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Editor's Letter

Having just eaten the last of my daughters' Easter eggs, I'm now racked with guilt – as well as on a mission to diet!

This is always difficult for me as I have the willpower of a flea – in other words, none. Crisps and savoury snacks aren't a problem, but chocolate and biscuits are, especially if they are in view. It intrigues me how my children can leave them sitting in the fridge – maybe because they never open it?

Those of you who have lived here for a while will understand the dilemma of home help and the issue of your children never having to do much in the kitchen. We have done a couple of six-month stints without home help, and the girls have had to do their bit. That is, until I cave in; the lizard droppings and piles of ironing usually become overwhelming. I've drawn up housework schedules to get them involved, but they haven't been glanced at after day two.

But have faith: my daughter who is now having to clean and cook in her own place seems to be managing; she doesn't look skeletal or sick, so she must be eating well enough – and she didn't smell too badly when she arrived home for a quick Easter break, so she's obviously got the laundry "sorted"!

My helper is on holiday for a couple of weeks at the moment and I'm digging deep to find my domestic streak. I am at least remembering to empty the bins regularly – how quickly they "start to hum" in this heat; thank goodness the rubbish is collected every day.

I'm sure those of you heading to your home countries for a break over the next couple of months will find your own domestic groove soon enough. Happy holidays!

If you're staying here or travelling locally, *Expat Living* will keep you up to date and informed – as always.

ohorca

REBECCA BISSET Editor-in-Chief

P.S. We just won Website of the Year in the annual Media Publishers Association of Singapore Awards – how brilliant is that? And *EX* magazine, our very cool publication for men who work in the region, was runner-up to *Esquire* for Men's Media of the Year. Great results for the team – onwards and upwards!



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NEWS

Keeping you up to date with the latest news and promotions around town, plus heaps of online-only content. *Tip:* For fabulous EL travel deals, go to expatliving.sg/travel.

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Editor-in-Chief REBECCA BISSET

Group Editor SHAMUS SILLAR

Executive Editor VERNE MAREE

Editors HOME, PROPERTY: AMY BROOK-PARTRIDGE LIFE & FAMILY: KATIE ROBERTS HEALTH & FITNESS, ARTS & LEISURE: AMY GREENBURG HAIR & BEAUTY, FASHION: SUSANNAH JAFFER WINE & DINE: MONICA PITRELLI

> Online Editor RACHAEL WHEELER

Web Developer RENE YUTIAMPO

Client Services & Production SHERAH BROWN | LEANDA RATHMELL | LIANA TALIB

Graphic Designers MICHAEL BERNABE | BEATRICE NG | JEANNE WONG

> Circulation ANNA TSERLINGAS

Subscription & Administration VALMAI DHIR | UMA KANDASAMY

Marketing & Business Development GRACE YEOW | LAURA PEREIRA

Brand Communications Manager NATALIE WHITTELL

Advertising Sales, Singapore KARIN GALLEY-DICK | SARAH PURCHASE DANIELLE ROSSETTI | LARA SAGE | JACQUI YOUNG

> EX Editorial Consultant RICHARD LENTON

Finance & Administration COLIN PURCHASE

HR

JULIET KEYS Contributing Writers

BEATE BALDRY | MIGS BRAVO-DUTT | LEANA DORAY CAROLYN HALL | LIZ MCCABE | JADE MCLEAN SHELLEY VON STRUNCKEL

> Contributing Photographers KEN TAN (WITHINIMAGES.COM)

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CONTACT US

General Enquiries +65 6259 0058 | info@expatliving.sg

Advertising Sales +65 6478 7151 | sales@expativing.sg

Subscription +65 6478 7153 | subscription@expatilving.sg

Production +65 6478 7169 | production@expatilving.sg

> Editorial & Media Releases editorial@expatilving.sg

Calendar of Events calendar@expatliving.sg

Events events@expatliving.sg

Expat Living Hong Kong info@expatliving.hk | sales@expatliving.hk subscription@expatliving.hk

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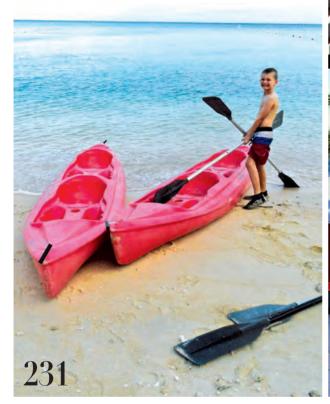
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UPFRONT New choices and things to do, buy and try



Wings of Time is Sentosa's latest night spectacular, replacing the long-running Songs of the Sea from 17 June. Set on an outdoor stage on Siloso Beach, it features a new backdrop, dancing water fountains, 3D video-mapping and pyrotechnic effects. The 25-minute show runs twice-nightly (7.40pm and 8.40pm), including on public holidays. Admission for residents is \$15. sentosa.com.sg

Fun and Free

We know Singapore is an expensive place to live, so we've tracked down some freebies to make your money stretch a bit further.

For adults: Every Friday between 6 and 9pm, the Singapore Art Museum waives all entry fees. Across the road, the National Museum of Singapore offers free entry to the



Singapore Living Galleries from 6pm every day; it closes at 8pm, but two hours is plenty of time.

For kids: Head to your local fire station (we recommend the historic Central Fire Station at 62 Hill Street) to see the fire trucks, meet the firefighters and get a free fire station tour. Saturday mornings only, from 9am to 11am. scdf.gov.sg



IN ANNIE'S FOOTSTEPS

Inspired by the Annie Leibovitz exhibition to learn more about photography? After checking out the impressive 200 photographs from the artist's personal and professional collection you may well be. Join a weekend session with Steven Yee, Associate Faculty Lecturer at SIM University, to learn how to capture the perfect portrait. Sessions run over seven weekends from June to October. \$200. And if you haven't seen it already, don't miss Annie Leibovitz A Photographer's Life 1990-2005 at the ArtScience Museum, 18 April to 19 October. marinabaysands.com/museum



CHILD'S PLAY

Masak Masak, a Singlish term that means "child's play", is the theme for Children's Season at the National Museum this year. The annual event is a special exhibition focused on childhood and featuring playgrounds, larger-than-life games of yesteryear, interactive installations, engaging performances and a film screening. Suitable for ages three to seven. 10am to 6pm daily, until 3 August. Free entry. National Museum of Singapore. nationalmuseum.sg 🛦





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SELETAR MEMORIES

"Sacred to the memory of Jane, the beloved wife of JC Buyers, shipbuilder who died on the 14th June 1867, aged 42. Also their sons John and James who died in infancy." So reads the gravestone of Jane Buyers, which is to be preserved after Seletar residents lobbied to protect its historical value. The gravestone was under threat from developments planned along the Lower Seletar Reservoir Park. The grave is one of the oldest in Singapore.

SENTOSA MAKEOVER

Luxury resort destination The Sentosa has announced a multi-million dollar makeover and renaming as the Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa. The hotel will remain open during the complete renovation, including

during the transformation of Spa Botanica into So Spa, which will retain its outdoor spa pavilions and garden. Completion date is 2015, adding



to the 40 Sofitel properties in the region. sofitel.com.

MARITIME HISTORY

Singapore's maritime history has received a boost with a new maritime corner and information boards at Fort Canning. In addition, the lighthouse that shone from the top of Fort Canning Park between 1903 and 1958 is now shining again, thanks to the installation of solar-powered lighting. Singapore Maritime Trails are free guided tours which focus on Singapore's maritime history.



Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore

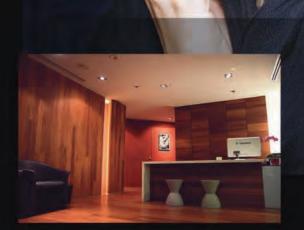
They run from 9am to 12pm, every first Saturday of the month, until this coming December. Call 6325 5707 or email enquiries@maritimegallery.sg to register.

AUDI ACCOLADES

Audi A3, the compact bestseller, has been named the 2014 World Car of the Year. The brand with the four rings beat 23 other cars to win the prestigious title as voted by an international jury panel of 69 automotive journalists from 22 countries. **audi.com.sg v**







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CALENDAR JUNE 2014

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Staying in Singapore for the summer and keen to find a way to occupy the kids over the holidays? Buds is running three-day drama camps right up to the middle of August. The young ones will learn to devise their own plots, design a set and costumes, and top it all off with a performance for family and friends at the end of the camp. \$300. Email info@budstheatre. com for more details and to register. Discounts available for multiple sign-ups and Centaurs RFC members.

OPERA IN THE PARK (7 JUNE)

Singapore Lyric Opera's Opera in the Park celebrates its 7th year. Featuring classic favourites such as Puccini's *Tosca*, Bizet's *Carmen* and more, this year's performance will be conducted by Joshua Tan Kangming. You can also expect lovely pieces such as "The Little Mermaid" and "Edelweiss" from guest performers, the SLO Children's Choir. **6pm, Singapore Botanic Gardens.**

LE NOIR (7-22 JUNE)

RSVP to Le Noir for an intimate evening of Cirque-style entertainment, featuring worldclass acrobatics, specialty acts, comedians and musicians, many of whom have performed in the world-famous Cirque du Soleil. **Tickets from \$70, available at showbizasia.com.**

EXHIBITION: BEST OF BRITISH (7-28 JUNE)

This exhibition will showcase new works by six British artists – Morgan Howell, Nikki Douthwaite, Horace Panter, Paul Oz, Colin Brown and Tim Wakefield. Their work covers a range of media from paper sculpture to mixed-media collage work, oil and acrylic portraits and even confetti art. In keeping with the theme of the gallery, the artworks will celebrate music, sport and cultural icons. **Icon Gallery, 476 River Valley Road.**

ETONHOUSE OPEN HOUSE (7 AND 14 JUNE)

Join EtonHouse International Pre-School's team of educators at an open house to get a taste of the new campus at 8 Thomson Lane, incuding its 200,000-square-foot state-of-theart learning facilities and outdoor spaces. The school offers the IB (International Baccalaureate) and Primary Years Programme (PYP) for children aged 18 months to six years. **10am to 3pm. For more information,** visit etonhouse.com.sg.

MALAYSIA PROPERTY SHOW AT MBS (7-8 IUNE)

Featuring exclusive real estate in the centre of cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Johor Bahru, PropertyGuru's MPS 2014 includes property developers UEM Sunrise with its Horizon Hills project, Eco World Development with its Eco World project and Tropicana Corporation with its 218 Macalister project. This will be a good opportunity for investors and house-hunters to learn from experts and industry leaders. They will share buying and investment tips on Malaysia's property hotspots for foreigners and how to grow your wealth via real estate. 10am to 7pm daily. Register at propertyguru.com.sg/ mpsjune.



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Saint Pierre presents a Chateau d'Esclans wine brunch – a chance to sample luscious wines from the heart of Provence, and a creative five-course brunch menu created by Chef Emmanuel Stroobant. Priced from \$98 per person. Call 6438 0887 to book.

A LITTLE TALK BY JIEUN PARK (12 JUNE-29 JUNE)

This month, REDSEA gallery presents emerging Korean artist Jieun Park's bold cityscapes, featuring iconic skylines from around the world. Opens 12 June, 6.30pm. To RSVP to the opening-night reception, email events@redseagallery. com. Block 9 Dempsey Road, #01-10 Dempsey Hill.



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SINGAPORE STREET FESTIVAL 2014 (12 JUNE-6 JULY)

Themed "Super Duper Youth", the Singapore Street Festival returns for its 13th year with a line-up of dancing, singing competitions, workshops and energetic performances. **For more information, visit singaporestreetfestival.com.**

BEERFEST ASIA 2014 (12-15 JUNE)

The sixth edition of the everpopular Beerfest returns, featuring more than 300 types of beer from all over the world. Marina Promenade. Tickets from \$15, available at SISTIC.

ELLIE GOULDING IN CONCERT

Ellie Goulding arrives in Singapore for a one-night only concert following her global tour. She spent most of last year playing sold-out shows all over the world, and supporting Bruno Mars across the US. **The Star Theatre. Tickets** available at Sistic.

BRITISH CLUB BLACK-TIE EVENT (14 JUNE)

Get ready to sail the high seas as The British Club welcomes you on board the Royal Yacht *Britannia* for its black-tie event of the year. Come dressed to impress to the Captain's five-course dinner and wine-pairing. The top auction prize of the evening? Business-class tickets to London and a four-night stay at The Dorchester hotel, worth a whopping \$25,000. **7pm, Pan Pacific Hotel. For more information and bookings, call 6467 4311 or email activities@ britishclub.org.sg.**

CAMP ASIA SUMMER CAMPS (16 JUNE – 8 AUGUST)

Whether you're looking for a multiactivity or specialist camp, Camp Asia has lots of choices for children aged three to 11 years. In addition to its popular specialist camps such as Super Chef, Sports Stars, Tech Savvy and Mini Mandarin, new camps on the block include Math Mania, Mad World of Science, Passion for Art and English 101. For more information and to book your child's spot, visit campasia. asia.

YOUNGER NEXT YEAR 2014 (20 JUNE, JAKARTA, GRAND HYAIT) (27 JUNE, BALI, PAN PACIFIC NIRWANA HOTEL)

This one-day summit offers a rare opportunity to hear from experts in the areas of wellness, fitness and antiageing. Guest speakers include bestselling authors, professors, doctors and celebrities, with talks covering everything from weight-loss success stories to the latest advances in medicine and therapy. Visit youngernextyearasia.com for more information and to book tickets.

FUN ART POP-UP (20-22 JUNE)

This will be Fun Art's inaugural pop-up art exhibition at the Goodman Art Centre. Titled Deconstruction: In Search of Truth, the show will invite the audience to interact with the works of eight emerging Asian artists from China, Indonesia and Singapore, many of them exhibiting here for the first time. **90 Goodman Road, #01-08 Block B. 10am to 9pm.**

WORLD CUP 10S RUGBY (21-22 JUNE)

This new annual event will feature top professional club rugby teams from around the world, supported by amateur club tournaments, for two full days of rugby action. Each day will run from 9am until early evening, with a series of 20-minute rugby matches: 12 pool matches on the Saturday and 12 knockout matches on the Sunday. Singapore National Stadium. For more information and to buy tickets, visit sportshub.com. sg/sportshubtix/events.

SUNGHA JUNG LIVE (28 JUNE)

With two highly skilled guitarists in the line-up, this is set to be one of the biggest guitar events of the year. Both Sungha Jung and Akihiro Tanaka perform a virtuosic type of guitar music known amongst enthusiasts as finger style, where the guitarist uses the guitar like a piano, performing the melody, bass, accompaniment and percussion all on a single instrument. **Kallang Theatre. Tickets available from Sistic.**

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One of the world's best-loved musicals arrives at Marina Bay Sands this July from the famous London Palladium. One for the family and not to be missed. Tickets from \$65 from Sistic.

ABSTRACT ART JAM BY HANSART (12-13 JULY)

Inspired to create your own abstract masterpiece? Now you can at this introductory art jam, which will teach you basic concepts and techniques such as colour-washing, dotting and "blow art". Materials will be provided, including a 28cm-by-36cm canvas. Tickets from \$25. For more information. visit thestudios.com.sg.

BALLET UNDER THE STARS (18-27 JULY

Take a picnic along to the park and enjoy an evening of dance together with your loved ones. This will be Singapore Dance Theatre's 19th annual Ballet Under the Stars. Works to be performed include George Balanchine's joyous Allegro Brillante, The Winds of Zephyrus and Opus 25 by award-winning Chinese-American choreographer Edward Liang, and the world premiere of a new work by Australian choreographer Natalie Weir. **Tickets from Sistic.**

OSCAR DE LA RENTA SHOW (24-26 JULY

After closing Audi Fashion Festival with his 2015 collection, Trinity Gallery will be the first retailer to host Oscar de la Renta's 2015 bridal trunk show, which will showcase around 30 designs that epitomise his distinguished style.



REEM ACRA 2015 BRIDAL TRUNK SHOW (3-5 JULY)

Reem Acra Bridal 2015

For the first time in Singapore, Trinity Gallery will be hosting a bridal trunk show for American designer Reem Acra, which will include over 20 of her glamorous wedding dresses, including her latest season bridal collection and best-selling designs from previous seasons.



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LETTERS

Readers' thoughts and comments about *EL*

Best Letter

We want to hear from you! Send us your thoughts on the magazine, or on any subject under the sun. For her heart-warming letter, **Evangeline de Macedo** wins a three-month subscription to *Expat Living* – posted all the way to her home in Switzerland!

Fond Memories

After returning to Zurich, Switzerland, it was a trip down nostalgia lane to be able to get the April 2014 issue of *Expat Living*. It was great to lose myself

in the beautiful Singapore home

decorations, try out the delicious recipes and feel "homesick" for the various featured venues.

I especially liked the article, "A Slice of Switzerland", as it gave me some information about Lucerne and Basel that I did not know. You always seem to discover more about your country from tourists! I will have to sign up for one of those walking tours of Lucerne myself.

Thank you too for all the tips on how to age well, as we all know it is the life in your years that counts, more than the years in your life. I am still doing the Luk Ting Kuen exercises which I learnt in Singapore from a 78-year-old lady, who looks nowhere near her age.

I am still astounded that so much sound advice, information and so many enticing photos can be packed into a magazine costing only S\$6.50. Compared to many other magazines, this is a steal! Keep up the good work and I hope that I can persuade someone else travelling to Singapore to bring me back another copy of your jam-packed issues. Meanwhile, I am glad that I can still keep in touch with the Singapore beat via your website.

Best regards!

Evangeline de Macedo



Going Crackers?

As you can see from the attached picture, I found a packet of rice crackers in Watson a while ago that is boldly branded "Zero Calories". Last week, my gym announced that it was voted the best gym in Singapore, and yet



there are sewage flies on the ceilings of the ladies' showers and it has not been renovated since I joined there 15 years ago.

I was wondering – does Singapore have any regulations for honest advertising, environmental grading, quality assurance logos or similar, to give consumers a guide to what they are really buying? An article that sets out what standards we can rely on here under Singapore law might be interesting for your readers.

Alix Burrell

Ed: Good idea! We're protected under the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act, and looked after by the non-profit Consumers Association of Singapore, so that's a promising start.

Bon Voyage!

It is with a sad note that I must end my subscription of *Expat Living*, as our family will be repatriated back to our home country. Thank you for sharing your magazine these three years with us. It has brought us all the information we need to enjoy Singapore. Here's to continued success with your magazine!

Christine Salazar





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SCENE AROUND TOWN Recent events, openings & parties









Education Insights

At a recent GEMS World Academy (Singapore) seminar at Raffles Town Club, parents heard insights from Dr Martin Stephen, Director of Independent Schools, GEMS UK, and Professor Pat Preedy, Chief Academic Officer and Director of Little GEMS International. Topics included the importance of quality early childhood education, and tips on nurturing the talents of "most able" students.







New Clinic

To celebrate the opening of its East Coast branch, Chl (Complete Healthcare International) held an open house and networking afternoon where guests could take a tour of the spanking new clinic rooms.





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20 Years of Freedom In celebration of two decades of freedom and democracy, the High

Commissioner of South Africa, HE Hazel Ngubeni hosted a fabulous dinner at the Fullerton Ballroom on 28 April. Guests included members of the diplomatic corps, senior government officials, business organisations and more. The highlight? A breathtaking performance by local musicians The Teng Ensemble and the Pipa Quartet.







ANZAC Day

The Australian International School marked a week of ANZAC Day services with the official Dawn Service at the Kranji War Memorial Cemetery on Friday 25 April. Hundreds of people turned out to pay their respects in what was a beautiful and poignant ceremony. The AIS choir performed "In Flanders Field" and the Australian and New Zealand National Anthems, and the AIS School Captains laid a wreath on behalf of AIS.









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WHAT'S NEW Hot shops and what to buy right now

Home Stone Style

From granite to marble, sandstone to limestone, Hot Spring Stone advises and delivers on all stonerelated home décor needs. If you're looking for a new countertop for your kitchen but want more choice, or you're hoping to revive that avocadocoloured bathroom, Hot Spring Stone can help with everything from choosing the raw blocks and slabs to delivering the final product. Call **6362 0085** or go to **hotspringstone.com** to find out more.



TABLE FOR TWO

At \$799 for a set of two chairs and a side table, Teak & Mahogany's Amalfi outdoor collection makes sitting under the stars in style even more affordable. The geometrical designs of its woven outdoor wicker, combined with its powder-coated steel-frame lines, work indoors as well. Visit in person at **100E Pasir Panjang Road, #07-04 Century Warehouse,** or online at **teakandmahogany.com**.



KIDS' WALL ART

Jazz up any kid's room with one of 18 different wallpaper mural designs by Walltastic, now available in Singapore. The murals are in 12 pieces, easily installed with double-sided tape or paste, and come with markings to make fixing the next part as easy as completing a three-year-old's jigsaw puzzle. Check out **muralz.sg** to see the designs, and email **muralz@purplefish.sg** for more information **v**

Colonial Treasures

Treasures of the Raj, stockist of colonial antique furniture and collectibles, has been so busy that it's currently expanding into an additional store in Tanglin Shopping Centre. It's also launching a new collection. The store's range of all things Raj, spanning the British, Portuguese, Dutch and French colonial periods in



the Indian sub-continent, can now be found at both #02-30 and #03-28 Tanglin Shopping Centre.



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Art on the Table

Everyone needs at least one conversation piece in their home, and Rugiano's Decorama collection, available exclusively at Pure Interior, is the place to find it. Items combine high-end materials such as hand-painted piano tops and steel or bronze bases, and come in various colours and finishes. Prices available upon request. Call **6534 9043**, or get down to **2 Alexandra Road, Delta House #01-01** to see the collection for yourself. ▶





NEAT PLEATS

Pleating gets a new lease of life at Pleatation, a new concept store featuring home and living products such as cushion covers, table runners and coasters. Pieces are designed with various types of pleating, including ruching, treebark and sunburst. (Who knew there were so many?) The brand also carries apparel and stationery, and can be found at **181 Orchard Road, #02-K6 Orchard Central**, or at **pleatation.com**.



SUAR CHIC

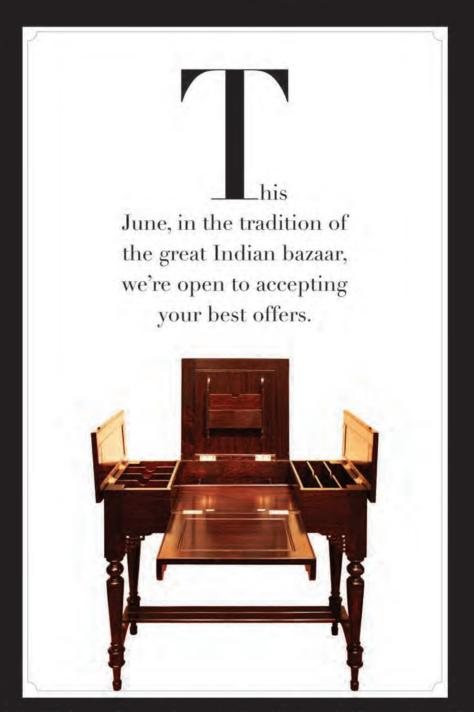
The latest range of Paresa Interior's signature furniture is now in, including its custom-built suar-wood bed. The store offers bespoke furniture and furnishings and a collection of lifestyle objects and accessories. Find out more by calling **6356 6298** or go to **facebook.com/paresacollection**. ◀

COMPETITION



16-piece cutlery set up for grabs.

Stylish South African homeware designer Carrol Boyes is the creative mind behind this stunning 16-piece stainless steel cutlery set. It's worth \$375 and it's up for grabs to one lucky reader. Go to **expatiiving.sg/competitions** to enter. To see Carrol's covetable collections, visit the store at **#03-06 Tanglin Mall**, or go to **carrolboyes.sg**.



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A mid 19th century British Colonial rosewood writing desk from India. Just one of the hand-picked, lovingly restored pieces of Colonial furniture from The Past Perfect Collection. 896 Dunearn Road, 02-01D Sime Darby Centre, Singapore 589472. T: +65 6737 3078 www.pastperfect.sg Hours: Tue to Sat - 10am to 6pm Sun - 11am to 5pm Closed on Mon and PHs



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Elegance in Simplicity Belies the fine details and surprising touches...



Designs on Emerald Hill By Amy Brock-Partridge; photography by Michael Bernabe





ELIZABETH ACLAND, one half of interior design-duo E & A Interiors, invites me into her Emerald Hill shophouse to talk expat moves, design passions and why her home will never quite be "done".

merald Hill. Even the name has an aesthetic ring to it, and the prospect of having a nose around a shophouse tenanted by interior designer Elizabeth and her fiancé Tim means expectations are high.

From the outside, their home exudes all the typical attributes of a beautiful shophouse. Inside is an interesting mix of classic British and European furniture, combined with Elizabeth's boho-chic, and some eye-catching patterns and pops of colour from the soft furnishings and reupholstered furniture.

Elizabeth and Tim arrived from the UK in April 2013, and stayed at the Park Royal serviced accommodation on Beach Road while hunting for a place to live. They first looked at apartments, but after visiting her friend Millie Heath's house on Killiney Road, Elizabeth's heart was set on a house.

"I can see why people would want to be in an apartment, but I couldn't stand being on a high floor. We don't



particularly miss the amenities, such as a swimming pool; but we are becoming members of the Tanglin Club – more for when friends and families visit than for ourselves."

When they first saw the two-bedroom home on Emerald Hill, it hadn't been lived in for almost a year. "It looked so depressing; there were piles of leaves in a corner, and for people who don't have much vision it would have been a 'no'." But the couple saw promise and made an offer.

Walls having been given a lick of paint, and the floors cleaned, they moved in with their belongings, including furniture mostly brought over from the UK. "We purchased a number of pieces from Lots Road Auctions in Chelsea, London. I do find it a lot harder to track down unusual furniture and antiques here," Elizabeth says, although she does mention Hock Siong and Aphorism as preferred haunts.

Business in Design

At the same time as moving, Elizabeth was also job-hunting. Having come from a senior designer position at Veere Grenney Associates in London, she was of course keen to continue her career in Singapore.

"I was worried about having nothing to do, so I had various interviews with interior designers when we first came for a recce. Tim and I aren't married, so I had to get a work pass, and was eager to find something as soon as possible." After meeting designer and stylist Chlöe Elkerton in Singapore, Elizabeth bumped into her again at a series of design fairs on a visit back to London. It wasn't long before the idea for E & A Interiors was conceived, and the two women became business partners. The company now has a studio on Kim Yam Road, a 15-minute walk from Elizabeth's home. It carries a wide range of soft furnishings from a range of designers, and offers services from re-upholstery, curtains and other soft furnishings, up to full project management. Its numerous fabric and wallpaper brands include Peter Dunham, Gwyneth Paltrow's "go to" fabric designer, and the new head of Oscar de la Renta Home. Carolina Irving.

Rules of Engagement

Having never actually lived together in the UK, Elizabeth and Tim's move to Singapore signalled more than the typical kind of adventure for expats. Things have obviously worked out well, as Tim proposed on a visit to Elizabeth's family home in Kenya in November last year.

"We were staying at my granny's place on the coast, which is my favourite spot on earth. There's no electricity, and at the end of the week there was a full moon, which literally lights up the place. That's when he proposed."

So, after a successful first year in Singapore, what's on the horizon? More home improvements, by the sound of it. "I'm never really finished with my own home," says Elizabeth, "and when new fabrics come in I have more ideas about what to change next."

Hove fabrics and colours, combining them and putting them together. I love the variety of working on different projects; it's so boring if you just regurgitate the same things again and again.



Left: "I was quite surprised at how lacking Singapore was in interesting fabrics. Fabrics from smaller companies that still practise handprinting and handblocking are often more reasonably priced."

Right: The blue glass bowl is antique, and the two white ornaments are from Taylor B. The lampshade (background) is from Fermoie, an exclusive supplier to E & A Interiors.





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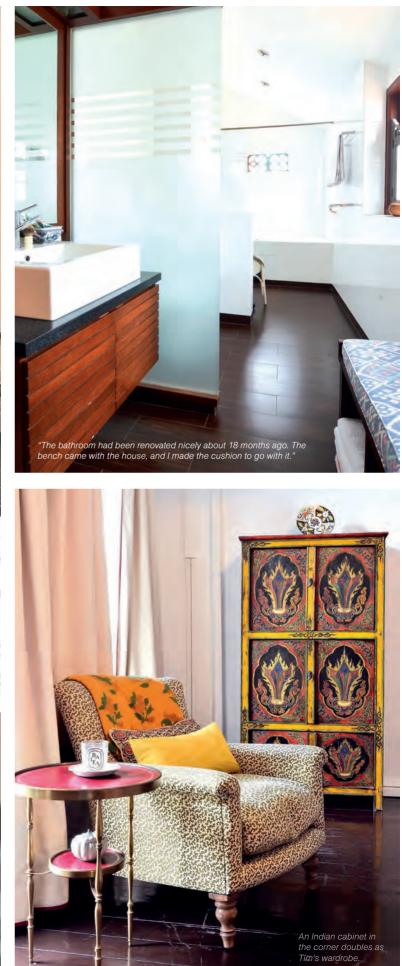
Elizabeth's headboard is made with material from Claremont.

Right: "My mother is so creative, as is my aunt, who designs jewellery and has also worked as a costume designer on movies such as Out of Africa and The Constant Gardener. This is a picture of my granny's house, where Ralph Fiennes was filming The Constant Gardener, and one of my granny's maids. She looks so bemused!"











The spare room houses two Vaughan Lighting star pendants, balancing its high, wide ceilings.





elizabeth's Recommendations

Travtus Workforce. "Great handyman service for all your odd jobs." 3158 7474 | travtusworkforce.sg

Aphorism. "Great furniture pieces from France, many of which have an Art Deco influence." 8168 9060 | Aphorism.com.sg

Hock Siong. "For furniture finds to revamp and turn into treasures." 6281 8338 | hocksiong.com.sg

Vaughan Lighting. "For beautiful lighting." c/o E & A Interiors, see contact details below.

Common Man Roasters. "For delicious coffee and food; this is where I get my coffee every morning." 22 Martin Road 6836 4695 commonmancoffeeroasters.com

Jessie Lim. "Beautiful ceramics and sculptural pieces; she also does amazing ceramic courses where you make your own pieces." jessielim.com

Leo Poloniecki. "His abstract pieces are so gorgeous; he did a series for the E & A showroom and I have already earmarked two for myself." 9352 0644 | poloniecki.com

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most common preconceptions surrounding antiques.

PRECONCEPTION: Chinese furniture is all about dark rosewood or lacquer, and is too ornate and heavy for most homes.

"Yes, rosewood furniture is part of Chinese furniture, but it's so much more than that – so much more varied," says **Just Anthony director Danielle Lee.** "Some pieces are ornate and heavy, but many others have a simple or rustic look that can easily fit with modern décor. Very good examples are Mingstyle pieces: their simple lines and elegant design make them timeless, which is why they continue to be reproduced today."



 This pair of double-door panels from Just Anthony has the original patina and carving, and would complement a rustic-style home. Black sideboard from Tianjin, made mainly from elm and some fir wood. Just Anthony kept the original colour and replaced the handles with brass ones. ▼



Recommended Reading

Just Anthony's Danielle gives us her list of useful books for when you're looking for ideas on how to mix and match Chinese furniture and accessories. "These are inspirational interior design books that have helped increase the popularity of Chinese furniture."

- China Style by Sharon Leece, published by Periplus
- Chinese Style, the Art of Living, by Bradley Quinn, published by Conran Octopus
- China Modern by Sharon Leece, published by Periplus
- China Living by Sharon Leece, published by Periplus

Chris Ang, general manager at Woody Antique House, agrees. "An authentic piece of furniture does not need to be very ornately carved or painted. There are simple pieces, like the Chinese wedding cabinet or the sideboard, which have less carving and yet are able to bring a certain antique style to your home décor."



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This elm-wood display shelf from Shanxi Province dates to the late 19th century and was sourced by China Collection. Doug explains: "It was originally in a dark reddish lacquer, most of which had worn with age. We applied a new colour, added slatting across the back to match the wood type and finish of the frame, and maintained the original feel and patina of the old piece."



China Collection's antique grain trunk in pine, made in Gansu Province in the mid-19th century. What was once a three-compartment trunk was transformed into a functional sideboard for a modern home.

PRECONCEPTION: Chinese furniture has to fit with traditional furniture.

"No, it doesn't," says **Anne Lockett from China Collection**. "It often has strong, clean lines that go with modern and contemporary interiors, and you can put one strong piece of Chinese furniture in with a lovely modern piece.

"Often, people have this idea when they arrive in Singapore that they have to get their home set up fast. It takes strength to pull yourself back and question why you want to buy certain pieces, but this is important. You need to buy key pieces that you really want and that you really enjoy. If you're going to buy a big piece you should make sure you know exactly where you will eventually place it. Be aware of why you're collecting furniture; buy slow and buy well. A lovely cabinet works well on its own, but you can also decorate around it, and a simple altar table, for example, could go with almost anything."

