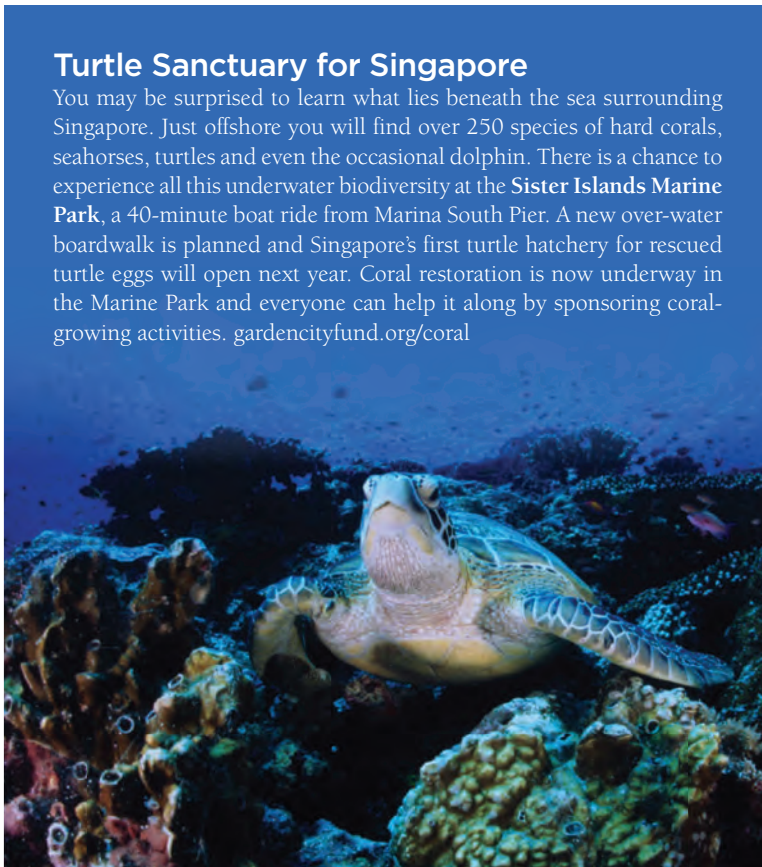


## Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright

Show your support for the world's most magnificent cat by joining in the global "thumbs up for tigers" campaign. Take a "thumbs up" selfie and post it using the tag #thumbsupfortigers. Your photo will be showcased on the **Thumbs Up for Tigers** webpage alongside supporters worldwide who want to actively show governments and other decision-makers that they care what happens to this very special species. PS: Did you know that each tiger has a unique set of stripes which identifies it? Not unlike our human thumbprints!

## Turtle Sanctuary for Singapore

You may be surprised to learn what lies beneath the sea surrounding Singapore. Just offshore you will find over 250 species of hard corals, seahorses, turtles and even the occasional dolphin. There is a chance to experience all this underwater biodiversity at the **Sister Islands Marine Park**, a 40-minute boat ride from Marina South Pier. A new over-water boardwalk is planned and Singapore's first turtle hatchery for rescued turtle eggs will open next year. Coral restoration is now underway in the Marine Park and everyone can help it along by sponsoring coral-growing activities. [gardencityfund.org/coral](http://gardencityfund.org/coral)



## Under Threat

What do the Taj Mahal, Machu Picchu and the Singapore Botanic Gardens have in common? Yes, they're all important **World Heritage sites**. However, while our Botanic Gardens are nicely looked after, a WWF report has found that, despite their special status, half of the 229 World Heritage sites across the globe are under threat. These sites are not just great places to visit, they also provide the local people with income and life's basics like food, water and shelter. Eleven million people rely on World Heritage sites and, specifically in our region, six million of those depend on the Tropical Rainforest World Heritage Site in Sumatra; yet the forest continues to be cleared to make way for plantations and mining activities. Support forests by buying paper and wood products with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) labels.





## OUR CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS READY FOR THEIR WORLD

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Taught by professional music teachers, this core programme accelerates early childhood literacy as well as develop visual-spatial and numeracy skills.

### Literacy Through I.T.

Developed by IBM USA, this programme promotes language composition as well as free, confident expressions.

### KinderFit

This one-of-a-kind physical education programme nurtures healthy habits and lifestyle through cardio-wellness education.



[enquiry@kinderland.com.sg](mailto:enquiry@kinderland.com.sg)



6881 8818



# NOTICE BOARD

## FAMILY NEWS



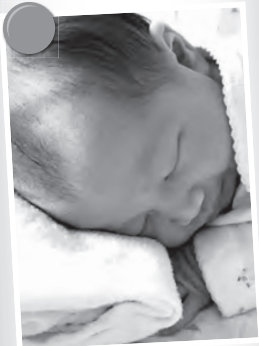
Karen and David Lucas are thrilled about the birth of their first son Alexander James, born 29 February



Kiana Anita Pereira was born on 26 January to proud parents Kanika Mittal and Kevin, joining big brother Kai



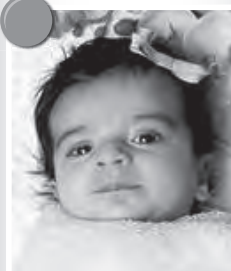
Twin girls Emiko Violet and Morar Millie arrived on 17 February, to the joy of big sister Florence and parents Fiona and Ryan Tate



Lauren Tan arrived on 7 April, joining proud brothers Kayden and Jairus, and parents Kai Yeow and Hui Min



Big congratulations to *Expat Living's* Katie Peace and her husband Michael on the birth of little Lily May, who arrived on 28 February to join big brother James



Sunita and Kaizar Karkaria are delighted to announce the birth of Nikita on 28 January, joining big sister Eva

### Congratulations!

All babies featured on this page will receive a \$500 voucher from Tomato Photo, which can be redeemed against a photoshoot and small product. The voucher cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer, and is valid for three months after prize-giving. 6440 7567 | tomato.sg

tomatophoto



### Just had a baby? Newly married? Recently engaged?

Moved back to Singapore and want to let people know you're back in town? Whatever your announcement, we will get the message out. Email us at editorial@expatliving.sg.





## ANIMAL ADOPTION



An easy-going seven-year-old, **Dino** loves the outdoors, is sweet-tempered and loving, and quick to attach himself to his human companion. He is not HDB-approved



**Lucius** may be ten-and-a-half years old, but he is still a kitten at heart. He is looking for a loving family who will take care for him for the rest of his life



Almost five years old, **Viking** is an energetic boy who requires high levels of interaction and stimulation, both mental and physical. He is suitable for an owner with an active lifestyle



This six-year-old feline, **Godiva** is named for her elegance. An independent girl, she will do well with an experienced owner who will give her space and time to adjust to her new home

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (**SPCA**) is a registered charity and leading authority on animal welfare and cruelty issues in Singapore. Besides adoption services, it also provides complimentary veterinary care and spay and neuter surgery, 24-hour emergency animal rescue, and educational talks and workshops about animal welfare issues. These include problems that usually escape the public spotlight. For example, chaining dogs is a legal practice, and many owners are unaware of the damage it does. SPCA promotes awareness of the physical and psychological detriments suffered by the dogs, in order to encourage the public to speak out against such acts.

These featured animals and many more are up for adoption at [spca.org.sg](http://spca.org.sg); you can call **6287 5355** to find out more.

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all\\_joblistings](http://expatliving.sg/all_joblistings).



Smateria backpack, \$45 to \$50 (exclusive price for *EL* readers; original price \$65 to \$70),  
**White & Black Trading**

# School Stuff – Sorted!

Starting a new school year is always fizzing with excitement. There are new friends and teachers to meet as well as all-important stationery selections to make and quirky gadgets and outfit essentials to acquire. Read on – we’ve got you covered.



Personalised backpack, \$76.95 (large) and \$58.95 (mini), **Stuck on You**



RICE lunchbox, \$15.90 (big) or \$11.80 (small), **The Children's Showcase**



Parallel Pen, \$16.80, **Tokyu Hands**

Everyday Ballpoint Pen, \$4.90, **kikki.K**



Bobino Small Cord Wrap, \$4.70, **Tokyu Hands**







Personalised coin purse,  
\$28.95, **Stuck on You**



Planner Dashboard Kit, \$24.90  
(large) or \$19.90 (medium), **kikki.K**



Kavat tan sandals, \$189,  
**TheShoeCo.**



Ascent Academy boys' shoe,  
\$195, **The ShoeCo.**



Skip Hop Zoo Cow  
straw bottle, \$12.90,  
**Motherswork**

Skip Hop Zoo Owl stainless  
steel sport bottle, \$34.90,  
**Motherswork**



Richter sports sandals, \$159,  
**TheShoeCo.**



Skip Hop  
Zoo Lunchie  
lunchbag, \$24.90  
**Motherswork**



Vanilla Fly posters, \$69.90 (large),  
\$49.90 (small) in varying designs,  
**The Children's Showcase**



United Bees  
Function  
Notebook  
Series, \$3,  
**Tokyu Hands**



Personalised  
school hat,  
\$39.95,  
**Stuck on You**





Micro Speed+ Scooter, \$235,  
**White and Black Trading**



Gelati drink bottle, \$39.95,  
**Stuck on You**



Kanken  
backpacks,  
\$129 (large)  
\$109 (mini),  
**Cuckoo**



Giron sneakers in white, \$149,  
**Lacoste**



Ascent girls'  
school shoe,  
\$119.95,  
**The ShoeCo.**



Junior Value Kit, \$49.95  
**Stuck on You**



Strideur sneakers in red, \$129,  
**Lacoste**



Pharrell  
Williams  
Vulc lace-up  
sneakers,  
\$129, **Adidas  
Originals**

## DIRECTORY

### MOTHERSWORK

Tanglin Mall, Great World City,  
Marina Bay Sands and I12 Katong  
[motherswork.com.sg](http://motherswork.com.sg)

### STUCK ON YOU

[stuckonyou.com.sg](http://stuckonyou.com.sg)

### TOKYU HANDS

#B1-07 Orchard Central and  
#01-36/37 Westgate  
[tokyu-hands.com.sg](http://tokyu-hands.com.sg)

### KIKKI.K

#44-46, B2, ION Orchard  
[kikki-k.com](http://kikki-k.com)

### WHITE AND BLACK TRADING

[whiteandblacktrading.com](http://whiteandblacktrading.com)

### THE CHILDREN'S SHOWCASE

Tanglin Mall and PasarBella at  
The Grandstand  
[showcase.com.sg](http://showcase.com.sg)

### THE SHOECO.

#02-36/37 Tanglin Mall and  
#03-02/03 Great World City  
[theshoeco.com](http://theshoeco.com)

### ADIDAS SINGAPORE

Bugis+ and Pacific Plaza  
[adidas.com.sg](http://adidas.com.sg)

### LACOSTE

Wisma Atria, VivoCity and  
Cathay Cineleisure  
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# BROTHERLY LOVE

## The Haw Par Villa Story

Haw Par Villa has been listed in Singapore tourist guides for decades and is famous for its eccentric mix of folklore and philosophy, with a lavish helping of frightening detail for good measure. And that's just what you see on the surface. The back-story of the two brothers who owned the villa and created the herbal ointment Tiger Balm is equally fascinating, as KATIE ROBERTS found out on a guided tour.

**R**eferred to as both Tiger Balm Gardens and Haw Par Villa, this landmark is synonymous with the brothers who garnered fame and fortune from Tiger Balm, the herbal remedy they developed to soothe aches and pains. Aw Boon Haw (Boon Haw) built the villa and gardens for his brother Aw Boon Par (Boon Par) in 1937. It's said Boon Haw discovered the site at Pasir Panjang when his car broke down; and he acquired the land for its auspicious location, with sea views in front and hills behind. This changed in the 70s when the port was built, transforming the coastline.

The villa was reputedly the most extravagant house built in Singapore at the time, and dioramas and statues depicting stories of Chinese mythology were constructed in the gardens surrounding it. Importantly, public entry to the garden was free,

at a time when there were few public spaces open to Asians. It became a magnet for locals who visited to see legends and folklore told through Confucian teachings, Taoist stories and Buddhist adages, with elements of 1930s Art Deco design. Here, Boon Haw and Boon Par expressed their concerns for the community, and the dramatic way traditional society was changing under the influence of the West during this period.

### Building a garden in Singapore

The brothers were immigrants to Singapore. Born and raised in Burma, their Chinese father was a Hakka herbalist who made his living in the medicine business in Rangoon (now Yangon). They scarcely lived in China, instead dividing their time between Burma and Singapore.

Boon Par, the more introverted of the two brothers, developed the formula for Tiger Balm and expanded the business to Singapore in 1921. He asked Boon Haw to join him as the marketing brains of the business. In a short time they became very wealthy men. An extrovert, and clearly ahead of his time in the branding business, Boon Haw even drove a "tiger" car, complete with headlights painted red to resemble eyes, fangs and a horn that roared, tiger-like. (It's still on display today.)

### Where is the villa?

The brothers were separated during World War 2 when the Japanese occupied Singapore. Boon Par fled to Rangoon and died there in 1944. Boon Haw lived in Hong Kong, returning after the war to find the villa in ruins. With his beloved brother dead, Boon Haw had the dilapidated house torn down. It's said that he tinkered in the gardens, adding new dioramas and displays until his death in 1954.





Photo by Journeys Pte Ltd

#1



#2



#4



#3



#5

## A chequered history

The Tiger Balm Company was taken over in 1971 by outside interests, ending family control. In 1985 the Singapore government acquired the land, and in 1986 Boon Paw's son Aw Cheng Chye donated the structures and statues to the government on the condition that the four memorial towers be retained.

From 1990 to 1995, Haw Par Villa was redeveloped into a theme park-style attraction named Dragon World, complete with rides and theatres. The park was beset with problems and didn't turn a profit, possibly on account of the \$16 entrance fee. After its closure, there were a few rocky years until the park returned to the control of Singapore Tourism Board, and it again became free to visit.

The hands of many people, including caretakers and gardeners, have added to the gardens since the brothers' day; and while it may not be faithfully true to their vision, it remains a sentimental piece of Singapore's heritage and history.

## Five of the highlights

**#1** Probably the most well known (and well remembered) section of Haw Par Villa, **The Ten Courts of Hell** depict in garish detail the punishments meted out for a range of sins. This is nightmare territory: it's dark, creepy and as hideous to children as it is to adults.

**#2** You'll find this expression of internationalism at the back of **The Eight Immortals** diorama. The origins of the map are not totally clear, but Boon Par's son Cheng Chye was an avid traveller who had an international corner built in the 1960s. Curiosities ranged from statues of wildlife such as kangaroos, to a 15-foot replica of a Maori and a replica Statue of Liberty.

**#3** **Lin Ze Xu** was a scholar and patriot who fought against the British importation of opium into China in the 1800s. Seeking to end the trade, he wrote a letter to Queen Victoria to urge her intervention. She never received the letter, but it was published in *The Times* instead. The First Opium War began during the same year, 1839, and for his part in it **Lin Ze Xu** was exiled, although he eventually returned to favour and his homeland.

**#4** What is the meaning of an old woman with bound feet beckoning a young couple wearing Western-style clothing? One possible interpretation is that it symbolises the old chastising the young for adopting what were then considered liberal Western values. Families arranged marriages in traditional Asian society, but in this era conventions were being challenged. Debate over the erosion of traditional Asian values and customs was common at the time.

**#5** A meandering blue labyrinth underneath **The Eight Immortals** diorama, the **Tigers' Den** is roomy enough for adults to walk through.

- While the manufacturing process remains a tightly held secret, the ingredients of Tiger Balm are the same today as when it was first manufactured; they include petroleum jelly, wax, camphor, clove oil and menthol.
- The former Tiger Balm headquarters and factory stand at 89 Neil Road.
- The loyal caretaker of the grounds of Haw Par Villas is 81 years old and followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather who were caretakers before him. *u*

Haw Par Villa is at 262 Pasir Panjang Road and is open from 9am to 7pm daily. Entry is free. Our tip is to visit early or late in the day to avoid the heat, and check out Singapore Walks for guided tours that explain the statues, dioramas and quirky corners. [singaporewalks.com](http://singaporewalks.com)



# Financially Fit

## Safeguard your fiscal future

We asked two Singapore-based financial advisors with expatriate clients for their opinions on two important issues: finding financial common ground with your new partner, and how to invest ethically.

### Are you ready to share a bank account?

So you think you've found the one? Before you get carried away with dreams of "happily ever after", ANDREW TALBOT from Expat Financial Planning, part of **Globaleye Wealth Management** recommends ways to smooth the path towards a united financial future.

"Multiple surveys have shown that the most common area of conflict in a relationship is money. Everyone has a distinct and different attitude towards money, often learnt in childhood," says Andrew. He recommends a calm conversation over coffee before you move in together, saying it can help set the boundaries and rules regarding spending that will leave both of you feeling secure.

"It's important to outline financial goals and directions together, and to discuss attitudes towards money," he says. "Often, one person will be a saver who feels safe and secure with a large nest egg, while the other may be more of a spender, someone who lives for experiences and sees money more as a tool." Understanding each other's spending habits and goals and creating a balance is the key to harmony.

According to Andrew, most couples start with an independent approach, and gradually adapt a jointly managed approach as the relationship develops and longer-term life goals such as purchasing a home together, having children and saving for retirement come into play.

What about pre-nuptial agreements? Although widely perceived as unromantic – betting against the success of the relationship, perhaps – Andrew says they should be considered, especially in

cases when partners enter into a marriage with unequal assets.

"For example, if one party has a large family holding or business, it would be suggested

that the family protect the business, possibly by looking at a trust or re-aligning the business structure," he says.

Depending on your tax jurisdiction, the taxman will often reward your relationship with joint allowances to offset tax for married couples. Finally, Andrew recommends that, in marriages between two people from different countries, financial decisions be made with the help of financial advisor qualified to help with tax matters.

#### COMMON WAYS FOR COUPLES TO MANAGE THEIR FINANCES:

- *Maintain independence:* Set up a shared bank account to pay shared expenses. For example, each partner might redirect a pre-agreed portion of their monthly income from their personal account into the joint bank account. Expenses such as rent, utilities and food would be drawn from this account. Sometimes, one partner may be able to pay a higher percentage if they are earning more than the other.
- *Split expenses by type:* One partner pays for one type of expense, such as the rent or mortgage, and the other pays for entertainment and food, for example.
- *Jointly managed:* All income and expenses are jointly managed and shared.

**Tip!** Pre-agreed limits on spending, and joint decision-making on purchases above specific amounts might provide peace of mind for both partners.



**"It's important to outline financial goals and directions together, and to discuss attitudes towards money"**

– Andrew Talbot

6632 8555 | [expatfinancialplanning.com](http://expatfinancialplanning.com)





**“Impact investments are made with the intention of generating measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return”**

– Chris Potter

## Do you really know where your money is invested?

Much is written about how to invest your money and the investments that offer the best opportunities for growth. CHRIS POTTER from **Chartwell Associates** takes a different tack here, outlining the rise of ethical and socially responsible investing. This investment focus is sparking the emergence of a new industry that operates in the largely uncharted area between philanthropy and profit maximisation.

“There is a growing movement seeking not just growth on investments, but achieving this without disadvantaging people or damaging the environment. Similarly, attention is being directed towards investing in areas and companies that have a direct and positive social impact,” says Chris.

Although ethical funds have been around for a considerable time, and these have performed commendably, socially responsible and impactful investing is a relatively new area and one in which Chartwell Associates sees itself as a principal advocate.

Although ethical and socially responsible investments are mostly available to accredited investors only (those that meet an annual income or investment portfolio threshold), Chris says there are a few funds that are available to non-accredited investors.

“What constitutes ethical investing depends on an investor’s personal views; some may choose to avoid investments in certain industries, such as gambling, alcohol or firearms, or to allocate more to industries that meet their own ethical guidelines,” says Chris.

Ethical investing gives individuals the power to allocate capital toward companies that are in line with their personal views, whether these are based on environmental, religious or political precepts. Indeed, investments can be considered socially responsible for a wide number of reasons, including the nature

of the business a company conducts and the way it conducts that business. Common themes for socially responsible investments include avoiding certain industries (the aforementioned gambling and others, for example), and seeking out companies engaged in environmental sustainability and alternative energy or clean technology efforts.

“Companies that treat their employees and suppliers fairly, or source supplies in an environmentally sustainable manner, could also qualify as socially responsible investments,” says Chris.

According to Chris, socially conscious investing is becoming a widely followed practice, and there are a growing number of funds and pooled investment vehicles available for retail investors. “Mutual funds and unit trusts provide an added advantage in that investors can gain exposure to multiple companies across many sectors with a single investment.” However, he does caution that just because an investment touts itself as socially responsible doesn’t mean that it will provide investors with a good return.

Impact investments are investments made with the intention to generate measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return. “Impact investments can be made in both emerging and developed markets, and can target a range of returns from below market to market rate, depending upon the circumstances,” says Chris. “The glue that binds those who operate in the impact investing industry is the shared conviction that creative investments can play a crucial part in addressing social and environmental challenges.” *EL*

6225 5707 | [chartwell-associates.com](http://chartwell-associates.com)





# Join the Fight

## AGAINST ASIA'S ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Credit: Edward Parker/WWF-Canon

Endangered animals are far from the eyes – and often far from the thoughts – of city-dwellers, yet our actions have a direct impact on their survival. KATIE ROBERTS talks to key figures in the conservation movement that's taking on the global trade in illegally sourced wildlife, to find out what's going on and what we can do to stop a shocking industry that's pushing thousands of species to the brink.

**T**he illegal wildlife trade keeps some illustrious company, ranking alongside drugs, guns and human trafficking in the top few illegal global industries. Some agencies say the trade is worth around US\$10 billion a year. In Southeast Asia, a biodiversity hotspot, the trade is partly responsible (along with habitat loss) for the near-extinction of 200 species and the uncertain future of many more.

Animals are sold either alive as exotic pets, or dead as food; animal parts and skins are used in handbags and other luxury items, and in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) products.

In Southeast Asia, the pangolin (also known as the scaly anteater, and found in tropical areas of Asia and Africa) is currently the most-traded mammal and in hot demand as an exotic meat and for its use in TCM remedies. Many other animal species are threatened, too – millions of animals are harvested illegally, fracturing ecosystems and destroying biodiversity to meet consumer demand across the globe.

Global figures from Prince William to Hillary Clinton have called for action, adding to the voices of wildlife and environment organisations in drawing attention to the scale of this trade. Malaysia-based Chris Shepherd is Regional Director of TRAFFIC in Southeast Asia,

and has worked in the wildlife trade monitoring field for 20 years.

Chris says the scale of the trade and its profits is enormous, and while it's true that some wildlife can be legally bred and sold, it's difficult to be able to prove this. "With the volumes that are being imported and exported around the world, traceability is the big issue. Where are these animals coming from?"

Rhinoceroses and tigers rightly get a large proportion of publicity, says Chris, but adds that birds and reptiles can be just as vulnerable because of their popularity as pets – not only in Asia, but in Europe and North America. In March of this year, two men were caught in Jakarta attempting to smuggle reptiles and amphibians in their suitcases on a flight bound for Kuala Lumpur.

"Among the haul were green tree pythons from Eastern Indonesia. These beautiful, non-venomous snakes are protected by law; it's illegal to take them from the wild and sell them. My guess is that they were bound for Europe, where they would become someone's pet in an aquarium," he says.





This critically endangered baby Sunda pangolin was found abandoned at Upper Thomson Road and was cared for at the Night Safari



One of 16 tiger cubs seized from illegal wildlife traffickers in Thailand



Elephant tusks seized by Thai officials

**“People call themselves animal lovers and yet they’re buying threatened species as pets”**

*– Chris Shepherd*

### What’s the situation in Singapore?

Singapore follows stringent regulations, employing surveillance and law enforcement measures to control the trade in illegal wildlife. As a result, it doesn’t have bird or animal markets on the scale of Bangkok or Jakarta, where illegal and endangered animals are traded openly.

Still, from time to time, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) makes busts, such as the seizing at Changi Airport of black rhino horns in 2014, and of ivory tusks and pangolin scales with a market value of \$1.3 million in 2015. And TCM stores and pet shops remain problematic. A campaign by the Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (ACRES) saw TCM businesses that were clear of any involvement in illegal trade labelled as such with prominent stickers.

The hotspot for animal trading today, however, is the internet. A study of online advertising sites by ACRES last year found 156 ads for illegal pets, including sugar gliders, an Asian leopard cat, an African hedgehog and a tarantula. A subsequent investigation revealed that the animals were either homebred locally or smuggled into Singapore by road or air. A joint sting with the AVA led to animals being seized.

Director of Conservation and Research at Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) Sonja Luz says consumers considering buying an exotic pet from a shop should be wary. “It’s obvious when an animal is illegal – a pangolin, for example; but with birds it can be difficult. The shop may have papers, yet the bird could be threatened because of unsustainable harvesting in the wild,” she says.

“The impetus is on the buyer to do their research. Ask questions about how sustainably the birds are bred in captivity, and whether they could have been taken from the wild,” she says. If there’s any doubt, don’t buy.

### What happens to confiscated animals?

The Singapore Zoo is a wildlife rescue centre, receiving and caring for animals confiscated by the AVA. Sonja says that reptiles – especially tortoises and turtles – make up about 80 percent of the live confiscations from illegal trade in Singapore. “Recently, we took in hundreds of black spotted pond turtles, a critically endangered species found in Nepal, Pakistan and India and traded as pets and for meat. People like them because they’re pretty and cute,” she says.

The Zoo also cares for 12 critically endangered birds that have become part of a breeding programme led by Dr Luis Carlos Neves (featured in *Expat Living* in June 2014). One aim of the programme is to return captive bred birds to reliable partners in their home regions, where they can boost or even reinstate native populations.



## International law

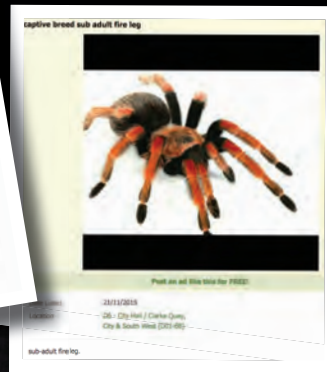
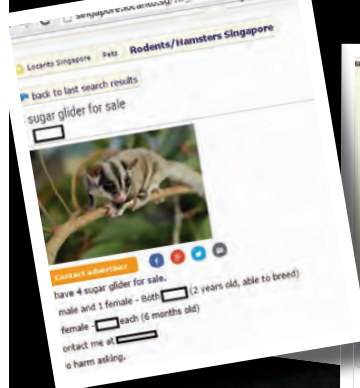
TRAFFIC field research points to Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar as some of the countries most heavily involved in the illegal wildlife trade. All Southeast Asian countries are among the 180 nations that have signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). This is an international register of endangered wildlife, and it's getting longer rather than shorter. Chris would like to see CITES use its power to penalise countries that are not abiding by the rules or following the steps available to help them do so. He suggests this could include a trade ban, which he thinks would be effective. "CITES is an amazing convention, but it needs to get tougher," he says.