"If you have a very modern home, just one piece can become a statement piece," continues Anne's son, Doug Lockett. "Some people think that Chinese furniture is very traditional, but increasingly we are finding that the younger generation of customers favour the 'shabby raw' look. This is a trade-off between function and form: leaving a piece in its original state means it's susceptible; but it has a certain look that they like. When it comes to 'younger' pieces, we are willing to modify them. For example, there's a large green bookshelf in our showroom, which is not particularly old - around 100 to 150 years: we retained its original frame, added slats to the back and changed the colour. But we'd never change the colour of a piece that has more history.

Woody Antique House's Chris explains his view. "The fusion approach to home decoration, a mix of Eastern and Western furniture styles, has been around for some time, and having a piece of antique furniture can further enhance that. If selected appropriately, a cabinet or sideboard can double as a piece of art on top of its original functionality for storage. It can be the centrepiece in the main hall of a home and, very often, a great topic of conversation with your guests because there is a story behind each authentic piece of furniture."

PRECONCEPTION: Antiques are fragile and will fall apart.

"Actually, antique furniture is generally very well constructed, and made by hand," says **Marie Hélène Van Houten from The Past Perfect Collection**. "If it has lasted this long it will likely withstand your daily routine. For the most part, even the most expensive new items will come up short in comparison with the craftsmanship and quality of materials found in antique furniture. Of course, there are plenty of delicate antiques that are not suitable for regular use, but there are many that can grace your home and still be useful."



PRECONCEPTION: Authentic pieces are costly to buy and to maintain.

"There are many authentic pieces of furniture on the market that will not burn a hole in your pocket," says Chris Ang. "For maintenance, there is not much you need to do, since most pieces will already have been given a new coat of lacquer to protect them. To clean them, you can just dust them or wipe them down with a slightly damp cloth. In dry conditions, furniture wax can be useful; but don't use it too frequently, and be careful not to expose your antiques to too much sunlight or air-conditioning."

Antique-buying advice

- Try to find out more about the history of the piece you're considering buying, including its age, its original use and where it was made.
- Always think about how the furniture might be placed in your current home or a home you might be going back to. Ask yourself whether or not it will fit in with your home décor.
- Ask about any restoration or damage to the item.
- Always ask to handle the piece, then have a look at it from odd angles to really get a feel for it.

Directory

China Collection 20 Malcolm Road 6235 1905 | chinacollection.com.sg

Just Anthony 379 Upper Paya Lebar Road 6283 4782 | justanthony.com

The Past Perfect Collection 896 Dunearn Road #02-01D Sime Darby Centre 6737 3078 | pastperfect.sg

Woody Antique House Block 13 #01-05 Dempsey Road 6471 1770 | woodyantique.com

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Contemporary

By Amy Greenburg; photography by Michael Bernabe

Considering how swimmingly she's already settled into her Bukit Timah home, you'd never know MAYTE NEARY arrived from Dublin just 10 months ago. The mother of two and Spanish tutor shares with us how she turned the newly built, five-bedroom house on Oriole Crescent into a stylish yet homey haven for her family.





ven from the outside, the Neary family's contemporary style shines through. The architecture incorporates smooth wood panelling, travertine bathrooms and geometric stone pillars for a modern, sleek look. So sleek, in fact, that it takes me a good second or two to find the ultra-minimalist front door – it's knob-free, so as to blend into the façade. Once I've found my way, I'm greeted by the family's friendly Yorkshire terrier, Leo, who's been the baby of the bunch from the time the Nearys lived in Hampshire, UK. As we sit on one of the living room's two long sofas, Leo makes himself comfortable on my lap while Mayte – who's originally from Madrid, Spain – tells me about her family's time in the UK, followed by their most recent twoyear stint in Dublin, her husband Joe's hometown. It was just last August that Mayte and Joe picked up and moved to Singapore with their children, Nico (16) and Stephanie (13), for Joe's IT executive job. Although they miss Dublin dearly – so much that they're planning on purchasing a beach home there – they've managed to settle in gradually but nicely to their new surroundings.

"Moving to the other side of the world has its challenges," Mayte confides. "But moving teenagers to the other side of the world is the most challenging thing of all." She adds: "It's definitely been an adjustment, but less than a year later, they're more established and enjoying their time here."

Mayte's been able to make a life here for herself as well, keeping busy with up to five private tutoring sessions a week. Having run her own Spanish club in the UK for primary school students, and later opening her own preschool "I enjoy hunting down accessories from all kinds of stores, from wellknown retailers to antique outlets to hole-in-the-wall shops in Chinatown and Kampong Glam." Buddha statue from Lee's Antiques.





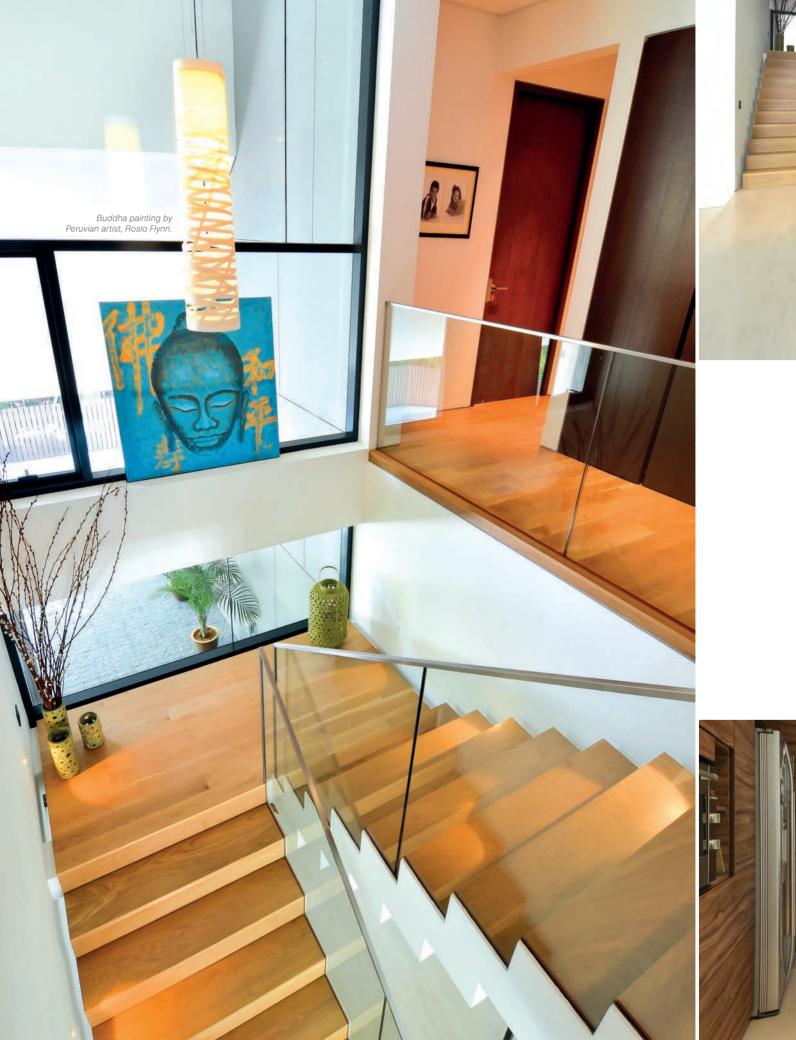
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nursery there, she was very interested in resuming her passion.

"I absolutely love teaching and wanted to continue once I got here," Mayte says. "Once I was settled, I began to spread the word and, now, I'm lucky enough to teach multiple students per week from my home, while still having time to do some of the other things I love."

When she's not tutoring, Mayte's taking Zumba classes (her favourite), catching Nico's soccer games and, of course, putting the final touches to her home – something she's clearly got a flair for. As for Joe, he enjoys spending time on the patio both after work and on weekends, which is why a proper patio was an absolute must for the Nearys' Singapore dwelling.

Right from the start, Mayte and Joe were set on finding a landed house with a nice outdoor space, and looked at a

variety of homes before finding one to suit their needs. They loved the Bukit Timah neighbourhood because of its quiet, residential feel, and the quick ride from the city centre; it's also a stone's throw away from the shops and eateries at Greenwood Avenue. "The majority of homes we saw were too massive," recalls Mayte. "Coming from a large house in Ireland, we wanted something more cosy here. This house felt really comfortable and we knew immediately that it was just right for us."

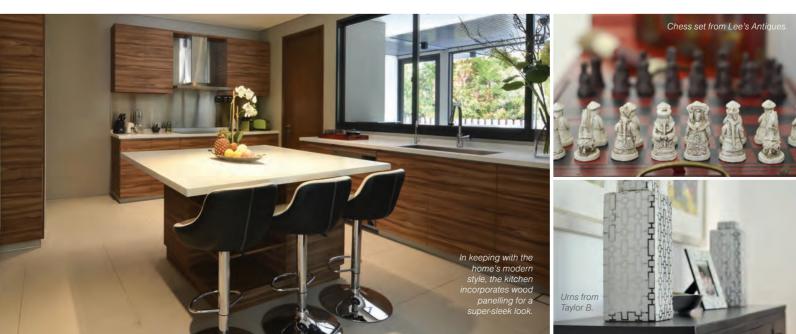
Once their decision was settled, Mayte called on Gallery 278 by ESCO Leasing. They arrived with very few belongings, and almost all of their furnishings are rented, with the exception of several accessories that she's purchased in Singapore and throughout her travels.

"This house was so perfect because it was brand new, and a completely blank

canvas to work with," she says. "ESCO really understood what I wanted and worked with me to achieve the exact look I was going for."

What she was going for was contemporary, with a slightly minimalist aesthetic – a look that she was able to execute quite perfectly. Using limited but consistent colours, and decorative, often Asian-influenced, accents that meld into the colour scheme, Mayte was able to give each room a simple, clean and modern appearance while still keeping things comfy, and infused with her own personal touches – from an antique chess board and Indian beaded table runner to sculptures and lacquer art pieces.

The living room is a perfect example of this contemporary, laid-back manifestation. Its vast, airy space – which appears even larger, thanks to the high





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ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the yard and a long, sleek swimming pool – incorporates browns and neutral tones with shades of blue throughout, from throw pillows to an antique Chinese jewellery cabinet. The centrepiece is a circular stone lamp atop a low console table – both from Gallery 278 – that manages to somehow be both a statement piece and blend in with the rest of the room at the same time. Full of natural light, the open-plan living space is bright and inviting, and the perfect place to lounge around and look out the windows – in fact, it's Mayte's favourite place in the house to hang out. "You just sit here and you'll see a lot

of different kinds of birds in the garden,

from woodpeckers to white parrots to hornbills," she says. "And everywhere you look, there's greenery around us. I love the vegetation here, it's just beautiful."

The only thing Mayte doesn't like? The neighbourhood's pesky monkeys. "Sometimes they just sit in our back garden and stare at us through the windows," she laughs. "That, I can do without!"







Home and Furniture

Boulevard Outdoor Furniture 200 Turf Club Road, #01-18 Grandstand 6763 1886 boulevardoutdoorfurniture.com

Dilip Textiles 74 Arab Street 6293 3633

Gallery 278 by ESCO Leasing 278 River Valley Road 6737 2322 | gallery278.com

Khim's Collections 13 Bussorah Street 6299 1192

Lee's Antiques & Interiors 102E Pasir Panjang Road, #06-08 and #06-09 8100 0428 | leesantiques.com.sg

Woody Antique House Block 13 Dempsey Road, #01-05, and Block 15 Dempsey Road, #01-12 6471 1770 | woodyantique.com

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The Curry Culture 31 Cuppage Road 6235 6133 thecurryculture.com.sg **2**









Al Fresco Flair

When it comes to outdoor furniture, there are myriad styles and designs to suit any taste. Our expat readers give their take on the pieces they purchased and why.

Photography by Michael Bernabe

Lorita (Singaporean) and Soeren Soltysiak (German)

We were looking for light furniture that combines elements of both outdoor and indoor living, as the concept of our home is to bring nature indoors. We love Dreamweave furniture for its good quality and colonial rattan feel.

When we first set eyes on the beautiful Georgia garden collection, we knew we wanted it – it reminded me of cupcakes and tea in the garden. True enough, the collection is designed to be a part of a pretty symbiosis with flowers, plants and trees. We were also happy to learn that the furniture is manufactured with respect for the environment.

This lovely swing is safe for our youngest, because we can adjust the height to prevent her getting onto it, as the pool is close by. Even for adults, it's a great, cosy swing to relax in with a glass of wine at the end of the day.

The other piece we purchased is a lightweight table that we can use almost

anywhere on our patio, near our pool or in our entertainment room. It's lowmaintenance, with covers we can take off and wash at any time – perfect with our young kids and our dog. Initially we wanted white, but we saw it in a brown shade (Antique) and loved it – it's unique.

Dreamweave Concepts, 9 Raffles Boulevard, #01-34 Millenia Walk 6333 1669 dreamweaveandotherstories.com Natascha Bruning and Bert-Jan van Essen, Zoe (6) and Griffin (1), Dutch

When we moved from an apartment to a house more than half a year ago, we needed some chairs to go with the table that we already had for our front terrace. We bought four chairs in two different models from Make Room.

All of the chairs are in a contemporary distressed style and made of metal; three in red and one in black. As it's an old house, we like to keep the furniture modern without the atmosphere being sterile. The chairs are comfortable, easy to clean and a great fit for the table we wanted to use. We sit here a lot more than before, and we don't have to drag chairs around anymore. We decided on two different chairs, as we had done for our indoor dining set; it looks like this is becoming a theme in our house.

We chose Make Room as we already knew the company and had bought



some accessories from them before. The owner, Barbara, always keeps things uncomplicated and is easy to deal with.

Make Room has recently moved to the Tan Boon Liat Building, and I highly recommend a visit to the new showroom if you are looking for furniture or accessories for your home. It has some really cool brands that I haven't found anywhere else in Singapore, including its own line of accessories.

Make Room, 315 Outram Road, #10-01, Tan Boon Liat Building 9113 1274 | make-room.net

Kate Thomas, Welsh

We were looking for something stylish and comfortable for a modest-sized balcony to provide a sense of chic outdoor living. We wanted to create positive energy, and a space to relax at the weekend or instantly unwind at night after a long day in the office. We bought the Love Dune because it's great to lounge in and looks very modern and stylish. With our balcony doors open most of the time, the Love Dune is always on show and brings a bit of 'Café del Mar' to our flat! It also easily seats two tall people to stretch out and enjoy a glass of wine, read, catch up on emails or enjoy an afternoon snooze.



We have purchased a few items from OHMM over the years. We even brought the outdoor experience inside, with a table for our dining area. Kevin and his team know the meaning of customer service and don't employ heavy sales tactics when you want to look around their showroom.

We wanted an 'all-rounder' that ultimately catered for adults but wouldn't be damaged if the kids climbed over it or spilt something. So it needed to be stainresistant and weatherproof. I really can't speak highly enough about the durability of the fabric, and you can mix and match with a wide range of fresh colours.

Our white dining room table and chairs are a big winner, perfect for a bright, airy flat like ours. It's again really practical with children around, but also dresses up beautifully for dinner parties. We've had a lot of compliments from visitors who like the look, feel and comfort.

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





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TEAKAVENUE

Tracey Lim, Singaporean

I was looking for furniture with clean lines to fit the modern, contemporary theme of our house. Specifically, I wanted to fill our third-floor balcony that overlooks a hilly area. This open rectangular space was bare and we wanted to make it look cosy, yet with furniture that was able to endure hot sun and heavy rains. We've also got three teenage boys, so we didn't want anything too delicate or fragile.

We went to Danish Design because the company is well known for designer furniture, and because we were in the market for functional but authentic Danish designs with classic and elegant lines.

They had exactly the bar table we were thinking of for our space. We wanted to use the bar table as a place where we could just hang out at after a long day at work. I found this one and liked its nice modern colour – titanium rather than just regular black, white or grey – and the waterproof cushions also appealed.



We were pleasantly surprised to learn about how environmentally friendly their designs are – the bar table, for example, is made from recycled railway wood.

We also purchased a single lounge chair for our second-floor balcony

from Danish Design, along with indoor furniture for the living room, and a sofa.

Danish Design, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #08-01 Century Warehouse 6270 8483 | designdesignco.com

Priscilla and Filippo Scotti d'Albertis, Alberto (13) and Niccolo (9), Italian

We first came from Paris to Singapore in May last year to have a look at houses and schools, and a friend introduced me to Verandah Living. I immediately bought four pillows in the palm fabric, and commented to Lynda that they were for the house in Singapore that I hadn't found yet.

We finally settled here in September and found a nice house to rent, with an unusual garden that has two different outdoor areas. There is a transparent



verandah in front of the sitting room, and I was looking for outdoor furniture with character: smart, good quality and hopefully a match for the décor inside.

We had planned a dinner party for six people that soon became eight, then 14, in a typical Italian way, and we still didn't have a table or chairs. Verandah Living came to mind, so I went to the shop and found the perfect pieces in a light metal structure and with a black-and-white optical illusion. I explained the crazy situation to Lynda and she arranged delivery for the same day, which was great - and unusual in Singapore. Our beagle puppy Beezy can't chew the metal structure and the furniture is so light that the kids can help when we have a dinner. The pieces will also be perfect on our Parisian balcony overlooking the grey roofs, while we look back and remember the special Singaporean atmosphere.

Verandah Living, Sime Darby Centre, 896 Dunearn Road, Level 2, Shop 2C 6466 0425 | verandah living.com



Amanda Buckland-McGowan and Denis McGowan, Lottie-Louise Buckland-McGowan, British

We were looking for furniture for our patio – a table, chairs and a sofa to be precise. I'd been looking for ages to try and find something characterful in rattan, and my husband wanted something modern. He also wanted a sofa that he could sit outside on and work, and we were looking for separate seats for our guests. My husband suggested the modular style, and we found one in Woody Antique House in Dempsey.

As usual when I go to Woody Antique, I got a good price and good service from the knowledgeable staff. The sofa consists of six pieces that can be put together to make a large daybed, which is great for my husband to lay out his work items. Our daughter can also sit out there with her friends and play and draw, and I can separate the pieces and have it so that friends can also sit comfortably.

We also purchased two armchairs to match the sofa and, while we were there, a suar wood dining table-top leaning against the wall caught my eye. We ordered a two and a half metre long table, and chose six chairs in the same wood, along with four hyacinth chairs, to break up the wood around the table.

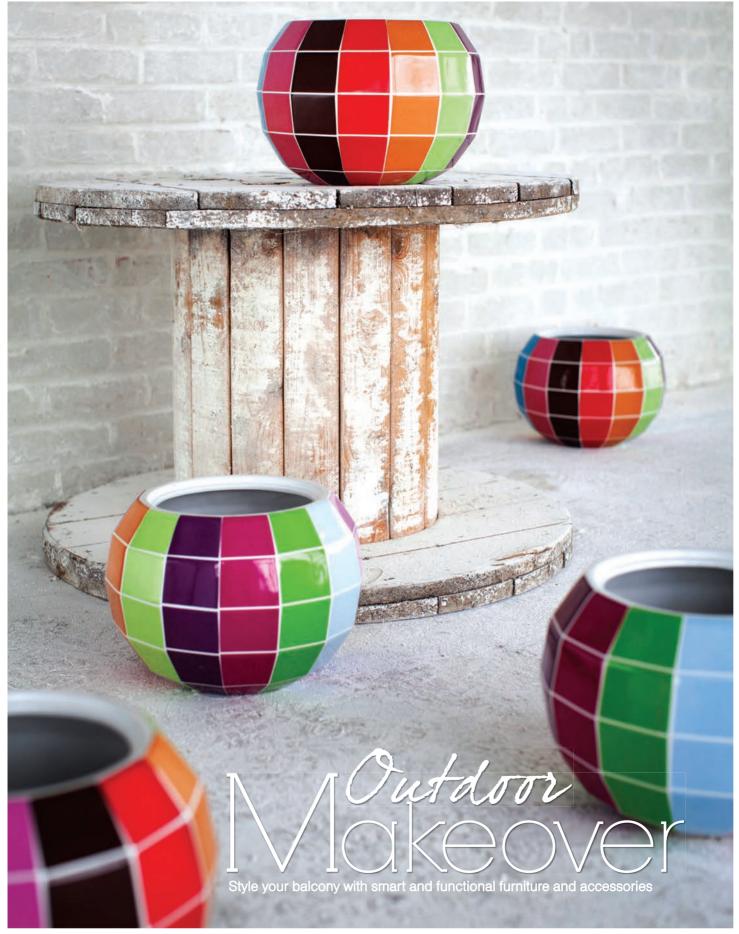
I absolutely love it. The knot in the wood and the different colours in the grain are warm, and the table maintains my theme of blending the garden onto the patio.

Now that the table is in along with the sofa, armchairs and all my new plants, we can sit out and enjoy more wonderful times with our daughter and friends in a warm and very comfortable outdoor space.

Woody Antique House, #01-05 Block 13, Dempsey Road 6471 1770 | woodyantique.com **2**



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6 Bird nest poly-rattan-coated aluminium frame lounge with cushions, available in white and grey or black, \$1,899, Galanga Living, 211 Henderson Road, #01-02, 6475 2633, galangaliving. com 7 Teak and rattan Castaway plantation chair, \$895, Verandah Living, Level 2 Shop 2C, Sime Darby Centre, 896 Dunearn Road, 9026 7061, verandah-living.com 8 Grid by Gloster's latest range of modular outdoor furniture, Danish Design, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #08-01 Century Warehouse, 6270 8483, danishdesignco. com 9 Colonial plantation chair circa 1880s from a palace in Pondicherry, ebony wood with distinctive rattan work, guaranteed 100-percent buy-back at purchase price after three years, Treasures of the Raj, 19 Tanglin Road, #03-28, 9173 5041, totr.pw

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10 Hemingway rattan lanterns: small, \$250 for set of two; large, \$450 for set of two; Elmy Collection, House of AnLi, 18 Mount Pleasant Drive, 6251 0410, houseofanli.com **11** Solid Burmese teak garden furniture; table, \$960, short logs, \$600, Teak Avenue, 9 Tagore Lane, #02-05 9@Tagore, 6457 2267, teakavenue.com 12 Madrid outdoor threeseat teak bench, \$1,380, Gallery 278, 278 River Valley Road, 6737 2322, gallery278. com 13 Copenhagen outdoor lounge chair made with old kubu wicker and teak, \$775, Teak & Mahogany, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #07-02/03/04 Century Warehouse, 6273 8116, teakandmahogany.com 14 Petrified wood base coffee table with glass top, price on request, Modern Eclectic, 120 Lower Delta Road, #01-14 Cendex Centre, 6273 2204, moderneclectic.com

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19



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15 Synthetic wicker Cora hanging chair, range of colours, **Woody Antique House**, #01-05 Block 13 Dempsey Road, 6471 1770, woodyantique.com **16** Helena sun loungers, \$1,280, available in four colours, **Dreamweave Concepts**, 9 Raffles Boulevard, #01-34, 6333 1669, dreamweaveconcepts. com **17** Mamagreen Allux teak dining set with powder-coated aluminium and Batyline sling fabric backrest, **Journey East**, 315 Outram Road, #03-02 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6473 1693, journeyeast.com **18** Floral-patterned cut-out metal lantern, \$135, **Singapore Trading Post**, 102F Pasir Panjang Road, #02-04 Citilink Warehouse, 6274 0511, singaporetradingpost.com **19** Rocco vase in lacquered stainless steel with bronze finish, PURE Signature collection, **PURE Interior**, 2 Alexandra Road, #01-01 Delta House, 6534 9043, pureinterior.com.sg **20** Rectangular outdoor dining table, solid vintage reclaimed teak with water-based, water-resistant coating, \$2,568, **Mountain Teak Furniture Gallery**, 315 Outram Road, #07-02 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6224 7176, mountainteak.com

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26 Customised solid wood bar with tile top, \$2,285, bar stools, \$325, **Arthur Zaaro**, 5 Eunos Avenue, 8A, Level 2 Henry Design Centre, arthurzaaro.com **27** Madal Stoltz birdhouse in white metal with wooden base, \$59, **Make Room**, 315 Outram Road, #10-01 Tan Boon Liat Building, 9113 1274, make-room.net **28** Mayan American hand-woven cotton hammock, \$278, wooden stand, \$438, **ReposeRhapsody**, 33 Ubi Avenue, #07-63 Vertex Tower A, reposerhapsody.com **29** Wicker coconut chair, \$1,375, **In Situ**, 238 River Valley Road, 6733 7307, insitu-sg.com **30** Copper outdoor lamps with strong fibreglass inner shell, available in different sizes, \$175 to \$395, **Treasure Trove**, 19 Tanglin Road, #02-47 Tanglin Shopping Centre, 6235 8514, ttrove.com.sg



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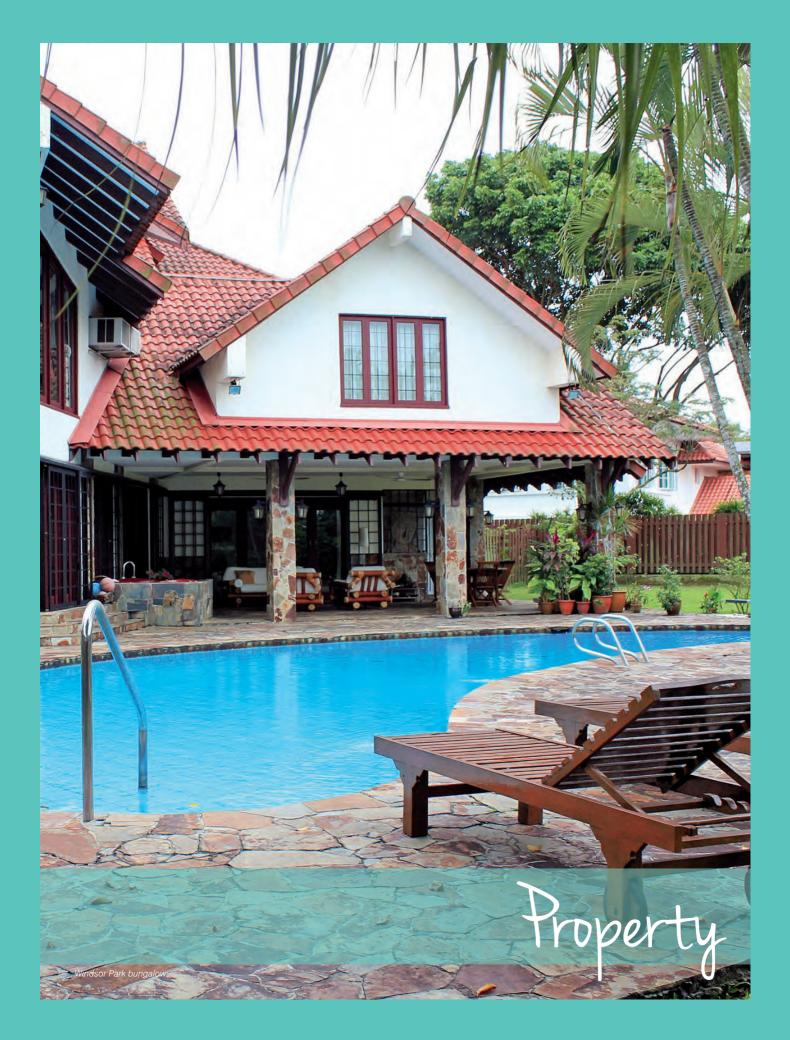


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THE SPECIFICS













NAME: GUY TURTON FROM: UK **OCCUPATION:** Insurance Recruitment (I'm a real creative type like that)

What street do you live on? Akyab Road.

If it's in another language, what does it mean?

It's the name of a port in southern Myanmar.

Exact words you tell a taxi driver to get home?

"Do you know Akyab Road? No? Head to Jalan Tan Tock Seng, then second right before the hospital, straight over the... I'll direct you when we get there."

What's the name of your neighbourhood?

"That residential bit between Novena and Balestier Road."

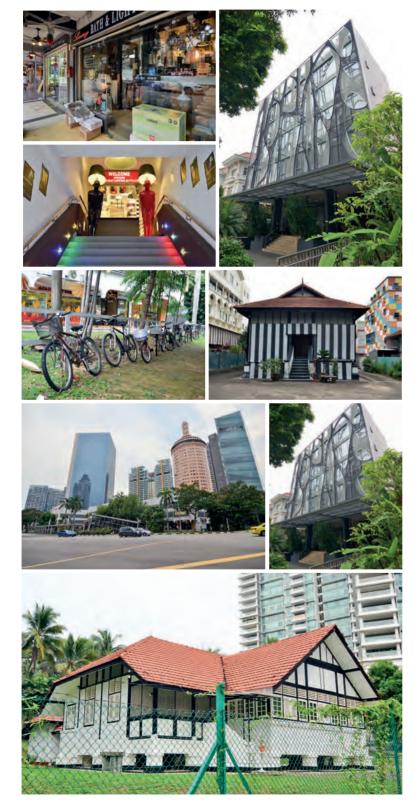
Closest MRT station? Novena.

How long have you lived here? 13 months, almost to the day.

Why here?

Because the lift opened straight into the lounge room with full-length glass doors onto the balcony. We're easily pleased.

THE SCENE



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

A toy poodle. You can't move for them nowadays; they seem to have become a standard family accessory. That's a lot of chaps trying to delay children, if you ask me.

The closest store (of any type) to your front door is:

A lighting shop – pretty much every shop on Balestier Road is lighting-based. Which is awesome when you wake up on a Saturday morning with a hangover and all you want is a cup of coffee and a slap-up breakfast...

Your neighbours are great, but you wouldn't mind a little less: Company in the lift in the morning.

The unofficial uniform of your street is:

A hard hat, on account of all the construction going on.

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

Go straight to Balestier Road wet market, pick up supplies for the week and then on to any one of the hawker stalls through the back.

If you're missing home, you:

Go to the balcony, look at the pool, look at the sun (not directly, that would be most hazardous) and tell myself to get over it.

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

There's slim pickings in Novena, but Tandoori Corner on Balestier Road usually features in most itineraries for guests. And we're a 20-minute (power) walk from the National Park at MacRitchie Reservoir, where the monkeys are always a crowd pleaser.

You'd swap houses in a second with: The family in the cosy black-and-white house we overlook, who only ever seem to be having an awesome time.

If you're ever woken up at night, it's almost always due to: Our five-month-old puppy Peggy chewing my toes off.

Your hands-down favourite neighbourhood joints are:

- DaLuca the single best burrata l've ever had.
- Pig's Fly a whole world of food on offer, plus Kopparberg cider and live football. Easy.

THE SUPERLATIVES

- Tandoori Corner great curry served quickly, and casual enough that you can turn up in your gym kit (as you do).
- BJ's American Diner and Grill brilliant hot dogs and brilliant-er happy-hour mojitos.



You won't find better local food than at:

Founder Bak Kut Teh Restaurant. Not my thing, but the huge queue every evening suggests the food is top-notch.

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

I assume the stiff competition among lighting shops means that you get a decent deal on a chandelier.

The guiltiest pleasure in your area is:

Unfortunately, the one thing that Novena lacks is personality, and pleasure (unless a brothel on Balestier Road is what you're looking for). There are no great coffee shops, quirky boutiques or casual chill-out spots. Put it this way, if you didn't live in Novena, you probably wouldn't go there for the afternoon.

One thing you'd never change is:

Our view of the city and the quiet. There's a bunch of hospitals in the area, so the government is pretty good with restricting the noise – the use of sirens seems to have been vetoed.

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

The construction site threatening our view of the city.

The city gives you \$5 million to

soup up your street. You use it to: Set up a decent coffee shop (there's a killing to be made), run a mailshot to taxi drivers about the existence of Akyab Road and replace the construction sites with some sort of nice pond.

Why should your neighborhood be featured in a guidebook? Because lamps make brilliant holiday mementos.

Whether they're newcomers or "old hands", we'd love our readers to get to know your neighbourhood. Help us by sending an email to contribute@expatilving.sg with "Street Talk" in the subject line. Include your name and street, and we'll be in touch.



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DEBORAH LAW Executive Director, Expat Realtor

A lthough the first quarter of 2014 saw an increase in sales due to popular launches, prices have gradually been dropping. Some new developments have re-launched at reduced rates (Sky Habitat at Bishan by as much as 15 percent), and more resale properties have sold below valuation.

In the next six months, high-end condos coming onto the market include New Futura on Leonie Hill Road, Robin Residences on Robin Road, Gramercy Park on Grange Road and Pollen and Bleu on Farrer Drive. Highline Residences and The Crest will add to the city's fringe, and the Commonwealth Towers (CDL) launched in May to much interest.

Despite this, it can still be a frustrating search

for resale buyers if the seller's next purchase needs to cover the restrictive TDSR (Total Debt Servicing Ratio) and ABSD (Additional Buyers Stamp Duty). With sales volumes remaining low, one hears the market is "tepid", "cool" or "mild", but as one industry pundit recently put it, to much laughter, "Cooling measures? It's positively freezing."

The good news is that Singapore's stability, strong economy, small land area and growing population keeps it popular with investors who are watchfully waiting for prices to further correct.

Predictions include an increase in smaller and more affordable units; larger, high-end units struggling; and sales volumes in 2014 being as much as 30 percent lower than 2013 while rents continue to fall.