## Creating awareness

Surveillance, intelligence gathering, law enforcement and strong penalties all play a role in curbing the supply side of the trade. The other side of the equation is stopping demand. Chris is frank. "People should stop buying. Just stop. There is little need to buy wildlife," he says.

TRAFFIC has a programme in Vietnam aimed at changing attitudes towards the consumption of rhino horn. Chris says people use the horn as a status symbol, or sometimes to treat their hangovers. "These people know that the rhino is almost extinct in the wild. So we're working on education campaigns to change their way of thinking, to say that it's not socially acceptable to buy and consume rhino horn," he says.

In Singapore, a new WRS campaign, "You Buy They Die", recently used a confrontational image of a pangolin and a cockatoo in the deplorable conditions in which they are smuggled; many such animals do not survive these cruel journeys. "We want to empower people to say no, to understand why they should care and what they can do," says Sonja. "Singapore is a tourism hub, and we need to equip visitors to Southeast Asia with the information to make informed choices when buying souvenirs, so they can say no to ivory at a street market and think twice before buying *kopi luwak* (civet cat coffee)."



**LEFT** Some of the illegal online advertisements found in the ACRES investigation

**BELOW** One image from the "You Buy They Die" campaign



## Nice bag?

You may not have a pet but have you ever purchased a reptile-skin product such as shoes or a handbag? Could you prove its origin and whether or not it came from a legal source? One of TRAFFIC's biggest goals is establishing a globally transparent and traceable system for animals and animal skin.

"A substantial amount of wildlife comes through Singapore as skins that are used here in manufacture before being re-exported to places like China or Europe. This industry involves millions of reptiles every year, and some of it is legal and some is not," says Chris. He is quick to reiterate that the power lies with consumers; "They should say, 'We don't really need a reptile skin bag, and if you can't show that it's from a legal source we won't buy it.'"

"There's not a lot of sense to the wildlife trade," Chris continues. "It's amazing how many people buy endangered animals as pets because they think of themselves as animal lovers. But those animals are as good as dead – they're not part of the ecosystem any more." *EL*

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Report information on illegal wildlife activities to the AVA at 1800 476 1600 or 6805 2992
- Report suspicious activity on the free Wildlife Witness App
- Support the WRS campaign at [wrs.com.sg/youbuytheydie](http://wrs.com.sg/youbuytheydie)
- Don't buy products from wild-caught animals
- If you're offered wildlife products, refuse them and encourage your friends to do the same
- Support the work of TRAFFIC at [traffic.org](http://traffic.org)





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<sup>1</sup> Aegon Retirement  
Readiness Report, May 2015

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# 20 MINUTES WITH ...



**Peter Derby-Crook,**  
*CEO of Tanglin Trust School*

Tanglin Trust School has educated thousands of children over 91 successful years; it continues to do so today, under the leadership of PETER DERBY-CROOK.

## Can you provide some insight into the schedule of a school CEO?

I'm afraid to say that I spend most of my time in briefings and meetings. Keeping in touch with and supporting all the various aspects of a large school is time-consuming but important. I also attend events and performances across the school and often support events after school and at weekends. To help me stay in touch, I also play in the Senior School Jazz Band and the Infant Ukuleles! In addition, much of my time is spent liaising with other school leaders, local and international organisations, and the Singapore authorities.

## Where have you lived and worked during your career?

I was a Head in Bolton for seven years, followed by a two-year contract Headship at Wix School, Wandsworth, in London. My first position abroad was with Rashid School for Boys in Dubai. This was followed by moving to beautiful Oman to be founder and Principal of their secondary school. After a short break in the UK to buy a home (in Stratford-upon-Avon), I was appointed as Head of the British School Tokyo – again to establish a secondary school. I then had seven wonderful years as CEO/Principal of the British International School, Jakarta, before moving to Singapore and Tanglin Trust School in 2010 as CEO.

## Tell us about your family.

The Infant students often call me “Mrs Derby-Crook” because my wife Maggie is Head of Infant PE! I have a 16-year-old son, Keating, and a daughter, Spencer, who is 14. I'm also very blessed with two older children: Naomi, who lives in Dubai with her two young children, and Jennifer, who lives in the UK. So, four children in all!

## What would you say has been your greatest achievement so far in your time at TTS?

Despite being one of the oldest schools in Singapore (founded in 1925) Tanglin is probably one of the most progressive schools here. I'm very proud of the fact that we offer the dual pathway choice of both A-Levels and the IB Diploma, which is unique amongst schools in Singapore. This gives students the option to choose the pathway that is best suited to their strengths, offering a richer and more diverse education for all. I'm also very

excited about the opening of our latest new structure, the Gateway building. Not only will it have a stunning design, but it will finally provide our school with a very clear and distinct front entrance. The project has been complex, but it's very exciting that every aspect of our community will benefit. The success of this achievement rests on many other shoulders alongside mine, of course.

## What other projects are in the wings at TTS?

The next is probably the seven-storey building planned at Gate C in two years' time which will give us, amongst other facilities, a 50m roof-top swimming pool.

## About Tanglin's new Gateway building

Due to open in August, this new building has a long list of fantastic facilities:

- large student canteen
- theatre
- gymnasium
- two floors dedicated to pre- and post-production for Media Studies
- large soft-play area for infants
- parent and community café with facilities for small children
- one-stop shop for parents to sign up for admissions, sports and a new school shop
- a floor of office space to accommodate business support staff
- new enlarged sports playing field

95 Portsdown Road  
6778 0771 | [tts.edu.sg](http://tts.edu.sg)





# Spick & Span

Singapore is the perfect place to live if you have neither the time nor the inclination for household chores. Here, we let our readers do the talking, recommending five companies that can take the hard work out of keeping your home shipshape.

## Part-time home help

1

### A-Team Amahs & Cleaners

*Piotr Jan Kucharski (Polish), Alla Kucharska (Russian), Gleb (11) and Sara (10 months)  
One year in Singapore*

“We have used A-Team for cleaning and home help services for almost one year. I initially called a number of part-time domestic helper agencies, and I found A-Team to be very responsive and professional in its approach.

A-Team sends one person to our home twice weekly. This service includes dusting, mopping and cleaning the apartment, and ironing. We’ve had the same part-time helper from the beginning.

I have recommended A-Team to others and I definitely commend them on their service.”

6100 6131 | [a-team.com.sg](http://a-team.com.sg)



2

### Comfy Homes

Kate Frost (Australian) and Rubin Frost (German), Annabelle (6) and Rosie (5)  
3.5 years in Singapore

“We live in a four-bedroom condo apartment and have been using Comfy Homes since we moved here over three years ago. We selected them for the cost-effective services they provide, having first noticed their advertisement in *Expat Living*. The helpers from Comfy Homes provide a range of services: dusting, mopping floors, vacuuming rugs, wiping windows and mirrors, cleaning the kitchen and bathrooms and ironing (up to 10 pieces) – they’ll even change the sheets. They also offer washing, though we don’t use this service.

The same two cleaners come once a week for two hours. One has been with us consistently since we arrived, and the other has been coming for around a year.

I would definitely recommend Comfy Homes as a cleaning service to those who don’t want live-in help. They provide a very good, reliable and trustworthy service. We’ve had no problems with them, and Andy is very accommodating if I need to put the service on hold for a few weeks.”

6844 4523 | [comfyhomes.com.sg](http://comfyhomes.com.sg)



## Full-time domestic help

3

### JobSearch Manpower Services

This company takes care of all the administrative work involved in hiring a foreign domestic worker, from the placement of a maid to training courses, processing of home-leave paperwork, work permits and more.

6836 5795 | [jobsearch.netmaid.com.sg](http://jobsearch.netmaid.com.sg)

## On-demand concierge

4

### Fix8

Ideal for busy people seeking convenience and reliability, this home service concierge takes the worry away by selecting the best-performing and most professional service providers at the best prices, so you don't have to shop around.

6514 9115 | [facilit8te.com/fix8](http://facilit8te.com/fix8)

## Air-conditioning service

5

### SD Aircon

For those new to Singapore, it may come as a surprise to read a clause in the fine print of your home rental contract about bearing responsibility for the servicing of the air-conditioning units. Generally, the onus is on the tenant to arrange and pay for a three-monthly service – and, let's face it, in this hot and humid climate, it's absolutely vital to keep the units in tip-top condition!

Most people sign a one-year contract with an air-conditioning service and maintenance company who will conduct a quarterly service. This ensures you will fulfill your rental agreement duty. There are a lot of companies out there, but SD Aircon goes by the book to offer Japanese-standard, high-quality service backed by 17 years experience, and with Japanese and English speaking staff too.

6467 4778 | [sd-aircon.com](http://sd-aircon.com)





# Staycations

## TWO NEW-LOOK HOTELS

BY SHAMUS SILLAR

A pair of Singapore hotels – in Chinatown and Tanglin respectively – have recently reopened after major makeovers; and both are well worth a visit, whether it's for a meal and drinks, or for a night or two as a mini-break from home.

### THE CLUB

**28 Ann Siang Road**  
**6808 2188 | theclub.com.sg**

**The transformation:** After beginning life as a 19th-century colonial house, this building on the western fringe of Ann Siang Hill opened as a boutique hotel in 2010, before closing last year for a nine-month renovation. It has re-emerged with a stronger focus on hospitality. The room count of 20 might be modest, but the hotel is now home to a whopping four restaurants and bars: Tiger's Milk, Mr & Mrs Maxwell's, B28 and The Disgruntled Chef.

**The rooms:** There's a muted elegance to the interiors, which feature earthy colours and retro *Mad Men* touches to the bespoke furniture and fabrics. We liked the proliferation of books and artworks, and the view past the vibrant red shutters to Ann Siang's shophouses and leafy summit; we were also fans of the handmade Hypnos bed and Ploh bedding (who wouldn't be?), the luxury UK toiletries and the zippy Wi-Fi. Two of the 20 rooms are suites, each with considerably more space and also a balcony.

**The food:** All four F&B spots are worth trying, but we were drawn to the rooftop, whose Peruvian restaurant Tiger's Milk

is adorned in a kaleidoscope of colours (a nice contrast from the understated rooms) – check out the beaded skulls on the shelf behind the bar. The views down to Chinatown and across to the towering CBD are epic, as is the Pisco Sour – surely the best cocktail of its kind on the island. We also enjoyed the menu of *ceviches* (the restaurant is named after the citrus marinade used in the curing process) and *anticucho* (grilled skewers); try the charred lamb heart marinated in harissa paste, or the interesting *causa*, a Peruvian potato terrine.

**The location:** The Club is well placed for exploring Chinatown's temples, eating hawker fare (Maxwell Food Court is mere metres away) and partying on Club Street – indeed, light sleepers might rue the proximity of the revelry on weekends. Three MRT stations are within easy reach. Joggers can try a few loops of Pearl's Hill City Park for a stair workout, or head east to the nearby Marina for water views.

### Nice to know

If you're a whiskey or jazz lover (or, like us, a whiskey-and-jazz lover), B28 is an underground bar (the "B" is for basement), where aficionados gather to swirl single malts and, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, enjoy live music.





## HOTEL JEN TANGLIN

1A Cuscaden Road  
6831 4333 | [hoteljen.com/tanglin](http://hoteljen.com/tanglin)

**The transformation:** After operating for almost 20 years, Traders Hotel Singapore last year booked in for the mother of all facelifts (\$\$45 million), emerging as Hotel Jen Tanglin. It's the city's second incarnation of Shangri-La's new four-star Jen brand, after Hotel Jen Orchardgateway.

The vibe is very different now, as you'll see from the lobby: the eye-candy includes a vertical garden of planter boxes, a check-in counter cobbled together from colourful suitcases, glass dispensers of iced tea for anyone to enjoy, and a sculpture of bicycles clinging to a wall.

**The rooms:** While none of the 565 rooms are the same, there are four main Singaporean themes running through the bright and breezy design scheme – “orchid”, “goldfish”, “bicycle” and “shophouse”. Bay-window sofas offer vistas of the large pool complex and Tanglin's leafy streets, or back to the city. There are Club rooms, too – worth considering for their access to the 17th-storey Club Lounge for breakfasts, afternoon snacks, happy hour drinks and other additions. All rooms have free Wi-Fi.

**The food:** Eating revolves around J65 (named after Singapore's telephone code), the lobby-level restaurant that's open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. You'll find Southeast Asian cuisine in abundance – we're suckers for laksa, but not even we could get through all six varieties on offer – but also plenty of Western options, fresh seafood (especially at the Seafood Dinners



from Thursday to Saturday), and healthy salads of kale, quinoa and other on-trend ingredients. One wall of the restaurant is taken up by a huge and lively piece of Singapore-themed graffiti, sprayed by a street-art collective called Parents Parents. Our stay didn't overlap with J65's Sunday brunch, but a colleague says that it's excellent value for \$128 (including free-flow champers and other drinks).

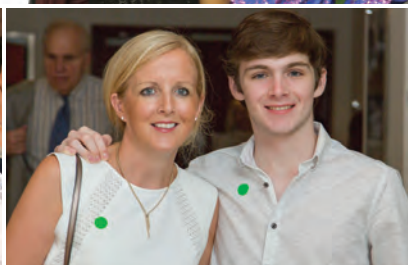
**The surrounds:** Most readers will be familiar with Tanglin Mall and its great array of shops and cafés; happily, the Jen has its own point of access directly to the mall. Just up the road is the start of Orchard Road, including the MRT station at ION Orchard, while a few hundred metres in the other direction is the main gate of the Botanic Gardens, with its 5km loop for the nature-lover or the exercise-minded. *u*

### Nice to know

Hotel Jen makes a point of supporting Singaporean entrepreneurs, including those from the worlds of fashion, art and coffee. The last-mentioned are represented at lobby café, Jen's Kitchen On-the-Go, featuring baristas and beans from coffee company Nomad the Gallant. Just before our visit, the hotel hosted a “Super Latte Throwdown”, contested by 32 of Singapore's best baristas.



# Around Town



## Searching for a Cure

The Stage Club performed *History Boys* at an awareness-raising event for sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. British Deputy High Commissioner Alexandra McKenzie and sarcoma survivor Emma Oldager attended the reception, which was organised by Kick Sarcoma.



## Do What You Love, Love What You Do

Executive Vice-President Roland Jegge celebrated his 20th anniversary with Worldhotels – a global brand that brings together a selection of distinctive and independent hotels – with an intimate gathering at the Carlton Hotel.







# Loewen by Dempsey Hill

## Sanctuary for the family



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Draped in luxuriant greenery, Loewen by Dempsey Hill is a unique lifestyle destination for the family. Loewen Road was once the site of a military hospital serving British soldiers at the old Tanglin Barracks. Built more than 145 years ago, the heritage buildings have been restored to evoke a rustic charm. Now, Loewen by Dempsey Hill boasts a mix of tenants not found elsewhere.

Swing by and transform any day into a learning adventure! Keep curious minds occupied at **Between Two Trees Early Learning School** or **Little Mandarins Language Centre**. You can also find out more about the integrated special classes conducted by **Melbourne Specialist International**.

Lush and peaceful, the surroundings at Loewen always inspire visitors to try something new. From the art of artisanal chocolate making at **ANJALICHOCOLAT** to creative art jamming and pottery at **Impressions Art Studio**, you will be spoilt for choice when it comes to fun activities.

Enjoy a soothing massage or a delicious brunch while the kids explore the play ateliers at **Tanderra**, a relaxing family club retreat. The young ones will love **Alpha Gen**, which offers energetic gymnastic classes for active kids.

When it gets too hot, dive into a mermaid swim class at **SWISH! Swimming** or book a spa treatment and fresh makeover at beauty and hair ateliers **Trimmings & Spa**.

Looking to add some character to your favourite room? Art lovers must stop by at **Billkey Art** to bring home some unique pieces for the home.

While you are in the vicinity, visit **The Wagington Luxury Pet Hotel & Resorts**. They will keep Fido safe when you go on your next family vacation!

Don't go home too early! Make time for a sumptuous authentic Korean dinner at the ever-popular **Chang Korean BBQ**.

Come to Loewen by Dempsey Hill for a well-deserved breather; you don't need an excuse to spend more time with your family.

Visit [www.dempseyhill.com](http://www.dempseyhill.com) for more information.



Between Two Trees



Little Mandarins Language Centre



Trimming & Spa



ANJALICHOCOLAT



Alpha Gen



SWISH! Swimming



Tanderra





## Zest for Life

Shophouse boutique Edit Lifestyle launched its annual pop-up retail showcase, this year a celebration of all things Brazilian. Running until 31 August, the showcase features the work of talented Brazilian designers and craftspeople, spanning fashion, art, jewellery and interior design.



## Coffee and Coaching

*Expat Living* readers absorbed a motivational and inspiring talk by life coach Anna Tan from Coaching Go Where at our Coffee Morning, held on 8 June and generously hosted by Taylor B. Images: Tatyana Kildisheva and William Dunn Photography



## Skin So Soft

Mums were treated to a hand and shoulder massage, and their bubs to a body massage, at Japanese brand PIGEON's special event to mark the launch of its Newborn Pure skincare range for babies.







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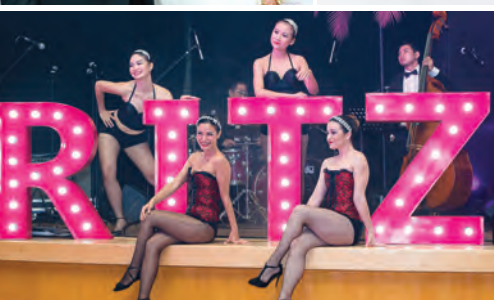
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## A Night at The Ritz

Close to 600 guests kicked up their heels at the annual Australian New Zealand Association (ANZA) Black Tie Ball, held at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel in May. Two worthy charities, Riverkids Project and Melrose Home, are the beneficiaries of the \$50,000 raised on the night. *Images: Tatyana Kildisheva and William Dunn Photography*



## Studio Loft Turns 10

Guests enjoyed performances by Gerry Cox and The Ducky Momos and generously supported Studio Loft's adopted charity A New Vision at a rock'n'roll party celebrating its tenth birthday in May.







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# WINE & DINE

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**CBD Dining:**

We scope out some of the Central Business District's best eateries



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**What's Cooking?:** We take a look at two cooking classes to try now



# What's New



## Straight from Paris



This month, award-winning French chef Guy Martin is the guest for the second edition of **Art at Curate**, a special dining series at Curate, Asia's first restaurant to be helmed by visiting Michelin chefs from around the world, located at Resorts World Sentosa. From 8 to 15 July, guests can get a taste of Chef Martin's signature creations from his restaurant in Paris, Le Grand Véfour, including duck liver ravioli with truffle cream, paprika-rubbed veal filet, and an artichoke crème brûlée topped with candied vegetables and bitter almond sherbet; he'll also present special creations for the season, like warm lobster with melted rhubarb, tomato and ginger. Prices range from \$240 for a four-course lunch with wine pairing to \$400 for an eight-course dinner with wine and champagne pairing. For reservations and more information, visit [guide.michelin.sg](http://guide.michelin.sg). ▲

### Sweet Weekday Treat

La Ventana by Michelin-starred chef Carles Gaig has introduced a **Spanish High Tea** (\$38 per person) featuring authentic Spanish snacks, along with coffee and tea. In addition to scones and jam, you can enjoy fluffy chocolate croissants, Ibérico ham with crystal bread, smoked salmon brioche and churros – all in the lovely eatery's tranquil Dempsey setting. Served on weekdays from 3pm to 5pm. #01-01 16A Dempsey Road. [laventana.com.sg](http://laventana.com.sg) ▼



### New Food Stars

Great news, foodies: the selection by **Michelin Guide Singapore** will officially be revealed on 21 July at an award ceremony at Resorts World Sentosa. Open to the public (at \$450 per seat), the event will get guests up close and personal with chefs from newly crowned Michelin-starred restaurants in Singapore, plus they'll enjoy a dinner prepared by celebrity chef Joël Robuchon and award-winning local chefs. For tickets, and to pre-order a copy of the *Michelin Guide Singapore 2016* (\$39.95; free delivery within Singapore), head to [guide.michelin.sg](http://guide.michelin.sg).





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Available every Sunday from 12pm to 3pm at \$98++ with free-flowing D.I.Y. Bloody Mary cocktails, juices and soft drinks; \$138++ with free-flowing Perrier Jouët Brut, wines and beers; and \$38++ for children aged 6 to 12. Complimentary two hours parking.



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### Celebrating Singaporean Cuisine

Themed “Savour the Past, Taste the Future”, the **Singapore Food Festival** is back from 15 to 31 July with loads of pop-up food stalls and foodie events all over the city. Highlights include Open Stoves by Timbre, a free two-day event filled with live cooking demos, local music and family games, and a hawker-inspired, five-course cocktail pairing menu by Tippling Club. If you’re into food trails, check out Crave! Singapore, which creates customised culinary adventures at the Malay Heritage Centre, at the Peranakan Museum and in Little India. For details, visit [yoursingapore.com](http://yoursingapore.com). ►





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# Feel-good Sunday

Offering nine different dining experiences within one restaurant, there's a reason for Grand Hyatt Singapore's **mezza9** being regarded as one of the best bubbly brunches in town. Featuring rotisserie and yakitori grills, a deli, sustainable crustacean bar, Thai kitchen, sushi bar and patisserie – not to mention a dedicated kids' area with balloon-sculpting and face-painting – what's not to love? There are bonus points for the fact that mezza9 partners with farmers and fisheries using sustainable practices – a little something to feel extra-good about, long after your buzz wears off. It's \$148 per person with Perrier-Jouët Grand Brut Champagne, wine, beer, mojitos and bloody Marys; upgrade to Perrier-Jouët Blason Rose Champagne for \$158, or Perrier-Jouët Belle Epoque Vintage Champagne for \$288; it's \$128 without alcohol, and \$69 for kids aged three to 12. Sundays from 11.30am to 3pm. For reservations, call 6732 1234. [singapore.grand.hyatt.com](http://singapore.grand.hyatt.com) ►



## Revolving Doors


Mod-Southeast Asian restaurant **Ding Dong** has left its Ann Siang Road location for a spot at 115 Amoy Street. Diners can expect an eclectic interior and updated menu with nostalgic flavours and textures.

## Want Some Wine with That?

If there's one thing better than good wine, it's free wine – and Citibank Singapore agrees. Its latest wine-and-dine programme entitles Citi card members to a **complimentary bottle of red or white wine** with a \$100 minimum spend on à la carte items at over 40 partner restaurants including Cocotte, Yàn, Tin Hill Social, The Song of India, The Carvery, Pollen, Osteria Art and Restaurant Ember. For more details, head to [citibank.com.sg](http://citibank.com.sg)'s Wine and Dine page. ►







# Tapas

with a Twist

Situated in the older wing of the historic Goodwood Park Hotel, recently opened Spanish European restaurant **Alma by Juan Amador** serves up creative tapas with an Asian twist, beautifully brought to life by the restaurant's eponymous three-star Michelin chef, who is a German of Spanish descent. Also in the kitchen is French chef Christophe Lerouy – don't miss his surprise Menu Carte Blanche: four, five, six or eight sampling portions (at \$68, \$88, \$108 or \$148 per diner), with some pretty fine wine pairing to go with the indubitably fine dining. Five rich and intense courses proved plenty for us, from the seared *foie gras* delightfully dunked in daikon broth and topped with fresh and pickled daikon, to yellowfin tuna with shiitake and green curry, to scallops with pork belly, vichyssoise and avocado, through to the final highlight: a densely layered dessert featuring chocolate, passionfruit and coffee. **22 Scotts Road | 6735 9937 ▲**

## New Bites

- Set to open on 16 July at Wisma Atria (425 Orchard Road, #04-39/54), **Japan Food Town** will offer everything from udon and rice balls to shabu shabu and sukiyaki.
- Now located on the ground floor of Nosh restaurant's black-and-white bungalow in Rochester Park is **Noshery**, a café by day and bar by night that serves up brunch fare – including pancakes (\$14) and eggs Benedict (\$10) – and an evening menu of bar snacks and craft beer on tap. 9 Rochester Park.



- The guys behind Mex Out recently opened **Barrio**, a 70-seater taquería and crudo bar at 313@Somerset (#01-14/15) featuring an open kitchen and bar. While Mex Out favourites like burritos and rice bowls are available on the menu, diners can also enjoy a variety of new dishes and *tortas* (Mexican burger-like sandwiches).



# AT THE BAR

We scour the bar scene to bring you the new and noteworthy. It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it!

## GEMMILLS

110 Amoy Street, #01-02

6221 5564 | [facebook.com/gemmillsingapore](https://facebook.com/gemmillsingapore)

**First Impressions:** Situated in one of my favourite parts of town, this is a wine bar, liquor store and café rolled into one – a real hybrid, marrying an old-school coffee shop with speakeasy vibes. It's open from 8am for morning coffee (those working in the area, take note!) and into the wee hours for post-dinner drinks, if you happen to find yourself in Maggie Joan's just next door (these guys also own nearby Moosehead Kitchen-Bar).

**The Chosen One:** A bottle of Astrolabe Chardonnay (\$70) from New Zealand. It's all about wine here, largely from the New World, and this bottle really hit the spot: one of those whites that's as full-bodied as a red and not at all acidic.

**The Cheapskate:** All the wine is pretty well-priced – bottles range from \$50 to \$120, and are incredibly well chosen by the team.

**Bite on this:** There's no official menu here, which only adds to the charm. The wonderfully chatty and bubbly chef creates a range of moreish offerings, served on vintage plates of all shapes and sizes. We tried a bunch: the **cheese board** (\$18) with **homemade breads**, the **charcuterie platter** (\$22); and the **salmon carpaccio** (\$12), which was the stand-out for me: freshly smoked salmon with shavings of fennel and slices of avocado. We also devoured the **Caprese salad** (\$18) – a gorgeous mix of *buratta* cheese, Roma tomatoes, and basil – and we made room for the **asparagus salami and egg platter** (\$16). Desserts include a selection of homemade cakes, among other delights – however, we simply didn't have the tummy-space.

**Last but not least:** Gemmills is available to hire out as a venue for private parties. The manager tells us they recently hosted a special birthday bash with pretty fairy lights lining the alleyway just outside, a live band, plenty of food and drink, and lots of dancing! (For more bites in the CBD, turn to page 149.)

- Emily Finch











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# Downtown Dining

Whether you're looking for a lunch spot, a post-work bite and beer with your colleagues or the perfect date-night destination, Singapore's Central Business District has a lot to offer. Here, we review some of the hottest places in the CBD.







Penthouse  
dining with  
views

### LeVeL33

#33-01 Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 1, 8 Marina Boulevard  
6834 3133 | [level33.com.sg](http://level33.com.sg)

**The mood:** Walking into LeVeL33, it's clear the spot is a haunt for the office crowd – and why wouldn't it be, situated inside MBFC? We visited the chic spot on a Wednesday evening and it was bustling, but not overwhelmingly so. Whether you opt for lunch or dinner or just drinks with pals, the water views from the outdoor terrace are spectacular – put this on your list of places to take newbies or the parents to wow them with the impressive vista of Singapore's skyline.

**The food:** For starters, we tried the **pan-seared Boston scallops**, which were paired with 'nduja cornbread ('nduja is a spicy, spreadable salami from Calabria), lamb bacon, cauliflower and ginger purée (\$28): artfully presented and yummy. We recommend saving your appetite for the generous main courses, though. The **wagyu beef sirloin steak** (\$68) served with beef stock russet purée and veal jus was like butter to cut through and rich in flavour. There are a few vegetarian options too, one of which is the **artichoke risotto with trumpet mushroom, aged goat's cheese and rock chives** (\$29) – exceedingly creamy and woh-so-satisfying!

This being a microbrewery, the guys like to get creative with their beer, so we had to try their **sautéed beer paneer spinach** (\$9.50), and the **Maccheroni** (\$10), a spin on macaroni cheese which combines India pale ale, taleggio cheese, wholegrain mustard and beer malt crumbs – sinful, but totally worth the calories.

**Bottoms up:** Try one of LeVeL33's speciality beer cocktails. I recommend the Paris, featuring 33.1 Blond lager, Rothschild Brut Champagne, crème de cassis and gold dust. Fancy!

**Good to know:** Once you're done with your main course indoors, ask for a seat on the terrace to enjoy a **dessert assiette** (a platter of their best sweet things – \$38 for two to share) with spectacular views over the marina – a romantic option for date night.

– Susannah Jaffer



## Artemis Grill

Level 40, 138 Market Street  
6635 8677 | [artemisgrill.com.sg](http://artemisgrill.com.sg)

**The mood:** Immediately enhanced by unsurpassed views of the city, Marina Bay and the sea beyond. An elegant Friday after-work business crowd buzzes in the spacious, fan-cooled outdoor terrace – and we hear it's like this every night. Back indoors for dinner, we find the chic and intimate restaurant just right for a special date or a smart girls' night out.

**The food:** Mediterranean, with a focus on “celebrating the integrity” of the best artisanal and sustainable ingredients, explains executive chef Fernando Arevalo. The result is what my dinner-date Sue describes as “intense, nicely balanced, really thoughtful food”. (Yes, yes, she's in advertising.) Perhaps our top pick, the exquisite **wild seabass sashimi** (\$42) is served with Corsican *coppa* for a sublimely salty richness that's intriguingly balanced with Australian finger-lime caviar. Thinly sliced and grilled, the **spicy Ibérico pork pressa** (\$40) – “like very fancy bacon” – according to wordsmith Sue, is another winner. **New Zealand John Dory** (\$48) is interestingly served with kale, preserved lemon gremolata and chorizo emulsion. Portions aren't huge, so you'll find room for the **pineapple rum baba** (\$16), crispy cannoli filled with pineapple ganache and served with rum and raisin ice cream; and the **bomboloni** (\$17), a sort of Italian doughnut filled with olive oil custard (so healthy!) and Valrhona chocolate.

**Bottoms up:** Start as we did with a couple of champagnes on the terrace, then let the sommelier suggest a scrumptious Sancerre followed by a rocking white Rioja – and perhaps a chilled Madeira with dessert.

**Good to know:** Book way ahead to score a window table with a view. Remember to book for pre-dinner drinks on the terrace, too.

– Verne Maree



Swanky  
Aussie



Gastro-cool  
with a view

## Cook & Brew

Level 33, The Westin Singapore  
12 Marina View, Asia Square Tower 2  
6922 6948 | [cookandbrewsingapore.com](http://cookandbrewsingapore.com)

**The mood:** My friend Georgie and I visited the venue early on a Thursday evening, and the place was heaving with a big city crowd. We navigated our way through the bar's contemporary wood and animal print interior, to the restaurant in the far corner. The wraparound views are either of the striking marina area and beyond, or of the area's ongoing construction – hard to tear your eyes away from, either way.

**The food:** During the week, the restaurant offers a three-course dinner set menu (\$55). The choice is not exhaustive, which helps if you're indecisive like me. We chose the **rocket salad** and **crispy artichoke hearts** to start, followed by the **chicken parma** and **black cod** for mains.

I'm a big fan of rocket, which was lucky as I had an extremely generous portion. Georgie's artichoke hearts were nicely crisped up and the nutty romesco dressing gave it the edge on my salad. We both enjoyed our mains, again extremely generous portions, which meant we unfortunately couldn't squeeze in a dessert. All three choices were tempting, however – a Bailey's cake, a raspberry chocolate layer cake and a choice of ice creams.

**Bottoms up:** We washed our dinner down with a bottle of crisp Mount Nelson Sauvignon Blanc (\$105). If you choose from the à la carte menu, there are several beer-pairing suggestions for most dishes. There's also an extensive cocktail menu, so plenty of choices for all palates.

**Good to know:** If you're a Starwood Preferred Guest member, you get 15 percent off your total bill for up to eight guests. The hotel also has a funky lobby lounge bar, which is great for kicking on.

– Amy Brook-Partridge



## Saint Pierre

#02-02B One Fullerton, 1 Fullerton Road  
6438 0887 | [saintpierre.com.sg](http://saintpierre.com.sg)

**The mood:** Located on the second floor of One Fullerton (right above Overeasy), the restaurant, which recently moved from Sentosa, offers an elegant and intimate dining experience with unbeatable, in-your-face Marina Bay views (a fab date-night spot, indeed). There being just 30 seats in the entire restaurant, each guest is doted on by knowledgeable European wait-staff who pay attention to each and every detail – a change of napkin every time a guest leaves his or her seat, for instance. Belgian Chef Emmanuel Stroobant greets each of his guests, and also prepares many of his French-influenced dishes tableside.

**The food:** Each dish here is a colourful and textural work of art with fantastic flavour combinations. Serving what he calls “essence-centric” cuisine – using stocks and seasonings derived from the essences of natural, seasonal ingredients – Chef Emmanuel offers vegetarian and non-vegetarian set menus, each available in six (\$148 and \$158) and 10 (\$178 and \$188) courses; there’s also a four-course set lunch version for \$85. I especially loved the **steamed Atlantic cod with oxtail consommé and daikon** from the “Earth” menu, while my husband savoured his “Tomato” appetiser – **vanilla oil-marinated Japanese Momotaro tomato, coriander water, balsamic vinegar and cashew nut papadum** – from the “Nature” menu. We also went nuts for “The Chocolate”, a **spherical chocolate shell filled with creamy passionfruit, chocolate mousse and Tahiti vanilla parfait**, available with both menu options.

**Bottoms up:** Wine pairing is an additional \$128, and includes your choice of beverage from the aperitif trolley (I chose champagne, natch), a glass of wine for each course, and digestifs from the dessert trolley that rolls around after the meal, complete with petits fours, macarons and fudge.

**Good to know:** Eat lightly in the lead-up to your Saint Pierre visit. Even when you choose the six-course option, you’re really getting a lot more, as there are surprises like a pre-appetiser “snack” and *amuse-bouche* courses. In addition to the digestifs and desserts trolley, there’s a cheese cart that comes around (\$28); my husband’s eyes lit up when it rolled by with its impressive and pungent selection. *Psst:* There’s a four-course children’s menu for \$85, but for such a quiet and romantic atmosphere, we’re guessing you’ll want to leave the kiddos at home.

– Amy Greenburg







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[www.tibaldi.com.au](http://www.tibaldi.com.au) or







Japanese  
with soul

## Tatsu

#02-16 Asia Square Tower 2, 12 Marina View  
6844 9855 | [tatsu.com.sg](http://tatsu.com.sg)

**The mood:** The vibe at Tatsu's Asia Square outlet (the original at Chijmes opened in 1996) is sleek and minimalist, and there are several seating options: a teppanyaki counter for 12, a sushi bar, private rooms and regular tables, too. Tatsu is casual, friendly and efficiently run by the effervescent manager, Maggie.

**The food:** I'm a little biased as Japanese is one of my favourite cuisines, but everything we tried was fabulous. The chefs allow the taste and texture of quality ingredients to shine with only the lightest of embellishments – like the sweet and flavoursome **Shizuoka fruit tomato** (seasonal; subject to availability), served with just a pinch of salt. Both the **omakase sashimi** (\$40 per person) and the **aburi sushi** (\$40) feature a selection of the best seafood, a highlight being wafer-thin slices of **flounder sprinkled with truffle**, and tuna belly that tasted as if it had just been caught.

Teppanyaki is as much about theatrics as it is about food. Chef Danny is a smiling showman who treats us to **Boston lobster** (seasonal price) flambéed in brandy (watch out for the flames) and freshly made mayonnaise. He also knows his way around a slab of **Kyushu wagyu** (\$168), cooking the marbled Grade Four beef to medium rare on request. Both are served with fried garlic chips (moreish and surprisingly not too potent the day after) and a bowl of garlic rice (\$8) cooked on the grill. The laughter gets louder when Danny asks us to catch small pieces of fried egg in our mouths as he flicks them off a spatula! Asahi draught beer (\$10) is the perfect accompaniment to teppanyaki and, if you can fit it in, finish off with one of the seasonal desserts.

**Good to know:** Busy at lunchtime (when bento sets start from \$24) with the Asia Square business crowd, it's quieter at dinner and open on Saturdays, too. Ask for a parking coupon if you dine on a weeknight.

– Katie Roberts





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Capitol Theatre 17 Stamford Road #02-06 & 03-06 Singapore 178907 • [www.kaiserhaus.com.sg](http://www.kaiserhaus.com.sg)





# Ten Minutes with Chef Aaron

Having worked in such cities as Bangkok, New York, Toronto and Montreal, **The Westin Singapore's** Executive Chef AARON FOSTER – who considers himself a “citizen of the world” – has loads of culinary inspiration to use throughout his menus at Cook & Brew and the hotel's other restaurants. We spoke to the Canadian-born chef about his awesome job, favourite foods and go-to spots in the CBD.

## What do you love most about your job?

I love the pressure, intense heat and self-expression of working in kitchens. Most of all, I love the fact that people come together when they eat – I get to be a part of the special moments of their lives. This means a lot to me, and it's something that I hold close to my heart.

## What inspires you?

Inspiration comes to me in many forms. My wife Pai and daughter Issy are my main sources of inspiration. They push me to do better and are always ready both to build me up, and to keep me humble. My team is a huge part of what keeps me going, too. We go to battle every day together; without them I'm nothing. We learn from each other and, as iron sharpens iron, we're always trying to better one another. But the guest remains the number one inspiration. As a chef, I'm in constant need of affirmation from the people who eat my

food. Because of this, I drive myself and my team every day to improve, try new things and push boundaries, just so I can get that approval – when people stop and say, “That tastes great!”

## What's your signature dish?

I don't know if I have a signature dish – it's more like I have signature ingredients and methods; things that are always on my menus, but in many shapes and forms. I fell in love with food when I was a kid making sausage with my dad and his friends, so I always have fresh-made sausage of some type on the menu, usually pork-based. House-made bacon is a must for me, too. And, I don't think I've ever had a menu without *foie gras*, high-quality mustards and fresh-made pickles. My wife is a Thai chef, so over the last 13 years my food has had a large Thai influence as well. I love the mix of cooked and raw ingredients in Thai food, and the balance of sour, spicy and sweet.

## What's your favourite food?

I love pork of every kind, but especially the off-cuts: tongue, shoulder, head and neck. A thick, long-dry-aged rib-eye cooked to blue in a cast-iron pan with Pommery mustard is heaven. But, to be honest, for my all-time favourite food I have to go back to when I was a kid. People always laugh at me about this, but I truly love Kraft Dinner (packet mac and cheese) with hotdogs. It's not fancy, but it takes me back to a time when life was simple. I cook it for my daughter, and it puts a smile on my face when we eat it.

## Where do you like to go after work?

The Bank always has a cold cider ready for me, and on Friday nights I end up at Penny Black with my Manimals hockey teammates. I like the live music at Hero's as well.

## Aaron's top eats

*db Bistro*: “I always go for the charcuterie board, and anything with *foie gras*.”

*Market Grill*: “A go-to spot for me – simple, honest food. I love it.”

*Pizzeria Mozza*: “It's all about the pies.”

*Kovan Hougang Food Centre*: “I eat pretty much anything and everything there.”



## More chef picks



“With the influence of my wife, I love Mexican food! For authentic Mexican food and drinks, I go to **Lucha Loco** taqueria and garden bar at Duxton Hill for grilled corn, pork tacos and ceviches. The lively ambience adds to the great dining experience. If I’m looking for a quick and simple bite, I grab a burrito over at **Muchachos** at Keong Saik Road.”

– Chef Jimi Tegerdine, *LeVeL33*



“Being vegetarian, I enjoy **Punjab Grill**’s weekend Kebabs and Biryani Feast, available in both vegetarian and non-vegetarian options. It’s perfect for our weekend family lunch, as both menus offer great variety, so everyone is happy.”

– Chef Emmanuel Stroobant, *Saint Pierre*



“**Piao Ji Fish Porridge** (at Amoy Street Food Centre) is a great place for an early lunch – great fish soup and prawn fish soup. It’s very affordable, but if you don’t get there early, you might need to wait for a while. I like going to **Lau Pa Sat** late at night after work – I love the satay and the *lala* (clams). They also have some good Indian food; I like the smell of the barbecue in the after-hours. **Jewel Coffee** is a great place for a cup of coffee and good waffles, and they offer different coffee beans every month – a great café.”

– Chef Fernando Arevalo, *Artemis Grill*

## Telok Ayer: A Break from the Bustle

Just a few minutes’ walk from Raffles Place and its big finance buildings, the Telok Ayer area is always a charming escape from the bustling business district. We rounded up some of our favourite food and drink spots in the trendy, shophouse-lined neighbourhood.

### Moosehead Kitchen-Bar

Chances are you’ve heard about this place and its edgy, tapas-style Mediterranean bites cooked on a charcoal grill – it’s been a hot spot for quite a while now. Signatures include the fried artichoke, ricotta, pickled lemon and radicchio (\$15), and the charcoal-grilled flat-iron steak with salsa verde and watercress (\$34). 110 Telok Ayer Street



### Meat Smith

This buzzy eatery is known for its tender, meaty bites, prepared in-house using speciality smokers. Favourites here include the barbecue platter for two (\$95) – featuring the chef’s selection of meats like brisket, pulled pork and chicken, along with smoked garlic bread – and bacon mac and cheese (\$10). 167/169 Telok Ayer Street



### Fu Lin Bar & Kitchen

This recently revamped, quirky joint still serves its famous *yong tau foo* tofu dish by day, but offers Asian-Spanish tapas by night – think grain-fed US beef (\$21) served with alfalfa sprouts, onion jam and a red wine jus, and Asian-infused crab risotto (\$21). There’s also a selection of specialty sakes and fun cocktails like the Young Tau Foo (\$18) made with pressed beancurd and Snow Leopard vodka. 127 Telok Ayer Street

### SPRMRKT

A supermarket-restaurant offering all-day breakfast, plus lunch, dinner and coffee, this place is a sure-fire hit with the CBD crowd. Favourites include soba noodle salad (\$12) with edamame and sesame dressing, and eggs Benedict (\$14). Craft beers are \$6 from 6pm, \$7 from 7pm and so on, Monday through Friday. 2 McCallum Street

### FYR Cycene Ond Drinc

It’s all about carnivorous dishes here, with the theme of prehistoric dining and the essential element of fire playing into both the menu – all meats are cooked on a Josper grill with lychee wood – and the physical space in which playful wall murals depict how cavemen found fire. Some of our favourite bites include the Ibérico pork chop (\$36) and spiced snapper with sambal (\$29). 19 Boon Tat Street



### Bitters and Love

Once you locate this craft cocktail bar’s unmarked entrance, step on in for some casual-cool vibes, fab music and bespoke creations concocted by a team of passionate bartenders – just tell ’em what you like and they’ll whip something up and serve it to you in a creative way. Many of the cocktails and bar bites put playful spins on local culinary flavours (kaya, for instance), giving this place extra character. 118 Telok Ayer Street



# Grab Your Apron!

Whether you're a rookie in the kitchen or a true Giada De Laurentiis, there's always room to improve – or at least have some fun with food and friends! Here are some of the latest cooking classes to try now.

## Huber's Butchery

Just when we thought Dempsey Hill's new and improved Huber's Butchery couldn't get any better, we find out that the family-run gourmet grocery and meat shop offers complimentary cooking demonstration classes in its very own in-store kitchen, once or twice a month on select Saturdays and weekdays (and yes, you get to sample the dishes!). While some classes are offered only to Huber's members, some are available to all customers.

From Spanish paella and Japanese wagyu sukiyaki to pan-seared barramundi and minced lamb marsala quesadilla, each class is different, and led by a guest chef or food-brand expert. Most recently, Italian chef Lorenza Pavan showed how to make classic carbonara from scratch using Italian cured meat *guanciale*, plus Sicilian *involtini* rolls with cannellini bean sauce, and members were treated to a dessert of pastry cream with caramelised sugar. Meanwhile, The Westin Singapore's Executive Chef Aaron Foster demonstrated pork recipes like Badger Cider-brined pork chops and spicy Thai pork salad.

For an upcoming class and events schedule, check [hubers.com.sg](http://hubers.com.sg).

22 Dempsey Road (free parking)  
6737 1588 | [hubers.com.sg](http://hubers.com.sg)



Part-seared  
barramundi with  
panzanella salad

## HOW TO BECOME A HUBER'S MEMBER

It's just \$5 to become a member, and you get a free cooler bag when signing up – just stop by the information counter on the shop's second level to pick up a membership form. Along with complimentary cooking classes, members also receive \$15 e-coupons with every accumulative purchase of \$500.



## Expat Kitchen

Located within a historic building in Little India, Expat Kitchen's large, fully equipped commercial kitchen is a wonderful setting for honing your culinary skills, no matter how experienced you are. From learning the bare basics – how to use kitchen appliances, learning what can be frozen and thawed, kitchen hygiene, and quantifying ingredients properly – to getting comfortable using new recipes and ingredients – cooking with quinoa, and gluten-free baking, for instance – to concentrating on more complicated cooking techniques, there's truly a course for everyone, offered either as a series of four sessions or as a single session. We love that there are all kinds of kids' classes, plus loads of specially devised hands-on courses for helpers, complete with custom cookbooks filled with recipes, diagrams, cooking notes and kitchen time-savers; there's even a "Mr Kitchen" men's course available.

*For class listings and more details, check [expat-kitchen.com](http://expat-kitchen.com).*

#02-01 9 Norris Road  
6299 4221 | [expat-kitchen.com](http://expat-kitchen.com)

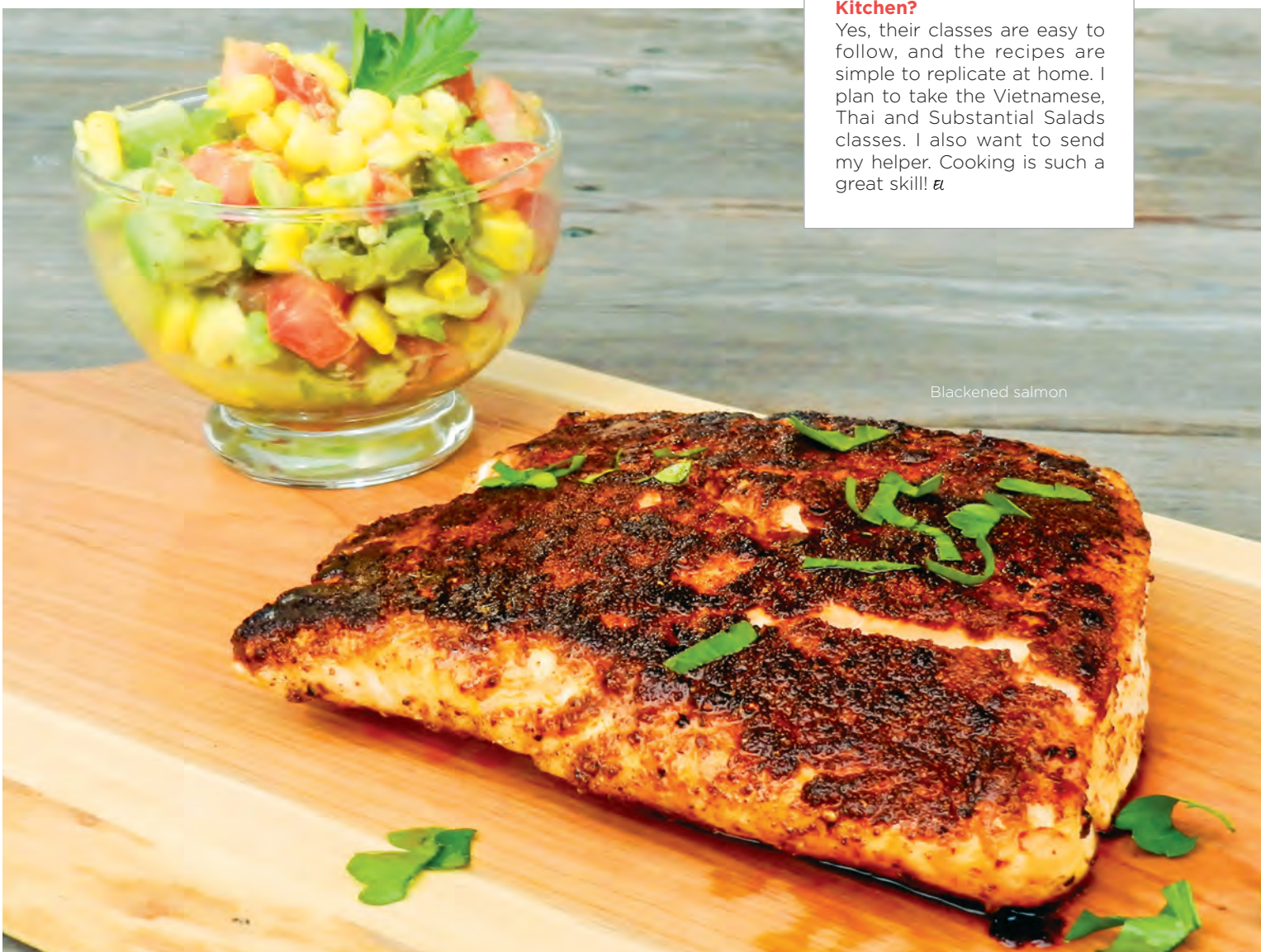
JILL HOWARD, CANADIAN

### **Why did you want to take a cooking course, and which classes did you sign up for?**

I never learnt to cook but always wanted to have a go at it. I did a four-week course, and that was it – I was hooked. I started with Basic, followed by Intermediate and Baking, and I've also done some specialty classes like Japanese, Korean, Fish Frenzy and Lunchbox Ideas.

### **Do you plan to take any more courses with Expat Kitchen?**

Yes, their classes are easy to follow, and the recipes are simple to replicate at home. I plan to take the Vietnamese, Thai and Substantial Salads classes. I also want to send my helper. Cooking is such a great skill!! *EL*



Blackened salmon





# RECIPE SWAP

Most of us have our go-to recipes, be it for a mid-week lunch, a dinner party pleaser or a sumptuous cake that Nigella Lawson would be proud of. In case you're stuck in a food rut, however, here are some of our readers' fail-safe recipes from around the world to add to your repertoire. **Bon appétit!**



## Mediterranean Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Makes 6

**Jessy Saber Rees,** Lebanese

"This recipe has become the definitive mushroom meal that my husband and I never tire of and our guests love. Quoting a Greek friend of mine (with her mouth full): 'I taste the islands from back home – pack me the rest for breakfast, please!'"



### Ingredients:

- 75g salted butter
- Olive oil
- 6 Portobello mushrooms
- 4 spring onions, finely chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, crushed
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- 4 bushy sprigs of thyme, leaves picked
- 50g roasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped
- 2 whole-wheat Weetabix biscuits
- ½ block feta cheese, crumbled
- 30g Parmesan cheese, grated
- 20g cheddar cheese, grated
- Pinch of paprika, white pepper and black pepper

### Directions:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius. In a bowl, mix the spring onions, garlic, lemon zest, thyme leaves, hazelnuts, cheddar cheese, paprika, black and white pepper. Crumble the feta and mix it gently into the mixture.
- 2 Wipe the mushrooms, peeling off the loose skin around the gills and snapping off the stems.
- 3 Heat the butter and olive oil in a large non-stick frying pan. When bubbles appear, put the mushrooms in, cap-side down, and leave to cook over a moderate heat. Once softened, turn the mushrooms over, pouring butter from the pan into the caps to continue their cooking. Don't overcook them, as they will finish cooking in the oven.
- 4 Transfer the mushrooms cap-side up onto a baking tray lined with grease-proof paper and then fill with the feta mixture.
- 5 Blitz the Weetabix biscuits with the grated Parmesan cheese then sprinkle the crumbs over and all around the mushrooms. Season.
- 6 Bake in the oven for 25 minutes; turn the tray halfway through for an even bake.
- 7 Sprinkle grated Parmesan cheese over the mushrooms and bake for a further five minutes.



# Finnish Karelian Pies with Egg Butter

Makes 20 pies

Breakfast

**Laura Karttunen**, Finland

"Karelian pies are traditional Finnish rye pastries filled with rice porridge, and they're sold everywhere in Finland. You can buy them in any supermarket and serve them for any occasion – I often have them for breakfast or a snack, and I serve a smaller cocktail version at parties. The pies are usually served warm with egg butter."



## Rice filling

### Ingredients:

- 200g short-grain rice (such as Australian Calrose rice), washed
- 250ml water
- 1 litre milk
- 1 teaspoon salt

### Directions:

- 1 Bring the water to the boil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan, add the rice and cook until the water is absorbed.
- 2 Stir in the milk and simmer for approximately 35 to 40 minutes, stirring, until the rice is cooked. Season the rice porridge with salt and let it cool. You can also prepare the porridge in a rice cooker, using the same mode as for congee.

## Rye dough

### Ingredients:

- 200g flour
- 100g plain flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 200ml water

### Directions:

- 1 Mix flours, salt and water together and knead into a solid dough.
- 2 Roll the dough into a long tube on a well-floured counter. Cut the tube evenly into 20 discs. Shape into balls and then flatten them.
- 3 Sprinkle more flour onto the counter and roll the discs into as thin a round shape as possible. Fill the rounds with a thin layer of cooled rice porridge. Crimp the edges of crust with your fingers to form oval-shaped pastries.
- 4 Place the pies on a baking tray lined with baking paper, and bake at 275 degrees Celsius for 10 to 15 minutes until golden brown. Once baked, brush pies with the melted butter-milk mixture (50 percent butter, 50 percent milk) and cover with a tea towel to soften.
- 5 Serve pies warm with egg butter (five hard-boiled eggs, cooled, peeled and mashed with 75 grams of butter and a pinch of salt). Enjoy!

## BE PART OF THE GREAT RECIPE SWAP!

If you have a fail-safe recipe you'd like to submit for our next issue, send an email titled "Great Recipe Swap" to Beate at [contribute@expatliving.sg](mailto:contribute@expatliving.sg) with your recipe, a photo of yourself and a few words about your dish. Thanks, Chef!