Hot Properties



Entertainers' delight! Currently owner-occupied, this penthouse unit with a beautiful roof terrace has been carefully and lovingly renovated, with high-ceiling windows creating a modern, bright feel. There are three good-sized bedrooms, an open lounge/dining area and a separate kitchen. The boutique-style low-rise condo offers handy facilities in a kid-friendly atmosphere, including a water playground, resort pools, and gym. Shopping malls 112 Katong and Parkway Parade are nearby, while Eunos MRT is 15 minutes away. Close to international schools and to East Coast Park Beach for outdoor fun and exercise.

S\$7.2K RENT District: 15 Size: 2,000 sq. ft (approx.) Bedrooms: 3 Type: Condo

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This idyllic ground-floor patio unit has been perfectly renovated by its owneroccupiers to ensure all needs are met, with ample storage, a perfect entertaining ambience, good-sized rooms, and the ideal corner garden patio (approximately 500 sq. ft). The condo is great for families, with facilities including a bowling alley; it's also hugely convenient - Simei MRT is a five-minute shuttle bus away, and the airport, Changi Business Park, One World International School and UWCSEA are all close by. Nearby shopping malls include Eastpoint Mall, Changi City Point and Tampines.

Be the first to rent this exquisitely renovated topend apartment in one of Singapore's most popular condos. The photos speak for themselves; this four-bedroom unit has been tweaked to three bedrooms with great space and flexibility created as a result. A magnificent quiet-facing balcony is the perfect spot for dining outdoors and enjoying the greenery. The property is close to the PIE, Orchard Road, and international schools, and there's also a shuttle bus on weekdays from nearby Hillcrest Arcadia. Full facilities include tennis, squash and basketball courts, a gym, a clubhouse and a children's playground.



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Size: 5,210 sq. ft (approx.)

Bedrooms: 5

Type: Cluster House

District: 11

This well appointed semi-D is one of only six luxury homes in a boutique cluster house development, and enjoys the preferred location of being set back for extra privacy. With private pool access from the garden/patio area, the house provides the full tick-list of space, with five ample-sized rooms, four with ensuite, two parking lots, wet and dry kitchens, a yard/laundry area, a family area and also a private lift. This luxury development is well fitted and includes solar water heating and an alarm system. Convenient and prime location close to Newton MRT, a choice of bus services, eateries at Balmoral Plaza and more. Easy access to town, CBD and major expressways.

Great family home set in a quiet cul-de-sac with wellmaintained garden at the front and patio with room to park a car. Although not a large house, all of the rooms are a really decent size and the bedrooms are huge with plenty of wardrobe and storage space. There is a family/office area on the third level, with two bedrooms on each floor. Located just off Still Road and close to Marine Parade Road, the property allows easy access to the ECP and East Coast Park, shops, restaurants and more. It's a 15-minute drive to the CBD, and 10 minutes to Changi Business Park. Siglap Serenity **\$7,2K RENT** (negotiable) Size: 2,600 sq. ft (approx.) Bedrooms: 4 Type: Semi-D

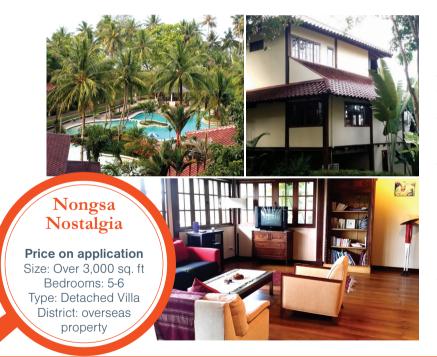
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District: 15

With its sense of the grandeur and luxury of old Singapore, this home offers extra-large everything: bedrooms, lounge/dining area, kitchens - wet and dry, rolling lawn to the left and back of the house, plenty of patio areas. The current tenant has installed a swimming pool; you can negotiate to have it kept or not. The house is about a 10-minute walk to Bukit Timah/Dunearn Road and 15 minutes the other way to the British and Swiss Clubs. The location is perfect for easy access to town, the PIE, or international schools.





Situated on the north-eastern tip of Indonesia's Batam Island, just 30 minutes by boat from Singapore, this idyllic resort village is set on over 10 hectares of lush and untouched tropical jungle. Rustic yet with modern fittings, these villas are hugely popular with expats working and also holidaying at Batam. This particular villa is set on the hillside overlooking the sea with unblocked view and a simple walk to the beachfront. The two-storey property has been modified by its French owner to incorporate an extra three bedrooms on the ground floor, creating a great family bungalow of six bedrooms. The open-plan kitchen/dining/living/patio areas ensure fabulous views at all times and great entertaining. Residents can use the resort pool and gym, or the facilities at adjacent Turi Beach Resort, Nongsa Point Marina and Resort and Tamarin Santana Golf Club. For sale or rent as owners are relocating overseas.

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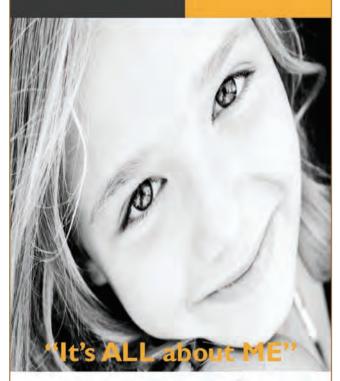
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Chock-full of must-have items from Jooniper, this is one competition you'll want to enter twice. There are cute forest animal plushies, a tote bag, a cushion cover and a \$100 voucher to spend on Jooniper's whimsical clothing collection for boys and girls aged two to 10 years. City Square Mall. Enter online at expatliving.sg/competitions. jooniper.com

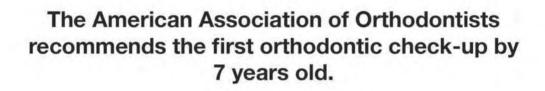


BEAUTIFUL BUMPS

As if shopping online wasn't easy enough; if you spend a minimum of \$200 on maternity and nursing clothes from the Babylicious website, the shop will come to your home so vou can try on different sizes and styles to make sure you're buying exactly what you want. Why not try it out on some items from UK brand Isabella Oliver, whose Spring/ Summer collection of easy-care, comfortable and versatile maternity wear will appeal to any mum-to-be. babylicious.com.sg

SAFE TRAVELLER

Travelling around Asia with a baby can be difficult on account of narrow, crowded footpaths strewn with obstacles for prams. This makes baby-carriers essential, and comfort for parents an absolute priority. Weighing only 600 grams, Lillebaby is a carrier with six different carrving positions. lumbar and neck support. wide straps, and shoulder pads. It's suitable for babies up to 20kg. \$195. Available online at vanilleet-chocolat.com. and at Mothers Work and department stores.



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READING RULES

There are about 25 libraries dotted across Singapore, but we've found two that are purpose-designed just for kids. The **Early Literacy Library** located within Jurong Regional Library has 60,000 books for kids under six years, plus regular story-telling and activity sessions. Meanwhile, the world's first green library for kids, My Tree House, at the **Central Public Library** in Victoria Street, contains 45,000 books in four languages for kids aged four to 12. Almost a third of the books focus on "green" topics, including animals, plants, nature, water, weather and climate change. **pl.sg** ▼



BUS TRACKER

MyBusMate is a new child-safety app for parents and schools to easily monitor children's commutes. The onestop information hub links parents, schools



and bus operators with approximate bus locations to reduce waiting time, ensure safety and simplify attendance-tracking. MyBusMate is rolling out to 15 schools in the coming months. **mybusmate.com** ▲



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will help build confidence, improve communication skills and expand knowledge through hands-on activities for children aged six to 14. Three- to fiveday holiday programmes run from June through August at UWC South East Asia, Dover. Sign up with a friend and receive 10 percent off. **Call 8161 0121 or visit eduactionresources.com**



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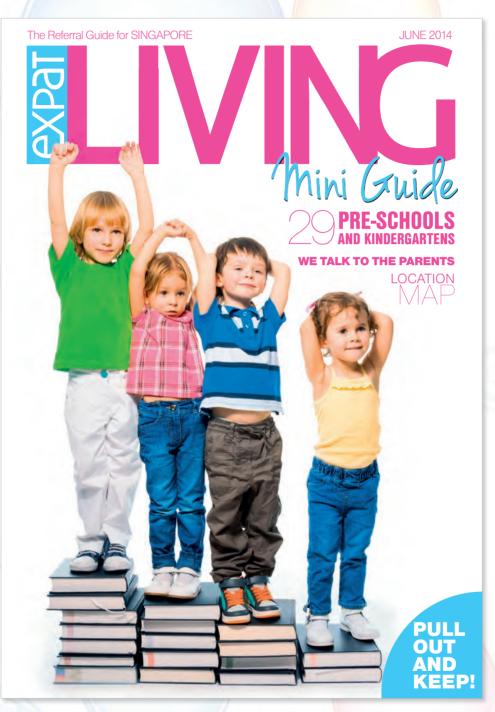
NO MORE NIGHTMARES

Fear of the dark and imaginary monsters are just some of the worries that bother young children. Now Philips and Disney have teamed up to make bedtime easier for parents and more fun for kids, with a **new lighting range** combining Philips innovation with the magic of Disney's loved characters. The LED range in kid-friendly designs includes torches, night lights, spinning image projectors and soft light-up friends to cuddle. SoftPals retail for \$72.90. **shopled.philips.com.sg** ▲

DIGITAL HUNT

SniggleHunt is Asia's first interactive, outdoor treasure hunt for children aged four to 15. It's designed to develop mental abilities, memory and strategic thinking skills, all during a runabout in the great outdoors. The new activity is a complement to the Forest Adventure treetop course at leafy Bedok Reservoir. \$15 for four missions; combined tickets are available. forestadventure.com.sg ▼





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The Club boasts first-class leisure, sports and entertainment facilities including four tennis courts, a pool, children's activities and numerous dining options.

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Middle School student Noa connects with her teacher Paula.

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Take Paula Guinto and her student Noa. With the support of dedicated digital literacy coaches, Paula uses technology extensively in her English classes. But she knows that the most important connection is the one that Noa makes with her learning. With a goal of cultivating trust and collaborative conversations, Paula's students use apps to extend discussions, access authentic audiences, edit one another's work online and more. Technology keeps them connected—to each other.

Maybe that's why UWCSEA was named 21st Century Learning International's School of the Year for 2013. There definitely isn't an app for that.

What if your child joins UWCSEA?

Visit www.uwcsea.edu.sg to find out more.



NOTICEBOARD

Births, engagements and weddings plus items for sale

FAMILY NEWS



Delighted parents Tan Zhi Fa and *EL*'s graphic designer Jeanne Wijaya welcomed baby **Caryl Tan** to the world on 6 January.



Benjamin Georg Gaca was born on 24 November 2013 to happy parents Tom and Tanja.



Kai Lincoln Meadows arrived on 5 June 2013 at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, to the delight of parents Katheryn and Taj.



EL's office manager Uma Kandasamy and her husband Vikensh are proud to announce the birth of their baby girl Vedhika, who arrived on 6 November 2013.

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@expatilving.sg.

CONGRATULATIONS

All readers whose babies are featured on this page will receive a photography session with award-winning Littleones Photography (Kate & Emily; littleonesphotography.com), plus a complimentary framed image worth \$52, and a pair of Pediped Originals*, valued at \$63.90. So keep those birth announcements coming!



FOR SALE

King-sized bed

Bed with Philippine wood and rattan headboard. Dimensions: 230cm by 204cm. Asking \$1,500 (pick up only).



Interested? Email Christine at tchuachiaco@gmail.com.

British India bed console

Only nine months old, made from wood and rope, and almost two metres long. Asking \$1,200.



Interested? Contact gp4rker@gmail.com for more information.

Outdoor dining set

OHMM outdoor dining table with four chairs, including cushions and glass top. In excellent condition, only used on a sheltered balcony. Asking \$500 (self-collection from the East Coast). Various potted plants such as frangipani and bougainvillea also available free of charge.



Interested? Email Chris at ckkasper@hotmail.com.

Turkish rug

Handmade Turkish rug in hand-dyed wool, measuring 100cm by 170cm. Please email to request more photos. From a smoke-free home. Self-collect from Novena. Asking \$300.



Interested? Email mcnulty_cath@yahoo.com.

Jimmy Choo shoes

Leopard-print, size 38 Jimmy Choo shoes for sale, worn once. With the original box. Pick up from Upper East Coast Road. Asking \$1,000 (or best offer).



Interested? SMS or WhatsApp Anne on 9119 2524.

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Avondale Grammar School is registered by the Council of Private Education Registration Number: 200514242C. Registration valid: 14 March 2011 – 13 March 2015

What is... Tongue-tie?

Learning to breastfeed your newborn baby can be one of the most uplifting and bonding experiences of being a new mum. Conversely, it can be one of the most stressful. One reason put forward for why some babies have difficulty feeding is "tongue-tie". We asked Mother & Child lactation consultant JANI COMBRINK all about it.

By Amy Brook-Partridge

What is tongue-tie in babies, and why do some babies get it?

The tongue of an infant plays an important role in breastfeeding. When a baby is born with a tongue-tie (medical term: ankyloglossia), the frenulum (the membrane that attaches the tongue to the floor of the mouth) is abnormally short, tight or thick. This can impede the movement and function of the tongue, especially when attempting to breastfeed.

Some studies say 11 percent of babies are born with ankyloglossia; others put the figure at between two and to five percent. It's a congenital condition – something you're born with. In most cases, one or more family members have a similar condition.

How can you tell whether your baby has a tongue-tie?

If a baby cannot extend the tongue beyond the lower gum ridge, or it has a heart-shaped tip, it may be a tongue-tie. If a mother has sore nipples, supply issues, problems getting her baby to latch after the first week (despite receiving help), or if the baby isn't gaining weight well or feeds continuously, has reflux, colic, spends a lot



of time crying at the breast, or clicks when swallowing while breastfeeding, it may be worth asking your lactation consultant to check for a tongue-tie.

Unfortunately, not all tongue-ties are obvious, and some cannot be seen without doing a full oral examination. This is not painful for the baby, and doesn't last long. It's done with a gloved finger, to assess the anatomy, appearance, functionality and movement of the tongue. There are several grades of tongue-tie, and some do not require surgical treatment – other measures can be used to help keep the frenulum elastic and functioning properly.

How can it affect breastfeeding, and are there any other issues that can arise?

Tongue-tie may prevent the baby from taking enough breast tissue into its mouth to form a teat, which can cause painful, cracked or bleeding nipples, too-frequent feeding and poor infant weight gain; some babies develop reflux and or colic, and are

There are several grades of tonguetie, and some do not require surgical treatment

generally unsettled. If unresolved, it can lead to early cessation of breastfeeding, exclusive pumping or formula use. Later on, a tongue-tie can lead to speech impediments, restricted tongue function and even food intolerance, though this connection isn't well understood as yet.

How can you address tongue-tie without surgical intervention?

Many babies with tongue-tie will breastfeed successfully with little or no intervention. Those who do experience problems, however, will firstly need to be assessed by a qualified lactation consultant (IBCLC) with experience in identifying tongue-ties. We always start with a conservative approach: certain breastfeeding positions can help mobilise the tongue, and suck-training exercises can be useful in improving tongue mobility and function. It may also help to visit an osteopath or chiropractor who is experienced with babies and tongue-tie.

When should the surgical route be considered?

When it's impossible to mobilise the tongue using the techniques described above, and breastfeeding is still affected. Bear in mind, too, that related symptoms, such as reflux, may not be relieved by medications alone. It may be that the tongue-tie is so severe that no other option is viable, as the long-term effects, especially related to speech, outweigh the risk and trauma of a minor surgical procedure.

Before making a decision, discuss it with your partner, your lactation consultant and your doctor or paediatrician. Sometimes, the anticipation of medical intervention is worse than the actual procedure. It is as important to find someone experienced with tongue-tie revisions, and who has extensive knowledge on the subject. There is a fantastic international support group on Facebook (facebook/com/ groups/tonguetiebabies), run by experts on the subject, that can provide a wealth of information and support, including the all-important aftercare.

The surgical procedure

The frenctomy can be done with or without anaesthesia, in a doctor's office or hospital. The procedure involves the doctor snipping the frenulum free; it's quick, and discomfort is minimal as there are few nerve endings in the area. Bleeding should also be minimal, and babies can usually breastfeed immediately after the procedure.



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Voluntee Finding positions online

Spanish expat IRENE IBARRA set up online portal Expatgiving.org to help non-profit organisations reach out to the expat community to promote volunteering positions in Singapore and across the region. She and colleague VICTORIA ORELLANA discuss the website's aims and its impact to date.

By Amy Brook-Partridge; Photography by Michael Bernabe





A lot of professionals put aside their careers to follow their partners in the expat adventure While I was volunteering in Singapore, several non-profits told me about the difficulties they had encountered in reaching expats. There are also many people who, like us, want to volunteer their skills to benefit the community. Expatgiving was born as a platform where non-profits can tap into the expat world, and where expats can find plenty of volunteer positions in Singapore and across the region.

What makes us different is the fact that, apart from helping our adopted community by working with local non-profits, we also try to focus on what expats need and can commit to. There are many reasons why people are willing to volunteer, but being expats ourselves we know that there are a lot of professionals out there who put aside their careers to follow their partners in the expat adventure. Keeping this in mind, we try to promote skilled or leadership volunteer vacancies that may help fill the gaps in their CVs.

We are currently working with more than 25 non-profits. Examples of recent positions include a communications volunteer for The Singapore Committee for UN Women, and country ambassadors for Project Inspire. We also received many applications for play personnel at The Children's Cancer Foundation, volunteers who provide fun activities for children in hospital. Aidha has also offered skilled positions for mentors, an operations manager, a grant writer and an IT manager.

inager.

Irene Ibarra



I met Irene while we were both participating at a UN Women fundraising event in Singapore. She told me about the project and I was immediately interested in joining to help her spread the word about such a refreshing initiative. I think it's the perfect bridge between available volunteer positions and expats who are willing to make use of their skills for a good cause.

Along with the larger non-profits, we're also keen to support small or lesserknown local non-profits that have less visibility by promoting their volunteer positions and events. We also give them advice on how to attract volunteers based on our experience with other organisations.

An example of how we extend our online support offline is when the National Kidney Foundation needed volunteers for its Circle of Hearts programme. In this case, we not only advertised their vacancy, but we participated in the activity as volunteers by doing a Spanish cooking demonstration for patients in a dialysis centre, and we blogged about it as well.

Victoria Orellana

t's the perfect bridge between available volunteer positions and expats willing to use their skills for a good cause

More than a website

Apart from finding vacancies online and applying for them directly, you can also register as a volunteer and receive a bi-weekly eBulletin with all the updates, as well as a quarterly newsletter.

Expatgiving is also active in social media, so to stay up to date, "Like" it on Facebook, join its LinkedIn group or follow it on Twitter. You'll receive notifications about available vacancies and upcoming charity events.

Friendly Feedback

VOLUNTEER

Jan, Club Rainbow tutor: "I heard of Expatgiving through the Singapore expat wives' group on Facebook. It was very easy to navigate through the website and apply, and I received a response the next working day. I would recommend Expatgiving to both expat and local friends; what I have seen so far is inspirational."

NON-PROFIT

Club Rainbow Singapore: "We received an email from Expatgiving in January about their service. It's been helpful as it's another avenue for Club Rainbow (Singapore) to source for volunteers. We have found a few volunteer tutors for our Saturday tuition programme through them. It's a good way to pool together different organisations' needs and present them on a unified platform for an interested volunteer to browse through and sign up."



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JURONG BIRD PARK

Parrots Penguins By Katie Roberts:

By Katle Roberts; photography by Michael Bernabe

Most of us take the sound of birds for granted – just another background noise as we go about our day-to-day activities. For DR LUIS CARLOS NEVES, assistant director of Jurong Bird Park's avian department, however, birds are his life's work. *Expat Living* went behind the scenes with the engaging Portuguese vet to find out more about his job and the internationally renowned tourist attraction and conservation centre.



r Luis Carlos Neves feeds a boisterous, three-week-old blue-eyed cockatoo through a syringe in Jurong Bird Park's Breeding and Conservation Centre. Akin to a hospital nursery, with progress charts and hygiene controls, the room also has a large glass window that visitors can peer through. It allows the public to watch how this captivitybred chick, native to the Bismarck Archipelago, is being hand-reared.

"People say the chicks are ugly, but I like them all," says Luis, stroking its feathers like a baby. He explains that this tender loving care is part of the Park's commitment to maintaining sustainable bird populations. "We have a hundred pairs of endangered parrots breeding in a special closed aviary just behind here," he says.

As the Park's assistant director, Luis's love of birds clearly goes deep; like many of the keepers here, his job is more a vocation than an occupation. Born and raised in Portugal, he trained as an avian and reptile vet and clinical pathologist. He has been working at the Bird Park for two years, following a stint at the Singapore Zoo. "I always loved birds and always wanted to be a vet. But I never thought I'd be working in this place; it's one of the largest parks of its kind in the world, and managing the whole collection is a dream come true," he says.

Birds have clearly been a life-long obsession. With a twinkle in his eye, Luis explains the mini-bird park he had as a child. "By the time I went to university I had about 80 birds in my garden at home. I started with quails and doves, and as I grew older acquired budgerigars and cockatiels. I think my mother tolerated it because I was an only child!" The Park is the largest in Asia, and with 800,000 visitors a year – many of them international – it's a clear favourite amongst Singapore's tourist attractions. "The visiting public are as important as the birds, and maintaining the quality of the exhibits and visitor experience is essential," he says.

"There are few bird-only parks left in the world, and at 20 hectares we are one of the largest. Sixteen keepers manage the more than 400 species of birds from all over the world. These include penguins from Antarctica and snowy owls from the North Pole, but we specialise in tropical birds from Southeast Asia."

Feathered Facts

- At nine stories high, Jurong Bird Park is home to one of the world's largest walk-in flight aviaries, Lory Loft. This is a favourite spot to feed 15 species of colourful, gregarious lories.
- The Park's 30-metre waterfall is the world's tallest man-made waterfall in a walk-in aviary, and was visited by Queen Elizabeth II in 1972.
- In the Breeding and Conservation Centre, a monitor shows a live feed of activity from the nests in the breeding area (which is not accessible to the public).

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Artist impression

Running hand-in-hand with the public exhibits and fun shows is the breeding and conservation programme. "A major role of zoos nowadays is to maintain a sustainable population of species. This contributes to their conservation, increases the genetic diversity of our bird populations and preserves adequate numbers of birds to breed and exchange with other zoos," he says.

Luis has poured boundless energy and resources into the Park's successful programmes. "We're getting good results from our focus on breeding regional species under threat," he says. "Only a hundred Bali mynahs (a type of starling) are left in the wild, but the Bird Park has successfully bred five chicks since January."

After a two-year breeding programme, ten Luzon bleeding-heart pigeon progeny are expected to be sent back to the Philippines and released on Polillo Island soon. This threatened species is declining due to deforestation and the illegal pet trade.

The Park is a designated aviation rescue centre, too; confiscated or donated birds end up here. "Someone will buy a big bird like a macaw and find it too noisy, demanding and distracting, so they bring it to us. Native species can be released back into the wild, but we keep exotics, or organise an exchange with other zoos, including ones in San Diego, the Bronx and Berlin," he says.

Of the eight rooms in the breeding centre, the quietest are the temperatureand humidity-controlled incubation rooms. The noisiest, on the other hand, are the weaning rooms, where birds of different species learn how to socialise with one another. In one room, young flamingos strut their stuff.



In another, a dozen four-month-old parrots, including a blue-eyed cockatoo, a palm cockatoo and a hyacinth macaw, cavort and squawk noisily in individual cages.

"The birds are here to socialise, and doing it at this early age helps with their development. We are not rearing pets here," says Luis. "They are captivity-bred wild birds, and at this age learning how to be native parrots." He also explains that research has shown cockatoos to be as intelligent as four-year-old children. "They have a sense of self, can solve equivalent puzzles, can recognise difference, can mimic, and quickly learn how to get attention," he says.

And what is Luis's favourite bird? "I'm fond of penguins – and, as a group, parrots are one of my favourites. They're intelligent and each species has very individual characters and personalities. Macaws are like independent cats, whereas cockatoos resemble dogs – they're needy, they scream for attention, are demanding and, like most of the larger species of parrot, can live into their 70s. Before you consider a parrot as a pet, remember they are a lifetime commitment, much more so than a dog. A parrot is with you for the rest of your life."

What's On

- 3-Day Bird Quest Camp (4 to 6 June) is an up-close encounter with our feathered friends that offers hands-on bird-keeping experiences, reveals the secrets of nest-making and includes lessons in feathers and flight.
- At the Junior Avian Keeper workshop on 11 June, learn what keepers do and find out how birds are kept in the best of health – but be prepared to get dirty and rough it!
- Feeding sessions and live shows are all open to the public.
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Al-Stars By Katie Roberts

The American Association of Singapore's General Manager TONI DUDSAK (*seated, above right*) explains its colourful 97-year history, and how she came to lead the organisation.

oni Dudsak is a classic example of the newly arrived expat that the American Association of Singapore (AAS) strives to lend a hand to. Four years ago, the high-spirited former New Yorker reached out to the association for help; today, she is its general manager.

Toni has long experience of working in international expatriate associations, however. She served as Executive Director of the Luxembourg-American Chamber of Commerce in New York for six years, and Chief Operating Officer of the American Chamber of Commerce in Luxembourg for seven.

So, when she relocated from New York in 2010 with her husband and now 17-year-old son, she immediately turned

to AAS and the Career Resource Centre for Expats (CRCE). Laughing, she says, "My husband knew that I needed to work: I'd always had a job in different parts of the world where we have lived. So I started looking immediately."

It was a difficult process initially, as many new arrivals find, but after a few months she got a job with AAS as sponsorship manager. "In that first year, I got to know the people and admire the achievements of AAS," she says. "I was deeply taken by its rich history and the strong, diverse community," she says.

She has held the general manager role for three years, and is the association's biggest advocate, singing the praises of the hard-working multicultural staff of nine, the executive committee, and the affiliate American organisations (see box on next page), that work together to serve their 1,400 member families.

Toni says it's estimated there are 26,000 Americans living here, and these fabulous organisations are the lifeblood of the tight-knit community. "Years back, there were no groups or associations providing any of these services, no programmes for trailing spouses, no newsletter, social events or sports. AAS was the first, and now all the country associations do those things," she says.

Toni was enthusiastic about moving to Singapore, as she feels it shares similarities with Luxembourg, where she and her family spent nine years. "Both countries are wealthy, very small and have easy access to other countries. We loved Luxembourg; it was a great time personally, as my son was born there, and professionally too, as I become very involved with the international community."

Clearly a motivated and driven person, Toni believes that much can be accomplished by the AAS when people pull together, both within and outside the organisation.

"We work closely with other country chambers and associations on common events and promoting links in the community. We raise money for charity, and always strive to improve the value we give to members. Our Singapore-American newsletter, which started in 1958, has a circulation of 6,000, while the 13th Living in Singapore book (first published in 1977) is a comprehensive resource for the entire expat community here," she says.

"We also need to keep up with the needs of members and understand how they experience Singapore. The city and its expats are changing; more people used to be on expat packages, whereas now it's a younger crowd and more people come on local packages. I see more couples where both are seeking work. CRCE is very important in helping with career information and resources, and attracts a great pool of gualified people."

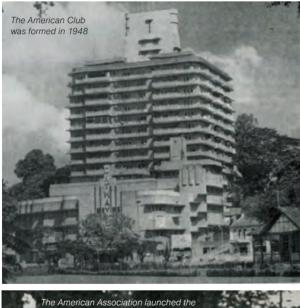
After more than 13 years abroad, have Toni's views of the US changed?

AAS History

Three years shy of a century old, the American Association is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the wellbeing of all expats, regardless of nationality. All of the following entities were started by AAS, and have slowly branched off to become independent, though they continue working closely together:

- American Women's Association (AWA), 1935
- The American Club, 1948
- Singapore American School (SAS), 1956
- American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), 1969
- Singapore American Community Action Council (SACAC), 1973
- Boy Scout Troop 07, first chartered by AAS in 1986
- American Dragons, dragon boat team, 2005

The membership mix is 60 percent American and 40 percent other nationalities. Membership is \$70 per family per year.





"Firstly, I think, you have to be a good ambassador for your country, and when you're away from it you also become more patriotic. I often take a step back and look at the freedom of speech the US enjoys, which you can't take for granted. While I might not necessarily agree with the political decisions made, I really appreciate the lifestyle there, and know that we can look forward to going back one day."





Coming Up

Independence Day: 28 June at Singapore American School Turkey Trot: Thanksgiving run and breakfast at Sembawang

Toys for Tots: Christmas-themed toy collection event for children (started by US Marines in 1942)

For information on other social events, including newcomer and repatriation talks, the annual Golf Day and the George Washington Ball, check **www. aassingapore.com**. The Career Resource Centre for Expats is an excellent resource for job seekers: **aasingapore.com/about-crce**.

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Nexus International School held a competition inviting students from international schools in Singapore to express themselves through digital art. We present "A day in their lives on campus".

The world goes through cycles of regarding new technology as life-changing or a fancy distraction. One thing is for certain, technology is only going to become more deeply integrated in our lives; most of us already struggle to function without it. We've almost tuned out from the debates and accepted that. What will always remain a topic is how we manage technology in our children's lives.

The educational value that comes with technology is often underrated; so seamlessly has the digital world merged with ours, we don't often realise how we are benefiting from it.

Nexus International School wants to remind parents and children, and really all of us, that we should be embracing the potential of our digital tools. Their function goes beyond what they are advertised to do. The discovery of that is where the magic happens. My Digital World invited students from international schools in Singapore to enter art pieces developed with digital tools that were conceptualised around the theme "A Day in Our Life on Campus'. Judges Oz Dean, Creative Directer at TBWA Singapore, Olivier Henry, Photographer and Owner of Milk Photographie, Jason Hodges, Creative Partner and Co-founder of Brilliant Agency and Ridwan Madon, Graphic Designer at Nexus International School, Singapore deliberated long and hard before coming to a decision.

Here are the winners, grinning ear to ear, not just from receiving prizes, but for the recognition of their work.

OUR LITTLE WINNERS



Contestants in the Primary School Category were asked to create pieces using any digital tool they could lay their hands on. Our winners showed us a variety of ways in which they could produce art using careful illustration, layering techniques and filtering. Congratulations to (left to right) Tanisee Nagaldinne (7) from EtonHouse International School, on winning the first prize. She won herself a brilliant new iPad Mini with Retina Display. Raphael Diederen (10) of United World College South East Asia and Nicholas Blowers (10) of Avondale Grammar School followed as close runner-ups, both winning two adult and two child passes to Universal Studios Singapore each. These kids will definitely be enjoying their win!

OUR BIG WINNERS



The competition for Secondary students asked them to produce photo essays, encouraging them to think more conceptually about how they would lay out their stories and process their photos, to come together in an artistic and cohesive way. We spotted clever use of color and text overlay, along with fun integrated text. The winner, Trisha Tan (15) from St. Joseph's Institution International looks ever-so pleased with her new iPad Mini with Retina Display. Runner-ups Theo Chen (12) also from St. Joseph's Institution International and Siona Mitra (13) from United World College South East Asia look equally delighted holding on to their new toys - the Canon Powershot SX170IS.

What a proud bright bunch of young potential! Here they are for one final shot with Dr. Stuart Martin, Principal at Nexus International School. What stuck most was not their amazing skills and creativity, but their quiet confidence and humble spirits alongside the support these learners had from their families, who all made time to attend the prize presentation at Nexus International School.



Left to Right: Theo Chen, Trisha Tan, Tanisee Nagaldinne, Dr Stuart Martin, Raphael Diederen, Nicholas Blowers and Siona Mitra.



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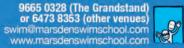
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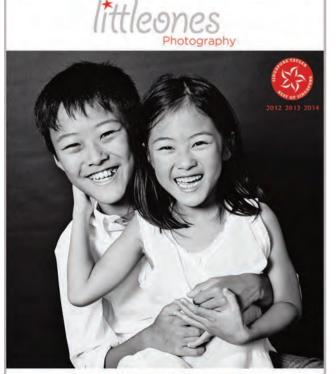
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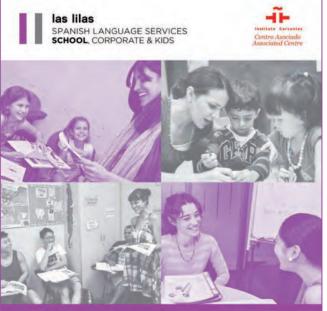
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Doyenne of local tour-guiding for more than 50 years, GERALDENE LOWE is semi-retired in Perth, Western Australia, but still comes back to lead occasional tour groups in Singapore. **Verne Maree** joined a fascinating bus tour of multicultural Katong on the East Coast, home to a plethora of eateries, historic temples and other architectural gems.

n the bus from Dempsey coach park to Katong, Geraldene takes the many opportunities to point out places of interest. The building site opposite Tanglin Mall, for example, is the soon-to-open Interpol Global Complex for Innovation. Trips off the tongue, doesn't it? Luckily, they already have an acronym for it – the IGCI.