# The Healthy Option

The benefits of drinking biodynamic and organic wine

The trend towards healthy lifestyle choices is increasing, and wine is no exception, with more and more vineyards embracing organic farming methods and minimising interference in the cellar. What does this mean for consumers? Does it really matter if a wine is labelled organic or biodynamic? Here's what we found out from the team over at boutique Italian wine specialist and online shop **Bacco**.

Wine production methods and regulations vary greatly, they tell us – not only by country but even by province or region. For example, in some winemaking locations, including Champagne, it's acceptable to add sugar to boost alcohol levels; yet this is strictly forbidden in places such as South Africa and Italy. A more controversial example would be the use of wood chips to replicate barrel ageing. Good quality wooden barrels are expensive, and the time required for ageing the wine means a longer wait for return on investment. Alcohol is a natural preservative, but it's quite common to add sulphur, especially when working with grapes that are naturally low in alcohol levels. Some vintners use additives like acetaldehyde to stabilise the wine. But, often, these additives are the cause of that morning-after wine headache.

Next-day headaches from drinking too much wine may seem inevitable, but that really depends a lot on the wine itself, we're told. Moderate quantities of a good quality wine, made with minimal chemicals, shouldn't give you a headache – and, for those who suffer from allergies,

an organic or bio wine can help them avoid side effects like rashes.

Look out for the organic or bio certifications on wine labels, such as the green icon of a leaf of stars that is used on European bottles, or the words “Vino Biologico” or something similar; if you spot the “Organic Wine” label on a US wine, it guarantees that no preservatives have been used at all.

On the other hand, many boutique winemakers who prioritise organic methods do not yet have an official logo on their products. There are so many small-production wineries offering “healthier” wine, but how do you find them? You should be able to request these details from a good wine supplier, say the experts at Bacco.

For example, a little-known estate in Marche (east of Tuscany and north of Abruzzo) is quietly crafting high-quality wine in its organic vineyard, and yet it doesn't display its organic status on the labels. For the winemakers of Serra San Martino, following local traditions that focus on natural production from farm to cellar is the only way to make wine. They

even use dried grasses (harvested on their estate) as twine to secure the grapes to the wooden trellises, ensuring a completely biodegradable process and avoiding any metal or plastic contaminating the soil with substances that the grapes could soak up as they grow. This kind of long-term vision is common among family-run estates, where winemakers see themselves as guardians of the land.

Healthier wines don't have to be expensive, but it's unlikely they'll be as cheap as some of the highly mass-produced products out there. As with most things in life, you get what you pay for!

Bacco holds wine tastings at its Robertson Quay space twice a month. Sign up for the 13 July “Piedmont Party” and the 28 July “Innovators” tasting at [baccowines.com](http://baccowines.com).



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The Strand, Myanmar's most historic luxury hotel, is closed until November 2016 for a major refurb. [hotelthestrands.com](http://hotelthestrands.com)

# What's New



## Bangkok to Danang

There are now more options for destination-hopping in Southeast Asia – whether you're doing so for business or for pleasure – thanks to a new **Bangkok Airways** service linking the Thai capital to Danang in Vietnam. Aside from being the third-largest city and a major port in Vietnam, Danang is close to beach resorts and to the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Hoi An and Hue. The 138-seater Airbus A319 leaves Bangkok four times a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday). Passengers can enjoy the facilities of a boutique lounge at Suvarnabhumi Airport, including free snacks and Wi-Fi, and a kids' corner.

[bangkokair.com](http://bangkokair.com) ◀

### Hole in One

Planning your next round of golf in the region will be easier with the launch of **Green Golf** – Asia's first live golf booking app. Created in Singapore, the app aims to reverse the global downward trend of golf participation by allowing users to book and receive confirmation of tee times within one minute. Fees start from as low as S\$10, and children aged between eight and 16 play for free when booking through Green Golf. Free download for iPhone and Android. ▼



### South America by Train

The first luxury sleeper train in South America will launch in May 2017, with the **Belmond Andean Explorer** in Peru set to travel along one of the highest rail routes on earth. The one- and two-night journeys will traverse the Peruvian Andes from Cusco to Lake Titicaca and Arequipa, exploring natural wonders and ancient kingdoms. From US\$462 per person, including all meals, an open bar and excursions. [belmond.com/belmond-andean-explorer](http://belmond.com/belmond-andean-explorer) ▼





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# Sublime Safari

If your current travel bucket-list includes “memorable African experience”, then you’ll want to know that the **Nxabega Okavango Tented Camp** in Botswana has reopened following an extensive refurbishment. The luxury camp, by safari company **andBeyond**, has retained its contemporary safari club ambience while offering a host of updates, including the extension of private verandahs to make the most of its serene setting in the wild; also, two tents have been converted into an interconnecting family suite. Guests can experience Nxabega in combination with other andBeyond camps by using the company’s Fly Me Over Botswana Safari – complimentary flights for travellers spending a total of seven nights at up to three of their lodges and camps in Botswana. **andBeyond.com ▲**



## Something Sweet

Planning on flying first class this month? For a limited time, Emirates has added one of the world’s greatest wines to its menu. **Château d’Yquem** is a sweet white dessert wine from Sauternes in the Bordeaux region of France. Its 2005 vintage, which will feature on the flights, scored 97 in Robert Parker’s 100-point rating system, making it among the highest-scoring wines of all time. The 2005 Château d’Yquem retails from around US\$250 to \$900 a bottle. **emirates.com/sg**

## New in KL

The Malaysian capital has a new hotel in the form of the 383-room **Holiday Inn Express Kuala Lumpur City Centre**. The property is located along Jalan Raja Chulan, just a street away from the heart of KL’s “Golden Triangle”, and special advance purchase rates start from as low as RM160 (S\$53) a night, with additional discounts for IHG Rewards Club members. **holidayinnexpress.com ▼**



## Theatre Tour with a Difference

**Voicemap**, a GPS-triggered audio guide app, has announced that Sir Ian McKellen (aka Magneto and Gandalf) will be narrating a tour of London’s famous theatre district, through a collaboration with the Society of London Theatre. Voicemap currently has over 200 curated tours in more than 50 major cities around the world, performed by locals, writers, thought-leaders and more. In Singapore, actor and entertainer Hossan Leong will be leading listeners through the Arts and Heritage district. **voicemap.me ▼**





# Sri Lanka FOCUS

We're big fans of the "Pearl of the Indian Ocean", with its sacred sights, amazing beaches and cuisine influenced by a multitude of migrants and colonisers. Here are some ideas for planning your next trip to the fascinating island nation.

## ONE TRIP, TWO COUNTRIES

**Starron Tours**, which offers custom itineraries so you can make the most of your Sri Lankan adventures, has devised an itinerary especially for *Expat Living* readers. The nine-day holiday covers the July to October travel season and starts from just US\$900 per adult, with destinations including Colombo, Sigiriya and Kandy. That's not all: the trip also incorporates a four-night stay in the Maldives (or ask about the six-night "luxury" option). Recommended off-the-beaten-path activities for families include guided nature walks, cycling excursions, and craft and cooking lessons at a local village. Starron's holidays always include a private vehicle (with children's car seats, if required) and an English-speaking driver-guide. Children under six travel for free.

*Special offer:* Quote "EXPATSG" to enjoy 50 percent off the children's rate (ages six to 12) on all bookings during this period, or pay for two nights and stay for three at specialty lodge The Other Corner Resort, Habarana. Contact **9183 9903** for a free travel consultation or email [tours@starrongroup.com](mailto:tours@starrongroup.com) with your travel dates.



## EASY ESCAPE

While the **Heritage Negombo** is conveniently located in close proximity to the Colombo International Airport, it comes with all the trappings of a beach resort. No wonder it's a popular location for everyone from business travellers to transit guests. All 139 rooms feature private balconies with views of the sea, so you can make the most of the stunning sunsets and sunrises on this part of the Sri Lankan coast. Dining is a highlight too, with Blu Tan's island stations and buffets providing a quirky all-day dining experience, and the See lounge bar offering panoramic views and a perfect spot to relax with a drink. The Big Fish seafood restaurant, meanwhile, is set to open later this year, with an emphasis on freshly caught and perfectly prepared ingredients. Finally, The Banyan is an alfresco dining area offering a collection of original dining spaces serving bakery treats, tapas and wine, along with specialty drinks and live music. [heritancehotels.com/negombo](http://heritancehotels.com/negombo)



## SEASIDE RETREAT

**Reef Villa & Spa** is an intimate boutique hotel one hour south of Colombo, offering seven glorious suites with four-poster beds. Set across three acres of tropical gardens and lily ponds, with a private spa, tennis court and azure pool, Reef offers direct access from a 65-metre palm garden to a long, sandy stretch of golden beach. The resort's traditional thatched restaurant is ideal for experiencing the region's freshest seafood, featuring crab, lobster, squid and mullet, and, of course, famous Sri Lankan curries; there's also an extensive wine list. Excursions to ancient temples and moonstone mines are just some of the day trips available.

*Special offer:* Book on the website using coupon code "HELLOREEF" and you can enjoy a US\$100 food and beverage credit for your stay, with flowers and chocolates in the suite. Bookings (minimum three nights) must be made by 31 July for travel between 1 and 30 September 2016. [info@reefvilla.com](mailto:info@reefvilla.com) | [reefvilla.com](http://reefvilla.com)





A woman with dark hair and sunglasses, wearing a red, white, and blue striped strapless dress, is smiling and holding a baby. The baby is wearing a white shirt with red sleeves and a green patterned hat. They are standing on a sandy beach with waves crashing in the background. The title 'Timeout in Thalpe' is overlaid on the image in a large, white, serif font.

# Timeout in Thalpe

AMY GREENBURG shares her tips for a getaway to the south of Sri Lanka – with a baby.

Looking for a relaxing getaway to somewhere other than Thailand or Bali, we turned our attention to southern Sri Lanka. After researching Galle and the surrounding areas, we knew we had found a gem when we came across The Frangipani Tree, a boutique hotel in the beach town of Thalpe, just a *tuk tuk* ride away from better-known areas Galle and Unawatuna.

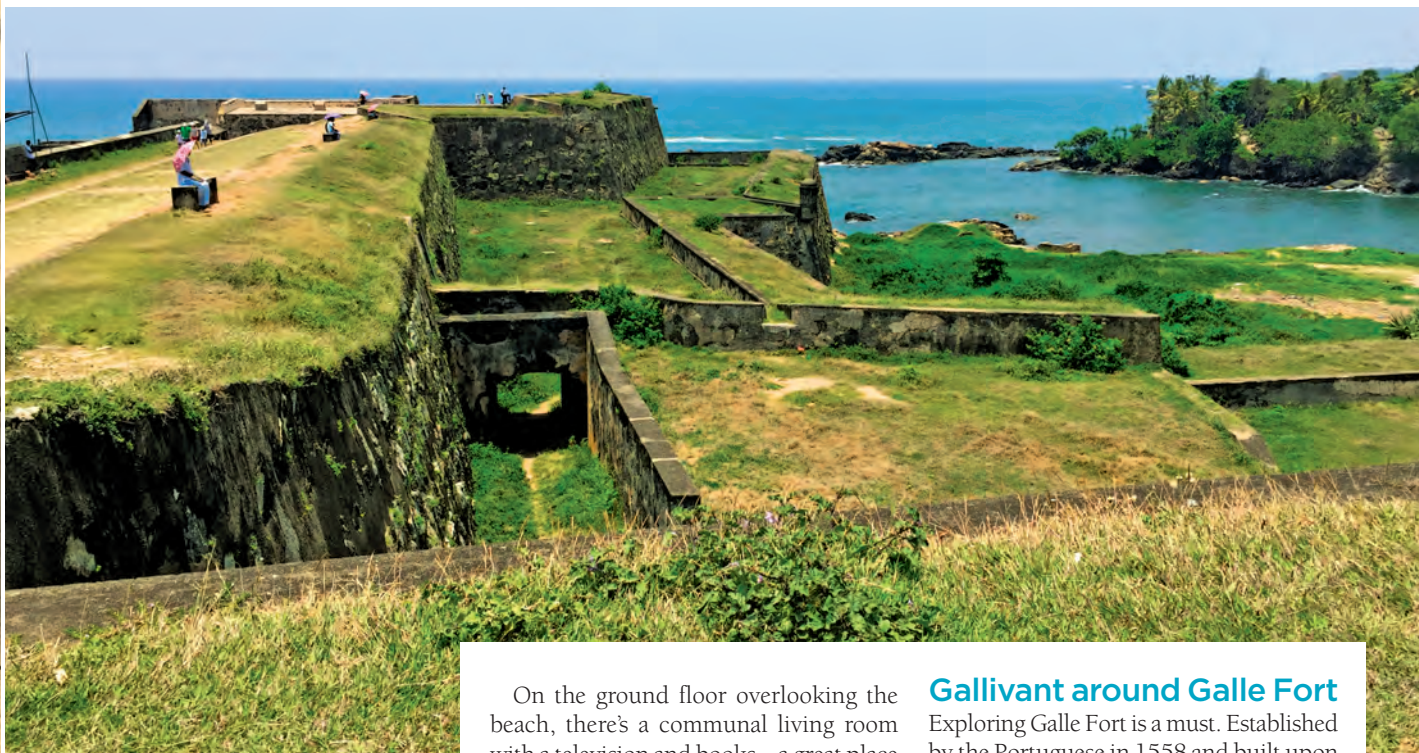
Though we were a bit wary of travelling with a seven-month-old to somewhere we didn't know as well as our usual Seminyak or Phuket, our minds were immediately put at ease when we stepped on to the gorgeous property. Not only did we love the intimate feel of the place, but we also appreciated the superb staff, who couldn't have been nicer or more helpful. From making sure we had enough bottled water at all times to bringing us an electric water kettle and bowl for washing the baby's bottles with sanitary water, to setting up an ironing board when we needed it, they truly made us feel at home.

The Frangipani Tree has nine beautiful suites across three villas, all with an “industrial chic” contemporary look (think concrete floors and minimalist décor) and beautiful views of either the ocean or the frangipani tree-lined courtyard. The air-conditioned suites, each named after a type of sea turtle, are spacious with high, airy ceilings, mosquito net-covered four-poster beds and lounge areas. Some of the rooms even have private terraces. Conveniently, the hotel has baby cots (with mosquito nets) on hand, though we opted to use our collapsible Baby Bjorn travel cot, as our son is used to sleeping in it when we travel.

While many of the suites feature lovely outdoor bathrooms, we specifically requested an indoor bathroom due to personal preference. We also chose our room, the Olive Ridley Beach Room, because it's on the first floor and there are no elevators – we wanted to keep things as stroller-friendly as possible; it's also incredibly roomy, perfect for a family travelling with an infant.







On the ground floor overlooking the beach, there's a communal living room with a television and books – a great place to chill out with tea or a cocktail – and an outdoor terrace for dining. We enjoyed our leisurely breakfasts on the verandah, chatting with other guests and watching a monitor lizard crawl around in the lush garden area. There's also a tennis court, if you're up for it in the heat. We especially loved the beautiful pool (complete with plenty of lounge chairs) overlooking the Indian Ocean – it's reason enough not to leave the hotel. But, if you do decide to venture out, here are three things to do near Thalpe.

### Gallivant around Galle Fort

Exploring Galle Fort is a must. Established by the Portuguese in 1558 and built upon by the Dutch from 1649, the massive fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has been wonderfully preserved by the government. Located on a 130-acre peninsula that protrudes from the southwest coast, it's surrounded by water on three sides. Though the city of Galle continues beyond the fort, you'll want to spend time wandering within the walls – and *on* the walls themselves, which are mostly covered with grass and make for some prime picture-taking when you climb to the top.

Wondering how to do this with a baby? For a day out, most parents will want to opt for a baby carrier strapped to their chests. It makes things easier with tuk tuk and getting around the fort. However, if having a baby fastened to your chest (or on your back) all day – or even half a day – isn't your thing, you can bring a stroller that folds up; the tuk tuk here have a bit more room behind the back passenger seats than those in, say, Thailand, so if your stroller folds up compactly (we used the Baby Jogger City Mini GT), it's totally doable.





We loved exploring the streets lined with historical Dutch and British colonial buildings, the Galle Lighthouse and the old Galle Clock Tower, as well as art galleries, shops and charming cafés; there's also a unique selection of religious buildings within the fort, including the old Dutch Reformed Church, the All Saints Anglican Church, the Meera Mosque and the Fort Shri Sudarmalaya Buddhist Temple.

We had a fabulous lunch at Sugar Bistro and Wine Bar at the Galle Dutch Hospital, which has been refurbished and transformed into a nice shopping complex with restaurants and bars, and shops selling everything from handicrafts and paintings to jewellery and spices.

The fort is about 25 minutes away from The Frangipani Tree by tuk tuk, and, though that may seem like a long ride in an auto-rickshaw, it's actually quite pleasant and breezy – trust me, you'll want the wind in your face, as it's quite warm year-round. Just ask the helpful folks at The Frangipani Tree to call you a tuk tuk and you'll be on your merry way in no time. *Tip:* Try to visit the fort in the morning if you can, as it gets really hot in the afternoon, and there's not much shade in certain stretches.

## Wade at Wijaya

After all that fort frolicking, you'll definitely want to cool off in the pool or the sea. Though the beach at The Frangipani Tree is beautiful, it's not suitable for swimming due to rocks and a strong current. So, if you're looking for some ocean action, head over to Wijaya Beach in neighbouring Unawatuna. It has a protected reef and is just a 20-minute walk or a five-minute tuk tuk ride from The Frangipani Tree. The Wijaya Beach bar and restaurant ([wijayabeach.com](http://wijayabeach.com)), known for its thin-crust pizzas, is a fabulous lunch or dinner spot (or both – we actually ate there twice in one day), and a great place to relax with a cocktail and beach views. (If I didn't have a baby with me, I'd curl up with a book and a beverage in the terrace area.)



Looking for more interaction with sea life? The Sea Turtle Farm and Hatchery is a non-profit organisation aimed at saving endangered sea turtles. While I haven't personally been there (not enough time during our visit!), I do love the idea behind the conservation project, which focuses on hatching turtles in incubators and releasing them into the ocean, as well as treating injured turtles before releasing them into the sea. Since its establishment in 1986, the organisation has freed about 759,000 turtles into the ocean. Open daily, the farm is not far from The Frangipani Tree by car. For more information, visit [seaturtlefarm.org](http://seaturtlefarm.org).





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## Spot Sea Life

Have the hotel arrange a taxi to take you to Mirissa, a small town on the south coast (about 40 minutes from Thalpe) known for being one of the best whale- and dolphin-watching destinations in Sri Lanka; you can also snorkel, dive, surf and participate in various water sports there. November to April is considered whale-watching season, as the water's not as rough, although you can go all year round.

Mirissa Water Sports has boats leaving from Mirissa Harbour daily at 6.30am and 1.30pm, and the staff at The Frangipani Tree can arrange the trip for you in advance. If you're with a group of families, I'd suggest chartering a yacht with Sail Lanka Charter – it's a nice option that includes breakfast and lunch aboard, followed by a swim in Weligama Bay. (It's about US\$700 for up to 10 people, though the boat can hold up to 25 for just over \$1,300.)

## Accommodation

During high season (November to April), room rates at The Frangipani Tree (812 Matara Road, Thalpe, Sri Lanka) start at US\$300 per night; prices go down in the low season (May to October; rooms from \$275). For more information, or to make a reservation, email [info@thefrangipanitree.com](mailto:info@thefrangipanitree.com).

In addition to The Frangipani Tree, The Edwards Collection hotel group has a handful of boutique hotels throughout Sri Lanka, including Hill Rise (Nuwara, Eliya), Thambili House (Galle), Villa Mayurana (Ahangama) and White Villa (Balapitiya). For more information, visit [thefrangipanitree.com](http://thefrangipanitree.com).



## Getting There

It's a two-and-a-half hour drive to Thalpe from Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport. We took a 12.50am Emirates flight out of Singapore and arrived in Sri Lanka at 2am. Had we not had an infant with us, we would have gone straight to The Frangipani Tree upon arrival. But, since we had a sleepy (and cranky) baby, we opted to get a few hours of sleep in Negombo (near the airport) before hitting the road in the morning. There is a 9.45am SriLankan Airlines flight from Singapore, but as our visit was only three days long, we chose the red-eye to save time.

## What to know before you go

**Visas:** To travel to Sri Lanka, you must apply for an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) at [eta.gov.lk/slvisa](http://eta.gov.lk/slvisa). This tourist visa (\$35 per adult; free for kids under 12) is good for 30 days, allowing double entry into the country. It's super easy, and takes from one to about five days to process.

**Jabs and mosquito protection:** Dr Natalie Epton of International Paediatric Clinic (IPC) suggests making sure all your child's regular vaccinations are up to date, including diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough (included in the five-in-one and six-in-one jabs), usually given at two, four, six and 12 to 18 months, with a second booster at four to six years old.

If your child is older than a year, he or she should get the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine, though Dr Epton points out that in some circumstances a child may be recommended to take the MMR prior to turning one, if travelling to a measles-endemic part of the world. Other important vaccinations include:

**Hepatitis B:** "This is usually given at birth and with the six-in-one vaccine," says Dr Epton. "A three-dose course over six months in early infancy confers what is now regarded as life-long protection."

**Hepatitis A:** "This can only be given after the first birthday, and is recommended for travel around Southeast Asia; two doses six months apart give what is now regarded as life-long protection."

**Typhoid (Typhim Vi):** "This is recommended for travellers over the age of two years who are visiting countries in Southeast Asia; it requires a booster dose every three years," says Dr Epton. "So, adults who got this before arriving in Singapore several years ago may require a booster now."

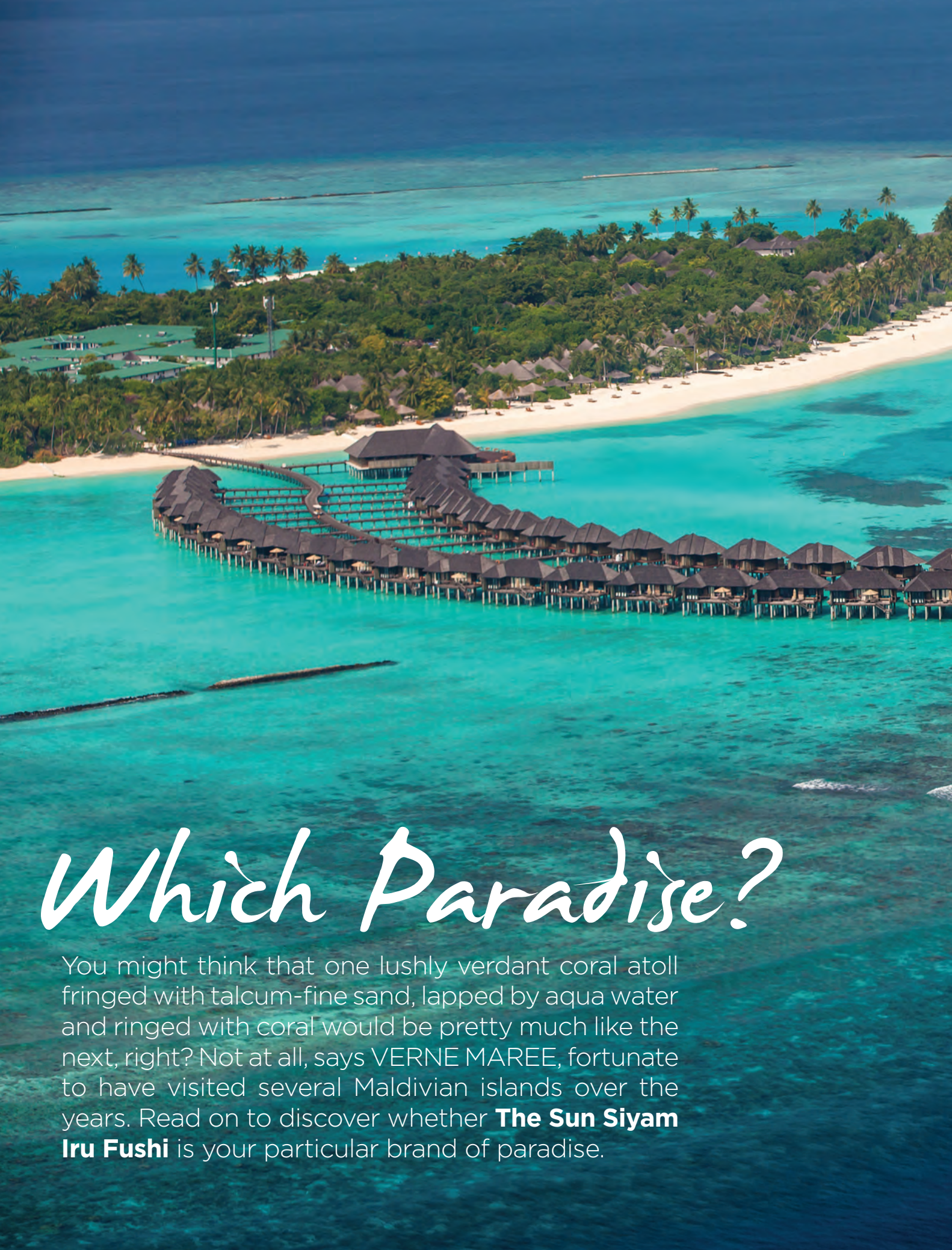
Also check with your doctor whether the area you're planning to visit requires anti-malaria protection. A DEET-based mosquito repellent is usually recommended for prevention of mosquito-borne diseases like dengue. We left IPC with a reduced concentration DEET spray that's safe for children from six months old.

And, of course, sunscreen is always recommended for the outdoors. Dr Epton suggests applying SPF 30 to 50 regularly, and wearing a hat to provide additional protection, and even a swimsuit with SPF in the fabric for swimming.

To schedule a consultation, call IPC at 6887 4440 or visit [ipc-healthcare.com.sg](http://ipc-healthcare.com.sg).







# Which Paradise?

You might think that one lushly verdant coral atoll fringed with talcum-fine sand, lapped by aqua water and ringed with coral would be pretty much like the next, right? Not at all, says VERNE MAREE, fortunate to have visited several Maldivian islands over the years. Read on to discover whether **The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi** is your particular brand of paradise.





**S**ize matters, and that's true for coral atolls, too. The dimensions of your island paradise are partly what dictate its character.

So ask yourself: do you fancy a tiny island with only a couple of dining venues, where the sea is your swimming pool, and the teeming house reef virtually your sole source of entertainment? Or would you like something much bigger that offers organised activities guaranteed to keep the kids out of your hair? Do you want to be able to go for a run – be it around the island or at its air-conditioned gym? Also, would you rather avoid pricy seaplane flights by choosing an island that's just a short speedboat ride from the airport?

Not one of the Maldives many far smaller islands, The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi has 251 villas that can accommodate around 500 guests who are looked after by about 600 staff at any one time. However, from the few souls you might encounter on the beach at 8 or 9am, you'd never think you were sharing the island with a thousand other people. Only at Iru Restaurant's breakfast buffet is this at all evident – or when it's bucketing down, and you're waiting for a buggy. (But you'd be sensible and go in the dry season, right?)