In old colonial days, she explains, all the British liked to live in **Tanglin** because it was so leafy and green. As we'll see later, rich Chinese and other Asian communities far preferred to live near the sea. Like many places in Singapore, Tanglin is named after a tree: the tanglin tree. Some say it's a derivation of the Hokkien *tang leng*, meaning "eastern hills"; but as Geraldene points out, this prestigious area is not the east and it's not that hilly. **Orchard Road** used to wind through a series of nutmeg, pepper and fruit orchards. Scotts Road was named for the port harbourmaster who owned property here, and the presidential lstana, or palace, was a German plantation owned by the Prinseps – hence Prinsep Street.

We pass **Tekka Market**, previously called KK Market, where buffalos used to be penned; hence Buffalo Road and Kerbau Road. The market was built after cattle were banned from the city. In the old days, says Geraldene, you had to be careful to specify which KK you meant, or the taxi driver might take you to the nearby KK Women's and Children's Hospital instead of to the market. The new name, Tekka, comes from the Hokkien *tek kha*, meaning "at the foot of the bamboo".

Next up is the Thieves' Market, and then on the left is the city's main Muslim

area, **Kampong Glam**, dominated by the dome and minarets of Sultan Mosque. We pass the back entrance to trendy Haji Lane, and then Arab Street.

Having turned right into Nicoll Highway, into Beach Road and along the Golden Mile, we cross the Geylang and Kallang rivers, both now canalised. The name **Bugis**, we're told, comes from Kampong Bugis, previously home to a tribe of tall, handsome sailors from Sulawesi Island.

"They used to come up the rivers to sell their exotic birds and spices," says Geraldene. She remembers that the sailors would turn their boats onto their sides on the beach and smoke the insides to kill the borer; then they'd collect the bark of the paperbark or glam tree to stop up any holes; it also served for awnings, sails and firewood. That, of course, is how Kampong Glam got its name.

Kallang is where, in the 1930s, the first proper airport was built. "This was originally a very swampy area," says Geraldene, "and there was a village here called Kampong Arang, *arang* meaning charcoal." After the war, in 1955, the airport was moved to Paya Lebar.

Mountbatten breezes

According to Geraldene, wealthy locals always aspired to owning a house at Katong or Pasir Panjang, somewhere to catch the cool sea breezes – they couldn't understand the British desire to live in the interior.

Along Mountbatten Road, she points out a few of the palatial homes that still remain. All these houses would have been right on the beach, before the huge land reclamation that took place in the 1970s.

This road lost more than its sea views. Sadly, it often happened that when grandma died, the younger generation heirs capitalised on their inheritances by knocking them down for redevelopment. Some of these old houses are still glorious, though, especially those that have had government preservation orders imposed on them. Others have been extended to the rear, and many serve as kindergartens – that's the big business nowadays, as Geraldene sagely notes.

Number 754 and its neighbour, 759, are two rather famous houses, featuring exquisite tiling and lovely balconies. Geraldene says they were owned by the same man, who accommodated his two wives in them. The one at 759 is now a hotel, but its original grass lawn is rather bleakly covered with tarmac.

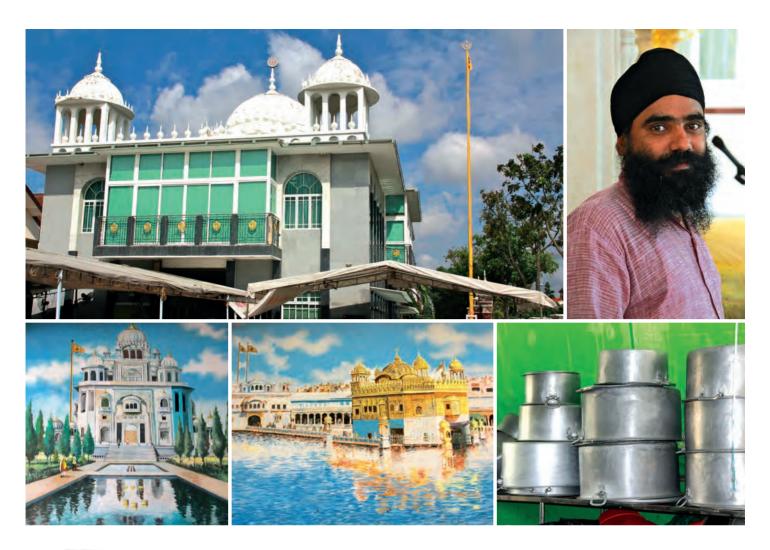
She points out a house that sports her favourite "**pepper-pot**" **turrets**, a popular architectural feature of the time. "Asian people don't swim much," she adds, "but they love the sea breeze, and the pepper-pots were the perfect spot to catch it from. Look at the traditional front steps, too – the curved balustrades stretch out to welcome visitors to the house."

These properties don't come cheap. Number 789 belonged to an old Arab family, says Geraldene, and was reported to have sold for many, many millions a number of years ago.

From Mountbatten, it's a left into Tanjong Katong Road, left again into Bournemouth, then into Wilkinson and our first destination.









Gurdwara Katong Sikh Temple 17 Wilkinson Road

Built in 1969 on the sites of two old bungalows bought for the purpose – at 11 and 17 Wilkinson Road – this Sikh temple was designed by a Muslim architect and surveyor called A. H. Saddique, who contributed his skills pro bono. Cameras are allowed in, but shoes are left at the door.

Reflecting traditional Sikh architecture, it's a two-storey building with a wide dome and a flat roof. One of many colourful murals on the lower level is a huge depiction of the **Golden Temple** of Amritsar, Amritsar being the capital of the Sikh world.

Another highlight for me is the **kitchen**. Its practical stoves are only knee-high, making it easier to lift off heavy pots of all-vegetarian dishes that are served up on high days and holidays, explains Geraldene, together with piping-hot chapatis. Today, sadly, the pots are cold and empty; but when one of the *Expat Living* team recently got married at the Central Sikh Temple in the Serangoon area, the vegetarian feast was delicious.

Upstairs is the **prayer hall**, where (being women) we're required to cover our heads; there's a pile of scarves available for anyone who didn't bring

THE SIKH FAITH

Sikhism is a relatively new religion, having been founded by Guru Nanak around 1500 in the Punjab area of what are now Pakistan and India. Nine gurus developed the faith – which is completely distinct from both Hinduism and Islam – over the ensuing years. After the execution of the ninth guru by the Islamic Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb in 1675, the tenth and final human guru, Gobind Singh, re-established the Sikhs as a military group so that they could henceforth defend their faith. After Gobind's death, the Sikh Holy Book has been regarded as the guru of the faith. one. It's rather nice, really – our group looks wonderfully exotic. During services, women sit on the left side and the men on the right. One day a week is ladies' day, we're told. It's a most pragmatic practice, according to Geraldene, because that's when the women do the dusting and clean up after the mess the men have made during the rest of the week.

A marble *paalki* holds the **Sikh Holy Book**, and nearby is a harmonium that's played with just one hand. Apparently, a group of singers leads the weekend services; they have beautiful voices, and anyone is welcome to attend.

"Who didn't have breakfast?" asks Geraldene, and we line up for a delicious scoop of some sort of sweetmeat – a mixture of nuts, semolina and sugar, still warm from the pot and doled out by a smiling temple attendant.

Before this visit, the little I knew about Sikhism had been gleaned from local author Shamini Flint's delightful detective series: *Inspector Singh Investigates*. For something more substantial, you'll find plenty on Wikipedia.



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You don't have to be a member to visit the Eurasian Association, have a look at its museum or eat at Quentin's restaurant, but it's best to check opening times in advance. As a Eurasian herself, Geraldene is a member, serving on its Heritage Committee.

"My father's side is Russian," she informs us. "His grandfather married a Chinese lady in Shanghai and brought her to Singapore. My mother's family was called Luth and came from Schleswig-Holstein, then part of Denmark. During Bismarck's unification of Germany, they headed to Asia and Australia and married people from various nationalities." The **museum** downstairs is small but interesting. I like the Singer sewing machine, just like the one my late granny used to make dresses for me as a child and a teenager. Upstairs is another area that deals with the experiences of Eurasians during the Japanese Occupation. "Our passports called us 'Others'," she remembers. "But now we have the choice of putting the word 'Eurasian' there, our official numbers have swelled."

As usual, Geraldene is full of snippets of information. One of Singapore's more illustrious Eurasians, she says, was the country's second president, the gynaecologist **Dr Benjamin Sheares** (yes, the bridge is named for him). When he was living at the Istana, he would nip out of the back entrance to deliver babies at the aforementioned KK Women's and Children's Hospital on Bukit Timah Road.

Decorative Portuguese blue-andwhite tiles reflect the fact that many of the Eurasians here are of **Portuguese origin**; their names feature strongly on the gilded lists of Association officebearers. Portuguese spice-traders first sailed to Malacca in 1509, having already established settlements in Goa and other parts of India.

In past times, many Eurasians lived in the Katong area, as did the younger Geraldene herself. Others favoured the Waterloo Street area, because they went to the Catholic schools that used to be there.

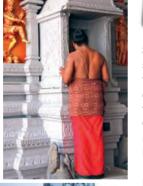
Interracial marriage was very common in colonial days, says Geraldene. Even men who had European wives often had "a bit of curry-puff on the side" (in her words). European women transplanted to Southeast Asia tended to die young; and men of retirement age, instead of going back to cold Europe, would settle in Australia with their Asian women, she says. Apart from being warmer, Down Under was perhaps a tad less judgemental, too.

"In fact," she adds, "many Singaporean Eurasians have migrated to Australia. At one time, if you could prove that you were Christian, or half-European, that was all it took. Often, a Europeansounding name was enough."











Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple 27 Ceylon Road

Stepping over the doorsill from glaring sunshine into cool shade, we try not to crush the flowers underfoot. In a cupboard to the left is what's claimed to be the world's biggest collection of **Ganesh figurines** – in gold, crystal and many other humbler materials. Anyone is welcome to add to it.

Originally a shrine built by poor labourers from Sri Lanka on the spot where, in the 1850s, a little statue of the Hindu god Ganesh was found among the roots of a chempaka (ylang-ylang) tree – an auspicious and holy omen – it has been rebuilt a number of times over the years. A series of murals shows its development from tiny shrine to bigger shrine to increasingly impressive temples.

Now we're in a newer part of the complex that's been built especially for **weddings**. "If you come on a Sunday when there's a wedding on, you'll probably be invited to eat," says Geraldene. Though it's an ordinary weekday, temple business is nevertheless brisk. Apparently, you pay about 50 cents for an ordinary prayer; you can either say your own prayer, or ask the priest to make it for you.

The temple **priests** – generally tall, strong men – all train in Sri Lanka for a number of years. Each morning, we're told, they have to wake up very early to clean the temple and physically wash all the gods. That's a big job in itself.

Indicating a statue of Ganesh wearing a crown, our guide tells us that all figures with crowns are saints. Ganesh's ears, she explains, are a message to listen to the guru, and to listen more than we speak. One of his four hands holds a stick, symbolising the stick used by a mahout, and another holds a lasso; both are meant to remind us to stay on the straight and narrow path, and to seek the middle way. His third hand holds a ball of rice, and the last holds the broken-off tip of his tusk, which he used to write the Hindu holy books.





Kim Choo's Kitchen, a Peranakan heritage home 109/111 East Coast Road

(opposite 112 Katong Mall)

Rumah Kim Choo is one of a few houses along this stretch of road that are dedicated to the Peranakan or Straits-born Chinese community, whose forefathers were the first to settle in Southeast Asia, perhaps most famously in Malacca.

Intermarriage with local women gave rise to a uniquely fascinating culture with its own cuisine, plus a legacy of distinctive marriage and social customs, architectural features, enamelware, intricate beadwork and embroidery.

High shelves bear jars of whole spices and other Peranakan ingredients, love letters, pineapple tarts and much more, together with diverse kitchen implements and exquisite porcelain and enamelware.

In another area is a stunning collection of nonya garments: hand-beaded shoes, hand-embroidered kebayas and sarongs, made on the premises and all for sale. It would be tempting to pair an exquisite kebaya with jeans, but my credit card is safely at home.



This business was started by his paternal grandmother shortly after the Second World War, says the young Raymond Wong. Taught to make the various nonya kueh (cakes) by her grandmother, she started making the traditional rice dumplings in the late fifties. We're treated to a demonstration: glutinous rice that's been soaked overnight is stuffed with savoury pork, firmly wrapped in fibrous green leaves, tied with string and steamed till tender. They're delicious washed down with a cup or two of tea after Raymond's comprehensive guided tour.

Geraldene is currently doing a few months of travelling, but we hope to see her back in Singapore before too long - and leading a few more of her famous tours.



Being a leader came naturally to Grade 12 student, Tanya Deol. She led the school blood drive, presided over the student council, and participated in outreach initiatives. At CIS, Tanya learnt that to be a lifelong learner, you need to ask questions, challenge beliefs and to think outside the box. Tanya is now studying at Cardiff University. A dream of finding the next big medical cure is not out of reach.



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June has all sorts of theatrical experiences, from live music and dance, to arts festivals and acrobatics.

Awe-inspiring Entertainment

This month, the international, cirque-style sensation, *Le Noir*, returns to Singapore – this time, with even more special effects and daring performances than before. Audiences can expect to be on the edge of their seats as acrobats execute dangerous circus stunts – including the death-defying Wheel of Death – in addition to acts by comedians, musicians and other specialty entertainers. Though the show has a seductive style, children are welcome to attend this magical experience. See it from 7 to 22 June at MasterCard Theatres at Marina Bay Sands. Tickets from Sistic. **baseentertainmentasia.com**



Cross-Culture Mash-Up

This month marks the fifth annual **CausewayExchange**, an arts and culture celebration to foster collaborations among young and established artists from Singapore and Malaysia. The programme will include various theatrical productions such as *Wushu Madness II: The Realm Between* – a "martial dance" performance featuring interactive lights, dynamic choreography and original music – and *About Last Night*, a comedy that follows two strangers trying to recall events from the night before. Also expect sculpture and painting exhibitions, literary workshops and panel discussions. 13 to 22 June. For schedules and tickets, visit **causewayexchange.com**

LIVE PREVIEW

Pre-Fest Fun

As the Singapore International Festival of the Arts' (SIFA) pre-festival, **The O.P.E.N.** (Open, Participate, Enrich, Negotiate) will presents a selection of screenings, talks, beginners' guides, exhibitions, concerts and performances in a more intimate and casual setting.



Exploring themes of SIFA's upcoming productions, The O.P.E.N. will explore issues from 20th-century history, art and science – biomechanics, digitalisation and South Africa's apartheid, to name a few. The 17-day pre-festival will be held four weeks prior to the opening of SIFA. 26 June to 12 July at TheatreWorks, 72-13 Mohamed Sultan Road. Tickets are \$45 at **theopen.sifa.sg**



Open-air Opera

Pack your picnic basket and find a spot on the lawn – it's time for Singapore Lyric Opera's annual **Opera in the Park** at the Botanic Gardens. This year's lineup includes excerpts from classics such as Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Bizet's *Carmen* and Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, performed by various vocal talents, including young songsters from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, and accompanied by the Singapore Lyric Opera Orchestra. 7 June at 6pm at Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage, Singapore Botanic Gardens. Free admission. **singaporeopera.com.sg**



Female Feats

Singapore-based theatre company, GenerAsia, presents a powerful play highlighting some of the issues faced by women today – fuelled by sex, abuse, identity and power. By Koreanborn playwright Asa Gim Palomera, **Women of Asia** explores the maltreatment and exploitation of Asian women around the region, and their struggles to freedom, through a series of seven provocative, true tales. A combination of dance, comedy and tragedy, the show has already received acclaim in cities including New York, Melbourne and Bangkok. See it from 19 to 21 June and 26 to 28 June at Flexible Performance Space, LASALLE College of the Arts, 1 McNally Street. Tickets are \$35 from ticketmash.sg. generasia.org

FOR KIDS

Brit Books Come to Life

Charlie and Lola, stars of BBC's CBeebies animated TV series and much-loved books by Lauren Child, will come to life on stage this month, in *Charlie and Lola's Extremely New Play* – the sequel to *Charlie and Lola's Best Bestest Play*, which enjoyed a sellout season in Singapore in 2012. Through a mix of puppetry, visual effects, music and audience interaction, youngsters – especially aged three to seven – can experience a new educational adventure with the brother-sister duo as they learn about the seasons, embark on a Pirate voyage, and look after Sizzles the dog. 3 to 15 June at DBS Arts Centre, 20 Merbau Road. Tickets from Sistic. **charlieandlola.com**



Wizardly Wonder

A retelling of the classic 1900 children's fantasy novel by L. Frank Baum, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz follows Dorothy Gale on her journey through the Land of Oz. Along the way, she meets an array of colourful characters that help her understand the importance of friendship and believing in ourselves. Though the one-hour show is recommended for four-to-12-year-olds, there's a good chance grownups will enjoy revisiting this perennial favourite. 16 to 18 June at Goodman Arts Centre Blackbox, 90 Goodman Road. Tickets are \$24 from ticketmash.sg

SCREEN

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

BIG SCREEN NEWS





Chef

After Miami-born chef, Carl (Jon Favreau), tries to open a restaurant in Los Angeles and fails, he returns to Miami to start a food truck, and reconnects with his family, including his ex-wife (Sofia Vergara). This star-studded comedy also features Robert Downey Jr and Scarlett Johansson. Opens 5 June at Golden Village cinemas.

Blended

After a disastrous blind date, single parents Lauren (Drew Barrymore) and Jim (Adam Sandler) agree to never see each other again. But when they sign up for the same African safari, they're forced to share a suite during a weeklong family getaway. This romantic comedy is the third collaboration between Barrymore and Sandler – and sure to make for a good time. Opens 5 June at Shaw Theatres.

The Angriest Man in Brooklyn

A foul-tempered Brooklyn man (Robin Williams) is told he has 90 minutes to live, sending him rushing all over New York to make amends. This dramedy also stars Mila Kunis and *Game of Thrones* actor, Peter Dinklage. Opens 19 June at Golden Village cinemas.

Transformers: Age of Extinction

A mechanic (Mark Wahlberg) and his daughter make a discovery that brings down Autobots and Decepticons upon them, as well as a paranoid government official (Kelsey Grammer). As the fourth instalment of the popular franchise, this film features an all-new human cast, and both new and returning Transformers characters. Opens 26 June in 3D, IMAX 3D and digital at Shaw Theatres.

For Kids

Big Eyes, Big Minds Singapore International Children's Film Festival

Back for a fourth time, this festival – the first in Singapore dedicated to kids – will showcase a selection of films from around the globe, including live-action shorts, animation films and documentaries, some of which were made by kids. The festival's programmes and workshops have been curated to engage children, enrich their worldview and inspire creativity. 13 to 31 May, 1 June and 6 to 8 June at The Arts House, 1 Old Parliament Lane. Tickets are \$12.90 from bytes.sg. For schedules, visit **bigeyesbigminds.com**.









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SMALL SCREEN

ZooMoo

New for Kids As Asia's first children's channel (StarHub Channel 306) dedicated to exploring the animal world, ZooMoo incorporates short-format programmes - using animation, puppetry, music and wildlife footage - to help young viewers get to know and love animals. Created by wildlife filmmakers and early childhood educators from New Zealand's University of Otago, ZooMoo features a cast of funny characters like Clawdia the Cat, Ninja Gorilla and Hanna the Hyena, among others.

And the fun doesn't stop there. This viewing experience is enhanced by the ZooMoo Second Screen App, which offers interactive games, puzzles and other learning activities on the go. Available on iTunes and Google Play, this free application lets little ones "feed" over 100 animals on ZooMoo Island, watch real life videos, learn about endangered species and

hear animal sounds. The app's clever Parent's Page allows grownups to learn about their youngsters' playing sessions, including their favourite animals. zoomoo.tv.



Football frenzy

This month, the World Cup's got the telly teeming with football-themed fare, plus the much-anticipated sports event itself.

The 2014 FIFA World Cup

This guadrennial tournament will kick off on 12 June, with Brazil taking on Croatia, and end with the



Final on 13 July. You'll be able to catch the action on both SingTel and StarHub - and on your mobile via mio TV GO - for a one-time fee of \$105. However, those who sign up for or extend their Gold Pack or mio Stadium+ contracts for two years can watch all 64 matches for free. SingTel mio Channels 141 and 142; StarHub Channels 223 and 224. For schedules, visit miotv.com.sg

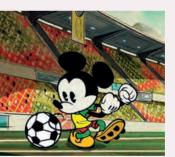


Sleeping Giant: An Indian Football Story This documentary

follows two young boys on their journey from the backstreets of

Mumbai to London, after beating out 1,700 other hopefuls vying for the opportunity to be taken under the wing of a famous English football club and trained like pros. With contributions from renowned journalists and football specialists, this story opens up the discussion on why India - a sports-obsessed nation of 1.2 billion people - is still an untapped football market, and whether sports success is a result of nature or nurture, talent or opportunity. Premieres 4 June at 10.50pm on BBC Knowledge (StarHub Channel 407).

Disney Does Football for Father's Dav The Disney Channel will celebrate Father's Day with the movie, Soccer Dog: European Cup,



which follows Kimble, a canine hero who escapes the clutches of an evil scientist bent on performing animal experiments, and Zack, an American boy brought to Scotland to reunite with the father he never knew. After a bumpy introduction, Zack and his dad bond through soccer and, when the unusually nimble Kimble storms onto the field one day, their lives change forever.

Can't get enough football? Dads and little ones can also enjoy the Mickey Mouse Short, O Futebol Classico, in which Mickey tries desperately to find the perfect view at the World Cup final in Brazil. Both features premiere 15 June, starting at 10am on Disney Channel (StarHub Channel 312, SingTel mio Channel 234).

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minnut



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

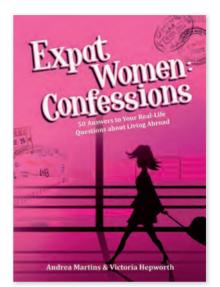
Expat Women: Confessions Andre Martins and Victoria Hepworth Expat Women Enterprises | 267 pages Available from www.nogstore.asia

My own confession is that I was looking forward to a collection of salacious revelations - perhaps involving a hunky pool-cleaner, a slim-hipped personal trainer, or a hotel courtyard indiscretion brought on by a free-flow Champagne brunch. Never judge a book by its lurid pink cover, as they say.

Subtitled "50 Answers to Your Real-Life Questions about Living Abroad", this is actually a serious and useful guide for expatriate women all over the world. It's full of real-life examples of the difficulties that expats face, and I was surprised to discover how universal many of these problems are.

Aussie Andrea Martins is the founder and director of expatwomen.com, and has lived in Jakarta, Mexico City and now Kuala Lumpur. Kiwi psychologist Victoria Hepworth has lived in Mivazaki. Shanghai, Saint Petersburg, Gothenburg and Mumbai, and now lives in Dubai. They answer 50 wide-ranging questions that have come from women who find themselves in hugely diverse places, from a small village in Finland to St Petersburg in Russia; one is from a Dane trying to adjust to life in Japan with her Japanese husband, another has specialneeds children and wonders about the wisdom of relocating to Central America.

Apart from more immediately recognisable issues such as culture shock, dealing with family back home, angsty teenage children, finances and work-life balance, they also cover more delicate areas such as alcoholism, marital



infidelity and divorce. Generally upbeat and encouraging, the advice is also comprehensive, often suggesting a variety of options and practical steps to take.

Verne Maree



Once Upon a Timepiece

Starr Wood Bo Tree Books | 167 pages Available from Amazon, and at Tango Mango, Tanglin Mall onceuponatimepiece.com

This is something unusual: a novel made up of 12 short stories. Each story can be read on its own, each having a distinct plot and an unexpected twist at the end. That's what I meant to do - savour them one at a time, but the stories are all connected to tell a bigger narrative, and I gobbled up the lot over a couple of days. (So did my mother.)

Set in England in 2012, it moves through the months of the year, with a different story and cast

of characters for each tale, all linked through the continuously changing ownership of a 1946 Breitling watch.

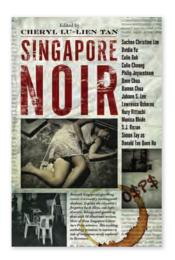
Starr Wood is a seductive writer with a wonderful command of his art. Not only does this work prove him a master of the short story genre, but its sensitive and intelligent exploration of the underlying themes of time and temporality makes it one of the most satisfying reads I have enjoyed for a long time. I can't wait for his next book.

Verne Maree



This is the debut novel from Starr Wood, who was born in the UK in 1970, grew up "all over the place" as an expat child, and has lived and worked here in Singapore since 2002 as a journalist and economist.

BOOKS

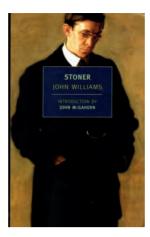


Singapore Noir Edited by Cheryl Lu-Lien Tan Monsoon Books | 256 pages

This interesting little book features short crime stories by 14 different writers, three of them Singapore Literature Prize winners. It delves into Singapore's "dark side" and back streets, as each author artfully explores taboo topics such as murder, prostitution and mental issues. The plot twists are unexpected and many of them had me wishing to know more by the time I'd finished. A fantastic read that will make you think twice about Singapore's rule-abiding image, told through eerily tangible (some parts just seem so real!) fiction. It's actually renewed my love for short stories - this is a must-read.

Susannah Jaffer

LUXE City Guides has released its 34th destination, LUXE Kuala Lumpur. She may be Southeast Asia's youngest capital, say the authors, but KL has a fabulously mixed heritage that translates into a hefty helping of culture, colour. fashion and art, with mosque minarets and Indian and Chinese temples jostling for space along the modern skyline. Expect the usual sleek format, snappy reviews and insider tips. Available online at www.luxecityguides. com and in bookstores from this month, June.



Stoner John Williams Vintage Classics | 278 pages

Hailed by UK *The Guardian*'s Julian Barnes as "the must-read novel of 2013", this quiet novel made hardly a ripple when it was first published 50 years ago, but last year it became a best-seller and Waterstone's book of the year, purely by word-of-mouth among readers.

This quiet novel is the story of academic, William Stoner, born at the turn of the 20th century in a Missouri farming community. At page one, the reader learns that Stoner will die having led a life that was neither heroic nor remarkable; he

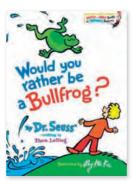
will not have changed the world, but merely passed through it quietly, his imprint seemingly limited to the classroom walls. Despite this, rich insights into internal conflicts at various stages of his life keep you engaged from one page to the next.

Stoner disappoints his parents by choosing academia over farming; he stays in a marriage that he realises is a failure one month after his wedding; even his daughter disappoints him. While he resists being drafted into real war, the irony is that he has been continually at war in his personal life.

I initially intended to read this novel over a longer period because it became too piercingly painful at times, but I ended up devouring it over a weekend.

Migs Bravo-Dutt

JUST FOR KIDS



Would You Rather Be a Bullfrog? Written by Dr Seuss; illustrated by Roy McKie Random House US

Another silly yet endearing rhyming tale by Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr Seuss. This bright board book explores all-important questions in life, like "Would you rather have a feather or a bushy tail behind? Which would you feel the best on you? Come on! Make up your mind." Seemingly innocuous questions allow small minds to explore different options in a fun and open-ended way.



How to be a Pirate

Written by Sue Fliess; illustrated by Nikki Dyson Little Golden Books

This book was right up my two-year-old son's alley. It is written in "pirate-speak", so be prepared for your toddler to start repeating ridiculous phrases around the house, like "Ahoy landlubbers!" and "Gangway! Blimey!" Which, of course, is all part of the fun. We loved this playful introduction into the world of pirates, told in rhyme with colourful illustrations. A sure hit for

little boys. "The test is over buccaneer, you're a pirate now - let's cheer!"

Beate Baldry



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



Worthwhile Walkabout

Get your walking shoes on – Friends of the Museums (FOM), a non-profit dedicated to promoting Asia's art and culture, has partnered with the Economic Development Board (EDB) to bring the art and history of Gillman Barracks alive with free weekly tours to the general public. Drawing from FOM's experienced and knowledgeable volunteer docents, the 1.5-hour **Gillman Barracks Outreach's Guided Tours** cover choice works of contemporary art from current exhibitions, along with stories about Gillman Barracks, a former British military camp on the West Coast (9 Lock Road), which now houses 15 commercial galleries and the Centre of Contemporary Art, plus three eateries.

Group tours start at 5pm on selected Fridays, and at 4pm on selected Saturdays and Sundays, and private tours can also be arranged two weeks in advance. Registration ends 24 hours before each scheduled tour, so be sure to sign up beforehand at **fom-gillman-barracks.eventbrite.sg.**

Brit Art

The **Best of British** exhibition will showcase new, original works from six British artists: Horace Panter, Nikki Douthwaite, Morgan Howell, Paul Oz, Tim Wakefield and Colin Brown. Artworks in a range of media, from paper sculpture and mixed media collages to oil and acrylic portraits and confetti art, will celebrate music, sports and cultural icons – inspirations include F1 racers, classic vinyl album covers and film stars, to name a few. 7 to 28 June at Icon Gallery, 476 River Valley Road. **icongallery.sg**



Pictures of the Past We: Defining

Stories presents a series of photojournalistic images of iconic moments in postwar Singapore, from the 1950s up to 2013. In



collaboration with The Straits Times, this exhibition explores some of the more significant events in the country's history, and reflects upon the experiences that were born out of these moments. See it until 31 August at Exhibition Gallery 1 of the National Museum, 93 Stamford Road. **nationalmuseum.sg**

Chalk-Full of Meaning

Known for his "erasure" technique – white chalk drawn on slate-painted panels, then hand-smudged for a ghostly appearance – American artist Gary Simmons addresses personal and collective experiences of race and class in his exhibition, **Extant Phantoms**, which features some of his works from the 90s. The chalkboard – a tool for disseminating knowledge – represents ideas about race that



are deeply embedded in the structures of academic and cultural institutions. According to Gary, the erasure drawings and their ghostly marks are meant to provoke personal recollections, and summon those haunting memories into the political realm. See it until 28 June at Ikkan Art Gallery, 39 Keppel Road #01-05. **ikkan-art.com**

Journey 'Round the World

After an eight-year, 32-country journey, Brazilian documentary photographer Sebastião Salgado presents **Genesis**, a collection of 245 black-and-white images divided into five geographic sections, including *South of the Planet, Natural Sanctuaries, Africa, North of the Planet and Amazonia and the Pantanal.* Sebastião explores the connection between man, animal and environment, capturing the world in all its unspoiled glory, from rugged landscapes and seascapes to wildlife and tribes found in the far corners of the world. See it until 27 July at the National Museum of Singapore, Exhibition Gallery 2, 93 Stamford Road. **nationalmuseum.sg**



All Lacquered Up

Vietnamese artist Phi Phi Oanh pushes the boundaries of lacquer painting in her sculptural light installation, **Palimpsest** – which literally means "scraped clean and used again" in Latin. The exhibit is comprised of miniature lacquer "skins" painted directly onto glass slides, then projected onto walls and translucent silk screens to create images similar to those seen through microscopes and telescopes – thus offering views that would



otherwise be invisible to the naked eye. This constant shifting of perspectives, and the act of looking through a machine, represent how we understand reality in the current age of digital reproduction. See it until 29 June at FOST Gallery, 1 Lock Road, #01-02, Gillman Barracks. **fostgallery.com**

Art Noir

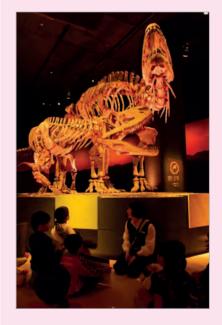
Portuguese artist Adriana Molder presents two series of mysterious blackand-white portraits inspired by iconic film figures and literary references, in her exhibition **The Light in the Heart**. The *Mystery* series is made up of six small-scale ink drawings – done in black and white with notes of red – that call to mind 1940s suspense movies, with women presented both

as the observers and the observed. The Light in the Heart series, meanwhile, includes six portrait paintings that focus on themes of lost love and death from Virginia Woolf's short story, The Haunted House. 10 June to 10 July at Third Floor at Art Plural Gallery, 38 Armenian Street. artpluralgallery.com



FOR KIDS A Dino-mite Night

Ever wonder what dinos are up to after dark? Here's your chance to find out. Dinosnores! A Sleepover with Dinos offers children aged six to 12 the opportunity to spend the night among the Dinosaurs: Dawn to Extinction exhibition at the ArtScience Museum The \$120 cost per child (it's free for an accompanying adult) includes a guided tour of the exhibition, a movie screening, dinner, and interactive workshops like shadow puppet making, fossil casting and stop-motion animation, as well as breakfast the following morning. 8 and 22 June from 6.45pm to 10am. To book tickets, call 6688 8826.



Creative Colony

With so many skyscrapers and shopping malls shooting up across Singapore, it's hard to believe there's still a pocket or two of untouched greenery and charming black-and-whites so close to the city centre. One such pocket can be found just off Portsdown Road. Wessex Estate is an artsy enclave where all sorts of international and local artists come to work and live in its cluster of colonial homes, studios and walk-ups. Though it's not quite as dormant as it once was, Wessex still maintains a relatively untouched and tranquil feel, and continues to inspire the many talented artists that inhabit it. On a recent tour of the artists' studios, we asked them what inspires them, and took a look at their diverse work.