Being bigger means the resort can offer more: especially a wider variety of restaurants and activities, so The Sun Siyam is a good choice for families. Little ones can be dropped off at the well-equipped Kids' Club to be cared for by trained and cheerful staff, and there's a plethora of options to keep them busy. Apart from a water-sport centre, a well-equipped gym, tennis and badminton courts, a library and outdoor chess, there's the thrilling opportunity to commune with rescued baby turtles.

## Getting there:

You know you're in island mode when your German seaplane pilot – upper half all crispy-white, starched linen and epaulettes – bares muscular calves and sports flip-flops. It's just over a four-hour flight to Malé, departing from Changi Airport at 9.30am; then it's five minutes on the bus to the seaplane airport and 45 minutes on the packed TransMaldivian hop to our destination – Iru Fushi island in Noonu Atoll, located in the northwestern part of the Maldives archipelago. The seaplane transfer costs an extra US\$500 per person.

## When to go:

Preferably not during the rainy season. Over three days at the end of August, it either rained or poured at least half the time, and we had at most two or three hours of sunshine. And though I've previously sung the praises of low-season tropical island breaks punctuated by cooling monsoon showers that quickly clear, you might not want to take the risk.

## Who'll be there:

You can guess the mix of guests from the languages on menus and signs: English, Chinese and Russian. Chinese predominate around this time of the year, we're told. Brits and Europeans like to visit during their northern hemisphere winter – over Christmas and the first three months of the year when they're guaranteed blue skies and baking heat. Russians rush in all year round, whatever the weather.

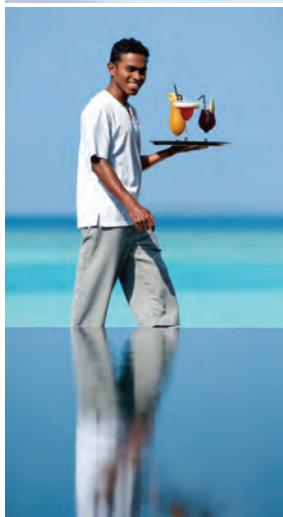


## Aquatic endeavours

A smart five-star **PADI dive centre** boasting instructors in several languages and offering a long list of dive and excursion options makes The Sun Siyam a good choice for lovers of scuba, whether already certified or wannabes.

I'm not one of them. I do adore snorkelling, though, especially on a house reef that can be reached from the beach. Apart from some pretty fish and coral in the lagoon, Ira Fushi doesn't have much of interest for the keen snorkeler, however. The wideness of the lagoon means the house reef is not conveniently close to the beach; also, it's not one of the better ones.

Going out in a traditional Maldivian *dhoni*, or fishing boat, is always fun, so I enjoy the three-hour **snorkel safari**, stopping at two different reefs for some floating time. Again, the range of species is relatively limited. Despite the poor visibility, some of us (not I, alack) spot a turtle; and others of us (again, not I) spot a couple of barracudas. We're also lucky to encounter a school of dolphins, as our **dolphin cruise** had to be cancelled due to the choppiness of the conditions.





## Food matters

Only such a big resort could possibly offer 14 restaurants, from French and Italian through Thai, Japanese, Indian and more. I was honestly blown away by the incredible standard of the food at The Sun Siyam. Whatever the cuisine, every meal was just as outstanding as the last, and I suspect that will be what I'll remember most about this resort.

Scottish culinary director Ian Lovie's extensive experience in Asia Pacific, including Australia, shows in the consistently high standards, immaculate presentation and beautifully fresh and wholesome flavours. All menus are presented on tablets, hurrah! – no scrabbling for those reading glasses that give your age away.

French fine-dining restaurant **Flavours** is built on a boardwalk over the sea and boasts a high-end Bubble Lounge that's bursting with rare champagnes. Starting with fresh-baked breads, artisanal sea-salt butter and an exquisite *amuse-bouche* of *foie gras* in aspic, I immediately know I'm in good hands – and that's where I stay for the duration. Italian restaurant **Trio** and the fresh seafood restaurant **Islander's Grill** become my other two favourites.

An excellent Filipino live band adds hugely to the ambience, especially during our last dinner, at Trio. Having sung along – almost certainly too loudly – throughout the meal, our group ends up in the resort's private **karaoke** room for a memorable and wine-fuelled songfest that has to be forcibly broken up around 2.30am. (Through a morning-after mist of hangover on the seaplane, it occurs to me that premeditated karaoke is never as good as a spur-of-the-moment session.)

Like much of the Maldives, though, food and beverage prices are relentlessly high. So it's a good idea to book a package: either half-board (dinner and breakfast) or full-board, and bring along a personal stash of your preferred snacks and sweets. Tragically, you're not allowed to BYO into the Maldives – the official reason is that it's a devoutly Muslim country (and yes, if you try to sneak some in they *will* check and they *will* find it) – so save your dollars to spend on drinks.



## Spa-gazing

A modest entrance belies the size and scope of **The Spa by Thalgo** – 20 treatment rooms linked by curved walkways and pavilions, hot and cold pools, steam, massage, and pavilions for yoga, relaxation and more. From a wide and comprehensive list of treatment and modalities, my 60-minute (US\$140) **Wish Massage** – tailored according to my whim by the well-trained and empathetic Weli from Bali – was very good indeed. Both an Ayurvedic doctor and a Chinese medicine consultant are available, too.

## So?

It's worth doing your homework before splashing out on a luxury holiday in the Maldives – and even the least expensive is nowhere near cheap. It's fair to say that you're never going to feel like Robinson Crusoe at a substantial resort like this one. On the other hand, you will be beautifully accommodated in a gorgeous villa (and my beach villa was truly magnificent), enjoy world-class food and warm, friendly service. Over to you! *EL*

[thesunsiyam.com](http://thesunsiyam.com)



# Getting to Know *The Snow*

JACQUI YOUNG and her family of first-time skiers head to France for a holiday on the slopes.

**W**e chose **Club Med Peisey-Vallandry** for our first French ski holiday, not only because Club Med's all-inclusive holidays make things so easy, but also because it's relatively quick to get there from either Lyon or Zurich airport by resort transfer. It opens slightly later in the season than neighbouring properties, too, which suited our timing.

It received a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for five consecutive years, and is beautifully located at a height of 1,600 metres in the Vanoise National Park in Savoy. It caters for skiing, snowboarding, walking and hiking, all of which can be done literally from the front door. The vast Paradiski ski area covers 425 kilometres of pistes at altitudes of between 1,200 and 3,000 metres.

## Arrival

We arrived late at night and after a short briefing, a quick snack and the collection of our keys and ski passes, we headed to our room, eager to catch up on some sleep in preparation for the following morning.

Everything is planned effortlessly at Club Med, and after a wonderful buffet breakfast we headed in our posh new ski attire







to the ski room to get measured for boots, skis and helmets. We certainly looked the part – “all the gear and no idea”, as some would say.

For planning purposes, it's perhaps better to arrive at the weekend so you can begin your ski “journey” from the Monday morning by joining the group ski lessons. Alternatively, **private lessons** can also be arranged upon request via **ESF Ski School**, which runs the whole ski setup, from hiring equipment to planning your time on the slopes.

We opted for the latter and were soon greeted by our ski instructor, Gary, who we later learnt was a championship skier. Having private lessons means the whole family can be together rather than the adults going in one group and the kids in another. I suppose the choice you make will depend on how long and hard your journey has been and whether or not you're keen for some peace and quiet!

## The learning curve

Off we headed, down the tunnel from the ski room to the entrance, where we were greeted with a fantastic atmosphere of upbeat music and warm drinks to get us in the mood and on our way. First step was to get acquainted with the ski lift, which is practically at the door of the hotel. This was new to us, but we managed to get through the turnstiles and shuffle along like penguins before the lift scooped us up and we were flying high.

We then spent most of the first morning on the nursery slopes, being pulled up the hill by an automatic pulley rope and attempting to ski back down in various professional ski poses.

After a quick bite for lunch back at the hotel, we again headed up the mountain. Having now got the gist of what we were doing, we miraculously managed to navigate all the way down the slopes to arrive back at the hotel in one piece – with only a chipped tooth and some dented pride to worry about! That evening, the hotel put on a great show, which was performed by the GOs and GEs (the terms used for Club Med's organisers and employees) and had us all dancing away. Afterwards, there was a disco and a band playing in the main lobby area.

## Gaining confidence

On our second day, we got a little braver and ventured with our instructor to some higher ski lifts. We also spent some time playing around on the “drag lift” on our way up the mountain. Once again, we managed to ski all the way back to base with only a few ups and downs (but probably more downs, it's fair to say).





The scenery here is stunning, and we couldn't quite believe the contrast from the hotel level, which seemed to be already in its spring incarnation, to the deep snow-capped mountains higher up, with **Mont Blanc** looming in the distance. Photographers are stationed on the mountain slopes to take pictures that are available to purchase from the hotel – a great service.

We also managed to take a trip on the **Vanoise Express**, which is at the bottom of the ski lift outside the hotel. This is a double-decker cable car with a glass floor that links the La Plagne and Les Arcs ski resorts. Built in 2003 at a cost of over 15 million euro, the lift stretches 1.8 kilometres across the valley at a height of almost 400 metres above the ground. It takes four minutes to cross and, remarkably, has a capacity of over 200 people.

The **Lonzagne cable railway**, meanwhile, is an open-air gondola on a pulley that operates up and down the hillside between Le Villaret and Plan-Peisey. This fun journey takes seven minutes. We had a lovely walk around the town, browsing in the family-run delicatessen and the small cafés.







EL TRAVEL

## Busy kids

Entertainment for little ones at the resort is typical of the Club Med brand, and as usual, impeccably organised by the young and energetic team. This kids' club was the most amazing we've seen, and it completely allows parents to chill out and relax whenever they want to. There is something for everyone: **Petit Club Med** caters for ages two to three years, **Mini Club Med** for ages four to 10, and **Club Med Passworld** for ages 11 to 17. The talented GOs organise the daily schedule, which can include group ski lessons, creative activities and shows for the different age groups. They can even take them for lunch and dinner. With entertainment every evening alternating between a show performed by the GOs and ones performed by the wonderful kids, there is always something going on.

## Dining highlights

Food is plentiful, and the beautiful array of dishes available almost constantly through the day means you never go hungry. Once the leisurely breakfast ends, the busy staff immediately begin clearing and setting up for lunch! Even when the lovely **La Vanoise** restaurant does close for a short time between meals, there's normally morning or afternoon tea being served in the main bar area. Drinks are free-flow, based on your package. For something different, and by advance booking only, the **Pierra Menta** restaurant serves regional specialities. We tried this one evening and enjoyed tender meat dishes served with vegetables and an amazing cheese fondue.

For when you're not skiing, **Carita Spa** has a full spa menu to relax body and mind; and on the same level you'll find a heated swimming pool, a sauna and a hammam, as well as a fully equipped gym with daily fitness classes. It really does make you never want to leave! *EL*

For more information about Club Med Peisey-Vallandry or to book a holiday, visit [clubmed.com.sg/PVAC](http://clubmed.com.sg/PVAC).







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# Staying

# BALA

From studying law and then working as an airhostess, to becoming a life coach and personal trainer, KARINE GAUTHIER's career has been one of self-discovery, and she's grateful for all she has learnt on the journey. I caught up with the high-spirited entrepreneur and busy mum of three at **Body Temple** in Loewen Gardens – a fitness studio that advocates women training women.



WORDS SUSANNAH JAFFER  
PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL BERNABE  
MAKEUP & HAIR KELLY BILIMORIA  
SPORTSWEAR INZONES



# NCEP



Karine With Her Children  
From Left To Right: Kenya, 6,  
Henry, 2, And Matilda, 8



### How did you come to live in Singapore?

I was born into a French-Canadian family and grew up on the east coast of Canada. In my early twenties I decided to travel and then lived in Australia for eight years. I met my husband Mike on a trip to Singapore 16 years ago, in 2000 – saying that makes me feel super-old! We got together and lived in Sydney, but eventually he was headhunted to come back here to work.

### At what stage did you decide you wanted to be a personal trainer?

I studied law, but decided not to pursue it – I didn't like it at all, actually! That's when I went travelling and ended up in Australia. It was supposed to be just a year's trip, but I decided to stay. I started out in film and television casting, and then I moved on to work for Qantas as they were looking for French-speakers. Being an airhostess for four years was fantastic, and during that time I met Mike. I was getting paid to travel and that was great fun, but it's not something that you can carry on doing forever. When we both got the chance to move back to Singapore, I took it as an opportunity to walk away from trolley-dolly life and start afresh.

### When did this career switch come about?

My husband had gone to see a life coach back in Australia. Soon after we moved here, I thought I'd book a session too, as it was time for me to invest some thought into what I was going to do for the next few years. I met up with a coach who gave me some very good direction. In the end, I was so inspired that I went and studied to be a life and business coach.

### So how did your journey with the Body Temple begin?

I met Suzanne Bocking – the founder of Body Temple – at the PrimeTime Business Association, and she was looking for personal trainers. I'd always been passionate about fitness as a hobby, but hadn't seen it as a potential career path until I met Suzanne. I soon gained my qualifications, and she was my mentor along the way.

When Suzanne decided to move back to Australia, she gave me the first option to buy the business. I was pregnant at the time and I purchased Body Temple on the day my first child was born. I felt like I took on two new additions at once!

I operated out of what was The Gallery Hotel at the bottom of Mohamed Sultan Road, along with a few other trainers, both male and female. Two

years in, we opened our first proper studio space at Carpenter Street. Eventually, we wanted to expand to a second branch, and that's when we came across the space at Loewen Gardens. It was just perfect for us. I loved the gated area for kids, the fact that you could train indoors or outdoors, and the beautiful natural surroundings. In the end, our landlords tried to double our rent in the city, so we focused our efforts in Loewen and haven't looked back.

### What's Body Temple's vision?

Our idea was always to create a centre for women, trained by women – a sacred and holistic place where you feel safe and encouraged at all times. We wanted to provide a more personalised service, not one where you feel like you're simply ticking boxes. We acknowledge that everyone has different levels of fitness, and we're very goal-orientated ourselves when it comes to health and wellness. While offering you accountability and support, our trainers want to nourish not only your body, but also your mind and soul.

### What do you specialise in?

Although we offer a variety of fitness classes, our ultimate passion is one-to-one training. I think that if you can make a difference in the life of one woman a day, your time has been well spent. I'm also a big believer in using your own body rather than lots of gym machines. If you keep your exercise routine simple, you're more likely to stick to it, and that philosophy has worked for us for eight years!

Also, we have a lot of prenatal and postnatal clients. Many women who have just had a baby want a place that feels safe, somewhere they can build up their confidence again. We know how to take care of them, but at the same time place an emphasis on good training and nutrition – after all, 85 percent of weight-loss depends on what you put into your body. If we need additional expertise for any case, we always refer her to the appropriate person; we're lucky to have built up great working relationships with health specialists in Singapore over the years.

### Tell us about your fitness classes.

Each of our classes is held at the studio five times a week; we keep them small and focused, with a maximum of around 10 to 12 people. We're experienced with injuries, and with educating clients on things they can do at home to become or stay fit. If I keep hearing requests for an exercise we don't currently offer, I'll look into our trainers getting a qualification for it.







“Ultimately,  
what keeps  
me going  
is seeing  
the women  
around me  
achieving  
great things  
every day”



### **How have you managed to balance work with the demands of a growing family?**

When I took over the company, I threw myself into deep water, but I'm thankful that this job has allowed me to work flexibly while expanding my family over the years. Having my third child definitely tipped my balance a lot, but in the end it taught me that you simply have to prioritise and make compromises. Singapore is regarded as a transitional place, but I've always had a steady network of inspirational women around me, including my team, who've been a great support.

When it comes to making time for family, I always feel like I'm performing a juggling act; but when guilty feelings creep in, I believe in stopping and being grateful for what I have. Of course, I'd love to spend more time with my kids like some other mums do, but when I look at the bigger picture I know I'm very lucky. I'm able to work every day, managing a beautiful team in a positive environment, yet I'm also able to wake up with my children, have breakfast with them and see them off to school. I try to put a positive spin on everything, and I think it's important that my children can look up to me as a good role model – someone who works hard, yet loves what she does. Ultimately, though, what keeps me going is seeing the women around me achieving great things every day.

### **What are your plans?**

I definitely want to take on more trainers, ones who have different niches and specialties. Also, having created a balanced daily routine for myself, I want to be able to give that opportunity to other mums who want to work flexibly.

Next, I want to work on our class schedules. These days, it seems to be more affordable for people to attend a few sessions a week, so I want to make sure we have a diverse timetable and a great range of classes on offer

at all times. In the longer term, I'd love to open more Body Temples around Asia – in Jakarta and Bangkok, for example – to provide our services for both the locals and expats there. Maybe I'll consider that in my next five-year plan!

### **If you had any advice for other female entrepreneurs, what would it be?**

Follow your gut feeling and go for it. If you're doing what you love and love what you do, I believe the money will come. Even if it doesn't go as planned, you'll have learnt something from the experience. There's no such thing as failure.

My other piece of advice is not to see people just as dollar signs. Listen to their needs, and be willing to make a difference to their lives with your service. In business, people really do connect to those with good intentions. To me, honesty and transparency are the way forward. That's my mantra, and that means I can go to bed at night feeling good about myself. *u*





**“In business,  
people really  
do connect  
to those  
with good  
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# FASHION



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### Editor's Pick

These cheerful shades take "seeing the world through rose-coloured glasses" to another level! \$325, Marc Jacobs.

# What's New



## Gift Appeal

Whether it's a present for a loved one or a treat for yourself, Pandora's elegant and affordable rings are a winning choice. They come in lots of elegant, stackable designs in sterling silver or 14-carat gold. Prices start from \$69. **Available at Pandora boutiques island-wide.**



### Home Sweet Home

A space for homegrown talent and local craftsmanship, Keepers has finally found a permanent home at the National Design Centre after three pop-up shops and many installations around Singapore. Their new home allows them to support independent artists even more than before, introducing new themes and designers every two months. **Find out more at [keepers.com.sg](http://keepers.com.sg).** ▲



### New in Town

On the hunt for a new pair of sunglasses? There's plenty of choice at new eyewear store Optic Butler, which houses a roster of luxe eyewear brands including coveted names such as Linda Farrow and Victoria Beckham. The best part? No mark-ups. The frames are said to be the same price as in Europe or North America! **#03-48/49A Paragon, Orchard Road.** ▲

### Reviewed: Aerosoles Shoes

"Hearing about the interesting technology in Aerosoles shoes, I was keen to take a pair for a spin. After wearing the Global Leopard sandals for a few days of errands, I can report no heel ache or tiredness in my feet – the soles feel very cushioned and well supported. I also love the flatform espadrille style – which adds a welcome bit of height, too – and I got lots of compliments on the leopard print finish!"

– Susannah Jaffer, Fashion Editor





## Feeling Retro

Whimsical ruffles and pops of colour abound in the latest Dorothy Perkins retro-inspired collection. Other highlights include the panelled denim and brocade accents, which features on jackets, skirts and dresses. Remember, they have ranges for petite, tall, maternity and plus sizes (18 to 28) too! **Available in stores from September.** ▲



## Fiction-Inspired

Inspired by late-19th century French author Jules Verne's travels around the world, his science-fiction novels and period attire, you'll find wacky lightning bolt, jungle, tiger and dinosaur motifs on clothes and accessories in Bimba Y Lola's quirky and imaginative This Is Verne range. Our favourite picks include this tiger stripe shoulder bag (\$330) and abstract print shirt dress (\$525). ▶



## Tongue-in-Chic

If asked to design a print on the spot, we're pretty sure we wouldn't have envisioned combining planets, stars and acid pink cord phones together. Thanks to Jeremy Scott's playful touch, however, it just works on the new, graphic-print Long Distance Call bag, complemented by the simplicity of Longchamp's classic Le Pliage shape. **\$430, available at Longchamp stores.** ▼



# Winning Threads

Developed with feedback from Olympic frontrunners, H&M's latest fashionable sportswear release, the For Ever Victory collection, has just hit the racks. Each of the designs, including basic training pieces like T-shirts, leggings, tops and sports bras for women in shades of dusty pink, gold, black and grey, was tested and approved by the Swedish Olympic team. Recycled polyester fabrics are a nod toward more sustainable practices, too. **Prices from \$17.90 to \$99.90.**



# IMPECCABLY DRESSED

Here's the best of this season's latest collections,  
for whatever occasion.



Luisa sequin  
dress by  
Bariano,  
\$240,  
available at  
Willow &  
Huxley

## THE BUBBLY BRUNCH

A loose-fitting frock or jumpsuit hides any evidence of over-indulgence, while statement accessories are an ideal conversation starter. Cheers!

- 1.** Jumpsuit, Topshop, \$76.90 **2.** Ring, Pandora, \$69 **3.** Wedge heels, Aldo, POA **4.** Halter-neck dress, Mango, \$69.90  
**5.** Necklace, Ricardo Rodriguez, \$375, available at Edit Lifestyle **6.** Lace-up sandals, Zara, \$79.90





1



Mona floral gown by Bariano, \$300, available at Willow & Huxley



4



2

3



5



6



7

## THE OUTDOOR WEDDING

Summertime weddings are the perfect excuse to wear pretty florals. Lift your outfit further with accessories in matching colours.

1. Dress, Iroo, \$143.80 2. Heels, Aldo, \$189 3. Heel-stoppers, Clean Heels, \$8 4. Dress, Zara, \$89.90 5. Fold-over clutch, Desti Saint, \$199 6. Sugarloaf mountain ring, Ricardo Rodriguez, \$105, available at Edit Lifestyle 7. Sunglasses, Gucci, \$460





LEAH LAMBERT teaches us three ways to wear a lariat necklace.

A lariat necklace adds sleekness to your look and elongates the torso. Typically made without a clasp and looped around the neck, it's one of the most versatile pieces of jewellery you can own. They're perfect for layering with your other favourite pieces, and can easily be worn looped around the wrist as a bracelet, or even wrapped around the waist as a belt!

Three ways to wear it:

#### #1 KNOTTED AT THE FRONT

Lariat necklaces tied with a simple knot in front are classic and elegant. Place the necklace around your neck, with the ends draping across your chest. Take both strands of the necklace in one hand. Make a loop with both strands of the necklace. Pull the ends of the necklace through the loop to knot the necklace in front.

#### #2 LOOPED

Wearing the lariat in a shorter loop creates a more dramatic impact. Fold the necklace in half, with the two necklace strands draping parallel to each other. Wrap the folded necklace around your neck. The ends of the necklace should face forward, as should the loop on the opposite end. Pick up the ends of the necklace and feed them through the loop to fasten it.

#### #3 OPEN- OR CLOSE-ENDED

Most lariats will be long enough to twist around the neck at least once, for a choker effect. Once that's done, you have the choice to let the ends hang open in front or to tie them using a simple knot.

Leah Lambert is the co-founder of Stones That Rock, an independent jewellery label offering contemporary and classic designs crafted from fresh water pearls, semi-precious stones and crystals. [stonesthatrock.com](http://stonesthatrock.com)

## THE BLACK TIE SOIRÉE

Evening events are always a time to reach for the little black dress, but don't shy away from incorporating prints into your ensemble.

**1.** Dress, Zara, \$139 **2.** Radianz cuff, Taula, \$545 **3.** Lolita silver lariat, Stones That Rock, \$100 **4.** Dress, Topshop, \$346 **5.** Silver ring, Pandora, \$129 **6.** Clutch bag, Bimba Y Lola, \$340 **7.** Heels, Massimo Dutti, \$175





Which Way maxi by Bariano, \$220, available at Willow & Huxley



## THE SUMMER CONCERT

Bohemian maxi-dresses, denim accents and cool sandals scream “festival”. Don’t forget your hat, shades and other accessories!

**1.** Sunglasses, Fendi, \$830 **2.** Denim dress, Massimo Dutti, \$165 **3.** Sandals, Zara, \$99.90 **4.** Top, Iroo, \$91.80 **5.** Skirt, Mango, \$55.90 **6.** Suede backpack, Topshop, \$139



# No Sinking Feeling

Clean Heels, the shoe accessory that protects your heels from uneven surfaces, has become a worldwide hit. We caught up with DENISE SADLER, owner of Dees Boutique, who distributes the nifty product here in Singapore.

## What's the concept behind Clean Heels?

It was invented by Ally Stevenson in the UK, where it's still manufactured. Ally was determined to invent a product that would stop women ruining their shoes at events on grass and soft ground – and soon the heel stopper was born. It's a discreet and inexpensive item that protects your heels and assists your poise and balance on uneven surfaces. It's been a massive hit. Ally even gained investment through the famous TV show *Dragons Den* last year!

## Tell us more about these shoe accessories.

Made in three different sizes, they can be fitted securely to most heels. They come in clear, black and plain, or with embellishments such as flowers, crystal hearts or crystal cut rings (a great keepsake for your wedding album or favours for guests!). You can also get kitsch stickers to jazz up your shoes, including cute "I Do" motifs to add sparkle to the soles on the big day. Finally, there are the heel sleeves: transparent covers which come in three sizes. They shrink-wrap to fit up to halfway up the heel – all you have to do is heat them with a hairdryer. They can be used daily so you don't scuff your heels on pavements, or simply to protect them from damage on a special night out or occasion event.

## Can you give us a specific example of how we might use Clean Heels?

They're invaluable for events on grass, sand or decking – in short, for when the ground outdoors isn't easy to walk on. There's nothing worse than being dressed to the nines for an occasion and being unable to walk the walk! Handily enough, they also prevent heel marks on wooden floors at



home or on boats and yachts – so they can extend the life of both your shoes and your flooring!

## Are they reusable?

Yes, depending on how hard you've danced the night away! Some people wear them again, while others use them for just one occasion. They can be rinsed and kept in your handbag for when you require them again. They come in pretty organza bags for easy storage, too.

## Is a there a moment in the past when you wish you'd had Clean Heels on hand?


Before I became a distributor, my son's wedding was held on grass and I had silk shoes which got totally ruined as the weather didn't behave – I never got to wear them again. On another occasion, on a boat trip, we were dressed in lovely gowns but were told to remove our heeled shoes so as not to mark the wooden floors. It really killed the glamorous black-tie vibe – Clean Heels could have solved that problem, too! Also, my daughter once ruined a pair of shoes by getting them stuck in decking – the shoe stayed in the floor as she continued walking!

## Unsure about sizing?

Dees Boutique can discuss your personal requirements, and offers a free fitting and delivery service. Discounts for bulk purchases are available. *EL*

Order and enquire online at [dees-boutique.com](http://dees-boutique.com).



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| Dresses | <b>\$140</b> |
| Suits   | <b>\$180</b> |



# TUX APPEAL

Chaps, take note: when it comes to a posh event, only a tuxedo will make the cut. JEREMY YIP from **CYC The Custom Shop** clues us in on the basics.

## So, what's the key difference between a normal suit and a tuxedo?

The main difference is the use of satin. Traditionally, tuxedos have satin on the lapels, buttons and pocket trim, as well as a satin stripe down the sides of the trousers.

## How and when is a tuxedo traditionally worn?

It is worn to a prom, a wedding or any other event where “black tie” is called for. The jacket is usually worn over a white shirt with a pleated front or a piqué bib front, along with a bow tie, a formal waistcoat or cummerbund and black lace-up Oxford shoes or pumps. For an edgier look, a tuxedo can be worn with a black shirt with pleats. A shirt with a winged collar gives a more formal look.

## What are the most important things to ask your tailor about the fit?

The secret to any good suit is the fit. There's no point buying an expensive designer suit that doesn't fit your body properly, so tailoring can be crucial, even if it's just a small tweak. Remember that off-the-rack tuxedos are normally made for a standard body type. Important things to note are:

- **Does the jacket have thin or thick shoulder padding?** Remember: shoulders with more padding have a retro look that works better for longer, full-cut jackets.
- **How big are the armholes of the jacket cut?** A slightly smaller, higher armhole gives you more freedom of movement. In addition, it gives your jacket a better, neater silhouette than a larger armhole would.
- **What's the cut of the trousers like?** A tapered leg bottom and shorter length that gives very minimal or no break at the bottom of the trousers looks sharper and is currently very trendy.

## Do you have any style tips for the most contemporary look?

Personally, I find the double-breasted tuxedo with wide peak lapels in a modern cut very appealing. For a less conventional look, you could consider having the jacket made in a patterned fabric like jacquard, or in a colour like burgundy, midnight blue or graphite grey, and match it with black trousers. *EL*



For more information and store locations, visit [cycustomshop.com](http://cycustomshop.com).



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# BEAUTY

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**Salon Guide:** Our little black book of hairdressers





## Editor's Pick

### MAC InstaCurl Lash Mascara

This cool new mascara features a curved wand which adjusts to the shape of your eye, so as to reach and coat every lash. \$38.

# What's New



## A Kinder Refiner

If there was an award for the healthiest-sounding serum this year, we'd wager it would go to Kiehl's, whose latest product – the Nightly Refining Micro Peel Serum Concentrate – contains extract of sustainably sourced quinoa husk from Bolivia (2000 husks for each bottle!). Absorbed overnight, it acts as a natural exfoliant to refine skin tone and texture, while smoothing out fine lines and wrinkles for a more youthful glow. In a clinical trial, it was tested on highly sensitive complexions without causing a reaction, and was proven to be just as effective as 20 percent glycolic acid. **\$99, available now at Kiehl's boutiques.**

## Bespoke Skincare

Your skin is unique and requires a dedicated approach. Tackle your concerns with Mount Sapola's single-ingredient supplements, called Xextract (from \$25.90). Ingredients are sourced from Germany, Switzerland and Japan. Use alone as a serum or add a few drops to your existing moisturiser for an added boost. Pick Arbutin Xextract to banish spots, B5 Xextract to heal and hydrate, or C2 Xextract to calm and soothe. With 12 to choose from, there's something for every skin problem. ▲



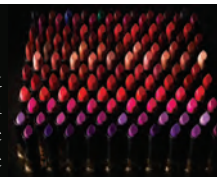
## Top Coat

Singapore's first "5-free" nail lacquers (\$25 each) are easy on the eyes and on your nails. Free from five toxic ingredients – formaldehyde, toluene, dibutyl phthalate (DBP), camphor and formaldehyde resin – they're available in 20 gorgeous colours to suit your every mood and outfit. Our favourites? The bright Calamity Jane and the Taupe Gun. **Get yours done at Hands & Feet Studio, 44 Siglap Drive. [handsplusfeetstudio.com](http://handsplusfeetstudio.com)** ▲



## Lippie Lust

Urban Decay's latest Vice collection additions make finding a suitable lipstick a breeze. Now in 100 shades and six finishes, you're spoilt for choice. We love the highly pigmented yet creamy textures that give intense colour in just one swipe. What's more, ingredients like illipe butter, aloe vera, jojoba, avocado and babassu oils keep lips hydrated and nourished. **Out now at Urban Decay stores and counters.**





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## Slim Fast

Have a special event coming up and trying to drop a dress size? There's only so much a healthy diet and exercise can do in a short time, so you could also opt for a little boost from BTL Aesthetic's new body-contouring treatment, the BTL Vanquish Me. Particularly effective around the waistline, on the tummy and for love handles, it uses concentrated thermal energy to break down fat cells via apoptosis, eventually eliminating them from the body. Best results are achieved over four to six treatment sessions.

**For enquiries, contact 6443 9093 or visit [btlaesthetics.com](http://btlaesthetics.com).**



### Spray This

In need of an afternoon pick-me-up? Instead of reaching for a coffee, try a spritz of facial mist. We like this new version from Origins, which contains panax ginseng and caffeine extract to re-energise your complexion and uplift your spirits. Pomegranate extract and witch hazel soothe irritation and ward off environmental aggressors, like smoke, smog and dust, too. \$42; pick up a bottle at an Origin store or counter. ◀

# WIN!

### Spa Package from The Nail Bar at Cluny Court

A little oasis away from your busy daily routine, The Nail Bar at Cluny Court specialises in keeping your hands and feet looking trim and tidy. This month, they're giving away one Put Your Feet Up package, which consists of a manicure and a pedicure, a hand mask and an organic foot spa, plus brow, upper-lip and under-arm waxing, altogether worth \$280!

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# ARCH ANGEL

BY SMITA DESOUZA

JARED BAILEY, global brow expert from **Benefit Cosmetics**, tells us why groomed eyebrows are so important, how to embrace your natural shape and his favourite picks from the brand's new brow collection.



## How do good brows change your face?

Eyebrows balance and add proportion to your face. There are a lot of different things you can do to your brows that will change your entire look. It's almost like contouring for the face. At Benefit, we created a technique called brow mapping, which we use to personalise the brow shape to flatter each individual.

## What's the most common mistake people make when it comes to their eyebrows?

The number one mistake we see is that people treat brows like a Pinterest project. Leave shaping to the pros. Many over-tweeze, which starts the arch too early and leaves their brows looking like commas. You want to draw people in, not distract them! The other mistake is picking the wrong shade of brow product; the rule of thumb is to go two shades lighter or two shades deeper. The third is that some people do nothing to their brows, even though they're so important because they frame your face. Pay attention to them like you would while putting an outfit together.

## What's the secret to getting the shape right?

Work with your natural shape. There are ways to cheat Mother Nature, but you don't want to fight her. You don't want to take away your natural arch or brow shape to follow trends. What you want to do is use tricks to fake a more linear brow shape, and that can be achieved with the right products.



## Speaking of Mother Nature, what do you do when you have two naturally different-shaped brows?

We always say brows are sisters, and there's a reason for that. Nobody's face is perfectly symmetrical, so your brows shouldn't be identical. They should balance both sides of the face and give the illusion of symmetry. A product like Benefit Cosmetics Goof Proof will help even out brows because the formula is not too firm or waxy and you get the right amount of payoff and precision throughout the brow. Also, the finer point of the tip allows you to add definition while the wider part allows you to create a flattering shape.

## Which are your favourite products from the range?

I love Precisely, My Brow. It gives you precision and allows you to create tiny hair-like strokes. The formula is such that when you first touch the skin, it's darker and then gets lighter for a natural finish. Also, I always add Ready Set Brows for invisible hold that lasts throughout the day without feeling stiff. *ea*



## WIN!

This month, you could be one of three lucky ladies to win a Benefit Cosmetics brow hamper worth \$100! Visit [expatliving.sg/competitions](http://expatliving.sg/competitions) to enter.



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# The Root Cause

SMITA DESOUZA discovers that most of our hair concerns can be traced back to an unhealthy scalp.

I've lost quite a bit of hair since I've moved to Singapore. I've also found that the quality of my locks has deteriorated: my hair is thinner and a lot more prone to frizz. So, I decided to investigate the problem and try to remedy the situation.

My appointment at Salon Vim started with a thorough analysis of my hair and scalp with a machine that magnifies images up to 200 times; I didn't like what I saw. Excess sebum was blocking pores and clogging the hair follicles, lots of which were empty as a result. Due to this, the new hair that did manage to grow was thinner and weaker, and so more prone to breakage and frizz.

Aside from regular shampooing, conditioning and an occasional deep-conditioning treatment, I hadn't been doing much for my scalp and I was evidently paying the price. Most hair concerns can be traced back to an unhealthy scalp – even the fact that your hair still looks lifeless after multiple deep-conditioning treatments, or that it isn't able to retain colour or a perm.

Based on the diagnosis, I was in for the **Advanced Densi Lift**, which uses Kérastase products to treat both scalp and hair. It started with a wash performed with massage techniques to remove impurities and unclog the pores. Dead skin and dirt out of the way, your scalp is more able to absorb the benefits of the Kérastase Densifique ampoule. Infused with Stemoxydine, a patented molecule that boosts hair body and density, it also contains vitamins B6, B5 and B3 as well as natural sugars known for their restructuring properties to accelerate growth while enhancing the quality of new hair.

A cold laser machine, exclusively available at Salon Vim, is used to further enhance the penetration of these ingredients, promoting microcirculation and hair growth. This is followed by a

densifying hair treatment that strengthens and expands the diameter of each strand for thicker, fuller locks. Those whose hair has been severely damaged by frequent chemical treatments are candidates for the Texture Smooth Double treatment. Your treatment can be customised to address your concerns; mine included the L'Oréal Pro Fibre treatment.

The post-treatment check showed a much cleaner scalp that would allow for healthy hair growth. If you like, you can prolong the benefits of the treatments and promote continued healthy hair growth with the Kérastase Densifique home care range.



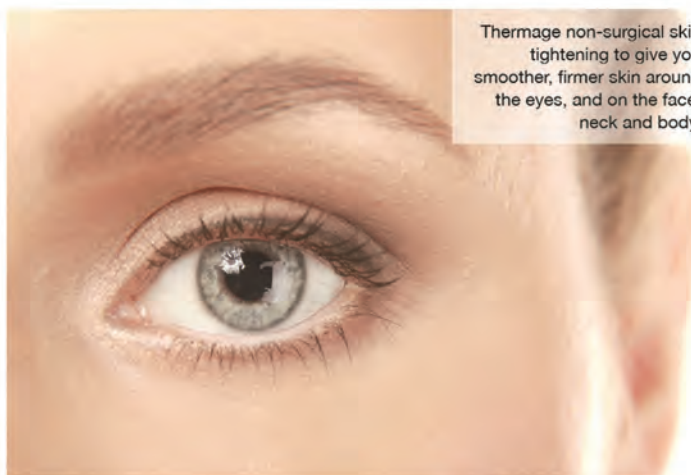
## WIN!

Salon Vim is giving away a complimentary Advanced Densi Lift Ritual (valid until 30 September 2016) plus the new Densifique range set, including a shampoo, conditioner and a box of Densifique Femme Cure. To enter, visit [expatliving.sg/competitions](http://expatliving.sg/competitions). *el*



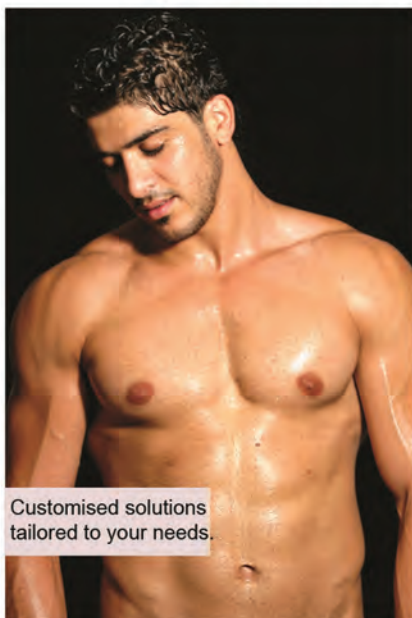


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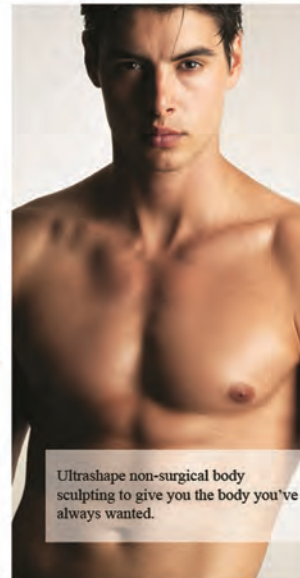
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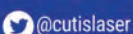
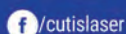


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**Medical & Scientific Director**  
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Fellowship (Harvard)  
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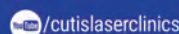
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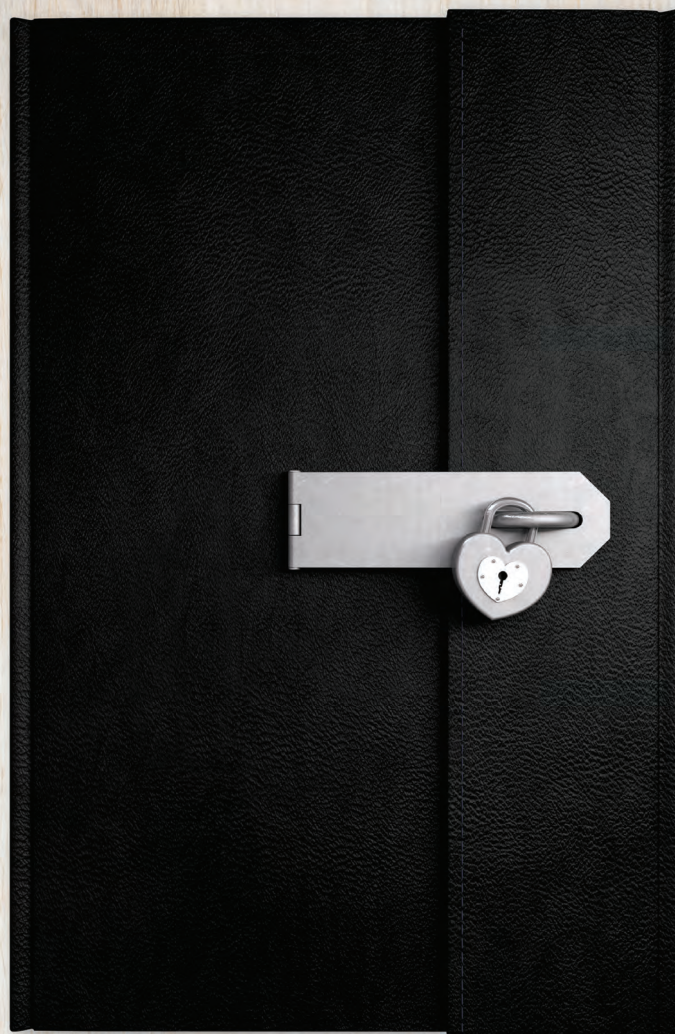
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# Hair, *Oh Where?*

Brunettes, blondes, redheads and everything in between – it's time to reclaim your salon mojo: we're opening up our little black book of the top locations for a trim, colouring, highlights, treatments and even extensions! Who made the cut? Turn the page for first-hand reviews and to see which hairdressers made the shortlist.





*Where I went:* Visage The Salon

*What I tried:* The Very Curly Haircut, \$75 to \$85

*The experience:*

Desperately in need of a cut, thanks to stringy, dead-looking ends (and my hair's annoying tendency to grow into a V-shape when the curls are too long and weighed down in the back), I decided not to wait until my next visit to the US, and instead to get a haircut in the city in which I actually live! The problem is, it's very hard to find a good stylist here who's comfortable with, and knowledgeable about, cutting and styling Caucasian hair, let alone curly Caucasian hair. Scarred from previous experiences in Singapore, I was admittedly hesitant to entrust my curls into the hands of someone "new". But, after hearing that Dominic at Visage regularly works with curly-haired clients, I decided to put aside my fears and take the plunge.

It was clear from the moment I entered the salon that Dominic was confident handling my type of hair (in fact, he said I was the fourth curly-haired client of the day). I told him I didn't want any crazy layering (my last haircut in Singapore ended with tears after I realised the front layers were too short to keep in a ponytail), and he assured me he would do a blunter cut to avoid just that.

A nice, long wash and scalp massage calmed my anxiety before Dominic started snipping away. After my locks had been chopped, my curls were coated with delicious-smelling Redken Curvaceous Ringlet Perfecting Lotion (which, to my dismay, has been discontinued) and, after about ten minutes of drying my hair with a diffuser, *voilà* – it was time for the big reveal. Though I was a bit shocked by how short it was initially (I'd never had shoulder-length hair!), it was a happy shock, as my hair looked healthy and more voluminous than before, and the curls were back to their bouncy selves. Let's just say I'll be returning here for my next cut!

Amy Greenburg

#02-11/14, Delfi Orchard, 402 Orchard Road  
6733 0933 | [visage.com.sg](http://visage.com.sg)







**Where I went:** Chez Vous (next to Best Denki at Ngee Ann City)

**What I tried:** Blonde highlights to blend out grey with pre-existing bleached blonde (from \$185)

**The experience:**

Going grey adds another dimension to hair care. I have the added complication that the front is greying while the back isn't, and because I hadn't looked at my rear view for a while, I thought the gentle greying was blending well with my current full head colour and tone. As you can see, it wasn't.

The whole experience at Chez Vous was very nice. There's a good selection of drinks on a very cool menu that tells you all about the company and the team. They've been going for 22 years, so they must be doing something right. My colourist Khim was calmly confident, and I let her choose the mix after saying that the only thing I didn't want was for it to be "yellow or orange". She suggested fine highlights instead of a full overall colour, and she did them in no time.

The outcome: The shade of toner is so important, and I think it's better to go darker initially as it does wash out – that's exactly what Khim did, so I was very happy with the results. I couldn't see the join of my old colour with the new highlights at all. It's a little darker than usual to start off with, but I like it!

*Rebecca Blisset*



**What I tried:** Express Revitalizing Supreme Treatment (from \$185), highlights (from \$185) and cut (from \$70)

**The experience:**

As a natural brunette living in Singapore, whenever I go for highlights and a lighter look, I seem to leave the salon with a wild orange tint to my hair. The word brassiness sends shivers down my spine; eight weeks earlier I'd had highlights done that were too thick and too orange.

My Chez Vous stylist, Serene, recommended fixing my previous highlights by making them finer, and using the correct toner so my hair would look naturally blonde and healthier.

I'm not normally a huge fan of hair treatments, as I've never found one that I thought was good value for money. Serene suggested that I try their Revitalising treatment and that I would be very pleased with the results. I'm now converted to hair treatments as this is the best my hair has felt with highlights, with none of the dry, straw-like feel that I have experienced in the past. A combination of two treatments – a Goldwell one and a Korean one – it is the signature treatment at Chez Vous, and it ensures brilliantly shiny hair.

I left feeling revitalised and refreshed with a great new hairstyle, and I was so pleased with Serene's good advice – her colour recommendations were perfect for my complexion.

*Sarah Purchase*



391 Orchard Road, #05-05 Ngee Ann City Podium  
6732 9388 | [chezvoushair.com](http://chezvoushair.com)





*Where I went:* Expat Hair Studio

*What I tried:* Hairdreams hair extensions (pricing is discussed at a free consultation)

*The experience:*

For years I'd struggled with thin, lank hair which had gradually become weaker due to the daily use of heat tools. Broken and extremely short at the sides, it seemed to be getting worse week by week.

That's why, on my last visit to Expat Hair Studio for my regular hair appointment, I was excited to hear that I could achieve instantly thicker-looking hair using Hairdreams hair extensions, a product that instantly thickens and lengthens the hair. (It's worn by many celebrities too, may I add!) Healthy, natural and chemical-free hairs are picked by hand and checked for their protein content before being passed through a strict quality-control process, and they come in an array of different colours to suit many different hair tones. I placed the order for the hair at the salon, and after a few days I was called in to take the plunge.

First, my hair was washed and blow-dried, before each layer of new hair was attached with a light microfibre gauze – there are no special tools or equipment required. What I loved most was that I had a complete head of thick, bouncy hair within the hour. I'm told they can be removed as the hair grows and reapplied twice with a new adhesive strip. There's also something called nano-bond technology to lengthen or thicken the hair, and your options can be discussed over a free consultation. It's very low maintenance too, as the hair can be washed and blow-dried as normal. It's recommended to purchase the Hairdreams care pack that contains a shampoo, conditioner and special hairbrush with ultra-soft bristles that won't drag the hair when brushing.

One month later, and I'm still impressed with the results. I can't feel them at all, as they lie flat to my head – and I don't think I'll be able to live without them!

Jacqui Young



422 Joo Chiat Road  
6444 7929 | expathairstudio.com

## GROWTH STARTER

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51 Cuppage Road, #01-09  
6653 5500 | hairdreams.com.sg





*Where I went:* Alikhan Coiffure

*What I tried:* Full head of highlights (\$210), Olaplex (\$60), cut (\$120) and blow-dry (\$45)

*The experience:*

As my fellow blondes will attest, being blonde in Singapore is a challenge. The damage from bleaching makes your hair dry and straw-like, and leaving a salon with brassy orange tones and an unevenly layered cut is not uncommon. You'll understand why I've always been apprehensive about visiting salons in Singapore.

Cue Alikhan Coiffure, and the dream team of Aussie colour specialist Leona and Italian Giuseppe. Trained with Joh Bailey in Australia, they have over 50 years' combined experience; and walking into a salon which exuded an air of professionalism, buzzed with activity and featured a range of expat clients immediately set me at ease.

Leona began my consultation with a thorough analysis of my hair. I showed her pictures of my ideal colour inspiration (Reese Witherspoon, sigh), and she explained clearly how we were going to achieve it. I felt comfortable enough to explain what I wanted, but also trusted that she would do what was best for my hair, and what would suit me.

I have previously highlighted my hair with a combination of lighter blondes and lowlights. Leona advised that it would be better to stick with an all-over highlight to achieve the look I wanted. She also stressed the importance of using Olaplex to counteract the harmful effects of bleaching; it repairs the bonds of the hair that are damaged, even as the colour is developing. I also picked up a small bottle of treatment that I am to use at home to continue to strengthen my hair. The colour turned out gorgeous; brighter and more even than I'd thought possible.

Giuseppe (Joe to his clients) cut my hair expertly. Listening to my requests for a fringe, he guided me against it, saying that I would find the maintenance too much. We compromised with a sweeping section at the front that I can easily tuck away without compromising the style (or spending huge amounts of extra time in the morning with a hairdryer). I was intrigued by his choice of cutting tool: a razor rather than scissors. Joe explained that for my thinner hair, a straight cut with scissors would lack volume. The razor does not damage the ends, and gives the hair a more textured finish, meaning it looks fuller and thicker (hooray!).

*Amanda Broad*

30 Merchant Road  
#02-07 Riverside Point  
6438 8801 | alikhancoiffure.com







*Where I went:* Kimage

*What I tried:* A cut by the principal stylist (\$70) and the Hydro03 treatment (\$145)

*The experience:*

After a particularly bad haircut (and I've had a few in Singapore), I was looking for a new hairstylist – someone who would understand my hair texture (Indian, significantly different from Caucasian and Asian) and work with it. So far, stylists here have all wanted to thin my thick hair – which, done wrong, can leave it looking ragged and frizzy.

On my visit to Kimage, Scarlett, my stylist, first checked my hair texture and discussed my expectations from the style – the length I wanted, the amount of time I was willing to spend on styling it and how much product I was comfortable using. I'd brought along references for the cut I wanted: the lob that everyone from Kim K to Kerry Washington is rocking – and Scarlett explained how it might look different on me, given the colour, thickness and texture of my hair. We finally settled on the best possible version of the style, which would also fix my current cut.

Scarlett proceeded to take off the dead ends, as well as some of the weight, with gradual layers that also enhanced my waves. This made it easy to style on special occasions, but OK to wash-and-wear on an everyday basis. As Scarlett snipped away, constantly checking to see if I was happy with the length, making sure that the sides were symmetrical, her attention to detail was apparent.

Once she was satisfied with the cut, it was time for my Hydro03 treatment. Exclusive to Kimage salons, the two-step procedure helps keep your locks hydrated, smooth and glossy. Finally, she blast-dried my hair to see how it fell naturally, and made a few final snips. She even showed me how I could style it at home.

*Smita DeSouza*

Visit [kimage.com.sg](http://kimage.com.sg) to find the salon closest to you.







### EDITOR'S TIP!

#### **Wonder product:**

Kérastase Chronologiste Parfum Oil

Not only does this new finishing serum have a heavenly fragrance, but it's suitable for all hair types. Apply it to dry, styled hair to tame fly-away strands and ensure an ultra-sleek finish. \$84.50



*Where I went:* Toni & Guy

*What I tried:* Kérastase Signature Ritual, Discipline (from \$204)

#### **The experience:**

I don't colour my hair and it's not particularly frizzy, but chlorine exposure from regular swimming has made both my scalp and my hair dry. I explained this concern to super-friendly Johnson Pang, who is a certified Kérastase scalp expert, after being ushered into the salon's private treatment room. Toni & Guy offers an expansive range of Kérastase treatments, and for me he recommends one designed to tame, moisturise and smoothen unruly hair.

The treatment begins with a wash and soothing head massage. Next, Johnson applies one strengthening and one moisturising serum to the wet hair. He then dries the hair off with a drier and applies a hair mask (available exclusively with treatments), which tames frizz.

After that, he dries the hair to 80 percent with a hair iron to deepen the penetration of the serums. He then applies a restorative pro-keratin care mask for taming unruly locks, which is left in for 10 minutes. I take the chance to snooze as he dims the lights.

Once he has washed out the product in cold water (to close the cuticle and lock in all that goodness), my hair feels surprisingly clean, not greasy. Before styling it, he applies a special leave-in scalp serum that conditions a dry scalp. He then carefully demonstrates how I can blow-dry my hair for extra volume.

The final touch is the wonder product Kérastase Chronologiste, a finishing serum for perfect glossy locks. This is a very relaxing experience so be prepared to put away your phone for 90 minutes and totally surrender. I'm sold – my only question is: how can I find the time in my schedule to do this treatment every week?

Katie Roberts

170 East Coast Road  
6345 0208 | [toniandguy.sg](http://toniandguy.sg)

*Where I went:* And A Salon

*What I tried:* Olaplex (\$150) and the Soft Straightening service (from \$200)

#### **The experience:**

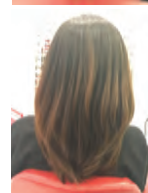
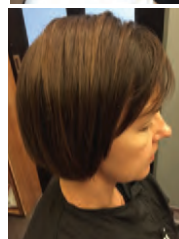
I had just come out of a rebonding hair disaster two days before my wedding last September, so when And A Salon's stylist told me that soft rebonding was the only solution to managing my thick and wavy hair, I had an ominous flashback. Could I really afford to put my hair through that nightmare again? In the end, I was convinced it was worth a try.