FRANCES ALLEBLAS, Dutch

Media of choice: Charcoal and pencil drawing, printmaking and watercolours.

Artistic style: Her drawings have what she calls "disquieting, dreamlike qualities in figurative and narrative atmospheres," and show "a world in which often-expected relations between

different elements confront the viewer with unclear feelings and certain confusion."

Inspiration: Personal experiences, different cultures, anthropology, mythology, literature and photography.

MILICA BRAVACIC, Former Yugoslavian

Media of choice: Painting, drawing, textiles and local ornamentation, applied to canvas, rice paper and silk.

Artistic style: "In Singapore, my work revolves around the existing Peranakan tile ornaments and motifs taken from iconic, historic places. While cultural conservation happens in museums, my work could be

understood as an aesthetic conversation with the past.'

Inspiration: "What's trivial because of our habitual perception is what can suddenly become inspiring and new, if we change our point of view. The idea that we shouldn't become mentally lazy inspires me; reality offers continual excitement."





VALERIU SEPI, Romanian-German Medium of choice: Charcoal on acrylic paint.

Artistic style: A combination of expressionism and realism.

Inspiration: "I can translate everything that gives me an emotion into visual art. I start with an energetic background, draw the subject, and then let myself get inspired by the result."

DICK LIM, Singaporean

Media of choice: Acrylic painting. Artistic style: His black-and-white paintings feature both real and imaginary scenes of old Singapore, in areas like Chinatown's Keong Siak Street – works that, he says, contain "hidden acts" and offer "loads of conversational values". Inspiration: "The tranquil surroundings of Wessex Estate and, most of all, a need



to imprint many long-forgotten images in my mind before they, too, are gone forever from my memory."

PATRICIA CABALEIRO, Brazilian-German

Medium of choice: Acrylic on canvas paintings and prints. Artistic style: Mostly abstract,



often vibrantly coloured, paintings and print silkscreens. **Inspiration:** "People, inside-out."



MARISA KELLER, Dutch

Media of choice: Printmaking, painting, video and installation.

Artistic style: "Symbolic and impressionistic." Inspiration: In addition to natural history, philosophy and trips abroad, she says that, even after so many years in Singapore, she is still inspired by the colours and textures of nature, and the tropical flora and fauna. "In fact, some of my works are created with collected natural materials like grass, leaves, seed pods and bark."

CLEO LIM, Singaporean

Media of choice: Acrylic and mixed media on canvas and Japanese rice paper.

Artistic style: Abstract expressionism with Pan-Asian mystical creatures and Qing Dynasty themes. She uses drip-and-pour techniques and layers of transparent hues to "complete her fantasy world."

Inspiration: "The flow of matter and 'happy accidents' are a great source of inspiration for me."

KELLY REEDY, American

Media of choice: Mixed media, including collage, acrylic paint, assemblage and printmaking, as well as paper cuts using natural dyes, fabrics and handmade papers.



Artistic style: "Symbolic, figurative works that integrate signs, materials and memories to blur the lines of time and place."

Inspiration: "Having lived in Southeast Asia for more than 15 years, my art has been inspired by Asian folk art rituals and the rich symbolism embedded in their mythologies."

JOYCE LOO, Singaporean

Medium of choice: Ceramic sculpture. Artistic style: "My artworks display a strong affinity toward nature and earth. Many of them also express various intimate embraces and sensual postures of loving couples." Inspiration: Flora and fauna, and love.



ALISON WILSON, British

Media of choice: Watercolours and printmaking, with a focus on etching and lithography.

Artistic style: A fairly limited colour palette with tonal contrasts and an emphasis on detail.



Inspiration: "Nature and landscape – anything from the tiny details of a shell to large earth formations like volcanoes. I'm really fascinated by patterns in nature, and Wessex Estate has magnificent trees, great bird life and lots of interesting plants to inspire me." RASHA ELEYAN, Palestinian Media of choice: Oil and acrylic on canvas. Artistic style: Life-sized



realistic figures against pop-art backgrounds. **Inspiration:** "My art is almost exclusively inspired by my two homes. Works depicting conflict and social unrest are inspired by Palestine and the Middle East, whereas my second home, Singapore, inspires the visual beauty of nature in my works."

CHIN MUI SIANG, Singaporean Medium of choice: Watercolours. Artistic style: "Naturalism and

impressionistic realism."



Inspiration: In addition to the New Testament's Philippians – particularly passage 4:8 – she says many of her works are influenced by "the colourful splendour of exotic plants in tranquil settings like those of the black-and-white residences at Wessex Estate."

CHIN OI TOW, Singaporean

Media of choice: Black ink, charcoal and coloured pencil, pastels, watercolours and oil paint.

Artistic Style: "Creative realism and creative lyricism, with a tinge of abstractionism."

Inspiration: "Life itself is inspiring, especially if one is in great health – the senses sharp and the mind crystal-clear. Being in touch with nature is important."

CHEN XING, Singaporean

Media of choice: Pen and ink, and watercolours. Artistic style: Meticulously detailed, with attention to accuracy and realism.

Inspiration: "Any endeavour that's skilfully and accurately executed, whether it be a painting



by Holman Hunt or Canaletto, a groundbreaking scientific discovery or an inspiring talk."



CAMERA-RADERIE

JADE McLEAN meets five women who have become friends while exploring Singapore – one photo at a time.

When I ask Australians Kerry and Lianne, New Zealanders Bronwyn and Christine, and Sandra from Holland how they forged their friendship in Singapore, they all mime drinking. I know immediately that my half hour with this fun-loving group won't be boring.

Ostensibly, it's Kerry's turn to pick the next spot for their weekly get-together, but it's a majority decision that the mojitos at Luke Mangan's Salt at Raffles City are the best in town. When it comes to the location for their weekly group photography outing, however, it's not such a foregone conclusion.

"We've all got these macro-lenses that do close-up pictures," says Lianne, "so rather than heading out somewhere, we might all spend an afternoon where we just stay in, squirt water on a flower and wait for a dewdrop!" Between bouts of raucous laughter, they admit that they have a brainstorming session a few days before a shoot, to decide where to go and which lenses to use.

But their photography group is not just a creative ruse for mojito-quaffing. The group has travelled the region together with their cameras – including to Cambodia, Myanmar and Bali. Bhutan is next on the list for Sandra, Christine and Lianne.

How did you all meet?

Lianne: On the second day of a photography course we'd all enrolled in, one of the girls suggested going out for a drink afterwards. Then, once the course ended, we all said, 'Well what are we going to do now?' So we agreed to meet the following week to take photos.

We usually pick an area in Singapore and go and photograph it, so we've seen a lot of the island that we probably wouldn't have seen otherwise. We walk around temples, we head out to Joo Chiat or East Coast Park; if there's a festival going on, we'll go to that – we recently went to Chinatown and, of course, we go to the annual Thaipusam parade in Little India.

We have now taken several photography courses together, either in a studio or online. They're lots of fun. One of our first challenges on a course with Karen from Baobab Photo was to photograph a still life, using shoes as the subject. We were doing everything to get the most interesting shot – even hanging shoes from our windows!

EL: What's been your hardest challenge so far?

Christine: We did an online course where we had to choose a word from a list – danger, empathy, loss, indifference – and depict that word with your photo, but we weren't allowed to use people.

Lianne: If you're doing a course and the rest of the group aren't doing it and you've got an assignment, guess what everyone will be doing that weekend! I think the more we do this the more we realise how little we know. There's always something to learn. We're quite critical of our own and each other's work – but in a positive way.

This must be quite an expensive hobby too.

Lianne: It can be expensive, but you can do it at different levels. You can rent different lenses here quite easily. But the more you get into it, the more you really want to have your own – any excuse! When it comes to buying software, most of us have Lightroom, but we'd prefer to get good photos just with our cameras. We also share our books and magazines – between us we could set up a library.

Sandra: Singapore is a city with a lot of opportunity to do courses. And you can photograph all kinds of different things here – there's the city itself, and there's so much nature.

Lianne: It's great for travelling as well. We're very lucky to be here.

What do you think made you gravitate towards one another? *Lianne:* We're nomads.

Christine: We're lonely, desperate old ladies!

Lianne: We're lonely and desperate and nobody else would have us! (*More laughter ensues.*)

Christine: Lianne and I hadn't been in the country that long, but when you find people who have similar personalities and an interest in common...

Bronwyn: Drinking?

All: Photography!

Christine: We don't *always* go for a drink after our session. We often go off to Funan to pick up some goodies!

Where are your favourite places to photograph in Singapore?

Bronwyn: The Bishan Monastery (Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery). It's so colourful and the people are so friendly. Chinatown is also a big favourite of mine.



Kerry: I like angles, lines and reflections, so anywhere, really. Marina Bay is good. I also enjoy street photography - Chinatown and Little India are great locations to watch daily events unfold.





Lianne: I like the wet markets for the activity; each one has its own culture. The light is challenging, though. Equally, I like the coastline and the surrounding parks, which provide a good contrast to the busy city.



Christine: The monastery in Bishan. It's vast and vibrant, but serene at the same time. Tekka Market is good too, because the stallholders don't mind you getting up close with your camera to photograph them in action. In China, they don't like it – it's a cultural thing. You have to be respectful.



Sandra: For me it's also Chinatown. And we did a shoot recently in the Joo Chiat area, where I live. It's nice to go on a shoot with friends and see what they notice about your neighbourhood. I really enjoyed that too.

Competition

Here's a chance to show off your own photography chops. Email Expat Living a photo that encapsulates the theme of "Best Friends", and the best entry will win a **Beginners' Photography Course with Baobab Photo (baobabphoto.com) valued at \$520**.

Entries must be emailed to contribute@expatilvingsingapore.com by 30 June 2014. *Photo details:* between 1MB and 5MB; please provide a photo caption in the body of the email. *Subject line:* "Best Friends photo". **2**

By Amy Greenburg

Whether you're at home or on holiday, you can always do with a new gadget or two, so we've rounded up some of the latest and greatest to hit Singapore.

6m20

Your New Best Buds

Need some new workout buds? Engineered specifically for exercise, Bose SIE2i sport headphones are completely sweat-proof and weatherresistant, with StavHear ear tips that conform to the ear's shape to stay securely in place, even during the most strenuous workouts. Available in four colours and accompanied by a stretchy Reebok armband, the in-ear buds also feature an inline remote and microphone, which allow for convenient music control on an iPhone with just the press of a button, and seamless switching between phone calls and music. \$219 at Bose stores and atlasestore.sg.

Movie-Lover Must-Have

Whether you're a serious cinephile or just love a good movie, here's something for you. **Sony's Full HD VPL-HW40ES home cinema projector** lets you experience the high quality, immersive images of a big screen cinema right in the comfort of your own home – rainy Saturday in, anyone? Using the latest technologies like Contrast Enhancer, Motionflow and Reality Creation, the projector is designed to deliver a sharp and crystal-clear cinematic experience in both 3D and 2D. Available in black or white for \$2,999 at AV One, 1 Coleman Street, The Adelphi, #01-10. **pro.sony-asia.com**

Canon

Multi-Angle Memories

With the new **Canon PowerShot N100 camera**, not only can you tell a story, but you can become part of it as well, thanks to its Dual Capture feature that captures both the subject and the photographer's emotions with just one click. Customise images with colour filters, create five-minute highlight reels with stills and videos, and then share them on the go with the camera's Wi-Fi capabilities. As if that's not enough, there's also an option for remote shooting, made possible with the Canon CameraWindow app, which lets you perform zoom, flash, self-timer and shutter functions right from your mobile device – great for getting shots from those hard-to-reach places. \$449 at authorised Canon retailers and **canon.com.sg**.



MAO TECH FOC

All it takes is just one slippery hand or a selfie gone wrong for your device to be done with. Well, clumsy smartphone users, here's something for you. The super-tough **Otterbox Defender Series protective case** – now available for the new Galaxy S5 – offers three layers of defence against even the most dreadful drops, shocks and scratches. With an impact-absorbing outer layer, solid polycarbonate shell, built-in screen protector, and port covers to keep out the sand on your beach holiday, carrying your smartphone will never be worrisome again. \$69 at authorised Otterbox retailers and **otterbox.asia**.

Portable Prints

Photo sharing's just been brought to a new level. With the portable LG Pocket Photo 2.0, you can print customised pictures right from your tablets or smartphone, using its wireless connectivity with NFC (near field communication) and Bluetooth capabilities. Download the free editing app to connect iOS, Android or Windows Phone 8 devices to the super-slim Pocket Photo and begin printing 5.1 x 7.6 cm hi-resolution prints immediately - perfect for travelling or a day out with friends. Plus, there's no need for expensive ink cartridges, thanks to ZINK printing technology, which uses heat to activate the colour-forming chemistry. We're impressed. Available in white or pink for \$229; 30 and 90 paper sheets cost \$15 and \$40 respectively. From authorised LG retailers. Ig.com/sg

-11

Advanced Aquatics

NEPTUNE

Why should runners have all the fun? The new **Neptune** waterproof MP3 player lets swimmers enjoy high quality sound underwater without the use of ear buds. Using revolutionary Bone Conduction audio transmission, the device transfers audio through the cheekbone and directly into the inner ear. This three-piece design includes two side speakers and a high-contrast screen that sits on the back of the head. Attached securely to goggle straps, they won't interfere with swim strokes, and 4GB of storage means aquatic athletes can look forward to hours of music, audio books, podcasts and more. \$299 at Axtro Sports, 3 Coleman Street, #02-01 Peninsula Shopping Centre. finisinc.com/neptune **3**

SCENE AROUND TOWN Recent events, openings & parties





Bubbly & Boats

Where better for Wine Guru to present a sneak peek of its newly available champagnes than aboard the sensational luxury tall ship *Royal Albatross*, which was on display at ONE15 Marina Club as part of the Singapore Yacht Show 2014. Guests sampled two superb drops, the Pierre-Simon Cuvée Speciale and the Pierre-Simon Premier Cru, and were entertained by guest speaker, acclaimed author and television presenter, Jilly Goolden.



















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American Club Luncheon

A large and attentive crowd gathered in the beautiful Colonial Room of the American Club for a luncheon with the theme Redefining Success in the Workplace. Guest speakers included Caroline Casey, founder of charity Kanchi and the Ability Awards; Rob Vogtle, COO of Deutsche Bank, Asia Pacific; and Sher-li Torrey, founder of Mums@Work. Channel NewsAsia's Annalisa Burgos moderated an interesting panel discussion on the meaning of success in professional life.







Magic Sound

Maya Gallery presented the first solo exhibition in Singapore of prominent Balinese artist Putu Bonuz Sudiana. Guests were treated to a painting demonstration where Putu Bonuz showed how he takes the energy from music as a guide to construct rhythmical compositions onto his canvas.



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Wine & Dine



WHAT'S NEW The latest trends in food and wine

Photo: Hilton Singapore

Save Dur Seas

Singapore is hosting its first **Sustainable Seafood Festival** from 8 to 15 June. WWF-Singapore and Marine Steward Council are teaming up to educate consumers about the ecological impact of their seafood choices. Watch out for special promos at some of our best restaurants, such as salmon tartar served with watermelon and raspberry vinaigrette at Il Cielo (shown here). Hilton Singapore and Conrad Centennial Singapore are participating on the heels of their parent company, Hilton Worldwide, recently banning shark-fin soup from all of its Asia Pacific properties, and Cold Storage is offering promos during the festival. Watch out for educational road shows popping up across the island, too. **For a list of participants and for more info, go to picktherightcatch.com.**



SILVER SCOOP

Twinings of London is upping its game with the introduction of a new Prestige Signature Blends collection. Each set includes a beautiful box, two matching tins of blended tea and a silver tea scoop. Varieties include Earl Grey Citrus, Jasmine Bloom, After Dinner Mint (shown here) and more. From \$88 to

\$188. Pick one up at Marina Mandarin. 6 Raffles Boulevard. **Call 6845 1000.**

OH SUGAR, SUGAR

If you've ever handed the kiddos ten bucks and sent them on their merry way into **Candylicious** to avoid yourself being tempted by the rows of sweets



inside, this morsel is for you. The store is now stocking Hershey's sugar-free chocolate, sugar-free Jelly Bellys and Aussie-brand Sugarless hard candies. Keep your eye out for organic, GMOfree, gluten-free Chocolate and Love bars, too. Resorts World Sentosa and Takashimaya B2. candyliciousshop.com



CHOC SHOT

There are but four ingredients in CaféDirect's São Tomé 3-in-1 Luxury Hot Chocolate – cocoa, pure cane sugar, skim milk and whey protein. And, the cocoa, from São Tomé – aka Chocolate Island – is packed with flavonoids and other anti-oxidants. But the sugar, we hear you say? It's still hot chocolate after all, so don't go replacing your morning protein shake just yet. But at 62 calories a cup, this isn't bad for an occasional shot of choc. \$8.85. Available at Cold Storage, FairPrice Finest, Giant Hyper and Jasons Market Place. ▲



PasarBella is proud to celebrate our first year of being the perfect market retreat for your entire family. Join the festivities in the rustic open-concept interiors of Singapore's only farmer's market and be enchanted by our traders. Journey through a world of seafood, meats, dairy, fresh produce, wines and craft beers, global cuisines and personal services – everything that have made us the multi-sensory grocery shopping destination you've come to love.

6 - 8 JUNE (FRI-SUN) PASARBELLA @ THE GRANDSTAND, BUKIT TIMAH SINGAPORE. 200 TURF CLUB ROAD SINGAPORE 287994 Opening Hours: Stalls: 9.30am - 7pm Restaurants: 10am - 10pm

X MARKS THE SPOT

In a city of endless high-rises, we can't believe someone here didn't come up with this idea first. But leave it to the Aussies to create **Jaffleschutes**, a Melbourne company that attaches grilled-cheese sandwiches to tiny parachutes and delivers them to hungry buyers five storeys below. Customers order their jaffle — Australianstyle toasted sandwich, pay via Paypal and wait at a designated time on an "X" on the street. Originally designed to help flatmates drop keys to locked-out roomies below, the idea is scheduled to launch in NYC next. **To watch a delivery in action, go to** www.jafflechutes.com.



BEER BARGAINS

Dempsey Hill's newest kid on the block, **Tree Lizard** is an unpretentious, pub-like eatery perfect for watching the sunset over a tipple or two. Daily happy-hour offers beer pitchers for \$20 and beers, house pours and cocktails for \$5 (3pm to 7pm). The no-frills, comfort-food-inspired menu includes prosciutto-wrapped asparagus (\$14.90), fish and chips (\$18.90) and hearty tenderloin with green peppercorn sauce (\$29.90), as well as all-day breakfast options like a chorizo sandwich with smashed chickpeas (\$18.90). Dempsey Road Block 25, #B1-01. **Call 6834 3969.** ▲





Giant buffets aren't the only option for lazy Sundays. The á la carte brunch at Osteria Mozza is a stylish and intimate affair in a setting of dark-wood panelling and crisp white tablecloths. General manager Owen Edson sets the dress standard with a swish cravat, but diners can take a more casual approach to match the uncomplicated food. Opt for the excellent \$50 free-flow deal on Italian Nino Franco Prosecco, after sampling a couple of barman Lucas's creations: Singapore Sling 1913 (\$22) and Ramos Gin Fizz (\$18) are heady kick-starters. Tomatoes and soft cheeses direct from France shine in standout salads, which include a tasty mozzarella, lettuce, cucumber and pomegranate combination (\$23). Signature brunch dishes, seatrout "cakes Benedict" with poached eggs (\$48) and Wagyu tagliata with fried egg and salsa verde (\$48) are highlights too; you'll also find pasta, risotto and other solid Italian favourites. Don't miss the vanilla panna cotta with mixed berry compote (\$17) to finish. Marina Bay Sands, B1 Galleria Level #42-46. Call 6688 8522.

REVOLVING DOORS

The owners of **Balanced Living** are relocating to the US and are currently looking for parties interested in purchasing the restaurant and lifestyle studio. Japanese powerhouse **Shinji by Kanesaka** has moved from OUE Tower to The St. Regis Singapore. The original location in Raffles Hotel is staying put. **The Jewel Box** at Mount Faber is now called **Faber Peak Singapore**. Second outlets for both **Chop Suey Café** and **PS.Café Petit** are opening this month at Robertson Quay's Martin No. 38.

Spring Forward

We may not get delicate spring weather in Singapore, but we can still celebrate the best ingredients of the season. The spring menu at St. Regis Singapore's French restaurant, **Brasserie Les Saveurs**, features dishes like European white asparagus, grilled lamb cutlets with spring vegetables, and strawberries flambéed with fresh black pepper and 100-year-old Grand Marnier (from \$148 for the five-course degustation menu, 6506 6860). And expect creamy burrata with fresh Italian vegetables (shown here), nettle risotto and octopus and spicy Calabrian *nduja* with sweet white corn on the spring menu at Sentosa's **II Lido** (from \$98 for the six-course degustation menu, 6866 1977).



DROPLET LIKE IT'S HOT

You can snag Champagne with afternoon tea anywhere these days, but only one place gives you a Ginger R cocktail to sip with your tea and scones. It's all part of the new afternoon tea at the Four Seasons Hotel's One-Ninety by Javier de las Muelas, the bar bearing the name of the Spanish mixologist who recently revamped the cocktail menu. You'll get three tiers of sweets (mango cupcakes, scones), savouries (lobster and tarragon salad, organic smoked salmon on brioche) and TWG tea along with a teapot cocktail containing Javier's signature flavour droplets. Don't worry - cocktails are more smooth than strong with ingredients like passion fruit, mint, white peach and lychee. \$62 per person. 190 Orchard Boulevard. Call 6831 7671.

FATHER KNOWS BEST

Dad won't have a clue as to the treat he's in for at Sque's Meat Madness Father's Day event. This rotisserie and alehouse is offering a meat platter for two - with roasted pork belly, pork meatballs, beef meatballs, spicy chicken sausage, celeriac mash and sauerkraut - and a bottle of German Schneider Weisse Tap 7 Unser Original German craft beer for \$55. Subsequent bottles are one-for-one at \$19. And, even though Father's Day is 15 June, you can treat papa to this promo during the entire month of June. 6 Eu Tong Sen Street, #01-70 The Central. Call 6222 1887 or visit www.sque.com.sg.



Cat's Meow

Forget cards and flowers. Send something the birthday girl really wants – her very own cheesecake. **Cat and the Fiddle** is a new online shop where you choose your cheesecake, organise all the extras (stencilled messaging, gift tags, candles) and schedule a delivery date (next day – no problem!), all on the company's easy-to-navigate website. And get this – cheesecakes range from \$19.90 to \$32.80. Delivery costs \$9 (Sentosa folks – you'll pay \$19) or pick it up for \$5 at Clarke Quay or for free at Tai Seng. **catandthefiddle.com**



Drganic Cleanse

Just another juice cleanse? Not so. What sets **Rejuicenate** apart is the fact that each of its cold-pressed juices is made from 100-percent organic farm-fresh produce, and is put together by a Michelin-trained NYC chef, Chris Remaley. He designed all of the juices with the help of a nutritionist, resulting in cleansers that are good for you and taste great. What's more, Rejuicenate supports local farming industries and sources a lot of its organic ingredients from farms in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Prices from \$320 for a three-day cleanse. **rejuicenate.net**



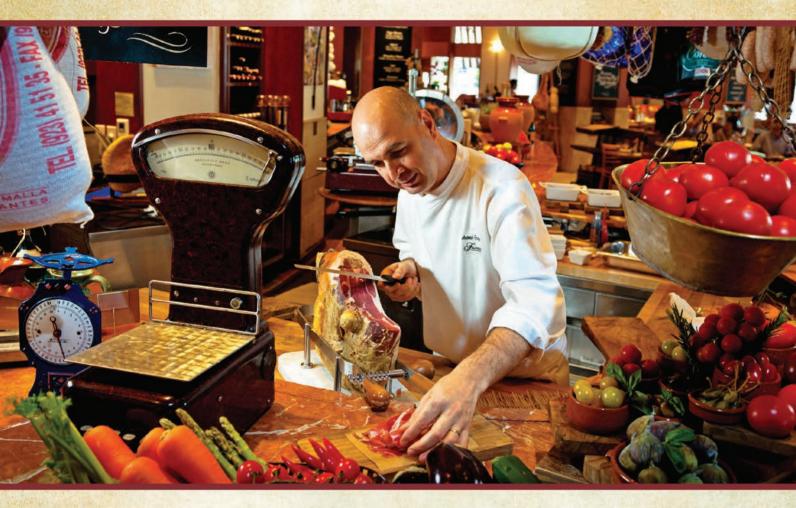
IT'S ALL GOOD



You needn't bother asking your waiter at inItaly, "What's good here?" The restaurant revamped its menu to include Chef Mario Caramella's "best of the best" dishes as voted by restaurant regulars. Nightly

specials that were perpetual hits, like the asparagus, fried egg and Raspadura cheese flakes (\$24) and the smoked eel and red berry risotto (\$32, shown here), are now menu mainstays. These dishes are intermixed into the menu rather than given their own billing, so on second thoughts, you may have to ask a few questions to suss these specialties out. 38 Craig Road. **Call 6423 0918 or visit initaly.asia.**





Traditional Italian Food at Its Best

Catch Chef Antonio Facchinetti in action as he serves up traditional Italian favourites at Prego in a dining style to the theme of Italian Trattoria. With strong emphasis on hand-made, house-cured and long-simmered flavorful dishes, one can be sure it's never just your run-of-the-mill pasta!

For reservations, please call +65 6431 6156, email dining.singapore@fairmont.com or book online at www.prego.com.sg.



Level 1, 80 Bras Basah Road, Singapore 189560 Tel: +65 6339 7777 | Fax: +65 6337 1554 | singapore@fairmont.com | fairmont.com/singapore



SUNDAY CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH GETS AN EDGE

Discover a brand new four-hour Veuve Clicquot Champagne Brunch at Edge on Sundays. With seven live food theatres, brunch aficionados can expect *a la minute* highlights galore, ranging from grilled omi wagyu beef, fines de claires oysters, Boston lobster, roast suckling pig, a two-metre long cheese board and over 20 desserts for the perfect finish.

Sundays, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

To reserve, please call +65 6826 8240 or email celebrate.sin@panpacific.com. Alternatively, reserve online now at edgefoodtheatre.com.



Lewin Terrace 21 Lewin Terrace 6333 9905 | lewinterrace.com

For a romantic tête-à-tête, you can't beat the location of this black-and-white bungalow in Fort Canning Park. I'm with a girlfriend, so the romance is more about the historical setting, at the foot of what Malay inhabitants of pre-colonial Singapore used to call Bukit Larangan, or Forbidden Hill.

Overlooking the Central Fire Station in Hill Street, it was once the residence of a series of Superintendents of the Fire Brigade. Most recently, it housed finedining Flutes at the Fort, now relocated to the National Museum.

Lewin Terrace is billed as Japanese-French fusion cuisine. Despite the authentic restoration and refurbishment of the colonial architectural treasure it's in, the ethos feels very Japanese, from the warm and exquisitely courteous service to the precision engineering of the food.

Chef Ryoichi Kano presides over what I imagine to be an army of minions engaged in such eclectic culinary pursuits as handcrafting transparent "crystal potato" chips that look like discs of spun sugar, charcoaling lemon zest,



and making edible sand. (Different from making sand edible, no doubt.)

After a couple of original and well-mixed cocktails, general manager and chief sommelier Daisuke Kawai (ex-Les Amis) offers wine pairing from a list of more than 100 labels, half of them French, the others a mix from the old and new worlds.

By far the tastiest elements of our eight-course set menu (\$180 per head) are the rich and creamy **foie gras terrine** with pickled white radish and a tropical fruit sauce; and **Wagyu sirloin toubanyaki**, served rare so you can cook it to your personal idea of perfection on a portable table-grill. Servings are on the light side, so hold onto your basket of warm bread.

For now, two set lunch menus (\$38 and \$70) and two dinner menus (\$120 and \$180) are available, but an à la carte menu is in the offing.

Verne Maree

MUST-TRY DISH: Foie gras terrine

Healthy grape and quinoa salad with sugar snap peas and fresh raspberries and a simple drizzle of olive oil

Portico

991B Alexandra Road, #01-10 6276 7337 | portico.sg

"Portico" might be an Italian word (for "porch"), but there's nothing remotely Italian about the food at this new opening on the West Coast. Chef Leandros Stagogiannis' British accent and Greek surname gives away his origins, but it's his background at Singapore's fine-dining restaurants FiftyThree and St Pierre's that shines through in a confident, walk-on-the-wild side menu of original creations.

Both soups, the wild mushroom, truffle oil and toasted buckwheat (\$9) and the roasted tomato and crispy jamon iberico (\$12) are richly flavoursome, as are the chilli-scented blue mussels in a creamy sauce (\$27). It's tough to find, but let's hope more restaurants start using the quinoa grain, served here in a healthy salad with grapes, sugar snap peas and fresh raspberries (\$14). Desserts are where Stagogiannis takes fascinating risks: caramelised pineapple with Chinese five spice and coconut sorbet (\$10) and deconstructed tart aux citron and onion ice cream (\$14) alone are worth the visit.

Although Portico is located in a bland office compound, the large restaurant and covered porch have a verdant green outlook and a relaxed, homey atmosphere. We'd recommend nabbing a seat at the bar encircling the open kitchen and settling in with a glass of Bordeaux house white (\$12) while watching the chef at work.

Katie Roberts



MUST-TRY DISH: Tart aux citron and onion ice cream (\$14)





The Monarchy at ME@OUE The Rooftop Level, 50 Collyer Quay, OUE Bayfront6634 4555 | me-oue.com | the-monarchy.com

Upon stepping into the über-stylish ME@OUE, you get the sense of being absorbed into the skyline. The 19th-floor setting offers a fresh perspective of the view – you're suspended between the action below and the twinkling towers above.

I'm here to enjoy The Monarchy, a fashionable new "pre-party" event that takes over the oh-so-trendy openair rooftop bar every Saturday. Aimed at Singapore's elite (how I got in is a mystery!), its themed events are about kicking the night off with seriously wicked cocktails and tunes from the world's hottest DJs.

Start with some seriously impressive grub at ME@ OUE – you can either dine inside the chic, edgy restaurant or order select dishes to the pumping terrace.

This is one of my favourite eateries in town, particularly when I have guests. There are three chefs running three separate kitchens – Japanese, French and Chinese – so you can mix and match the menu. Highlights? Get stuck into the air-flown Hokkaido scallop sashimi (\$18) or the French Orient clams (\$24), baked in Mont d'Or cheese and burgundy butter. In China's corner, feast on red lobster (\$45) with Singapore-style chilli sauce.

While the wine line is endless, I opted to sample a few (no, a few more than that) cocktails. Start off with the sweet elderflower and

lychee-based Run DMC (\$16) and move onto the Japanese Slipper for Cointreau and citrus. Too nervous to hit the dance floor with Monarchy's in-crowd? The absinthe-heavy Sazerac (\$18) will sort that out in a jiffy.



Rachael Wheeler







D'Bell

43 North Canal Road 6536 4046 | dbell.sg

Just a stone's throw from Boat Quay, D'Bell offers diners the choice of eating in the glitzy restaurant downstairs, or having a cocktail in the lounge above, reached through a hidden door.

D'Bell is aimed at a relaxed fine-dining crowd, offering a lighter contemporary Indian cuisine (no ghee is used) combined with some decidedly Western flavours – blue cheese and smoked salmon are just two examples on the menu.

Dishes of particular note were the **kofta kebab** (\$18), the beef croquettes filled with cheddar cheese and prunes and dusted with semolina, and the pleasantly spiced **Tawa Wali fish cubes**, glazed with coconut and curry leaf paste (\$22). Our favourite curries were the **mutton rogan josh** (\$20) and **chicken tikka masala** (\$18). The meal finished with a **mango kulfi**, an Indian ice cream, which was delicious and, again, not overly heavy.



Amy Brook-Partridge

MUST-TRY DISH: Kofta kebab





Manor Cocktail Room 8 Ann Siang Hill 9696 6695 | manorbar.com.sg

Even Ann Siang regulars unknowingly pass this hidden gem. Tucked away above the ever-bustling Gem Bar, Manor offers intimacy and mystery, a rarity for a trending area. There are no signs, so keep your eyes peeled for the elusive staircase in Zui Hong Lou dim sum bar.

The vibe: Once by invitation only, the bar still feels exclusive. Polished oak, sprawling Chesterfields and an extensive whiskey selection evoke a gentleman's club-vibe that's far removed from the deafening beats below.

Tipples: Manor maintain a high standard on the classics while also serving bespoke concoctions and popular signatures such as the Breakfast (\$20), vodka-based with a hint of English marmalade, grapefruit and egg white (complete with toast and cornflakes!); and Sweet Dreams (\$20), a vanilla-spiked Old Fashioned.

Taste: Pair your poison with bar bites like the moreish deep-fried bean-curd prawn rolls (\$6) and the tangy baby back ribs (\$24).