I was recommended Olaplex, a pre-treatment quite different from the rest, which is ideal for strengthening hair before colouring or treatments and great for Caucasian hair. The stylist began with a process to soften my critically damaged hair, followed by a wash, flat ironing and neutralisation to finish. I was surprised by how uncomplicated the entire process was and I didn't get a whiff of those harsh chemical smells (it's free from silicone, sulphates, aldehydes and even gluten).

Afterwards, my hair looked like it had experienced a turbo-charged reparative treatment. It looks healthier and has been much easier to manage day by day. I definitely recommend this treatment, especially for anyone with damaged ends.

Veena Bajaj

#02-08 Claymore Connect, 442 Orchard Road  
6235 1230 | [facebook.com/and.a.salon](http://facebook.com/and.a.salon)







*Where I went:* The Big Blow

*What I tried:* The Perfect Blow Out with the Young Again masque treatment by Kevin Murphy, \$70

*The experience:*

My friends will testify that I can't resist a good blow-dry! It's impossible for me to tame the mane in the same way using my GHD iron – only a salon visit seems to work. My locks are also seriously dry and rather damaged from years of highlighting and exposure to the sun, so I was keen to road test a new conditioning treatment too.

To make it a real treat, Ellie, owner of The Big Blow, added on a ten-minute scalp massage, which was divine. Kevin Murphy hair products are the order of the day here, together with some heroes from the Innoluxe range such as the Innoluxe Elixir, which was used to reinforce and strengthen my hair.

This salon is very convenient and offers a really personal service. The brainchild of Ellie Sakrzewski, a makeup artist by trade, it offers an efficient blow-dry service ideal for those short of time. They can do everything from a classic, sleek blow-dry to party hair. Ellie offers a makeup service too, and her team can come to you if you can't make it into the salon. She's also branching into safe self-tanning, so if you've got a special occasion and don't want to leave the house, these guys can bring it all to you; tanning kit, hair and makeup – the works.

This is a small salon, so book ahead: you may want to reserve an early evening slot with a friend, so you can enjoy a few glasses of bubbles while having your hair done. Now we're talking!

Emi Finch

#02-21 Cluny Court, 501 Bukit Timah Road  
6465 4836 | thebigblow.com



*Where I went:* Hair We Are

*What I tried:* A deep-moisturising treatment using Wella LuxeOil Keratin Protect products (the salon may also use Aveda products, depending on your hair type); from \$100 to \$120, depending on hair length

*The experience:*

I've walked past this salon plenty of times in the past on the way to my favourite foot massage place in the Serene Centre (Adept Therapy on the second floor, in case you're interested). It's small, the staff are friendly, and I was offered a glass of wine at 3pm – now that's my kind of place.

On the basis of my hair type (thick, with dry ends) and the last time I'd had a treatment (a very long time ago), senior stylist Christina suggested a treatment that would help tame my fly-aways and add moisture. Chastising me lightly for overusing coconut oil in my hair, Christina gave me a vigorous wash for at least ten minutes with Wella LuxeOil Keratin Restore shampoo, as I sat there in the chair taking advantage of the free Wi-Fi.

Once my hair was squeaky clean, she applied the LuxeOil Keratin Protect treatment and left me to "cook" for around 20 minutes under a heater. My hair was then rinsed thoroughly and blow-dried straight, just the way I like it, with no little kinks at the ends. She added a touch of Wella's Elixir serum, and I was done. My hair was smooth and soft to the touch, and it stayed that way all evening up until the next morning, even though I had braved the humidity outside on more than one occasion.

The salon itself may not look the fanciest from the outside; but, as the saying goes, never judge a book by its cover – the service and treatment I received was top-notch. *✍*

Amy Brook-Partridge

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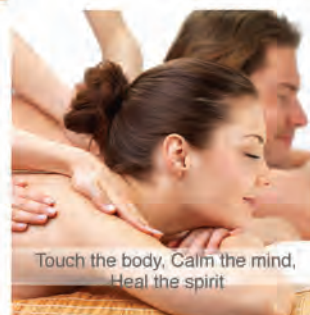
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## Hair Highlights at Visage



Need to touch up your roots? Fancy a change? Fed up with your frizz? Need a completely unconventional makeover? Visage specialises in high-lift, blonde highlights. Dominic and his hair colourist recommends them for the following reasons:

- They're fine and natural
- The colour is very light ash-blonde - no orange or yellow tones
- Highlights go right to the roots
- No bleaching is used
- All highlights come with a 10-day free touch-up
- 10 day guarantee

And if the Singapore humidity is playing havoc with your straight hair, Dominic recommends his keratin treatments - especially the Brazilian blowout, which doesn't use hair-damaging chemicals and is great for fine or over-processed hair.

Visage specialises in Caucasian hair.

**Visage The Salon**  
402 Orchard Road, #02-12/14 Delfi Orchard  
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# HEALTH & FITNESS

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Selina McCole

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# What's New



Did you know that our intestinal microflora – the community of microorganisms that live in our digestive tracts – plays an important role in protecting us against unfriendly bacteria, viruses, free radicals and pollution? Which, is why, according to **The Dermatology Practice**, probiotics can be beneficial when treating atopic eczema, acne and rosacea, as they reduce inflammation; studies have shown that the skin of children with mild to moderate eczema had reduced redness, skin irritation and itchiness after eight weeks of treatment. Talk to a dermatologist at The Dermatology Practice about how probiotics can help improve the health of your skin. #07-60/62 Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital. For an appointment, call **6694 3290** or email **apt@thedermatologypractice.com**.

## New Resource

Non-profit organisation Environmental Working Group (EWG) recently unveiled its new cancer prevention site, [ewg.org/cancer](http://ewg.org/cancer), which focuses on the link between cancer and toxic substances in the environment. Featuring blogs and expert advice, the latest cancer news from global media sources and EWG's newest investigations on environmental causes, the site aims to arm the public with tips and tools for preventing the disease before it starts.



## Health-food Find

We're always on a quest for health-food retailers, and we found a new one for all you health nuts. As one of Singapore's latest online marketplaces, **Foodsterr** carries all kinds of products to help you eat better, like superfoods, nuts, specialty flours, dried fruit and organic products. They've even got a blog and newsletter, with recipes and articles on oats, chia seeds, quinoa, almonds and more. We love that Foodsterr delivers groceries in waterproof, resealable, European-spec, stand-up bags for storing your food in the fridge. *Special offer:* Get 15 percent off your first order with coupon code "EXPAT20". [foodsterr.com](http://foodsterr.com) ▲



## Coming up Night Racers

The **PUMA Night Run Singapore** is back on 27 August, this time at a new venue – the recently redeveloped Seletar Aerospace Park. Choose between 6km and 12km race routes, each of which takes runners along the fringe of the airport and through clusters of black-and-white colonial houses – followed by post-race activities, musical performances and a lucky draw. Starts at 6pm and 7pm. Register by 31 July at [puma-nightrun.com.sg](http://puma-nightrun.com.sg).





# Zika Virus Explained

## What is it, and what are the symptoms?

To find out more about the health issue that has been making headlines around the world, we turned to the **International Medical Clinic (IMC)**.

### Where did Zika come from?

The first human case was detected in Nigeria as far back as 1954, and there have been further outbreaks since then in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. However, most of these were small, and Zika has not previously been considered a major threat to human health.

In May 2015, the virus was reported in Brazil and it then spread rapidly. It has since been reported in such locations as Barbados, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guatemala, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Suriname and Venezuela.

### How is it spread?

It's spread by Aedes mosquitoes found throughout the Americas. If they drink the blood of an infected person, they can then infect people they subsequently bite.

### How dangerous is it?

The symptoms of Zika are similar to those of dengue and chikungunya – both of which are spread through the same mosquitoes that transmit Zika. Deaths are rare, and only one in five people infected is thought to develop symptoms. These include:

- Mild fever
- Conjunctivitis (red, sore eyes)
- Headache
- Joint pain
- Rash

If you have recently travelled and are showing any of these symptoms, tell your doctor when and where you travelled. He or she may order blood tests to look for Zika or other similar viruses. There are currently no vaccines or drug treatments for Zika, but patients are advised to rest and drink plenty of fluids.

### Zika during pregnancy

Zika infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly (a condition where the baby's head is much smaller than expected) as well as other fetal brain defects.

### What about preventative measures?

As there is no treatment, the only option is to reduce the risk of being bitten. Health officials advise people to:

- use insect repellents
- cover up with long-sleeved clothes
- keep windows and doors closed

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised pregnant women not to travel to affected areas. To find out more, head to the CDC fact page at [cdc.gov/zika](http://cdc.gov/zika).

### USING REPELLENTS

- IMC carries the RID Insect Repellent range in all its clinics. RID contains the correct dosage of DEET to help protect you from mosquitoes that carry diseases such as Zika, dengue fever and malaria.
- Independent laboratory tests prove that Tropical Strength RID Repellent provides heavy-duty protection against mosquitoes for six hours; it's available in 100ml pump spray or roll-on.
- Kids' RID Repellent (available in a 60ml roll-on) contains fewer chemicals, is alcohol-free, has a mild fragrance and is medicated for extra protection. The light milk formula is friendly to the skin, while the roll-on applicator is simple to use. *EL*

- #14-06 Camden Medical Centre, 1 Orchard Boulevard
  - #02-04 Jelita Cold Storage Shopping Centre, 293 Holland Road
- 6733 4440 | [imc-healthcare.com](http://imc-healthcare.com)







# Getting Personal

## Readers get real about one-on-one training

With so many travel opportunities and a jam-packed social calendar, not to mention year-round pool parties and loads of meals out, it can be quite difficult to maintain a disciplined fitness routine here in Singapore – which is why personal training often proves to be a great fitness solution for so many people looking to stay in shape, lose weight or maintain all-round healthy habits. Here, four *EL* readers share their own personal training experiences.



### Scott Moffitt

British expat Scott has been training with Sandra Linnemann of **Core Synergy Studio** for almost two years now. Working with her three times a week at Core Synergy's River Valley gym, Scott, 55, switches between cardio and strength training, and Miha Bodytec training, which combines electro-muscular stimulation with resistance exercises to work different muscle groups at once.

**Why he started:** "I felt completely out of shape. I like a drink, and middle age spread got the better of me. I sat on the bed one morning, bent over doing up my shoelaces, and I found it difficult to breathe. I was horrified. My wife had already been going to Sandra for some time, and recommended I had a chat with her. I didn't fancy doing group classes, as I was feeling a bit self-conscious. If I were left to my own devices to use the condo gym, I would find an excuse not to go, saying I'd do it tomorrow instead – 'tomorrow' wouldn't materialise, of course. With a personal trainer you make a commitment that you have to fulfil. It has worked wonders for me."

**Why he loves it:** "Sandra is excellent at varying things, and steps you up to more difficult tasks; she pushes you hard and is passionate about seeing you improve. She shares in your delight when you achieve 'the impossible', and drives you on in the lazy moments. Very motivating."

**Results:** "My body shape is very different now. I can wear tailored shirts – though not yet slim-fit, my waist size has come down two sizes and I have a neck. (My head used to sit on my shoulders!) Many friends have noticed the difference. I still drink and enjoy myself, but I have much more energy and feel good about myself. I wish I had done this years sooner."

Core Synergy Studio  
279 River Valley Road, #04-01  
9800 3757 | coresynergystudio.com





## Sascha Garfield

Since returning to Singapore from Shanghai in 2014, Sascha (Australian) has been training with Sam Blakey of **Ooberfit** two to three times a week, mixing it up with everything from HIIT, resistance training and weights to intensive cardio, kickboxing and Pilates.

**Why she started:** “In simple terms, because I was lazy! I was 119kg and I needed help. I’d tried to motivate myself for years, but could never get past about one to two weeks before giving up, losing focus and settling on the assumption: ‘This is who I am, how it is, and how it will always be for me.’ Once I was back Singapore, with my husband at work and my twin girls settled into nursery school, I found myself with ‘me time’ again, and started asking myself, ‘Why not now?’ I was smart enough by then to know that I couldn’t do it on my own; that I needed someone to help make me accountable, push me and motivate me where I couldn’t motivate myself. I needed someone I couldn’t let down because, after 34 years, I’d become a little immune to letting myself down.”

**Why she loves it:** “For me, it’s the combination of Sam the personal trainer and Sam the person that makes this the right personal training solution for me. The intense and varied workouts have been great for my weight loss and my physical health, but the relationship that I have built with Sam has been great for getting me through the psychological battles that come with being overweight. I would not be where I am without having Sam on my team. She’s been ridiculously supportive, encouraging, focused and as invested in my health and happiness as I am; probably more so!

“With Sam, it’s variety all the way; every workout is different, which means there’s no time to get bored. I love the satisfaction in completing each workout, mixed with the sweat and muscle aches. It’s that feeling of accomplishment that puts me on an emotional, physical and psychological high.

“Sam is always out to better herself, increasing her knowledge with the latest research and developments within the fitness industry – and, as her client, I reap the benefits of this.”

**Results:** “In August 2015, I reached 87.5kg – a 31.5kg weight loss in just under 12 months. This was all a result of working out with Sam, as I had never quite mastered eating healthily and in moderation. My body had also become toned. I sat steady at that weight for quite a few months, but then found myself slipping back into my old habits. I have put some of that weight back on, but we are now refocused with some new fitness targets in place – one major goal being the Great Wall Half Marathon in May next year!

“My journey with Sam has shown me what I am capable of, what my body is capable of and the important role that being fit and healthy plays in all other aspects of a happy life. I have come to realise that it’s an everyday personal challenge, that it comes in small steps and that it’s not easy.”

Ooberfit  
8218 8513 | [ooberfit.com](http://ooberfit.com)





## Sherry McIntosh

American expat Sherry has been training with **EzFit** for over six months, fitting all kinds of workouts – including yoga and Pilates – into her busy schedule (and in her own living room!) before heading off to work.

**Why she started:** “As a working professional, my stress level and lack of time for a good-quality workout led me to seek out professional training. I needed to learn how to exercise the right way to be at a healthy weight, how to better manage stress, and how to have more energy to keep up with long days in the office and evening conference calls. While I wanted help from a trainer, I also wanted convenience, and travelling to and from a gym would have been inconvenient for me.”

**Why she loves it:** “I love the convenience of a trainer coming to my condo. I also like the variety of workouts and the nutritional coaching the EzFit team provides.”

**Results:** “I have lost about 13kg. My trainer Vanan taught me about the importance of the right balance of proteins, carbs and fats throughout the day. This was life-changing. I learnt I wasn’t eating enough protein and good fats, and I was eating too many carbs. I now have tons more energy, less ‘brain fog’ and am stronger, more flexible and at a healthy weight. I have dropped three sizes and still don’t count calories.”

“Yoga, aromatherapy and Pilates have reduced my stress and increased my focus, energy, flexibility and strength. I used to be stressed out, breathing shallowly all day long, frustratedly trying to figure out how to get in a workout while keeping up with demands at work and home. Yi Nuo, my yoga and Pilates teacher, has taught me about mindful meditation to quieten my mind, and the benefits of essential oils and aromatherapy. Learning how to breathe properly has dramatically helped to increase my energy and reduce my stress. Instead of trying to manage my stress, I now focus on holistic self-care. I’m a calmer, happier person because of what the EzFit trainers have taught me.”

EzFit  
9007 9742 | ezfit.sg





## Tennille Holt

Australian expat and professional "Travel Grammer" and blogger, Tennille (also known as @wanderlustmuse) has been training with Chris Richards at **Ultimate Performance** (UP) for four months, four days a week, focusing on resistance and functional training.

**Why she started:** "Ninety-nine percent of the time I'm in front of the lens on beautiful beaches in tropical locations, which obviously involves swimsuits and underwater photo shoots! My job is to inspire my followers to travel, while promoting a fit, healthy lifestyle, and body confidence – so I needed to be a great role model physically. I wanted a personal trainer to help me reach my body composition goals by tailoring exercise programmes for me while I'm travelling and setting strict dietary guidelines."

**Why she loves it:** "The challenge! The workouts get progressively harder as I get fitter, and I'm pushed to the limit, which I love. The key to maintaining a long-term workout schedule is accountability, and I know I can't rely on self-discipline alone to reach my fitness goals. I need that extra accountability to stick to my workout sessions and adhere to my diet plan. UP asked me to follow the '90-10' rule: they dictate 90 percent of my food intake and training programme, which I need to follow precisely; the remaining 10 percent is up to me and my conscience – that's why I knew UP was the right training solution for me."

**Results:** "The changes have been dramatic – I have lost over seven percent body fat! Although I may weigh more on the scales, my body measurements have vastly decreased. Overall, I am feeling much fitter, stronger, younger and healthier."

"In the past, I had a hard time fitting in workouts as I was always on the go. I now make exercise my number one priority; emails and work can wait – my health and wellbeing are most important."

"Although my diet was always clean, I ate 12 or more servings of fruit daily – which wasn't helping me achieve my body composition goals. I now understand the importance of protein – it's such a crucial nutrient! – and I eat a healthy balance of protein, good fats and greens. Also, with the heavy-duty training I'm doing, it would be impossible to keep up my energy levels without supplementation. Together with a good diet, supplements help me get the necessary nutrients to build muscle and enhance my training."

"Since joining UP, I'm now sleeping much better than I used to do. Sleep is just as important as nutrition and exercise for improving your health, performance and body composition." *EU*

Ultimate Performance  
21st Floor, The Octagon,  
105 Cecil Street  
6536 8649  
[upfitness.com.sg](http://upfitness.com.sg)





# 6 Secrets to an *Amazing Smile*

BY PIP HARRY

Our panel of dental experts share their trade secrets for getting a gorgeous grin.

Do you have perfect pearly whites, or could your teeth do with a tune-up? Either way, it pays to stay on top of your dental care. “Healthy teeth and gums and a confident smile are very important assets in our personal and professional life,” says dental surgeon DR SHAUN THOMPSON of **Expat Dental**. “Regular check-ups and proper hygiene cleaning are the keys to that killer smile. Our teeth need and deserve a little love every day to keep our smiles looking great and avoid funky breath that no one appreciates!”

If you do strike dental trouble, don’t procrastinate. “In life, love and dentistry, prevention is the name of the game,” says Dr Thompson. “If you wait until it hurts or breaks, the repair takes longer and is more expensive. The dark ages of dentistry are over, and maintaining your gorgeous smile with your dentist can actually be a fantastic experience.”



## #1 WHITE OUT

There's no reason to give up your beloved morning coffee and occasional glass of red wine. Teeth whitening can restore a bright, white appearance even to the most stained of teeth and make you look years younger.

"Teeth-whitening procedures can be divided into in-clinic or home-whitening methods," says DR STEVEN SOO of **Specialist Dental Group**.

In-clinic chair-side whitening involves applying a carbamide peroxide-based gel to the teeth with activation by light. "Usually, two 15-minute cycles are sufficient to whiten the teeth," says Dr Soo. "Your dentist will scale and polish the teeth first to remove surface plaque and calculus that would prevent the gel making contact with the enamel. The lips and gums are isolated prior to the gel application. The whole procedure takes approximately one hour."

Home whitening involves the fabrication of customised whitening trays into which the carbamide peroxide gel is placed. "The trays are generally worn for 45 to 60 minutes per day, over a period of five to seven days," explains Dr Soo. "Home-whitening is more controllable, as you simply use the trays for as many days as necessary to achieve the result you want."

The best results are achieved by using a combination of both the above methods, says Dr Soo. "In-clinic chair-side whitening will instantly boost the shade, after which home-whitening will help maintain the result."



## #2 STRAIGHTEN UP

Gone are the days when years of unsightly metal braces were the only option to cure a crooked smile. "We now use invisible aligners to straighten and correct teeth, such as Invisalign," says DR TEODORA KENT of **Smile Focus**. "Invisalign is a system that uses clear, custom-made removable aligners made from a thermoplastic material to gradually move teeth. Without the wire and brackets, the trays are almost undetectable."

Over the course of treatment, patients are supplied with a series of aligners to slowly straighten their teeth. "Each aligner will apply controlled force to make slight adjustments to tooth position, a process that is mapped out in advance by your doctor, specifically for your situation," says Dr Kent. "After approximately two weeks, you will begin using the next set of aligners, which will continue the teeth-straightening process. In this way tooth movement is carefully controlled."

There are other almost invisible options for sorting out snaggle teeth. "If your bite doesn't need correction, Cfast may be an option for you," suggests Dr Kent. "Cfast (cosmetically focused adult straight teeth) uses braces with clear brackets and a white-coloured wire. The result is a camouflaged form of braces that straighten the teeth within months. The treatment straightens crooked or misaligned front teeth only, without changing the bite. This is a fantastic alternative for people who don't need prolonged conventional orthodontic treatment."





## #3 CROWNING GLORY

If you're looking for a dramatic smile-enhancer, crowns and veneers are both good options.

"Porcelain crowns or veneers can enhance your smile in a subtle but powerful way," says DR THOMAS KOTY of **ARC Dental Clinic**. "People will notice that your teeth look great, but they probably won't be able to put their finger on the fact you've had work done!"

**Veneers:** Veneers are thin, tooth-shaped pieces of porcelain which are bonded to teeth and can dramatically change their shape and shade. "Porcelain laminate veneers are composed of thin ceramic layers that essentially replace tooth enamel," says Dr Koty. "They're similar to a contact lens for the eye. Veneers that adhere to the outer surface of teeth, they're an excellent solution for imperfections such as poor colour, shape or contours, tooth fractures, poor tooth position, as well as some minor bite-related problems," says Dr Koty. "They're also a great option for superficial stains on teeth that are not responsive to bleaching."

Tooth preparation for veneers is minor. "The natural tooth structure must first be reduced by a minimal amount – approximately one millimetre or less of tooth enamel," says Dr Koty. "This will allow room for the veneer to work its magic and restore natural tooth form."

**Crowns:** Like veneers, crowns (or caps) are also excellent for significantly changing the shape and colour of a tooth that is worn, broken, weak, misshapen or discoloured. "Porcelain crowns are generally necessary when more tooth structure has been lost from tooth decay or from trauma and therefore more material is needed to replace it," says Dr Koty. "Also, if more tooth structure needs to be lightened (because of deeper staining) or strengthened, a crown is the ideal restoration choice."

A porcelain crown replaces the entire external form of a tooth, down to the gum level. "Crowning a tooth re-establishes its natural form and function, including how it contacts other teeth," says Dr Koty. "Crowning teeth can also create dramatic improvements for patients whose teeth have been worn by bruxism (habitual grinding) or by enamel erosion."

## #4 PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

When it comes to a beautiful, healthy smile, prevention is key, says DR DAPHNE CHUA of **Aesthete Smilestudio**.

### *Brush twice, floss once*

"The recommended oral hygiene routine is to brush at least twice a day for around two to three minutes and to floss at least every night," says Dr Chua. Choose a soft-bristled toothbrush with a small head for maximum manoeuvrability in tight spaces. "An electric toothbrush is helpful in areas that are hard to reach. Flossing every day is very important and cannot be replaced by using mouth rinses." You can also gently brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen the breath. *Tip:* Air-dry your toothbrush and replace it every three to four months.

### *Watch the sweet stuff*

Sugar is oral enemy number one, closely followed by colourings. "Limit your intake of dark-coloured and sweet food and drinks (coffee, tea, red wine, soft drinks, sweets and cakes, for example). Rinse immediately after consumption to reduce the impact," says Dr Chua.

### *Don't let pain be your guide*

"Patients often use pain as an indicator for when to see a dentist. This is a bad idea, as dental problems do not first present as pain – pain is felt only in the later stages."

### *Make a regular date with your dentist*

"It's important to see the dentist for your routine check and clean at least every six months," says Dr Chua. "Pick a dentist who you are comfortable with, communicates well and is someone you can trust."



# #5

## EASE THE DAILY GRIND

Dental bruxism, which is often triggered by stress, is the medical term used to describe habitual clenching or grinding of the teeth and jaws.

"You may experience stiff or fatigued jaw muscles when you wake in the morning, headaches, neck aches, sensitive teeth, jaw pain or noises when opening or closing your mouth," says Dr Thompson from Expat Dental. "All of these can be signs of dental bruxism and TMJ (temporomandibular joint) disorders.

There's no need to suffer habitual teeth grinding and the chipped, worn teeth it can cause. Increasingly, injectable therapies (such as Botox) are being adopted as a safe and preferred way to treat bruxism. "Using what we call localised muscle infusion techniques, we can painlessly inject a muscle-relaxing compound directly into the muscles that are doing the most damage," explains Dr Thompson. "In this way, we can treat your bruxism without the use of cumbersome night mouthguards."

Emerging Botox therapy provides a welcome alternative to mouthguards. "Many people don't like wearing them, because they interrupt sleep or make them gag," says Dr Thompson. "Injectable therapies can change the behaviour by treating the muscles that are actually causing the problem; thereby solving the problem, not just treating the symptoms."

Other treatments for bruxism include occlusal splints and even behavioural therapy. Choosing the right treatment for you is an important decision that you and your dentist should make together after considering all factors and treatment options.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN YOU LOSE A TOOTH?

*(HINT: DON'T LEAVE IT OUT FOR THE TOOTH FAIRY!)*

Dr Kent from Smile Focus advises the following course of action if a tooth is knocked out.

**Step 1:** Locate the tooth and check there's no obvious damage to the root. Providing there's not too much trauma and blood, lick the tooth clean. Alternatively, the tooth can be washed in plain milk – don't use water!

**Step 2:** Try to replant an adult tooth by holding it firmly in place with a finger, or by biting gently on a handkerchief. Don't try to replant a baby tooth, as the pressure can damage the adult tooth still to come through.

**Step 3:** If you can't replant the tooth, keep it under your tongue or inside your cheek. Alternatively, place the tooth in plain milk or salt water. As a last resort, place the tooth in plastic wrap, a wet towel or water. If the tooth has been broken off rather than completely knocked out, try to find the fractured piece, as it can often be re-bonded. Place the piece in salt water or tap water.

**Step 4:** See a dentist immediately, preferably within one hour of the trauma.





# #6 GET IN EARLY

Early diagnosis and treatment is key, which is why DR CATHERINE LEE of **Dr Catherine Lee Orthodontics** recommends that children have their first orthodontic evaluation between the ages of five and seven. (Treatment between the ages of five and 10 is known as “Phase One” treatment.) While the jaws are still growing – no later than age 10 for girls and age 12 for boys – interceptive orthodontics can help balance and adjust any differences that might cause issues with teeth and jaw alignment. According to Dr Lee, missing the opportunity to catch and fix potential problems during this active growing period may result in a need for corrective surgery later on, either after the final growth spurt or during adulthood.

While not all children require early treatment, Phase One orthodontic intervention provides opportunities to:

- improve a child's appearance and self-esteem;
- create space for the eruption of new permanent teeth;
- preserve or gain space for the new teeth;
- reduce the risk of fracturing a new front tooth that sticks out;
- lessen or eliminate abnormal swallowing or speech problems;
- guide the correct rate of growth of the jaw;
- regulate the width of the upper and lower dental arches (the arch-shaped jaw bone that supports the teeth);
- correct harmful habits such as thumb or finger-sucking;
- potentially simplify or shorten treatment time for full braces during Phase Two (teenager) treatment.



## THE PANEL



Dr Shaun A Thompson  
Expat Dental



Dr Daphne Chua  
Aesthete Smilestudio



Dr Teodora Kent  
Smile Focus



Dr Steven Soo  
Specialist Dental Group



Dr Catherine Lee  
Dr Catherine Lee Orthodontics



Dr Thomas Koty  
ARC Dental Clinic

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#06-05 Camden Medical Centre, 1 Orchard Boulevard  
6835 9571 | drcatherineleeorthodontics.com

### Expat Dental

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6397 6718 | expatdental.com

### Smile Focus

#08-02/14-02 Camden Medical Centre,  
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6733 9882, 6834 0877 | smilefocus.com.sg

### Specialist Dental Group

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6 Napier Road | 6471 5150  
specialistdentalgroup.com





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MBBS (Hons) (UNSW), M.Med (Surg), FRCS Edin (Gen Surg)

- Graduated from the University of New South Wales, Australia (1998)
- Senior Clinical Fellow in Vascular and Endovascular Surgery, Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney (2007)
- Registered as a Medical Practitioner with the Medical Board of Australia
- Member of the American College of Phlebology



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38 Irrawaddy Road #10-43/44 Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Singapore 329563

319 Joo Chiat Place #04-03 Parkway East Medical Centre Singapore 427989





Often, the only way to get real results is a no-nonsense approach to your fitness and diet regime. That's why **Ultimate Performance (UP)** has become such a popular choice among busy expats who are serious about getting in shape, in locations as widespread as London, Hong Kong and Singapore (and with Seoul and Los Angeles soon to join the list). We spoke to UP founder NICK MITCHELL about his "no BS" attitude and asked him what sets UP apart from other personal training options.

# Results-driven DEDICATION

**W**alking into UP, it's clear that the trainers here mean business; as they should. After all, personal training doesn't come cheap – and everyone's time is precious, so why waste it on chit-chat? At UP, it's all about no-nonsense training and achieving hard-evidence results. And the evidence is on full display in the series of "before and after" photos lining the wall at the entrance.

"It's not about being an 'entertrainer' – we don't do any of that," says Nick, a former competitive bodybuilder and the author of two Amazon UK bestselling books, including last year's *Your Ultimate Body Transformation Plan*. "We aren't here to be your friend, we're here to get the job done. You come to me as a client, I find out your goals, and then we work as hard as possible to hit those goals." He adds, "We use visual evidence of body transformations as our marketing tool because anyone

can say, 'We're the best, we're going to look after you'; words are cheap – but tangible, physical results are not cheap."

It's not only about physical transformation. Nick says that for UP's key client base, it's also about tailoring time-efficient programmes to fit each client's hectic schedule and personal lifestyle. Most clients come in two to four times per week.

"Our clients are generally time-poor, very busy and stressed out," he says. "We know you're going to travel, we know you're going to eat out, we know that you don't want to dedicate your life to working out, and we aim to find solutions."

So, how do Nick and his team do this? They pride themselves on "bucking the system" by going beyond what a standard personal trainer would do at a commercial gym – taking what Nick calls a "holistic, global approach" and customising a realistic solution for each individual's lifestyle, from advice on diet and supplements to travel health and sleep tips.

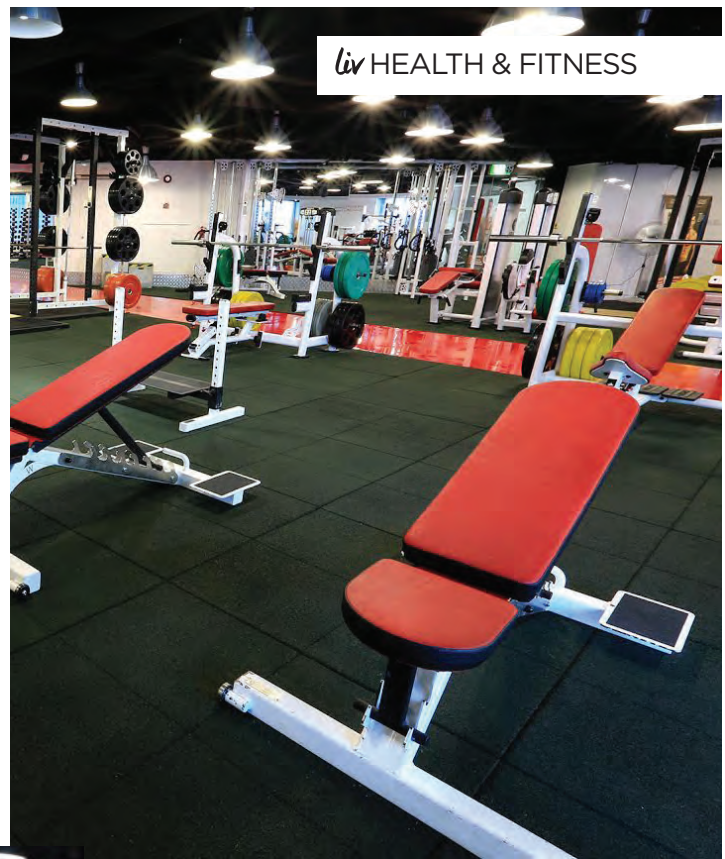
"The standard way of personal training is saying 'hello' and 'goodbye' to the client at the gym door," Nick says. "But we can't get the results that we want without helping you change



your lifestyle, the way that you approach your diet and the way that you sleep.

“We do whatever it takes to help the client reach their personal goals. If you’re going away for a month of ice-climbing in the Himalayas, we’ll work with you on a diet, and on optimal supplementation. If you’re going away to a deserted island for two weeks and all you want to do is read books, we’ll put together a stretching programme for you. You’re going to be jet-lagged – we’ll give you the tips on how to deal with it.”

So, what makes the ultimate trainer? “A good trainer takes his or her client’s results personally,” says Nick. “I’ve got to get inside your head. And, if I get inside your head, 95 percent of the job is done. What’s the best way to get into your head? By making you accountable and invested in the process.”



## 5 FITNESS FAILS

Nick shares some of the common mistakes people make while trying to get in shape.

- #1** “Not exercising hard enough. If it doesn’t challenge you, it won’t change you.”
- #2** “Men who try to lift with their egos, not with their brains.” Alternatively, many women are frightened of lifting heavy weights. “They need to lift heavier; women need to lift more like men, and men need to lift more like women.”
- #3** Women doing too much cardio. “The problem with exercise for most people is that if you do the wrong type of exercise, you can lose weight, but you don’t change your body shape. Instead, you want to mould your body, which is why resistance training is our chosen tool.”
- #4** “Jumping from one diet fad to another, and not giving things enough time.”
- #5** “Failure to prepare – if you really want to change your lifestyle, take your food with you to the office. Otherwise, you get too hungry and end up choosing something easy and unhealthy.” *U*

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# The Amazing Race

BY AMY GREENBURG

In April, SELINA MCCOLE left the comforts of Singapore expat life to take part in the arduous, week-long 251 kilometre ultra race, the Marathon des Sables (MdS), across the Sahara desert, ultimately finishing in 100th place and as eighth female – and all in the name of raising funds and awareness for her chosen charities, Women for Women International (WfWI) and Aidha. We spoke to the 43-year-old British expat and working mother of two about the challenges she faced.

“Reflecting on people affected by war, fleeing their homes with children and their belongings on their back, and with little to no food in their stomachs, I knew I had no excuse for not pushing through to the finish”







### Have you always been a runner?

No, I wasn't sporty at school, and was never picked for sports teams; but I was always naturally good at distance running, cycling and hiking. I took up running at 30. Living in London, you get into the spirit of the London Marathon, so I applied through the ballot system and got in on my fourth attempt; that year, I'd also signed up for the Paris Marathon, so I ran my first two marathons within two weeks of each other. By the time we moved to Singapore, I had run seven marathons, but stopped running completely when we moved here, as I couldn't cope with the heat! I finally took up running again because it was a great way to find some "me" time in an otherwise hectic life, and I find it a great way to release stress.

### What types of exercise do you do?

I have a pretty active life – with kids, there's always something to do. We don't have a car in Singapore, so I walk and cycle quite a bit, and I make a point of taking the stairs rather than the escalators in MRT stations. However, running is my main form of exercise. I typically run six times a week, and it tends to be the first thing I do each morning – before other things start to creep into my day and take over.

### What made you sign up for the MdS?

I heard about the race over 10 years ago and always thought I'd love to do it; I just had to convince my husband, Derek, who was not so keen on the idea because it was such a big challenge, and I think he was secretly worried about me.

One of my key reasons for wanting to do the MdS was that it's billed as the toughest footrace on earth – the heat, terrain, number of days, having to carry all provisions on your back, sleeping in tents, rationing water and not taking showers – I wanted to push myself physically and mentally to see how I'd cope.

### How did you prepare?

Lots of running, a bit of weight training and some stair climbing, and I lost 7kg – the lighter you are, the faster you run. I also hired UK-based trainer Rory Coleman, who's now run the MdS 13 times and trains hundreds of people for the race. I Skyped him every three weeks, and he adjusted my plan according to my travel and family schedules. I changed my working hours so that I could train hard on Friday through Monday, and on Wednesday mornings. I met Rory in person twice in Wales, where we trained on sand dunes and at the gym.

My daily training became the real focal point of my morning and weekly routines. I was typically out the door at 5.30am, so I could be back by 7.30am to get the kids ready for school; then, I'd either do a bit more training from 8.30am, or head off to work, depending on my schedule.

### What sort of diet did you follow beforehand?

Low carbs, as I needed to keep my weight down; no bread, pasta, rice or potatoes; lots of cereal, vegetables, meat and fish. I significantly reduced my intake of cake and sweet things – and chocolate, the biggest challenge for me! I also gave up alcohol for a year, having a drink only on three special occasions.

### What were the most challenging parts of the race?

The first was leaving my family at the airport before the race began! I think Derek was still concerned for my safety, and the kids didn't like the idea that I would be away for over two weeks, and that much of that time we wouldn't be able to speak. I'd written them little letters for each day I was away, explaining what I was likely to be doing on that particular day.

During the first two days, we faced really strong headwinds and tough climbs over sand dunes, so progress was slow. The longest day (Day Four), which was 84.3km, was the most dreaded. I split it up into checkpoints: first at 13km, and every 10km thereafter, so it felt more manageable. I listened to music, and reflected on my friends and family at home and their messages of support. (Every evening we received emails sent via the MdS website, which were a real source of encouragement.) And I repeated the mantra "Run if you can, walk if you need to". I finished the day in 12 hours and 25 minutes, two to three hours of which was spent in darkness, running by myself at times. I was totally exhausted upon finishing that stage, vomiting everything that was left in my stomach.



The final race day was a marathon, and it was definitely a case of mind over matter. Reflecting on people affected by war, fleeing their homes with children and their belongings on their back, and with little to no food in their stomachs, I knew I had no excuse for not being able to push through to the finish.

**You had to be self-sufficient, carrying everything with you on your back. Tell us what that's like.**

Typical contents of a rucksack include a sleeping bag and mat, a change of clothing for the night, obligatory safety items (a mirror, a penknife, an anti-venom pump, a head torch and an emergency blanket, for instance), medication, a camera, a charger and food. At the start of the race, my rucksack weighed 7.8kg, and two full water bottles added another 1.5kg. Clearly, the lighter your backpack, the better, so I needed to find food that was light with high calories – dehydrated food such as custard and apple, porridge and maple syrup, energy bars, nuts and energy gels. It was pretty unappealing and, by the end of a long day, my stomach could no longer bear it.

We collected rationed water at checkpoints – either 1.5 or three litres, and a further 4.5 litres every evening, which we had to manage for washing, rehydrating food and drinking. That was pretty tough – I mismanaged my water supplies on the first couple of days, and it was quite frightening to have no water and know you have another 4km to run in 45-degree heat to reach the next checkpoint!

Thank goodness the last day wasn't timed, as I wasn't eating and my feet were in pieces with blisters (I've since lost six toenails) and an infected heel; it took me four-and-a-half hours to hobble 17.7km! My rucksack had also caused some afflictions – wounds on my collarbones and lower back; all part of the experience!

**What went through your mind when you found out that you'd placed 100th in the race, and were the eighth female?**

I was delighted! I had secretly held the goal of finishing as one of the top 10 women, so to achieve that was a real dream come true.

**Will you be participating in the 2017 Mds?**

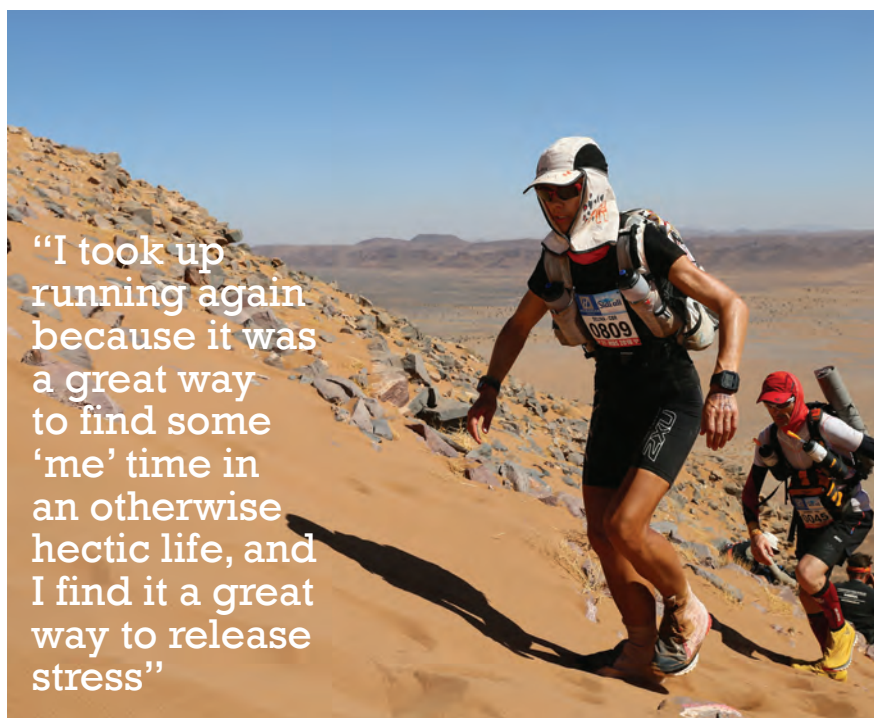
No! I promised Derek I wouldn't do it again. It's a big time commitment, a financial commitment and, of course, a strain on the body. I will, however, continue running, and now that I've experienced ultra-running, I'd like to do another ultra-race – I'll likely focus on improving my speed for a year or two, and then take on another big challenge.

**What's your advice to runners who want to prep for a race as gruelling as the Mds?**

Get yourself a coach who can give you the type of expert advice required. This will not only save you a lot of time, but will also ensure you get the right training and guidance. They can also help you believe in yourself.

**You raised a whopping \$80,000! How did you choose your charities?**

Charity work features heavily in my life and is definitely a great source of inspiration and satisfaction for me. I'm lucky to have an incredibly supportive husband, who makes my involvement in charity and crazy trips possible – I previously took part in Women on a Mission's trek to the Tsum Valley in the Himalayas, where I got to know WfWI, an organisation that provides vocational training to women afflicted by war or conflict. In Singapore, I regularly volunteer with Aidha, which provides computer, leadership and financial literacy skills training to foreign domestic workers. I serve on their corporate taskforce and help to teach business plan courses to students every other Sunday. Having been blessed with education and opportunity, I feel a duty to help women who have not had that good fortune. Living in Singapore, where foreign domestic workers are integral to our lives, I want to do my bit to help them secure a better future for themselves and their families. *ℳ*





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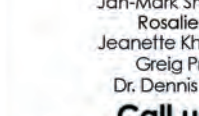
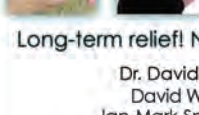
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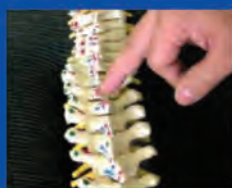
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| • British Association                              | 6339 8229    |
| • Canadian Association                             | 6622 5485    |
| • Career Resource Centre (CRCE)                    | 6733 4257    |
| • Consumer Association (CASE)                      | 6463 1811    |
| • French Association                               | 6737 8422    |
| • German Association                               | 6467 8816    |
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| • Protea Group of South Africa                     | 6465 6908    |
| • SACAC Counselling                                | 6733 9249    |
| • Scandinavian Women's Assoc.                      | 9168 0745    |
| • Singapore Oilwomen's Club                        | 6365 2096    |
| • Spanish Speaking Women's Assoc.                  | 9712 9948    |
| • St Andrew's Society                              | 9763 4141    |
| • St Patrick's Society                             | 6345 0253    |
| • Swiss Association                                | swiss-sg.org |
| • Friends of the Museum                            | 6337 3685    |

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| • Finnish Business Council            | 6322 2451 |
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| • German Business Assoc. (GBA)        | 6353 6841 |
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| • Italian Chamber of Commerce         | 6223 0356 |
| • Japanese Chamber of Commerce        | 6221 0541 |
| • New Zealand Chamber of Commerce     | 6235 7119 |
| • Spanish Business Association        | sbasg.sg  |
| • Swedish Business Association        | 6734 5009 |
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| • Comfort & City Cab Limo Cab Service | 6552 2828 |
| • SMRT Taxis                          | 6555 8888 |
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## WEBSITES

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- [eventshub.sg](http://eventshub.sg) — Information on cultural and entertainment events
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### INFORMATION

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- [expatrealtor.net](http://expatrealtor.net) — Properties for sale and rent — previously Expat Rentals
- [google.com.sg](http://google.com.sg) — Singapore-specific search engine portal
- [hardwarezone.com.sg](http://hardwarezone.com.sg) — Up-to-date computer prices in Singapore
- [gov.sg](http://gov.sg) — For official matters pertaining to the government
- [primetime.org.sg](http://primetime.org.sg) or [athenanetwork.com.sg](http://athenanetwork.com.sg) — Meeting the networking needs of professional women
- [app.www.sg](http://app.www.sg) — An extensive site about Singapore services and what's available
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# JULY 2016 TAROT FORECAST

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## CANCER JUN 21 - JULY 22



It's been a while since anything tickled your intellect. You may have found an interesting course of study, an interesting debate to delve deeper into, or just tracing your family tree and learning more about your family history. Whatever it may be, it puts a smile on your face. It's like a romance with a newfound lover. It feels like you are taking some time out yourself for a change, doing something that you thoroughly enjoy. So take pleasure in your "personal date time" this month, but don't forget those around you – they'll need your tender loving care, too!

## LEO JUL 23 - AUG 22



It's a month to acknowledge yourself and your need for some time out this July. June was rather successful, so this month you get the chance to rest on your laurels and receive praise for your efforts. Kudos to you for putting in all that hard work. Among all this, balance is the key ingredient this month. Too much of a good thing is not necessarily good for you. Bearing this in mind, do not allow the praise and attention you receive to make you complacent.

## VIRGO AUG 23 - SEP 22



Love is definitely in the air for Virgos this July. It could be in the form of a romantic partner, or it could be falling in love with something else – anything from a new pair of shoes to a hobby, a new pet or different home. It's going to be something that you are strongly drawn to. Be warned, though – it could become obsessive. If it's a potential partner that has caught your eye, you may have trouble controlling your feelings, or distinguishing between an infatuation and identifying a possible soul mate. Enjoy the whirlwind of emotions – it's not often that you get to act silly.

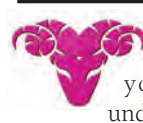


**LIBRA** SEP 23 - OCT 22

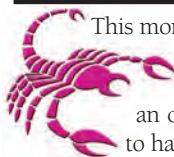
It's a lovely July ahead, filled with wishes coming to fruition. Such a love-filled month seldom comes along, so make the most of it. There is emotional fulfilment and great satisfaction in having things go your way. The past few months have been trying, but now you can sit back and receive all the goodness that you have been giving to the universe. It's also a time of healing and acceptance. Help is around, so be open to it; it's there for a reason – because you helped in the past. Have confidence that this goodness will keep on rolling. This is also the month where you discover passion in the form of a life calling, career or business, or even a romantic relationship. All is certainly well in the world of Libra!

**CAPRICORN** DEC 22 - JAN 19

July will be a month of swift changes that might leave your emotions all over the place. Tempers will flare and heated words will be exchanged. With your emotions going yo-yo, you can expect the unexpected this month. Why this unsettled feeling? It seems you're searching for something that makes you feel excited and stirs your passion. Frustration builds when we feel we're being pressed for time, when, in reality, it may just be that things around us are moving too quickly for us to keep up with. So, the advice is to hit pause when things get overwhelming. Regard this month as merely a test of how well you maintain your composure amid the madness.

**ARIES** MAR 21 - APR 19

It's a journey of discovery for Aries this July, where you carve out a deeper understanding of give and take. There is no shame for the recipient and no arrogance on the part of the giver. It's a simple balance of understanding. Every person that you encounter has probably got a lesson for you to learn from and vice versa – you could be the bringer of lessons to other people around you. This giving and receiving may not necessarily be tangible; it could be emotional or spiritual. So, go on, it's all right to accept that piece of cake! Just remember that what goes around will come around.

**SCORPIO** OCT 23 - NOV 21

This month, it's about focusing on yourself, doing things for yourself to reinstate an old, familiar joy. You used to have "me time", but with all your commitments, that has kind of slipped through the cracks. Spend some money on yourself – that nice spa weekend that you so deserve, for example! Or you might decide to work for yourself; if so, you'll need a strong, solid foundation, an iron will and lots of strength to see you through the hard knocks that you're going to face on the journey. Scorpions possess all of these traits and they're also highly self-critical, so there is no doubt they'll succeed in what they set out to achieve this month.

**AQUARIUS** JAN 20 - FEB 18

Things feel stagnant this month – not necessarily at a standstill, but plodding on too slowly. You'll wonder if it's time to look for something new to do – perhaps something that stirs and excites you, like how you felt when you first started a new job. When you start to feel this way, it's probably time to take stock of your life and assess whether or not things are truly greener on the other side. You might realise by the end of the month that you haven't taken time to appreciate what you already have. So, reinvent yourself if you have to, but jumping ship is certainly not the answer.

**TAURUS** APR 20 - MAY 20

Good fortune comes your way this month, which calls for a celebration. Things are going to change and for the better. And why not, when you have been putting in so much hard work the previous month! It could be a new job or business, or something relating to your health or family – it's just great news all around. However, as with everything in life, balance is essential. It's OK to be over the moon, just stay grounded as well. Be emotionally mature with your decisions and wise with your finances.

**SAGITTARIUS** NOV 22 - DEC 21

You must move on this month. It's time to let your self-protective guard down. Relax a little, and end the constant tension. There are other ways to protect your ideas and thoughts, and you'll seek them out this month. It's impossible to carry on the way you have been going, so find a different way to go about your daily business that puts the least amount of stress on yourself – you don't want to be glancing over your shoulder all the time. You may have been caught unawares in the past, but you have learnt your lesson well and history is not going to repeat itself anytime soon.

**PISCES** FEB 19 - MAR 20

A pressing choice needs to be made, and circumstances will put you on the spot: making this decision becomes inevitable this month. The question, though, is how to approach it. The key is not to rush. Seek the advice of others if you can – help is abundantly available, so don't say no to it. And, as much as you think you know everything there is to know about the subject, don't get too big-headed in this instance. The other thing to note is that there will be people close to you who will be impacted by your decision, so you can't afford to be selfish. Being in the shoes of Pisces this month doesn't look like much fun, so all the best!

**GEMINI** MAY 21 - JUN 20

Alas, it feels like your efforts have come full circle. You haven't quite reached your destination, but rest assured you have laid a proper foundation for getting there. There is excitement in the air this July as you continue to reap the benefits of your hard work. Finances are in top form – so much so that you're in the mood for treating the family. To maintain this continued success, however, you'll need to decide which path or passion to focus on. While having all your eggs in one basket may have worked, you can't carry on like this and enjoy the same level of success.



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# Vacation **vs** Travel

BY KATHLEEN SIDDELL

**I** blame it on the rise of endless travel, food and culture shows. On hipsters turned backpackers. On the internet. Overpopulation. Disney and Starbucks. Travel has become unnecessarily pretentious. It's no longer acceptable to strap on new kicks, a fanny pack and your Nikon and see the sights of a famed city as listed in your guidebook.

To consider yourself a respectable traveller, you have to find a remote village and be served dinner on the floor of a local's house. You need to take a picture highlighting the stark contrast between the haves and have-nots (say, your high-tech Patagonia outerwear next to your hosts' modest wardrobe), throw a moody filter on it and post to Instagram. You have to balk at the beaten path and always choose the one less travelled.

This type of travelling has merit.

But – and here comes the so-predictable-I-swore-I'd-never-say-it caveat – this kind of travel isn't as rewarding with kids in tow.

Could I take my four- and five-year-olds on a trek through the crowded streets of Bangkok? Of course. Are there couples who strap their kids to their backs, smeared in sunscreen and mosquito spray, with plenty of wet wipes, and live to tell? Sure.

My husband and I are not those parents. The work involved in getting the little people to walk even short distances, appreciate a historic temple, and feel energised by the buzz of a busy city, far outweighs any enjoyment we might get from it.

Still, I sometimes long for the days of backpacking through Europe with a copy of *Let's Go* and a Eurail Pass (and no cell phone!); the days when being a traveller was carefree; when the only chain restaurant to avoid was McDonald's. Today, authenticity is increasingly elusive. "Hidden gems" are over-exposed all over the World Wide Web. While travelling has gotten infinitely easier, being a "traveller" is more difficult.

Now, I take vacations. I hear Anthony Bourdain whispering: "Vacations are for tourists; unplanned adventures are for travellers. Vacation is Outback Steakhouse; travelling is a small, quirky gastro-pub."

And yes, vacations scream of tourists, cookie-cutter resorts and generic hotel buffets. But do they have to? Can you enjoy a hotel restaurant without feeling guilty about not trying somewhere more authentic? Vacations can be cool, can't they?

My family and I recently spent a long weekend in Phuket. We managed to simply flip-flop our way from the pool to the beach to our room and back again. We let the kids nap at 3.30pm and swim at 8pm. It was a vacation in the truest sense of the word: rejuvenating, fun, relaxing. But I left unable to really describe what Thailand is like.

Upon our return, I felt the need to explain our lack of sightseeing. Embarrassed that we had gained no new insights, had learnt nothing, had stayed quite cosy within the confines of our comfort zone. "Well, Phuket's not really Thailand," an expat friend of mine reassured.

I was reminded, once again, why we love this expat life. This, for many people, is the road less travelled. While Singapore's shiny exterior belies centuries of culture, living here as an expat allows us the time and space to explore for authenticity. We encounter different cultures every day, we make friends with locals, we make friends with people from all over the globe. Expat life feeds a travelling spirit. Go ahead and enjoy that generic vacation! *✍*

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