Top tip: Check out Manor's new affair, Bar Shift, a regular bartending soirée that invites well-known guest mixologists to concoct three unique cocktails especially for the evening. Stayed tuned for upcoming dates at facebook.com/manorbarsg.

Leanda Rathmell



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 your repertoire. Bon appétit!

ASIAN COLESLAW WITH SPICY Soy sesame dressing



Sunita Bett, Singapore

I love this tasty Asian version of a coleslaw – I make it every time I'm tasked with a potluck dish. There's lots of chopping involved, but if you have a machine that can do that, it's a doddle.

Ingredients:

- 3-4 cups coleslaw (grated carrots, finely sliced green and red cabbage)
- 1 cup precooked frozen edamame (shelled soybeans)
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced (optional)
- 2 small radishes, thinly sliced (optional)
- Spicy soy sesame dressing (see below)
- Slivered almonds
- Toasted sesame seeds
- Shichimi togarashi (Japanese seven-spice blend)

Dressing:

- 1/4 cup light soy sauce
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons almond butter (or substitute peanut butter)
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1-2 tablespoons shichimi togarashi or red chilli flakes
- · Salt and sugar to taste



Directions:

- 1. Put the soybeans in a bowl and cover with boiling water, leave for a few minutes then drain and chill in the refrigerator until ready to use.
- 2. Make the spicy soy sesame dressing. Adjust seasoning to taste.
- 3. In a large bowl, mix all the vegetables together with a generous amount of the dressing and chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.
- 4. Just before serving, add extra dressing, toasted sesame seeds, almonds and chilli flakes.



INDULGENT CHOCOLATE CAKE

Hayley Reece, UK

"I always get asked for the recipe of this yummy chocolate cake. It's a must for special occasions like birthdays – it's rather indulgent and not for a time when you're watching what you eat!"



Ingredients

For the icing:

- 175 grams dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids)
- 225 grams unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 1 tablespoon semi-skimmed milk (room temperature)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 250 grams icing sugar, sifted

Directions for the icing

- 1. Melt the chocolate and set aside to cool.
- In a large bowl, beat butter, milk, vanilla and icing sugar until smooth. Add chocolate and beat again until thick and creamy; if it looks too runny, keep beating.
- Sandwich the thoroughly cooled cakes together with the icing and cover the top with more. Add sprinkles or other sugar decorations of your choice.

For the cake:

Donois

- 230 grams dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids)
- 170 grams unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 350 grams light brown sugar
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 370 grams plain flour, sifted
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons bicarbonate of soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 500ml semi-skimmed milk (room temperature)
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Directions for the cake

- Preheat oven to 170 Celsius (with fan), 190 Celsius, or gas mark 5. Grease and line two 20cm cake tins with greaseproof paper.
- Melt chocolate (in microwave on medium for 30-second bursts or in heat-proof bowl over simmering pan of water); set aside to cool.
- Cream butter and sugar together in a large bowl until smooth. Beat egg yolks in separate bowl for several minutes, then slowly add them to the butter and sugar mix while beating well. Add cooled chocolate and beat again.
- 4. Combine flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt in separate bowl. Combine milk and vanilla extract in a jug. Add one third of flour mixture to creamed mixture and beat well. Pour in one third of milk and beat again. Repeat until all flour and milk added.
- 5. Whisk egg whites until soft peaks start to form, then carefully fold in egg whites using a metal spoon (do not beat as this will take the air out), dollop the mixture equally between the tins and bake for approximately 35 minutes. When cooked, a skewer inserted into the centre of the cakes should come out clean.
- 6. Leave cakes to cool before turning out onto a wire rack. Peel paper from bases.



If we publish your recipe in our magazine, you'll be adding a great cookbook to your bookshelf. This month it's *Going with the Grain!*, a healthy collection of recipes transforming grains such as amaranth, barley, buckwheat, quinoa and spelt into delicious salads, soups and stews. Publisher: Parragon.

Be Part of THE GREAT RECIPE SWAP!

If you have a fail-safe recipe you'd like to submit for our next issue, please send the recipe, a photo of yourself and a few words about your dish to beate.baldry@expatlivingsingapore. com. Thanks, Chef!





You may have tried these cuisines on your travels around the world, but we'll hang our hats on the fact that you've not tried many of them in *Singapore* before.



EXPLAIN IT: Think the world of French food is vast? This food covers parts of France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Liechtenstein and Monaco, though the restaurant featured below leaves the latter two little guys out. The cuisine is built around blustery winters and mountainous terrain. Can it work in sweltering Singapore? Austrian chef Lorenz-Maria Griesser isn't the least bit concerned.

WHAT IS IT? Alpine food

ENJOY IT: at Zott's True Alps

Unless you were born in the silvery shadows of Mont Blanc, you'll want to hold on to your menu during this meal. A borderless map with a trivia-packed legend guides you through the dishes and the regions, which is how we learned **carpaccio d'espadon** (\$28) hails from the area "where the Alps shake hands with the sea" (a fancy way of saying Provence). This dish of thinly sliced swordfish adorned with an "apple creation" (a beautiful semi-frozen mousse covered in sparkling beetroot gelatin) reveals the chef's training in molecular gastronomy (copies of *Modernist Cuisine* on the walls are another giveaway), while the **bouillabaisse Marseillaises** (\$87) shows he is no slouch when it comes to old-fashioned comfort food, either. The broth of this fish soup is simply brilliant, though the tongue-twisting **suedtiroler apfelsuppe** (\$26), a creamy apple soup with marinated char fish, is also superb – and less heavy on the wallet.

The **tellerfleisch** (\$75) is creatively served in three courses. This Austrian-Bavarian "boiled beef" favourite may sound bland, but it's not when served first as baked *Schulterscherzl* (oyster blade) with parsley dip and tartar sauce, second as homemade oxtail ravioli and third as a fabulous prime rib with carrots, leeks and freshly grated horseradish.

It takes a darn good dessert to make the first page of the menu – in this case the **Kaiserschmarrn** (\$24), a souffled and caramelised pancake served Sisi-style (for all you Habsburg history buffs) with stewed plums and vanilla ice cream, edges out the starters for good reason. Don't miss it.



97 Amoy Street 6223 0913 | zotts.com.sg

WINE&DINE

EXPLAIN IT: This cuisine is known for Cajun and Creole regional favourites like gumbo - a meaty soup thick with seafood, chicken, sausage or okra; po' boys - overstuffed French bread sandwiches; crawfish étouffée and doughnut-like beignets. Cajun cuisine, incidentally, is named for the French-speaking immigrants deported by the British from Acadia in Canada to the Acadiana region of Lousiana, US. Lousiana Creole cuisine, on the other hand, blends French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Native American and African influences with elements of Southern cuisine. And arguably, this city does them better than anyone else (though don't say that to someone from Baton Rouge).

WHAT IS IT? NOLA, or New Orleansstyle cuisine

ENJOY IT: at Life Is Beautiful – Louisiana Kitchen & Bar on Duxton

Already, at just after 6pm on a Wednesday night, the place exudes remarkable energy. That has to be down to the Life is Beautiful team – an eclectic mix of characters, many of whom seem to have known each other for years.

Instead of NOLA's typically soupy or rice-based one-pot dishes, this menu is tailored to be shared, and to fit in with drinks and dancing. We especially love the **pulled pork knuckle with crackling** (\$21) and the spicy **gator and fennel boudin** (\$28). Then we demolish a whole **catfish** (\$38) and see off a hearty pile of three-day-buttermilkmarinated **fried chicken** (\$38). A special feast menu is in the pipeline for Tuesdays, just because Mardi Gras means "fat Tuesday".

It's been claimed that cocktails were actually invented in Louisiana during Prohibition, as drinkers devised ways to make moonshine more palatable. From Virginian bar manager Tyler Hudgens' back-to-the-classics list of cocktails (all \$18), we try a rye-based **Sazerac**, the Louisiana version of an old-fashioned; a delicious **French 75**; and then a girlier **Ramos Gin Fizz**.

Get here early for dinner to be sure of a seat; later, some of the tables are moved



for dancing. Tonight there's a special event, Tropicália, to channel the Brazilian anti-establishment artistic movement that arose in the sixties. DJ Ramesh plays Afro-beat, dance hall, swing, jazz, funk – "nothing too commercial", says team member Alyssa Kokilah. This authentic, vibey place well deserves its early success.

99 Duxton Road 6423 0939 | facebook.com/ lifeisbeautifulsingapore





QUIRKY CUISINES

EXPLAIN IT: The cuisine is as diverse as the countries occupying this enormous continent. On the western side, Chile, Peru and Venezuela were all influenced by the native Incas, the imposing Andes Mountains and colonising Europeans. Seafood is abundant, and apparent in ceviche, a raw dish of raw seafood typically marinated in lemon juice, while beef and lamb are equally popular. Staples include corn, potato and chilli. The national drink, pisco, is a distilled grape brandy made from the leftover fermented grapes from wine production, and Pisco Day is the fourth Sunday of July.

WHAT IS IT? South American ENJOY IT: at Pisco

The Ilama wall murals, multicoloured cascading yarn (symbolising the weaving loom and Andean textiles), colourful chairs and light fittings are a welcoming sight. Live music from Thursday to Sunday adds to the fun and relaxed atmosphere, and staff help to settle the little ones quickly with crayons and colouring-in. There's a **kids' meal** (\$15) of a chicken or salmon skewer, with rice, a drink and ice-cream; nachos (\$11) and quesadillas (\$9.50) will appeal to the younger ones, too.

Pisco Sour (\$15) – pisco, lime juice and egg white, and **Caprioska** – a concoction of rum, sugar and lime wedges (\$18), are authentic beverages that pair nicely with **ceviche pulpo**, octopus in an olive and caper sauce (\$13), or **ceviche langostino**, prawns with coconut *leche* and banana (\$13).

Other un-challenging snacks for lunch or an easy dinner are **arepas venezolanas** (\$15), a Venezuelan corn flat-bread sandwich filled with spicy beef; and **empanadas** (\$14), minced beef in corn dough parcels.

Los pinchos, a combination of meat or vegetable barbecue skewers (from \$9) served dramatically in the centre of the table are the main event, ideal for sharing. And to finish, who can say no to **churros** (\$9) and hot chocolate sauce? This is uncomplicated, unpretentious food perfect for gatherings of families and friends.

Resorts World Sentosa

The Forum, #01-231 (next to Candylicious) 6795 4720 | pisco.sg







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Lotus Dining





EXPLAIN IT: This food has a diverse history, taking influences from Levantine, Palestinian, Egyptian, Syrian, Roman and even French cultures. Sumptuous and healthy, Lebanese dishes are typically baked, grilled or sautéed in olive oil, herbs, garlic and lemon and use sampling serves of mezze to arouse the dining senses with an array of colours, flavours, texture and aromas.

WHAT IS IT? Lebanese food

ENJOY IT: at Cedar Grill

Under a lavishly draped tent overlooking the river at Boat Quay, this restaurant has a magical charm that fits the cuisine perfectly. Even on a Monday night, Cedar Grill is fairly busy, with most other tables reserved and a consistent stream of diners arriving all night. Mezze dish after mezze dish is delivered to our table, all beautifully presented and sweet-smelling; contenders for our favourite are the **muhammara** (\$10), a spicy red-pepper-and-lemon dip with fluffy pita bread, **tabbouleh** (\$14), finely chopped parsley, tomato, onion, lemon juice and olive oil, and **gebnea haloumi** (\$12), deep-fried haloumi cheese.

We've only just begun to relax from this initial feast when a striking **mixed grill kebab** (\$32) is presented, a combination of *kofta, shish taouk, tikka kebab* and lamb chops, all hanging from skewers over a platter of Arabic rice and grilled vegetables. This delicious lineup leaves no room for dessert, only a slurp of **peppermint tea with honey** (\$7) and a puff on a **watermelon and mint sheesha** (\$35).

Fantastic setting and great food - perfect for a special event.



63 Boat Quay 6438 7322 | facebook.com/cedargrill.sg



EXPLAIN IT: Not just another "eco-chic" fad, this vegetable-based diet has become increasingly popular with those keen on keeping up a healthy lifestyle. Along with a focus on fresh, uncooked ingredients comes a greater interest in the quality of farm produce, which in turn encourages greater support of local farming communities.

WHAT IS IT? Raw food

ENJOY IT: at Afterglow

One of the latest additions to the quirky Keong Saik Road, this new café and lifestyle concept store promotes farm-to-table food that has undergone as little processing as possible. Half of the menu offers vegetarian and raw food, as well as many vegan options made with nut-cheese and nut-yoghurt, made fresh in-house in batches each week.

And never has a plant-based diet tasted this good. We couldn't stop picking at the **raw vegan nut "cheese" platter with crackers** (\$16) – exceedingly tasty and moreish. Another must-try is the smooth **broccoli soup** (\$16), blended fresh rather than boiled to maintain maximum nutritional value. For mains, the **deconstructed sushi bowl** (\$16) with seasoned pickles, shiitake mushrooms, avocado and miso dressing is delicious and great to share. Dessert doesn't disappoint, either. Try the **tiramisu with cashew cream** (\$10); we vouch it may even taste better than the real thing. You can also enjoy a variety of **cold-pressed juices** which are pressed daily – choose from spinach- or beetroot-based (\$6-12).

24 Keong Saik Road 6224 8921 | facebook.com/afterglowsg

NOT TO BE Forgotten

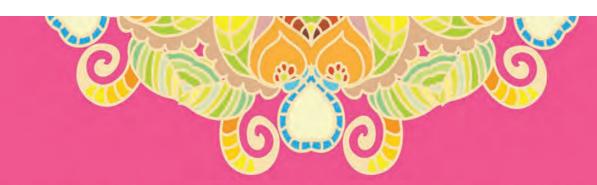
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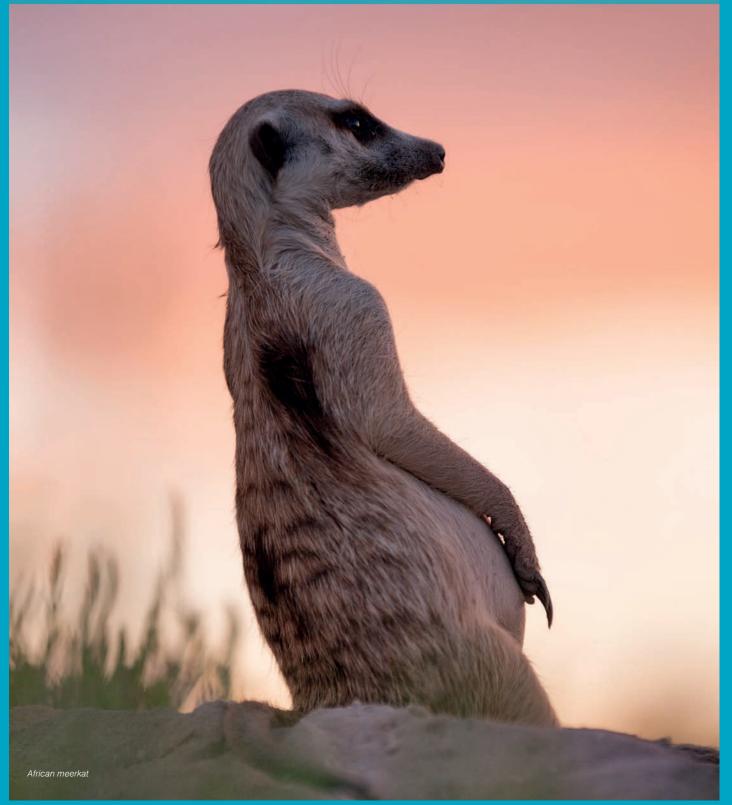


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Travel



WHAT'S NEW Hot destinations & great places to stay

Downtime & Discovery

An ultra-private resort in Central Vietkam, **Banyan Tree Lang Co** sits on a crescent bay framed by the blue waters of the East Sea and the mountain peaks of Truong Son. Its proximity to several of the country's renowned UNESCO World Heritage Sites – the imperial city of Hue, the charming old town of Hoi An, and the ancient relics of My Son – allows for a culturally enriching experience in and around the resort. Meanwhile, the property's collection of intimate onebedroom pool villas comes with all the facilities one might need for a thoroughly enjoyable and relaxing vacation. **banyantree.com/en/lang_co/**

TURTLE SEASON

Aside from being a luxury resort of 50 private pool villas in a protected national and marine park, Six Senses Con Dao is a place where you can witness the wonderful sight of sea turtles nesting and hatching. In May, pregnant sea turtles return to the shores of neighbouring islands to lav their eggs. Nearly two months later, the hatchlings emerge: quests of the resort can visit and release the hatchlings into the bay. If that's not enough, the Six Senses Spa at Con Dao boasts the dramatic backdrop of the Lo Voi Mountains, along with classic signature treatments and specialist therapies. Also on offer at the resort are water and beach sports, hiking, discovering nature, or enjoying the many dining options. For details of summer specials, including turtle-releasing, visit www. sixsenses.com. Wilderness Associates is offering bonus complimentary nights on certain Six Senses packages, valid for travel until 30 September. Call 6893 1773 or email enquiry@eatplaysurf.com.sg. ▼





JETSETTING!

This will do us just nicely. Beginning in February 2015, a fully branded Four Seasons Jet – a retrofitted Boeing 757 featuring leather flatbed seats, in-flight Wi-Fi and more – will be available to transport 52 very lucky guests on a range of bespoke journeys. Reservations are open now for a 24-day, ninedestination, around-the-world flight in February (beginning in LA, ending in London, and with the Taj Mahal in between); and a "Backstage with the Arts"

trip in April, taking in six cities over 16 days with backstage visits to Europe's most stunning museums, performances, dinners, and a private gala in the Pavlovsk Palace outside St Petersburg. To learn more, visit fourseasons.com/jet and follow the #FSJet hashtag on Twitter and Instagram.



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JAVA ESCAPE

Offering majestic views from its hillside location and easy access to the famous temple it takes its name from, Villa Borobudur has opened three new private luxury villas. Villas Merbabu, Menoreh and Kayangan each provide breathtaking views of the Borobudur valley and, on a clear day, up to seven volcanoes, including Merapi. The villas have two or three bedrooms, feature large private pools, and come with private staff and chefs. Delicate woodcarving, spacious lounging areas and authentic Javanese design are other attractions.

Special offer: To celebrate the new openings, Villa Borobudur is offering *Expat Living* readers a 20-percent discount on nightly rates from now until 20 December 2014. Just keep this page of the magazine to show as validation. +62 293 5525520 | info@villaborobudur.com ▲

CHEAP FLIGHTS

There are plenty of websites around that offer comparisons on flight prices, but one that stands out for ease of use and good deals is www.cheapflights.sg. It includes the budget airlines as well as national carriers, and sometimes good deals can be found in unexpected places; we've seen fares to Sydney on British Airways for as low as S\$620 return. All flights can be booked online directly, and importantly there is no credit card surcharge. The multi-city search is a handy option too. **cheaptickets.com**



YANGOON LUXURY

Hot on the heels of its extensive two-and-a-half-year renovation, the Traders Hotel in Yangon, Myanamar has a new name: Sule Shangri-La. Located on Sule Pagoda Road near the landmark namesake pagoda, the 484-room hotel is a showcase for local artists and craftsmen. Ornate Burmese vases, panels of intricate woodcarving and specially commissioned art decorate the property. Take advantage of the celebration package priced from US\$215 until 31 July 2014. **shangri-la.com/** yangon/suleshangrila

THE HERMITAGE OPENS

Formerly the Dutch telecommunications office, an historic 1923 building in the heart of Jakarta's prestigious Menteng district is now a 90-room boutique hotel, The Hermitage. Carrara marble and heritage-style furnishings adorn the rooms and suites, and cutting-edge dining choices include a rooftop bar and courtyard café. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World, The Hermitage opened its doors in May, with special rates from US\$186, including gourmet buffet breakfast. **1800 737 9955 | Ihw.com/** hermitagejakarta





MS ROTTERDAM

Expat Living recently checked out the MS Rotterdam while it was docked in Singapore - including a fantastic dinner in the Pinnacle Grill - and it's the kind of ship we could happily spend a few weeks on while cruising the region. Together with another Holland America Line ship, the MS Volendam, the MS Rotterdam has expanded its Singapore sailings recently, making it easier to experience calls at exotic destinations like Myanmar and India. Everything from two-week trips to threemonth extravaganzas are available. In November, for instance, you could fly to Sydney or Melbourne then sail back up via the Great Barrier Reef, Komodo Island and Bali; or explore the likes of Vietnam and Hong Kong in December. Better yet, kick off 2015 in style with a longer journey via famous historic ports all the way to Southampton, or to Rotterdam itself. Fares start from \$1,699 per person, double occupancy, for a two-week cruise. Check the website for full details of every available trip. hollandamerica.com



FRENCH FARM LUXURY



Ready to open later this month in the heart of the Alpilles, just 45 minutes from Marseilles airport, is Domaine de Manville, a working farm that has been transformed into

a French country "palace" hotel by a local couple. Among its highlights is a spa with five treatment rooms and a house-range of skincare products made specially in conjunction with Swiss laboratory, Naturalps, and featuring local products such as verbena, jasmine, lavender and olive oil. Domaine de Manville is opening as a member of Small Luxury Hotels. **domainedemanville.fr**

BRING ON THE FREEBIES

The way to a global traveller's heart is through his or her stomach, it would seem. In a survey by Hotels.com, complimentary breakfasts have this year been voted the number-one hotel facility travellers look for, ahead of last year's number one, free Wi-Fi.

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ears ago, I soaked up the words of a travel writer as he recounted how his global pursuits didn't skip a beat after the birth of his children. He and his wife just strapped their brood on their backs and off they went.

So when my husband and I had our first child, I took these words to heart. We planned ambitious trips to Europe, the US and a handful of locations around Asia, all within one year of our daughter's birth. The first trip – to the UK – coincided with the front-page grilling of Nick Buckles, CEO of the security firm hired for the British Olympics, who admitted to UK lawmakers that a personnel shortage had ended in "humiliating shambles". These two words became the mantra for the trip. There were more tantrums on this trip than could be believed. (And the baby got upset a few times, too.)

After a year of travelling with a baby, I found myself engaging in make-believe confrontations with Super Dad Travel Writer. Was he lying? Was he, similar to what happens after you give birth, suffering from memory lapses that made him forget the pain and tears? Were my husband and I not privy to the magic formula for free-and-easy travel with a newborn?

Perhaps there is truth in all three. (And maybe an itinerary covering eight US states in three days didn't help matters.) So, as my daughter's first birthday rolled around, we put aside our wounds, reassessed and booked the easiest trip we could think of – a weekend in Bali.

Bali: familiar, close, butler-servicefrom-morning-to-night Bali. But the old script of late nights in Seminyak and leisurely days of shopping in Ubud was going to need some revising. Family-friendly Nusa Dua came to mind, as I silently mourned the passing of villa-life in favour of a large resort along the island's southern tip. The grieving period was short, however. A *Conde Nast Traveller* pick for Best New Hotels in the World in 2013, Nusa Dua's **The Mulia Bali** has three types of accommodation – resort, all-suite hotel and *yay*, private villas, too.



The entire property is steeped in grandeur, with lobby ceilings that would turn a Gothic church green with envy and décor that would make an interior designer swoon.



The Vacay

So what exactly does it take to be named among the world's best? The first criterion is to elicit a reaction from arriving guests that ranges somewhere between a jaw drop to a standing back tuck. The entire property is steeped in grandeur, with lobby ceilings that would turn a Gothic church green with envy, and décor that would make an interior decorator swoon. My laptop collection of interior design ideas – which on average gets about three additions a year – was blasted with shot after shot of furniture, vertical gardens and mosaics made out of broken pieces of dishware.

If everything is bigger in Texas, everything is even more massive at Mulia. And that goes for pools, rooms, views, artwork, floral arrangements and floating pavilions. It is as if no expense has been spared, even down to the dirtiest of details (the \$6,000-plus automatic Toto toilet in our villa being one example). And though the Indonesian brand may not be a household name yet, this property proves you don't need the words Ritz, Regis or Seasons to play with the big industry boys.

The Villa

We are staying in one of the **family villas**, a butler-serviced 60-square-metre space with two bedrooms (the second is perfect for visiting parents, older kids or a helper), a hydrotherapy pool and a large outdoor pavilion. We are delighted with our villa. Baby is too. There is a Jacuzzi tub for extreme bubble play, a soft grassy area for her to practise her first steps, and a walk-in closet with a crib inside it that constitutes a sizeable upgrade from her room at home.

The villas are not totally private, but this won't fuss the family set, who have long passed their strip-naked-and-frolic-aboutin-the-pool phase of life. The villas are terraced towards the back of the property, and the wall facing the ocean has been knocked down to provide a piercing view of the ocean in the distance.















I unpack a small library of magazines and books (none of which pertain to "sleep training" in the slightest) and begin mentally making plans for morning yoga and a "four hands" massage at the spa. But then... a scream.

A tiny baby finger has found its way in between the front door and its frame. There's blood, uncontrollable wailing and eventually a fingernail that doesn't make it. But the villa butler shows up in a flash, calls in a hotel medic and helps to calm down a very upset trio dealing with what would become baby's first injury (we've had a few more since).

With children, you come to learn that episodes like this - not to mention a cold or a sudden bout of stomach irritability can happen anytime, anywhere (though

trains and planes have a particular flair for attracting these events). I don't recall "strap them on your back and go"-guy making any mention of this. But no matter, with nerves as sensitive as freshly whitened teeth, I keep my daughter at arm's length as we swim, play in the grass and take buggy rides around the property courtesy of our two villa butlers, who act as babysitters, chauffeurs and travel agents all rolled into one.

They make arrangements for a sunset beach barbecue in Jimbaran the following day, and - despite my protestations entertain our daughter while my husband and I enjoy relaxing meals at the Living Room, the private restaurant available to guests of the villas and suites. There we feast on grilled baby octopus with saffron

potatoes for dinner and enjoy calm, waiterserviced breakfasts (a welcome break from the usual bustling buffet) of fresh beetroot juice, lemon ricotta pancakes, dim sum and eggs Benedict with crab.

We prefer homemade over jarred (or, more currently, pouched) food for our daughter, which adds a further level of complication to the whole travelling experience. But it is no problem for the Mulia staff, who prepare a medley of veggies, fruit and grains into a puree or chunky mash at mealtimes. Our first night there, I request that a plate of ripe papaya be brought to our room before bedtime; one arrived, unrequested, every night thereafter, too.

The Verdict

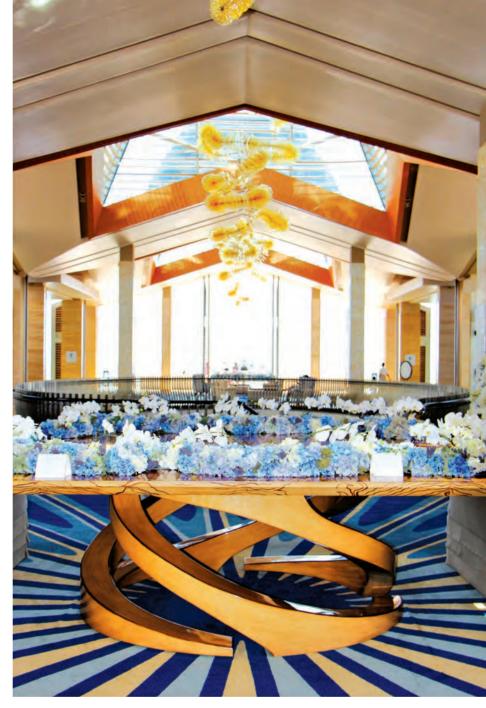
The hotel is as beautiful and relaxing as it – and the accolades – promise, with enough wow factor to impress even the most well-travelled. As far as travelling with a baby goes, a Bali holiday is decidedly easier than hop-skipping across the Indian Ocean. But even the simplest holiday with children will never be completely carefree, no matter what some may say.

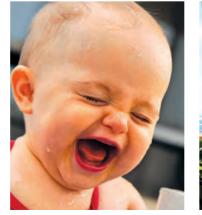
I slide my books and magazines, virtually untouched, back into my suitcase (on the other hand, strangely, hubby started and finished his book). Between dips in the pool, buggy rides and – okay, I did steal away for a massage at the super-lux spa – the weekend was as relaxing as one with a baby can be. Lesson learned – next time I'm packing a pair of grandparents along, too.

Family travel – three ways:

- For families looking for a resort experience (pools, people, activities, lots of restaurant choices), the **Mulia Resort**'s Junior Suite comes with marble flooring, a large patio and a sofa that converts into a bed; connecting rooms are also available.
- For a few more pennies, suites at **The Mulia** offer more space, balconies with a Jacuzzi and daybed, large bathrooms, separate dressing areas and spectacular ocean views.
- For a holiday splurge, the Mulia Villas are located at the highest point of the property and offer the most privacy, exclusivity and space. Guests of The Mulia and the Mulia Villas have access to private restaurants and pools; all guests of the property can use the spa, the gym and restaurants in the main resort.

For more information on all the accommodation options, visit www.themulia.com.







Getting there: It's a 20-minute drive from the new airport to The Mulia Bali, courtesy of the toll road bridge (also new) that has halved the time it takes to reach Nusa Dua.

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Meeting the Meerkats

As CAROLYN HALL discovers upon spending time with the diminutive stars of the BBC programme, *Meerkat Manor*, Africa is not just about the "Big Five".

Photos by A Couple of Photographers















he day starts at dawn, with the two of us plus our Scottish guide, Laura, sitting outside the entrance, looking a bit like groupies, and nervously awaiting the appearance of a famous face. Only, this entrance is not one to a hotel room or a backstage area, but to a dirt burrow.

Just as Laura checks her watch, right on cue the famous whiskered, fox-like face appears: our first sighting. And like all groupies, cameras are ready and clicking away before our diva even fully emerges. True star that she is, full of confidence and nonchalance at finding an audience right on her doorstep, she emerges and yawns her way into the start of her day.

Thus is our introduction to the first member of the Uberkatz family, one of several study groups at the Kalahari Meerkat Project, near Vanzylsrus in South Africa.

As it transpires, our first encounter is not with the dominant female of this matriarchal mob. She is the next to emerge and easy to identify: Tina, wearing a tiny radio collar.

Although we have been furnished with a list of names and identifying marks for each of the 13 mob members, we are far too engrossed in the early-morning antics of these endearing social animals to tear our eyes away for a single moment. We even refrain from moving too much, and we whisper to each other so as not to frighten these bundles of energy - all for nothing, it turns out. On the whole, the meerkats ignore us, though they have been known to climb onto visitors to use them as lookout points. We are so close, my partner is muttering curses at his wrong choice of camera lens, and backs off.

Meanwhile, the entire group of animals emerges in rapid succession, literally popping out of the ground and pausing at the top of the mound, seeming to pose for the camera, as stars are wont to do. Balancing on a tripod of two legs plus a tail, these entertaining creatures really do line themselves up facing the sun, in order to warm up after a night underground, before beginning their day of foraging for insects and other invertebrates.

The five young who appear, and also take very little notice of us, are only a month or so old, and although they belong to the dominant breeding pair (Tina and her mate, Gump) they are communally cared for by the entire group.

But first things first. As part of the study, each animal is weighed twice daily. A set of electronic scales balancing a Tupperware container with sand in it is placed on the ground and each individual is enticed inside using bribery. A tiny piece of boiled egg is the treat – and it really must be such, as several members try to get weighed more than once.

Like human young, the juvenile meerkats have no idea how to find food or how to dispatch what they do find; it's up to the adults to educate them. This leads to some hilarious antics, with youngsters enthusiastically digging up the desert in mimicry of the adults, but all in a rather haphazard, messy fashion and with very little success. Live offerings, which are normally jealously defended, are given to the young who are then left to struggle with whatever delicacy has been deposited before them. I watch one who has an oversize worm wriggling to escape, like a giant piece of spaghetti slapping a child's face when sucked in fast. Sharp teeth and determination make the little meerkat the winner of this encounter, and to my surprise he begs for more.

By now, there are meerkats scattered in all directions and lively vocal contact is maintained between all the individuals. It's hard to know where to look or which one to follow, but thankfully they seem completely unbothered by having us – heffalumps by comparison – lumbering amongst them.

Our presence also fails to prevent them from undertaking their guard duties. This is done with an air of intense seriousness, as they peer fixedly beyond the camera lens regardless of how close we come. Alarm calls are given several times and the response is immediate – youngsters are protected either by being straddled or surrounded, and at one stage everyone hightails it (literally, with tails pointing directly skyward) to the nearest underground entrance.

After several hours, it is with great reluctance that we leave this entertaining group. Our only consolation is having a return visit arranged for later that same afternoon. Midday in the Kalahari is too hot for anyone, including resident meerkats, and so "time out" is taken by all.

On our return, our guide is Seline from Istanbul, who takes us to spend time with the "Whiskers mob" – the real stars of *Meerkat Manor*. This group is smaller in number, has no youngsters and is consequently a quieter group; this, combined with the fact that it's still too hot at 5.30pm for much activity, means we have to rely on modern stalking methods (i.e., radio signals) to locate them.

The group of six is found lying flat like worn animal-skin mats beneath the shade of a bush, blithely unconcerned at our approach. Every few minutes they move to a new cool spot and flop down starfish-like in the shade, looking decidedly hot and bothered.

As the sun begins to sink in the sky, at some unknown signal they all begin foraging and moving with purpose back towards the current burrow in use. Being fickle homeowners, meerkats do not dig their own burrows but commandeer those dug by ground squirrels, often sharing the same space in relative harmony.

Unusually, this group has two pregnant females (Rufio and Brea) due to give

TRAVEL

birth around the same time. Often, the dominant mother will kill any other young; we're hoping that if both give birth at the same time, she will get somewhat confused and think they are all hers.

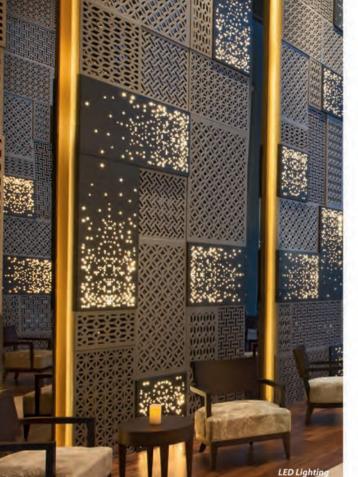
Adding to this, the slightly younger pregnant female, Brea, appears to be making a bid for the top spot, judging by the submissive behaviour being displayed by Rufio, currently the dominant female, when in Brea's presence. Seline assures us that Rufio is "not a very nice character"; she is hoping Brea will win out in the end. Such is life as a diva with an ambitious younger understudy.

Arriving back at the den as the sun drops closer to the horizon, it is time again for weighing. At the most, a heavily pregnant female weighs in at around one kilogram, but tonight Rufio isn't playing the game, and no amount of enticement will get her on the scales. Like a prima donna who has gained weight, she refuses to confirm it and turns her nose in the opposite direction.

Sitting up with rounded belly facing the sunset, her eyes glaze over as she falls asleep, jerking herself awake each time she tips off balance. Like an older relation who's had one too many glasses of sherry at Christmas time, she gazes blearily around to see if anyone has noticed her nodding off.

Finally, without even a last backward glance at her adoring fans, she is the last to disappear into the den as the sun touches the horizon. And it's time for us to leave, too.

Visits to the meerkats only take place on Sundays and are only available for guests staying at one of two places at Vanzylsrus, the Van Zylsrus Hotel (vanzylsrushotel.com) or Leeupan B+B. Vanzylsrus is approximately 700km by road from Johannesburg, or 1,220km by road from Cape Town on the route to Botswana and Kgalagadi Transfrontier National Park. The nearest local airport is Upington, approximately 400km away. The meerkats themselves are located 20km outside of Vanzylsrus. It is possible to get there in an ordinary family car, as most of the route is on tar, the balance being a good (but rutted) dirt road.





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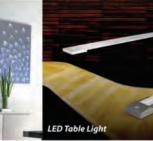
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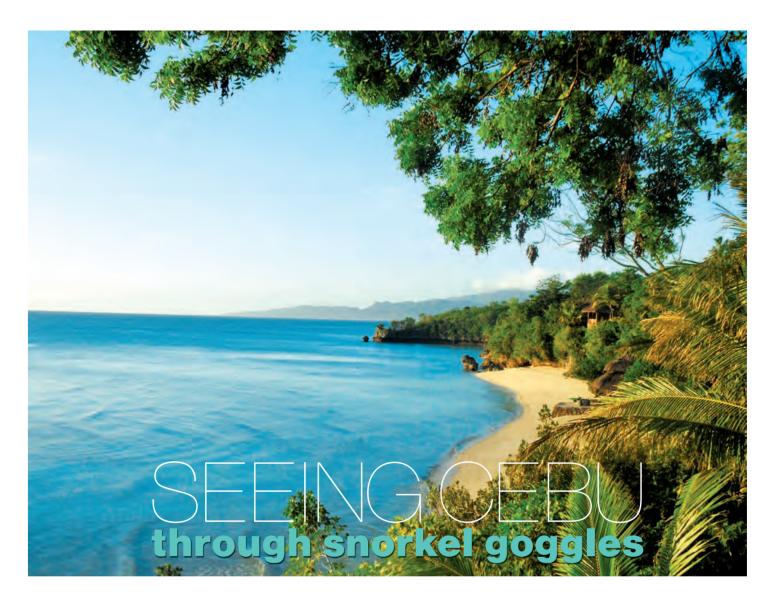


OSBORNE & LITTLE

Danoval Solas meet Brillsh Standards for Durability, BS EN 15573-2-23 BS EN 1022, Export Sales Available

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While Boracay tends to hog the limelight, there are thousands of other islands that invite exploration in the Philippines. In Cebu, large resorts dominate the area close to the airport, but just an hour and a half north is a relatively unknown piece of paradise. Alegre Beach Resort, on the fine sand beaches of Sogod, is an idyllic place to unwind, as KATIE ROBERTS and her family discovered.

ith work, school, sport and social commitments accounting for almost all my 112 waking hours in the week, there's rarely time to just veg out. The diary is bursting at the seams, and even a Sunday afternoon snooze is a rare luxury. So our family of four was eagerly looking forward to an affordable five-day break on Cebu, an island that we'd heard only good things about. We left on an early morning flight with the agenda mapped out in advance: no driving, no worrying and no hurrying.

Set on seven hectares of beachfront (including an orchid farm) and with just

42 rooms, the 22-year-old Alegre Beach Resort is a spacious oasis built for relaxation. From the first introductions, the warm and welcoming staff chatted to us like old friends. They quickly learnt all our names, as we did theirs. The nicknames proved the most entertaining (for everyone), with waiter July explaining he was actually born in April. After listening to the chatter, my cheeky son said with a big grin to receptionist Apple, "Hi, you look yummy!"

Apart from the lush, park-like surroundings and 100-strong, goodnatured staff, we found much to enjoy at Alegre.

Reef revelling

Snorkelling must be one of the most relaxing activities ever invented, and the eight-hectare reef at Alegre's Marine Reserve is perfect for hours of floating among fish and coral. Cheerful Linda at the Aqua Sports Centre kitted us out with snorkels, masks and fins on our first afternoon, so we could go any time the urge struck – which was about three times daily! Scuba diving is popular here, too.

Buoys clearly define a snorkelling area that excludes boats, so it's very safe. When local dive instructor Lew had a half-hour to spare, he showed us giant clams and a black-and-white sea snake, and together we looked for the sea turtles that are often spotted here.

The Marine Reserve is legally protected. Over the past two decades the staff at Alegre have worked hard to preserve this beautiful but fragile ecosystem. Unfortunately, it is threatened by illegal work on the foreshore – sneaky



fishermen exploiting the bounty of these waters – and all-too regular-typhoons. Inhouse marine biologist Geri told us that efforts to monitor the reef include yearly fish counts and coral surveys. Coral is also planted to assist regeneration.

There's a wide diversity of fish, and numerous Nemos (that's clown fish) living in the soft sea anemones provide endless fascination for the children. At eight and 10 they are accomplished snorkellers; the water here is shallow and calm enough for beginners and younger children, too. Knowing the swimming abilities of my two, I felt comfortable enough to stay out of earshot of the eight-year-old, who talked non-stop into his snorkel and scared off the fish!

The sheltered palm grove with beach bar, hammocks and large shady trees was a relaxing spot for sand-castle building without the risk of sunburn. We were happy at the beach, but Alegre also has a very large pool.

Long, lazy meals

A leisurely two-hour breakfast is an absolute luxury after the usual fiveminute rush on school mornings. More so when the backdrop is 180-degree ocean views and the plates are laden with crispy bacon and perfect pancakes. They were so delicious that we almost ate our own body weight in bacon and pancakes, after a healthy start of fresh mango and pineapple.

For other meals we alternated between the restaurant and the relaxed beach bar, tucking into the pizzas and salads for lunch – and the odd San Miguel. The resort's remote location means other restaurant options are a drive away in Cebu city, which could be combined with a night or day excursion. Room service is also available.

The dinner menu included enough reasonably priced (S\$10 to \$14) Filipino and Western options to keep us all interested for five nights. Highly recommended is dinner under the stars at a private table by the beach with a Filipino menu of whole deep-fried fish, deep-fried pork belly and marinated fish in coconut milk and herbs. And, after a day of snorkelling, there is absolutely no reason not to have banana fritters for dessert.



Cabanas

Each thatch-roofed, freestanding cabana has two separate rooms. There's an interconnecting door – larger families or those wanting more space might book both rooms. One room was spacious enough for the four of us to bunk in together in the two double beds. The enormous marble bathrooms have a spa, separate shower and toilet, lots of thick white towels, robes, and a large wardrobe with a safe.

Cabanas one to 10 are recommended, as their patios open directly onto a grassy lawn, perfect for kids to play safely. Other cabanas rise up the hill and all have stunning views of the sparking sea and Bohol Island in the distance.

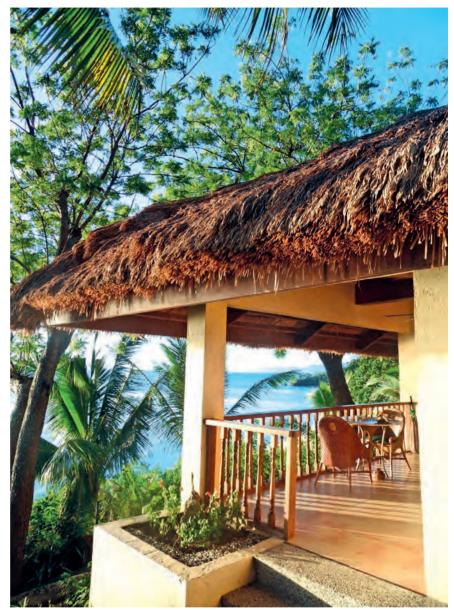
Kayaks and boats

Messing about in double kayaks is great family fun, especially when the water is calm. We paddled about and explored the rocky cliff faces and a fourth little beach that's not accessible by foot. The kids were keen to do this daily, enjoying the adventure, playing with innumerable hermit crabs and looking at the countless shells.

One morning we took a boat trip to Capitancillo Islet (*picture, next page*), a coral atoll an hour's cruise away on a traditional outrigger boat. The tiny islet has a lighthouse built in the 60s and century-old, crumbling quarters built by the Spanish. It's now a protected zone for diving and snorkelling. A leisurely walk around the islet takes less than 10 minutes, so it's a place to relax, eat a picnic and look at the shells and coral. While the snorkelling wasn't great due to the strong current and poor visibility, we managed to swim a lap around the island.

Things To Do

As a break from the beach, we played bad pool and dangerous darts in the Games Room. Explore the resort by bike, or take a walk along the pretty sea cliff. The hotel also has a half-day tour which takes in local highlights including the wet markets at Bogo, a bush snail farm, the Shrine of Our Lady of Miraculous Medal and observing the day-to-day activities.



MADE IN THE PHILIPPINES

General manager Dottie Wurgler-Cronin is an enthusiastic advocate for Cebuano-designed and manufactured products. In the recent refurbishment of the stunning restaurant and bar, she used locally sourced products to showcase the skills of her home island.

Kenneth Cobonpue's indoor and outdoor furniture crafted from natural materials makes a dramatic statement in the restaurant and bar; while Italian designer Carlo Cordano designed and manufactured the centrepiece bar and buffet in his Cebu factory, using sustainable materials.

filveneer.com kennethcobonpue.com



The highlight of the in-house spa is the *hilot*, a traditional healing practice re-interpreted into a unique massage therapy. The best bit is the application of warm, soothing coconut oil on the back, upon which the therapist lays strips of banana leaf, apparently to draw out the knots. I'm not sure about that, but the 60-minutes passed in a blissful flash.

Go soon, and tell them I sent you.

Make it happen

Numerous airlines ply the 3.5-hour route to Cebu, and the resort will arrange hassle-free transfers to Alegre.

alegrebeachresort.com

Island of contrasts

left the south largely untouched.

This year, Cebu rated eighth in the world's top ten cities for outsourced manufacturing and production. Big employers include numerous call centres, a Mitsumi electrical components plant and a Timex watch factory.

In contrast, travelling in the far north of the island around Bogo city, economic inequality is plain to see. Farmers scratch a living from small plots of land in the hills, living in simple, corrugated iron houses. These people were hardest hit by the November 2013 typhoon that carved a path of destruction through the island's northern half and

10W

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When we visited at the beginning of this year, relief centres were still handing out food parcels and distributing corrugated iron sheets and nails for house-rebuilding. Independent of NGOs, Alegre staff delivered relief goods to 1,000 households and supplied building materials for 226 homes.



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> 3D2N Anantara Angkor fr S\$ 470 3D2N Avani Sepang Goldcoast fr S\$ 370

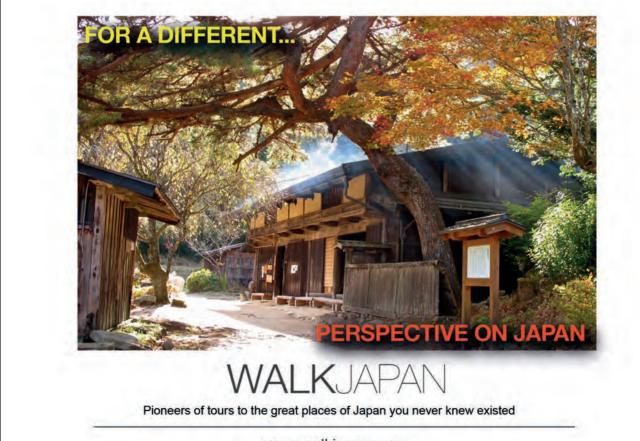
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East Coast 65 6345 0208 Marina Bay Link Mall 65 6636 7003



STYLE UPDATE

Zara

Band of Outsiders

Faith Connection

IT'S ALL

Nothing shows off a holiday glow like a LWD (little white dress), and it's one of this season's hottest trends. Opt for flowing cotton materials that nip in at the waist, à la Kate Middleton.



Marvellous Malabar

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has just opened its second outlet in Singapore, on Serangoon Road. The new showroom features an international collection of classic and contemporary jewellery crafted with gold, platinum and diamonds. **malabargoldanddiamonds.com**



Pleats Please

New pleat-focused local brand Pleatation has just opened its first concept store in Singapore. We love how these clutches are brought to life by the humble pleat, and all with unique textures and constructions. You'll also find clothing, homeware and interiors products too. With new colours and prints added each month, there's plenty of variety. **#02-K6 Orchard Central. pleatation.com**



French Revolution

French labels are having something of a heyday in Singapore at the moment, and the addition of Parisianbased label Sandro last month has just added to the list. You'll love this brand if you're into chic femininity. **#03-18 ION Orchard.**

Hats Off

Singapore's newest millinery label, Hats Off - Handcrafted Headwear for Very Special Occasions, is the place to find unique or bespoke handcrafted headpieces for horseracing events, weddings and parties. Designs are individual, colourful, stylish, and always made with love from quality materials sourced from the UK and Australia. Look out for the 50-percent-off sale during the months of June and July only. Email camp_dk@hotmail.com to book a fitting appointment.



Mini Mac Mayhem

The iconic Mini Mac Clutch (\$299) is now available in ten different shades, ranging from bold, solid colours to metallic shades and contrasting hues. New colours are released every month. We've got our eye on the printed snakeskin (\$349, pictured), large enough to hold your keys, wallet, phone and other essentials. To shop, visit the Doorstep Luxury boutique at 163 Telok Ayer Street, or visit doorstepluxury.com.

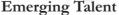


Swim Good

Swimwear label Tom & Teddy has launched its 2014 new collection, just in time for Father's Day and the summer holidays. All the latest designs come in sizes ranging from age 12 months up to XXL, so there's something for all the boys. Super-soft, mid-thigh shorts come in bold, retro-inspired prints in punchy colour combinations. Choose from speedboats, scooters and airplane motifs, or a lovely, coolblue wave pattern. **To shop online,** visit tomandteddy.com. Free delivery within Singapore.







New at online retailer Inverted Edge is Singaporean label Pauline Ning, an emerging and independent designer who produces ready-towear urban pieces with a feminine spin. We love the draping, simple tailoring and cool silhouettes. **To shop, visit invertededge.com.**



Bridal Brilliance

Mark the following dates in your diaries for Trinity Gallery's upcoming trunk shows. American designer Reem Acra, known for her glamorous, red-carpet-worthy designs, will be showcasing 20 wedding dresses from 3 to 5 July. Next up, Oscar de la Renta's 2015 bridal collection will showcase 30 wedding dresses from 24 to 26 July. **#02-14 Raffles Hotel Arcade**. **For more information, visit trinitygallery. com.sg or call 6336 5052.**

STYLE HUNTER

STYLING WITH AN EDGE

For indie clothing that's not in the malls, we head to Inverted Edge to check out its ever-growing roster of up-and-coming contemporary Asia-Pacific designers such as Lion Earl, Fleamadonna, Day Dream Nation and Karen Walker. But did you also know Inverted Edge offers professional styling? The team stands by the fact that a good styling session doesn't just boost your confidence, but can also make you a smarter shopper, giving you tips you can use again and again. We chat to **Debra Langley, CEO of Inverted Edge**, about styling up a storm in Singapore.

Who are your typical customers for styling advice?

Often women come to us because they want to adjust their style after having a baby, or they have a new job, or they're starting a business, or just because they're new to Singapore and don't know what to wear in this climate. This is where we love to step in, because after years of working with different silhouettes and personalities, we can see options that aren't necessarily obvious to the customer.

What advice do you offer women who are rather self-conscious about their bodies?

Every woman, no matter how tall or small or thin or curvy, has a part of her



body that she obsesses over. Rather than trying to hide it with looser or tighter clothing, or a combination that doesn't flatter, we've learned that there are styling solutions for everyone. Best of all for us is the boost of confidence that our customers get from learning how simple styling tweaks can totally change how they look and feel.

Where do you look for inspiration?

For trends, we follow various styleinfluencers and bloggers, especially those who encourage women to develop and own their own personal style - and that means dressing in a way that reflects their personality, not buying a brand simply because of the name. We try to help through introducing interesting new brands like those we carry, but ultimately our goal is to arm our customers with the personal style information they need to make well-informed purchasing decisions every time they shop - not just when they shop with us."

Take a look at Inverted Edge's collections at invertededge.com

EDITOR'S PICKS

BOLD 'N' BRIGHT

For the holiday months ahead, lend your outfits some summer cheer with some bright arm candy.



8am: Catching a glimpse of local folks, from an ancient village built on stilts 1pm: Exchanging stories with the locals, sampling food so full of flavour

5pm: Sitting on the pier with the village cat, watching the skies as the sun sets

BINTAN RESORTS. MY DAY DONE MY WAY.

Penyengat Island, Bintan

...........

Located south of Bintan Island, the charming Malay fishing village of Penyengat Island truly reflects Bintan as a place of culture and history. Visit this 18th century village or discover the 100-year-old Banyan Tree Temple in nearby Senggarang — all here, in Bintan Resorts.



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Happily Ever After

Presenting our annual wedding special packed full of bridal inspiration, gorgeous dresses, real weddings, beauty tips for the big day and much more.



For modern silhouettes: Love, Yu

Ee-Lyn Tang worked in the banking industry before deciding to pursue her dream. A graduate of the Parsons School of Design in New York, she started her label Love, Yu in 2009. Ee-Lyn specialises in simple, timeless and chic wedding gowns. They're now available internationally, including at the e-boutique Shopbop.com.

Love, Yu's designs are stocked at multi-label boutique The Prelude Bridal. Gowns range from \$2,000 to \$3,800. 8 Mohamed Sultan Road, #03-01. weloveyu.com



For romantic: Renée L

Renée Leung studied at the Brookes College of Fashion in Los Angeles from the age of 17 and, upon graduating, began working as a designer for brands such as Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, Bill Blass and Calvin Klein. In 2006, she launched her eponymous line in Singapore.

Gowns start from \$2,000. 64 Emerald Hill Road

Also try:

Danny L., #03-11/12 Delfi Orchard. danny-l.com Dang Bridal, 6 Eu Tong Sen Street, #07-21. dangbridal.com.sg Olive Suite, #03-25 Delfi Orchard. olivesuiteweddings.com



For wallet-friendly: The Gown Warehouse

The Gown Warehouse saw a lack in availability of a variety of beautiful, up-tothe-minute yet affordable weddings. New collections are brought in every quarter, and the large space and mirrored stage is conducive both for browsing and for trying on dresses.

Short dresses are around \$250 and longer dresses are between \$500 and \$2,000. 11 Woodlands Close, Woodlands 11, #06-38.

Also try: Vivian Gown, 308A Anchorvale Road

BOUTIQUES FOR BRIDES

Surely every girl's ultimate shopping experience is finding her dream wedding dress (or dresses!). To get you started on your search, LEANA DORAY of **The Wedding Scoop** has put together her list of top bridal boutiques in Singapore, with a few extras on the side.



For iconic: Vera Wang

The news that a Vera Wang Bride boutique is slated to open at The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands in the second half of 2014 is sure to set Singapore brides' hearts aflutter! The influential designer is known for her modern approach, sophisticated drama and feminine detailing. (And, more recently during her Fall 2014 shows, for shocking colour – pinks!)

For couture: Tan Yoong

Tan Yoong has been a fashion designer for over two decades and has won numerous awards for his fantastical and surrealistic creations. For him, what constitutes good bridal design is timeless appeal, and his philosophy has always been to design pieces that are simple but stunning, where less is more but not necessarily minimalist. A simple bridal gown starts from \$5,000 and a simple evening gown from \$3,000. #0250 Lucky Plaza. tanyoong.com

Also try: Frederick Lee Bridal, 2 Jalan Kalpa. frederickbridal.com



For designer and luxury: Belle and Tulle

Belle and Tulle is a new multi-label boutique that features international designers such as Anne Barge, Kenneth Pool by Amsale Aberra, and Lela Rose, and will soon be carrying gowns from Elie by Elie Saab, Naem Khan and Romona Keveza. Choose from an array of dresses including romantic ball gowns, fine silk sheaths and mermaid cuts, or designs featuring delicate embroidery and Chantilly lace.

Anne Barge gowns start from \$6,000, Lela Rose, \$7,000, Kenneth Pool, \$8,000. #03-12 Palais Renaissance. belleandtulle.com

Also try:

Trinity Gallery (for lines such as Jenny Packham and Monique Lhuillier), #02-14 Raffles Hotel Arcade. trinitygallery.com.sg The Atelier Bridal (for lines such as Carolina Herrera and Marchesa), 22A Ann Siang Road. theatelierbridal.com

The Prelude Bridal (for lines such as Christos and Badgley Mishka), 8 Mohamed Sultan Road, #03-01. theprelude.com.sg Something Borrowed (gowns for purchase or rental). somethingborrowed.com.sg



For local:

Silhouette The Atelier Silhouette The Atelier has been in Singapore since 1995 and in the region for the past 18 years. It carries a wide range of dresses in different styles (particularly fit-to-flare and ball gowns), but its signature design approach is simple and classic.

Gowns start from \$2,000. #05-38 Orchard Central

Also try:

The Wedding Present, 25 Bukit Pasoh Road. weddingpresentbride.com Digio Bridal, 69 Tanjong Pagar Road. digiobridal.com Rico-A-Mona, 33 Tanjong Pagar Road. rico-a-mona.com



For the dovenne of gown design: AnnTeoh

Ann Teoh has been designing gowns for over 20 years. Her label strives to create gowns that suit each bride's style and personality, with dresses that are timeless yet unconventional, and comfortable to wear.

Prices average \$3,000 for a full-length wedding gown. Suites 02-18/19, Delfi Orchard. annteoh.com

For structural, avant-garde pieces: Vaughn Tan

After graduating as a materials engineer, Vaughn dove straight into making wedding dresses with a bridal boutique and started his eponymous label in 2006. He's known for structured designs and high-fashion style that are inspired by, amongst other things, architecture. His emphasis on great fabrics and meticulous attention to detail help him create sleek, detailed and unconventional gowns.

Gowns start from \$4,500. 7 Spottiswoode Park Road. vaughnt.com 🗈

For bespoke crafting: Time Taken To Make A Dřess

Jade and Letitia's passion for design led them to start their own dressmaking shop. They believe women are complex creatures with multifaceted styles, so they create pieces that flatter each individual's body and show off her personality.

Gowns range from \$1.000 for short dresses to \$3,000 for mermaid cuts and \$4,000 for ball gowns. 61 Niven Road. timetakentomakeadress.com

Also trv:

Caramel & Co., 17 How Sun Road. caramel.com.sg Jessicacindy, #02-08 Scotts Square. jessicacindy.com



Leana Doray writes The Wedding Scoop, a Singaporean webportal founded in 2013. theweddingscoop.com

As seen first or expativing.sg! more wedding an fashion articles Visit expatiiving so body_style/fashioi ******



TULLE PRINCESS



Azure dress by Monique Lhuillier

Available at Trinity Gallery, trinitygallery.com.sg



Swarovski crystal ribbon brooch by Ben-Amun

\$275, available at Pinwheel Jewels, pinwheeljewels.com



Bridal hair and makeup by Kelly Bilimoria

kellybilimoria.com



Peony bouquet, The Bloom Room

bloomroom.sg

HOPELESS ROMANTIC



Belle Ivory dress by Jenny Packham Available at Trinity Gallery, trinitygallery.com.sg



Juliet Series II 18k diamond earrings by Facets (cushion-cut diamond, 1.23 carats; single-cut diamond, 0.9 carats)

facetsingapore.com



Floral headband, Flower Girl

englishflowergirl.com



Rio Dress by Naeem Khan

Available at Belle and Tulle, belleandtulle.com



The best way to start planning for the big day? Lots of visual inspiration. Get in the spirit with our wedding-day spread, including fashion, flowers – the works.

SWEET AND STRUCTURED



Dress by Romona Keveza

Available at Belle and Tulle, belleandtulle.com

MERMAID MAIDEN



18 carat rose gold ring with diamond frame, Choices by DL \$3435.

Interchangeable ring system, view more at choicesbydl.nl



Floral arrangement by Flower Girl

englishflowergirl.com



Avina dress by Rivini

Available at Trinity Gallery, trinitygallery.com.sg



Dress by Romona Keveza

Available at Belle and Tulle, belleandtulle.com



Liza earrings by Chelsea de Luca

\$250, available at Peachy, peachyshop.com



Kelly Bilimoria

kellybilimoria.com



Intrigue dress by Monique Lhuillier

Available at Trinity Gallery, trinitygallery.com.sg

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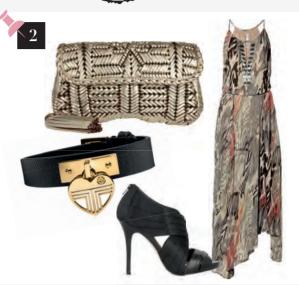


Juliette dress by Fever, \$200, available at Willow & Huxley, willowandhuxley.com

Metallic heels by Brian Atwood, \$646, available at The Outnet, theoutnet.com

Hand-woven hat, price on request, The Hattitude, thehattitude.com

Crystal cluster necklace by Anton Heunis, \$315, available at Pinwheel Jewels, pinwheeljewels.com

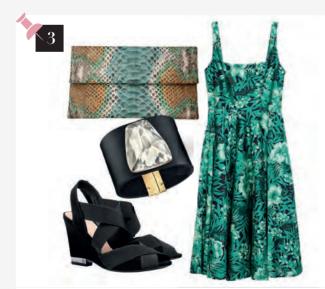


Beaded printed chiffon dress by Chelsea Flower, \$274, available at The Outnet, theoutnet.com

Gold metallic woven clutch by Anya Hindmarch, \$400, available at The Outnet, theoutnet.com

Leather and satin pumps by Lucy Choi, \$221, available at The Outnet, theoutnet.com

Adeline Fret heart leather bracelet, price on request, Tory Burch

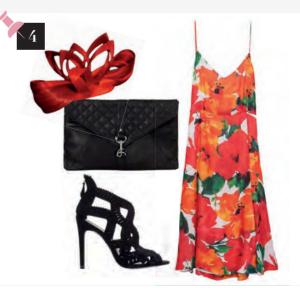


Green printed dress, \$139, Zara

Lille python clutch bag, \$220, A-python, a-python.com

Black strappy wedges, price on request, Tory Burch

Arty large cuff bracelet, Swarovski, \$320



Bold floral printed dress, \$109, Zara

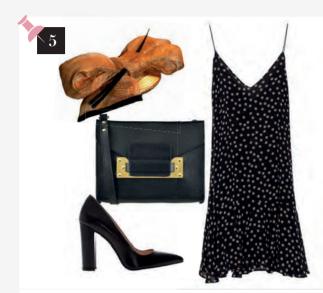
Red opera hat, price on request, Hats Off – Handcrafted Headwear For Very Special Occasions

Criss-cross high-heel sandals, \$129, Zara

Quilted faux-leather bag, \$79, Topshop



Received an invitation through the post? Don't fret! Shopping for your outfit just got a whole lot easier with our edit of everything pretty and wedding-worthy this season.



Polka-dot dress, \$79.90, Zara

Gold button hat, price on request, Hats off – Handcrafted Headwear For Very Special Occasions

Leather asymmetric high-heel court shoes, \$149, Zara

Soft mini-envelope clutch by Sophie Hulme, \$790, available at Doorstep Luxury, doorstepluxury.com



Custom-made formal shirt, from \$160, Victor York, victoryork.com Custom-made formal jacket, from \$900, Victor York, victoryork.com

Black formal trousers, price on request, Zara

Oxford shoes, \$149, Zara

Bowtie, \$39, Zara



Najahi dress by By Malene Birger, \$530, available at Willow and Huxley, willowandhuxley.com

Crystal chandelier earrings in rose by Anton Heunis, \$298, available at Pinwheel Jewels, pinwheeljewels.com

High-heel leather court shoes with bow, \$139, Zara

Baby-blue hat, price on request, Hats off – Handcrafted Headwear For Very Special Occasions



Dress by Halston Heritage, \$688, available at The Outnet, theoutnet.com

Strappy platform sandals, price on request, Kate Spade Saturday

Snake-print clutch, price on request, Zara

Mini statement necklace, \$36.90, Accessorize

Whether you're the groom, the best man, the father of the bride or a guest, there's nothing like a good suit to make you look and feel the part at a wedding. Investing in good materials is key to an ensemble that will do you justice time and time again. We asked the tailoring experts at **CYC The Custom Shop**, established in 1935, to clue us in on key suit trends for weddings.

Photography by Michael Bernabe Shoot direction by Susannah Jaffer Hair & makeup by Kelly Bilimoria, kellybilimoria.com Location provided by ESPA, Resorts World Sentosa Model: Rodrigo C from Upfront Models by upfrontmodels.com Leather "siloso" brogues by Ed et Al, edetal.sg

LOOK 1: BEACH WEDDING

MODEL WEARS: PINK BLAZER; WHITE SHIRT, 100 2-PLY 100% COTTON SHIRT; LIGHT GREY 100% COTTON

For a beach wedding, styles in lighter shades and weight suit the mood perfectly. They make you look comfortable, without sacrificing dapper elegance



LOOK 2: GARDEN WEDDING

MODEL WEARS: LIGHT GREY CHECKERED SUIT; PALE PINK, 100% EGYPTIAN COTTON SHIRT

Light grey is versatile for a summer suit, and great for an outdoor wedding. The colour is a bridge between casualness and a traditionally smart image. A pale pink shirt softens the look and fits in well with the surrounding greenery.

TAILORING WITH CYC: THE PROCESS

- Visit the store and sit down with CYC's consultants to discuss the kind of look you'd like to go for.
- Based on your preferences and the wedding theme, the consultants will help you to select your suit and shirt fabrics and styles.
- You'll be measured and an order will be placed. Two weeks later, you'll return for a fitting session, after which any necessary adjustments to the garments will be made.
- Your completed outfit can be picked up two weeks after the fitting session.

PRICE GUIDE:

Mixed wool suits from \$745. Pure wool suits from \$1,045. Cotton blend suits from \$745. Pure cotton suits from \$1,790. Pure linen suits from \$792.

For more information, visit cyccustomshop.com or facebook.com/CYCcustomshop

Retail stores in Singapore: #02-12 Raffles Hotel Arcade, 6336 3556 #03-16A Orchard Gateway, 6737 5332 #01-21 Republic Plaza II, 6538 0522

LOOK 3: CHURCH WEDDING MODEL WEARS:

100% WOOL SUIT; DEEP SKY BLUE GINGHAM 100% EGYPTIAN COTTON SHIRT A medium-blue suit is ideal for a church wedding, as the colour is classic and formal, yet not as seriouslooking as black. The gingham shirt adds a touch of personality, and could be matched to the bridesmaids' dresses. Blue suits are perfect for daywear and are ideally worn with shoes in a brown hue.



LOOK 4: BLACK-TIE WEDDING MODEL WEARS:

GREY SUIT JACKET WITH BLACK LAPELS; WHITE TUXEDO SHIRT; BLACK PANTS WITH SATIN TRIM

You just can't go wrong with a sleek, form-fitting tuxedo. With these contrasting lapels, you'll stand out in a sea of traditional black tuxes – for all the right reasons.

Make Me

The dress is a huge decision, but your makeup for the big day is also important. Makeup expert **Kelly Bilimoria** from **Paparazzi Black** talks us through achieving your perfect look.

Makeup and hair by Kelly Bilimoria, kellybilimoria.com

he summer wedding season is now in full swing and all brides-to-be are dreaming of that picture-perfect look for their special day. But do you do your own makeup or do you call in the professionals? If you choose to do it yourself, here are my top tips.

DIY TIPS

- Accentuate your eyes or your lips, but not both at once – If you pick a bolder or brighter lip colour, keep your eyes relatively light.
- Opt for waterproof and sweat-proof Make sure you use waterproof mascara and eyeliner; this will allow you to have your "moments" without the worry of ruining your makeup.
- Define your brows After getting the perfect tweeze or wax, make sure your eyebrows don't get lost under the foundation and with the photography flash. Lightly fill them with a pencil; even if you're wearing minimal makeup, they contribute tremendously to the polished final look.
- Exaggerate colour Remember that the camera drains colour from your face (especially if you're wearing white!), so pick a lip or eye colour one or two shades brighter than you'd usually wear.
- Keep a touch-up kit on standby Have a bridesmaid or a friend carry your lipstick, a highlighter and mattifying powder or spray.

Though most opt for the "natural look" on their wedding day, it's really one of the hardest looks to create, since it has to perfectly accentuate your features. For that reason, hiring a professional makeup artist is more often than not your ticket to looking and feeling your best.

HIRE LIKE A PRO

Makeup artists are trained not only to find colours that suit you, but to recreate a look that complements your dress, too. If your dress is romantic, for example, they may opt for a softer look. They should also understand how different factors such as climate and lighting will affect your final look. I advise expat brides in Singapore to try makeup artists outside of photography studios and hair salons. Avoid wedding-day disaster by hiring someone fully trained in application for Western skin types. Remember to also book in for a trial, so you can make a well-informed decision.

In Singapore, there's a cultural difference with how brides like to look on their wedding day. Make sure that the person you've chosen understands your needs and desires and can perform them.

GET THE FACTS

- What's included in my package? Check if it includes everything from primer, hydration and mattifying creams to false eyelashes.
- Do you require a deposit or a contract? If the makeup artist or company is professional, this will be a standard procedure. Deposits in Singapore can be minimal or up to 50 percent.
- Who will be doing my makeup? It's highly possible that your makeup on the day will be done by someone different from your trial, especially if you book through a studio or a hair salon. Make sure you lock in the same person who did your trial makeup.
- How many events will my makeup artist be doing on my wedding day?

Most artists will work with a number of brides, so make sure that you are top priority and that another wedding won't interfere with yours.

BRIDAL PROMO

For *EL* readers, all bridal trials with Paparazzi Black are currently priced at \$65. Pre-book your wedding makeup and receive a complimentary goodie bag worth \$150. What's more, if you book makeup for your bridal party, you'll receive a complimentary makeup service for the mother of the bride. **To book or for more enquiries, email kelly.bilimoria@hotmail.com or call 9822 2203.**



OBSTETRICS

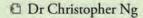
- Pre Pregnancy Clinic
- Antenatal Risk Assessment
- Antenatal Diagnosis & Counselling
- 3D, 4D & Detailed Antenatal Ultrasound Scans
- Fetal Wellbeing Assessment
- · Birth Plan / Delivery

GYNAECOLOGY

- Cancer Screening
- Contraception
- General Gynaecology (Fibroids, Ovarian Cysts, Endometriosis & Menstrual Problems)
- Infertility Management (IVF & SOIUI)
- Menopause / Bioidentical Hormones
- Minimally Invasive Surgery (Laparoscopy & Hysteroscopy)
- Urogynaecology (Incontinence & Prolapse Surgery)
- Women's Health Screening

AESTHETICS & REJUVENATION

- BOTOX
- Eyelash Enhancement
- Injectable Fillers
- Hair Removal
- Hair Restoration
- LED Phototherapy
- Maximus TriLipo RF (Facial & Body Contouring, Fat & Cellulite Reduction)
- NovaPlus 3R IPL (Skin Tightening, Skin Rejuvenation, Facial Flushing & Pigment Removal)
- Professional Chemical Peels
- Stretch Mark Treatment
- Spectra Laser (Skin Rejuvenation, Acne, Melasma & Pore Reduction)
- Tattoo Removal
- Vein Removal (Face, Arms & Legs)



Obstetrician, Gynaecologist MBBS (Imperial College, UK), FRANZCOG (Aust-NZ) MMed (O&G) (S'pore), FAMS (O&G) (S'pore)



1 Orchard Boulevard Singapore 248649

#04-03A Camden Medical Centre Phone: (65) 6733 8810 • Fax: (65) 6733 8850 After Office: (65) 6535 8833 Website: www.gynaemd.com.sg Email: gynaemd@singnet.com.sg

REAL PEOPLE, REAL WEDDINGS

Planning your wedding in Asia and looking for inspiration? Four Singapore-based brides share the ins and outs of their big day.

Gabrielle Riggir & Klas Eriksson

From: New Zealand and Sweden Wedding destination: Phuket, Thailand Bride's dress: BCBGMAXAZRIA Photographer and florist: Our wedding planner Fab Event sorted everything out for us

Head count: 35

When did you get married? 29 March 2013.

Who designed your invitations?

Klas and I designed our invitations together, which may not have been the smartest idea! We chose to get married quite quickly after we got engaged, and given that our family and friends live all around the world, we felt that sending e-invitations was the best option.

Why did you pick this destination?

As everyone knows, Singapore is expensive when it comes to weddings, and after looking around at the options we quickly realised that even though Singapore is right between Sweden (Klas) and New Zealand (Gabrielle), it was unfortunately not a financially viable option for us or our guests.

We looked at a few options around the region, and the reason we ultimately chose Phuket is because the flights to Phuket from New Zealand and Sweden are affordable and direct, the accommodation is cheap, and it made it easy for our guests to get around to different destinations if they wished to continue their holiday after the wedding.

Although Klas and I did not see Phuket as our dream wedding destination, it was a great compromise as we managed to find a really nice restaurant right on the beach in a relatively quiet area. At the end of the day, your wedding shouldn't be about the destination, but who is there to celebrate with you.

Did you use a wedding planner?

I knew from the get-go that there was absolutely no way I was going to get married without a wedding planner. That might sound a bit snobby, but it really was for unpretentious and practical reasons. The amount of work you have to do to pull a wedding off is absolutely huge, and as a video producer I really do understand this. I see it in my work every day, where people try to take on projects they aren't familiar with to save money, but due to inexperience, end up spending more money and time than if they had hired a professional. (Not to mention the stress.)

I wanted our wedding to be our day. I didn't want to be stressed that we were missing one chair, or that the flowers were an hour late.

The planner we hired – Yai, from Fab Event planners based in Phuket (fabevent.com) – was an absolute magician. The price was also extremely reasonable – in fact it was an absolute steal, but not at the cost of the big day. He also provided flowers and a photographer at the last minute.

What was the biggest challenge?

Guest logistics. For many people, coming to a country halfway across the world on short notice to attend a wedding is a difficult thing to do, so we had to be flexible on our dates and







understanding about the wedding venue and location.

Second biggest was probably the dress, because I'm fussy and I hate frills and sparkles, and it's pretty hard to find anything else at bridal shops in Singapore!

What was your biggest expense?

We did it really cheap, and it was great that way. The most annoying expense was the alcohol. The restaurant where we held the wedding had some very strange pricing options for free-flow drinks, making it quite difficult to gauge what we should do. I think it all worked out in the end though. As a foreign couple in Thailand, you have to be careful that you aren't being ripped off.

What did you serve your guests?

An array of very nice Italian and Thai food. I honestly can't tell you how good it was, because I was so nervous and excited I barely ate, but the guests really loved it.

Mandy, my step-mum, made our cake. It's way nicer to have a cake made by family than to buy a cake from a shop, I think. Growing up, the only time I ever ate cake was if someone I knew had baked it. Then you are kind of forced to eat it!

Any complications with the marriage formalities?

We personally didn't have any difficulties, but if I were to give advice to other people about having a destination wedding, it would be not to bother getting officially married in the country you will have your ceremony in. It's so easy to sign the papers in Singapore first, or afterwards, as in our case. The process of becoming officially wed in Thailand is really long and difficult, and some parts of it can only be done in Bangkok.

Top tips for brides-to-be?

Don't get caught up with what everybody else wants your wedding to be: make it what you want it to be. And don't overthink it – it's only a wedding!



Karen Cole-Fitzsimons & Joseph Fitzsimons

From: Wales and New Zealand Wedding destination: Nosh, Rochester Park, Singapore

Bride's dress: Rosetta Nicolini (Jorga) - the dress was bought in Wales

Photographer and florist:

Photographer – Brendan Fitzpatrick, loveislight.net Florist – One Olive, oneolive.net

Head count: 50 guests during the day, 30 guests for the evening

When did you get married?

Saturday, 23 November 2013.

Who designed your invitations?

As we're both graphic designers, we were able to design and create all the stationery ourselves. We also did all the place settings, signage, props and table names. We even built our own website!

Why did you pick this destination?

Weddings here in Singapore are very different to the traditional weddings that we're used to in the UK and New Zealand. We had considered some of the many wonderful hotels, but they just didn't have the right feel for us. They all felt too big, too corporate and certainly not quaint enough for our theme. We wanted something with some personality. When we first visited Nosh we fell in love with the place. The secluded, alfresco green house with its retractable roof was perfect, and at night when it's lit up it is incredibly romantic!

Did you use a wedding planner?

No, but the events planner at Nosh restaurant, Tom, was extremely helpful and very accommodating with all our requests.

What was the biggest obstacle?

For us, planning a wedding when we were in different countries and on different time zones. Luckily, I had a fantastic group of bridesmaids who helped me every step of the way. Logistically, getting all of our friends and family here from the UK, Australia and New Zealand was also a challenge.

What was the biggest expense?

The venue. Although there was no rental for the venue itself, we had a minimum spend to meet.

What did you serve your guests?

A three-course sit-down meal that they chose on the day. Nosh serves innovative fusion food, and we picked a selection from the dinner menu.

Did you have any favours?

We gave each of our guests two favours. The first were small, handmade map notebooks. We wrote personal messages to each guest inside them, wrapped them with ribbon and attached a luggage tag, which then also acted as the place name on the tables. We donated money to the Alzheimer's Society in exchange for "forget-me-not" flower badges in memory of my late grandmother, who we lost not long before the wedding. Each guest also got a badge as part of his or her favour.

Any complications with the marriage formalities?

None whatsoever. Our solemniser was fantastic throughout the whole process, and made the ceremony light-hearted in parts so that we'd feel more relaxed.

Top tips for brides-to-be?

First of all, enjoy the preparations as much as you can! The planning was the



best bit for us, and we loved sourcing the small details online. Our favourite go-to website was Etsy.

Second, don't have your hen or stag do the night before the wedding! We had all joked how potentially dangerous it was, and I was adamant that it would be fine... but there were certainly a few sore heads the morning of the wedding. All great memories, though, thanks to my wonderful bridesmaids and Joe's best man and brother.

Lastly, on the day itself, savour every single moment, as it goes by far too quickly. Remember beforehand to give your photographer a list of all the special pictures you want to capture so you're not disappointed afterwards.

Other recommendations

Wedding cake: Missus Bonbon, missusbonbon.com Makeup: P.S. Jesslyn, ps-jesslyn.com Saxophonist: Johnny James (managed by White Noise Creations) Band and Entertainment: White Noise Creation, whitenoisecreations.com







Rachmania & Knut Thorsland

From: Indonesia and Norway Wedding destination: Bali Bride's dress: Meras Jakarta Photographer and florist: Bani Amir Photography, Jakarta Ningali Photography, Yogyakarta Ai Luo Si Floristry, Bali Head count: 120

When did you get married? 12 April 2014.

Who designed your invitations? They were designed by Rumah Bingkisan by Vena Noorbasha in Jakarta.

Why did you pick this destination?

Bali was a natural choice as I'm a true island girl and have always dreamed of a beach wedding – I grew up near the ocean with swimming, scuba diving and surfing. I also used to live in Bali, so it feels like home to me – I couldn't imagine any other beach destination for my big day!

Did you use a wedding planner?

I used Bali-based wedding organiser Dove Wedding Infinity, and they did an amazing job of pulling everything together.

What was the biggest obstacle?

Funnily enough, we didn't have any big obstacles - everything ran very smoothly, probably thanks to our wedding planner!

What was the biggest expense?

Our biggest expense was definitely the decoration of the venue, and I took part in every single tiny detail. But it was worth it to get everything looking beautiful.

What did you serve your guests?

Because they were from all over the world, we served a selection of different cuisines for dinner: Indonesian, Balinese, Western and Chinese. We also had a variety of Indonesian and French desserts, along with cold and hot tapas, cocktails and beer at sunset.

Did you have any favours? No.

Any complications with the marriage formalities?

Not at all. We got married in Singapore two months before through ROM (Registry of Marriage). It was a quick and simple process for foreigners like us. In Bali, we had our holy matrimony ceremony and reception.

Top tips for brides-to-be?

Many brides stress about their wedding





day, especially when they're working or studying at the same time. I really suggest hiring a good wedding planner, as for me this made all the difference. She helped make my dreams come true!

Other recommendations

Krishna Aji Photography, Bali krishna-aji.blogspot.sg





Felice & Chris Mockford

Wedding destination: Phuket, Thailand Bride's dress: Renée L, Singapore, reneel.com

Photographer and florist:

D-Image Plus,

d-imageplusphotography.com Supparin from Wedding Flowers Phuket, weddingflowersphuket.com **Head count:** 70

When did you get married? December 2013.

Who designed your invitations?

We found a template design on Etsy and had them printed in Singapore.

Why did you pick this destination?

We wanted to have our wedding in Asia so our friends and family from the UK could make a holiday of it. Phuket worked for various reasons, including the ease of travel and its stunning private villas.

Did you use a wedding planner?

Yes - most of the private villas we considered required you to have a recognised planner.

What was the biggest obstacle? Organising everything in a different country was a challenge. We had to fly over a few times to find venues and do food-tasting, but this was a good excuse for a holiday!

What was the biggest expense?

Hiring the wedding villa for three days, closely followed by food and booze.

What did you serve guests?

Fusion canapés, Thai food and full-moonstyle "buckets" when the party started!

Did you have any favours? No.

Any complications with the marriage formalities?

The legal ceremony took place in Singapore a week before, and we had a non-religious celebrant to do the blessing in Phuket.

Top tips for brides-to-be?

Find a good wedding planner, and make sure you ask for testimonials and photographs of previous weddings. Secondly, if you are getting married outside, make sure you have a backup option for wet weather – don't just cross your fingers and hope for sun!





Other recommendations

Bridesmaid's dresses: The Radical Thread Co, Etsy, etsy.com/sg-en/ shop/TheRadicalThreadCo Tuk Tuk Diner: Burgers and chips served from a tuk-tuk for post-wedding munchies, tuktukdiner.com Yacht hire: We had a pre-wedding yacht party on the *Shangani*, a luxury 70-foot catamaran, hired through Tiger Marine Charter, tigermarinecharter.com Hair and makeup: Lisa Allen, makeupartistphuket.com

There are many wonderful spots to get married in Singapore. Here are our top 20 wedding venues, with some extra suggestions on the side. Whether you'd prefer an intimate ceremony or a lavish celebration, there's definitely a setting to suit every couple in this buzzing city.

Location

DCALIOI

By Leana Doray

FOR COUPLES WHO GET A THRILL FROM HEIGHTS

and

Way up high on the 55th level of ION shopping mall is celebrity chef Luke Mangan's **Salt Grill & Sky Bar**, a 6,000-squarefoot space. In the main dining area, which has floor-to-ceiling windows, you'll enjoy contemporary Australian cuisine and views of southern Singapore. *ION Orchard*, #55-01 and #56-01. saltgrill.com

Capacity: Seating for 100 guests and standing space for 200 guests **Cost:** Exclusive booking of the restaurant from \$10,000 for lunch and \$25,000 for dinner.

WE ALSO SUGGEST:

1-Altitude, located in the heart of the Central Business District. 1 Raffles Place. 1-altitude.com

FOR COUPLES WHO LOVE NATURE

Burkhill Hall is situated in the lush surrounds of the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Overlooking the National Orchid Garden and set in a restored colonial bungalow, Burkhill Hall is the perfect spot if you're looking to tie the knot away from the city's hustle and bustle. **Capacity:** 180 guests.

Cost: From \$561.75 per hour with a minimum of a four-hour booking, or \$6,291.60 for a full day.

WE ALSO SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING VENUES IN THE BOTANIC GARDENS: Halia, Ginger Garden. Food for Thought, Tanglin Gate, #B1-00.

FOR COUPLES WITH OVER 300 GUESTS

An indoor venue with a difference, the Flower Field Hall is within the Flower Dome at Gardens by the Bay. Your guests can dine in comfort alongside the Flower Field display, which reflects different seasons, festivals and themes at different times of the year. On the other side of the hall, they'll have a spectacular view of the Marina Bay skyline. 18 Marina Gardens Drive.

Capacity: Up to 700 guests for a sitdown dinner



Known for its impeccable service, the Four Seasons is located just off tree-lined Orchard Boulevard and has a quieter and more intimate ambience than other hotels on the Orchard strip. The Four Seasons Ballroom is an elegant venue and the larger of the hotel's two ballrooms. Pre-dinner cocktail options include a Peking duck station, a martini ice bar or strawberries on ice. 190 Orchard Boulevard.

fourseasons.com/singapore Capacity: 320 guests in the Four Seasons Ballroom

FOR VERY LARGE WEDDINGS, WE ALSO SUGGEST: Regent Hotel Singapore, 1 Cuscaden Road. Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore, 22 Orange Grove Road. The St. Regis Singapore, 29 Tanglin Road. The Ritz-Carlton, 7 Raffles Avenue. Millenia Hotel Singapore, 7 Raffles Avenue.

FOR COUPLES WITH UNDER 20 GUESTS

The floating pods at The Fullerton Bay Hotel Singapore are a set of recently launched event spaces on the waters of Marina Bay. The pods are suitable for solemnisation ceremonies for 20 to 40 persons

per pod. Each pod comes with a balcony and open-air rooftop, complete with idyllic views of Marina Bay and the skyline. *80 Collyer Quay.*

fullertonbayhotel.com **Capacity:** 40 guests per pod **Cost:** From \$88 per person for lunch and \$98 per person for dinner,

with a minimum of 20 guests





Aumi Hotel is located in the heart of the CBD just opposite Raffles Hotel. This boutique hotel has a rooftop infinity pool which creates a great backdrop for an intimate solemnisation that can be followed by a reception at the bar and lounge. 41 Seah Street, naumihotel.com

Bar and Lounge Capacity: 32 seated, 70 standing Rooftop Infinity Pool Capacity: 18 seated, 45 standing

FOR SMALL POOLSIDE SOLEMNISATIONS WE ALSO SUGGEST: Park Hotel Clarke Quay, 1 Unity Street. Village Hotel Changi, 1 Netheravon Road.

FOR COUPLES WHO LOVE A BIT OF GLAMOUR

Tamarind Hill is in a beautiful stand-alone colonial bungalow, surrounded by the lush greenery of Labrador Nature Reserve. It specialises in Thai cuisine, an interesting culinary option for a wedding. It has over 12,000 square feet of space where celebrations can be held indoors, outdoors or a combination of both. Its high ceilings and beautiful, colonial-style long bar get the thumbs up from us. *30 Labrador Villa Road. tamarindrestaurants.com* **Capacity:** 200 guests (indoors and outdoors)

Cost: From \$12,000 for lunch and \$23,000 for dinner



CHIJMES, originally the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus (CHIJ), was a girls' school established in 1854. The school chapel, built in 1904, boasts high, vaulted ceilings and stained glass windows. CHIJMES is a stunning venue in the heart of the city. 30 Victoria Street. chijmes.com.sg

Capacity: 100 to 300 guests Cost: From \$988 to \$1,178 per table on weekdays and \$1,088 to \$1,488 per table on weekends

FOR OTHER GLAM OPTIONS, WE ALSO SUGGEST:

W Singapore - Sentosa Cove, 21 Ocean Way. Il Lido, 27 Bukit Manis Road. Suburbia, 30 Allanbrooke Road. Proccaci, 70 Collyer Quay. Forlino, One Fullerton, #02-06. Boathouse, 3 Fullerton Road.

FOR COUPLES WHO LOVE THE BEACH

Tanjong Beach Club is a sophisticated venue on one of Sentosa's loveliest stretches of sand, and it has a great laidback vibe. This venue has a variety of indoor and outdoor event spaces, including restaurant, bar, cabana, terrace and pool areas. Each space can be made exclusive for your wedding, both on weekdays and weekends, but booking the entire 30,000 square foot venue is restricted to weekdays only. 120 Tanjong Beach Walk. tanjongbeachclub.com



off afterwards at your dinner reception in one of the ballrooms. 101 Siloso Road. shangri-la.com/singapore/rasasentosaresort

WE ALSO SUGGEST: 1-TwentySig 902 East Coast Parkway #01-26 Bid



FOR COUPLES WHO HATE PLANNING

One Rochester offers the choice between a lush garden setting and a 1930s colonial bungalow at Rochester Park, for an intimate house-party feel. A dedicated team of wedding and event planners will work with you to help orchestrate your special day, from conceptualisation all the way through to packing up after the event. 1 Rochester Drive.

Banquet seating capacity: 168 guests in the entire house and garden

🔰 FOR COUPLES WHO LOVE THE SEA 🛛

If you have steady sea-leas, consider chartering a yacht and setting sail for your solemnisation or wedding. White Label Weddings is an events-management company that has a selection of different-sized yachts as well as a variety of wedding themes for couples keen to wed on water. Its wedding packages include vacht rental, catering, décor and photography, so planning should be a (sea) breeze, whitelabelcharters.com

WE ALSO SUGGEST:

ONE° 15 Marina Club, 11 Cove Drive. one15marina.com



FOR HISTORY ENTHUSIASTS

Once home to the General Post Office, The 13) Singapore Club and the Chamber of Commerce, The Fullerton Hotel Singapore is located by the Singapore River. Venue options include the pillar-less ballroom, the more intimate Straits Room, the Jade Restaurant, which serves Chinese cuisine, and the alfresco terrace, East Garden. 1 Fullerton Square

WE ALSO SUGGEST:

Raffles Hotel Singapore, 1 Beach Road. Old Parliament House. 1 Old Parliament Lane. Command House at Changi Cove, 351 Cranwell Road.



FOR COUPLES WHO FANCY A GARDEN WEDDING

Alkaff Mansion sits atop Telok Blangah Hill, overlooking 14) a 19-hectare park. Its fine-dining restaurant serves up Italian cuisine in a European-style setting. In the beautiful grounds are a pair of ornate fountains, a romantic roofed gazebo, an outdoor terrace and a Grand Marguee in the courtyard. 10 Telok Blangah Green.

Capacity: 180 seated guests for the Mansion, 400 seated guests for the Marquee.

Cost: From \$108 per person with a minimum spend requirement (available on request from the events team).

WE ALSO SUGGEST:

Emily Hill, 11 Upper Wilkie Road. The White Rabbit, 39C Harding Road. Silver Leaf at Gardens by the Bay, 18 Marina Gardens Drive. Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa, 1 Larkhill Road, The Sentosa Resort and Spa, 2 Bukit Manis Road

FOR COUPLES WHO LOVE ARCHITECTURE

Designed by award-winning architectural firm WOHA, 15 Parkroyal on Pickering's ballrooms have glass walls that

allow in plenty of natural light. The hotel's commitment to ecofriendliness means that its menus are free from shark's fin and other endangered produce. Another feature is the "Organic Delight" menu option, which features organic and sustainably



sourced produce. 3 Upper Pickering Street.

Capacity: 200 to 280 guests in the William and Pickering Ballrooms.

Cost for non-organic menus: From \$888 per table for lunch, \$1,088 for dinner (weekdays), \$1,288 for dinner (weekends).

FOR COUPLES ON A BUDGET



Hort Park has an air-conditioned multi-purpose hall that 16) can be booked from National Parks. The hall opens on to the very pretty Hort Lawn, which you can also book at an extra cost. You're free to hire your own caterers and other vendors

for your reception, so you can work comfortably within your budget. 33 Hvderabad Road.

Capacity for multi-purpose hall: 200 guests.

Cost: From \$725 for a four-hour booking from Tuesday to Thursday, and from \$900 for a four-hour booking from Friday to Sunday.

WE ALSO SUGGEST: Fort Canning Park, 70 River Valley Road.



Situated 106 metres above sea level, The Jewel Box at Mount Faber sweeps you away from urban Singapore, offering hilltop views of the harbour, Sentosa Island and the cityscape. Pocket-friendly options include weekday lunchtime or high-tea receptions at one of the indoor or outdoor venues, from \$68 per person. *109 Mount Faber Road*.

Capacity: From 30 to 200 guests, depending on the event space.

WE ALSO SUGGEST:

19

The British Club, 73 Bukit Tinggi Road. britishclub.org.sg

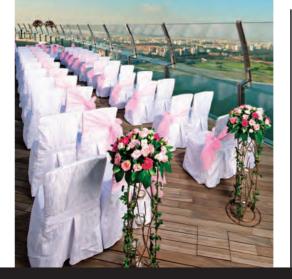
FOR COUPLES WITH A BIG BUDGET

Wow your guests with the iconic architecture of Marina Bay Sands (MBS) and Singapore's stunning city skyline with a solemnisation and standing cocktail event, 57 stories above the ground at the Sands SkyPark. There's a choice of three event areas, including the Observation Deck for an eyepopping \$65,000 and the more modest North and South Gardens at \$20,000 each. 10 Bayfront Avenue.

Capacity: 500 guests at the Observation Deck, 250 guests at the North Garden and 200 guests at the South Garden for standing cocktails only.

Cost: Space rental charges quoted above plus from \$200 per person for a cocktail reception (with a minimum of 50 people).

FOR A LESS PRICEY OPTION, WE ALSO SUGGEST: Garden Bay Bridge or Garden Walk, 18 Marina Gardens Drive. gardensbythebay.com.sg



you can dine in the world's largest oceanarium with a panoramic underwater view of 50,000 marine fish. *8 Sentosa Gateway.* **Cost:** From \$2,288 per table, with a minimum of 20 tables. **FOR A LESS PRICEY OPTION. WE ALSO SUGGEST:**

The closest thing to an underwater wedding in Singapore is a

celebration at the Ocean Gallery at the S.E.A. Aquarium, where

Jurong Bird Park, 2 Jurong Hill. birdpark.com.sg Singapore Zoo, 80 Mandai Lake Road. zoo.com.sg



FINALLY, FOR COUPLES WHO JUST WANT TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

20 Capella Singapore on Sentosa Island gives you the joy of being away from the city without the hassle of travel. The hotel weaves old and new, as modern buildings intermingle with colonial ones against the beautiful backdrop of a verdant rainforest and the South China Sea. The Bliss Suite is a haven where brides can get ready for their big entrance, with a daybed, a walk-in wardrobe and full-length, three-way mirrors around a circular dressing platform. Plus, create your own wedding miracle with a floating platform over the pool to create the illusion of the bride and groom walking on water. 1 The Knolls. capellahotels.com/singapore. 10 Bayfront Avenue.

FOR ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL POOLSIDE LOCALE, WE ALSO SUGGEST: Mandarin Oriental, 5 Raffles Avenue. mandarinoriental.com/singapore **2**

Leana Doray writes The Wedding Scoop, a Singaporean web-portal founded in 2013. theweddingscoop.com

Getting hitched in Singapore

Planning on tying the knot? We've broken down all the legalities in this step-by-step guide to make sure your nuptials run smoothly.

STEP 1: FILE YOUR NOTICE OF MARRIAGE ONLINE

- ☆ Head online to file a Notice of Marriage with the Registry of Marriages (ROM, rom.gov.sg)
- π You'll need the passport details of the bride and groom.
- π15 days of continuous residence in Singapore is required before you can file the notice (excluding your day of arrival).
- ☆ At this stage, make sure you can produce evidence of any divorce decrees, if applicable.

Take note! Make sure you give at least 21 days notice of your upcoming marriage. The earliest date to file your notice is three months before.

STEP 2: VERIFY YOUR DOCUMENTS

- ☆ After you've completed the online stage, make an appointment with ROM for them to verify all your documents. A statutory declaration will be signed at this point, meaning that all the legal requirements for a marriage have been met.

STEP 3: SOLEMNISE YOUR MARRIAGE

- ☆ Wasn't so bad, was it? Now you can proceed to the next stage the official civil solemnisation. Here, your religious or customary wedding ceremony can be performed at a venue of your choice.
- π You must have two witnesses present, aged 21 years or older.
- Your marriage ceremony must take place during the following time frame: 21 days after your Notice of Marriage issuance, but still within the 90 days – otherwise ROM will consider the whole application void.

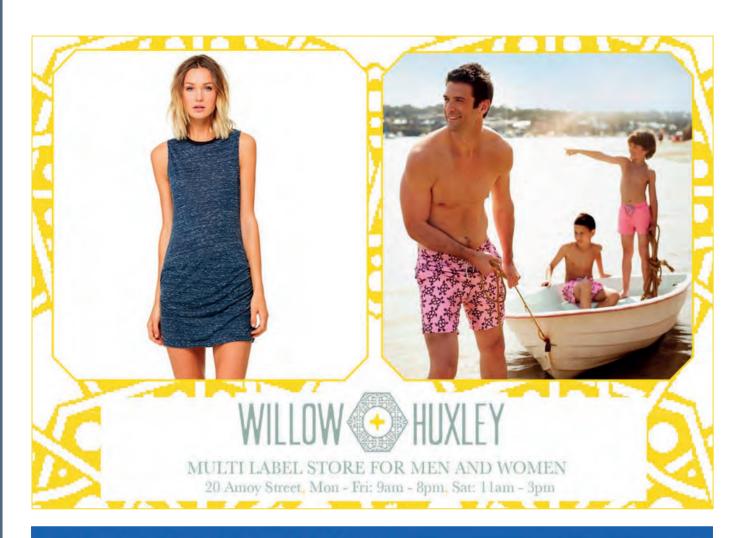
STEP 4: AFTER THE SOLEMNISATION

Congratulations! Your marriage is registered, and your Certificate of Marriage will be signed by the registrar, yourselves (bride and groom) and your two witnesses.

For more information, contact the Registry of Marriages enquiry line at 6338 7808. 7 Canning Rise.

Important:

Be sure to check with the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) on whether you have to notify your marriage. Current or former work-permit holders may need to approach MOM to ensure their application to register a marriage does not contravene any of their work permit conditions. Visit www.ice.gov.sg or www.mom.gov.sg for more information.



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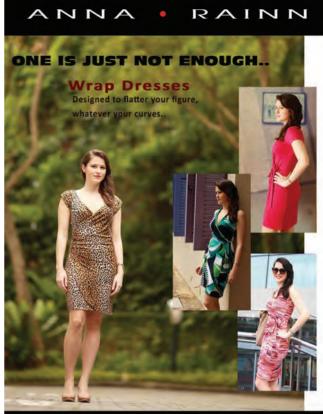












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HAT'S NEW All the latest hair and beauty updates



Weight-loss Wonder

To celebrate its first anniversary in Singapore, Hypoxi studio will be giving a special 20-percent discount to Expat Living readers throughout the month of June, in addition to the in-store summer special offers.

About the Hypoxi method:

Hypoxi helps people to achieve their weightloss goals and has seen some impressive results in the last year, with several clients losing over 10kg each. Even with exercise and intensive dieting, a beautiful figure can't always be achieved. This is because your body only burns fat which it can easily access - it won't burn fat in areas where circulation is poor. In order to shape your figure and smooth your skin, you need to target problematic areas such as the stomach, thighs and buttocks. This unique therapy combats cellulite, stubborn fat deposits and poor connective tissue. Call for a free trial today. For more information, visit hypoxi.com.sg or call 6536 3080.

LOCK IN MOISTURE

Now the weather is heating up, it's a good idea to switch from your heavy cream moisturiser to a gel-based one. like the new Impress

IC Moisture Gel by Kanebo. This soft, lightweight gel instantly transforms into a lotion upon contact with the skin, balancing water and oil levels to prevent drvness caused by exposure to sun, air-con and other stressors, \$66. available at all Kanebo counters.



BEAUTY OFFERS

The beauty services at one-stop beauty shop Fave Prestige span nail-care, eyebrow grooming, Japanese eyelash extensions and perming, waxing and facials using luxury products. The Sheer Indulgence manicure and pedicure treatment (\$85) includes a nail mask, moisturising massage, foot scrub and callus treatment. During the month of June, for the Great Singapore Sale, receive 50 percent off a second treatment from the à la carte menu of services. The clinic

will also be offering a 70-percent-off discount on all products in the store. #03-23 The Centrepoint, 176 Orchard Road. Call 6235 7611 for more information and appointments or visit facebook. com/faveprestige ►



COMPETITION



Win a Jet-lag Relief Massage worth \$168!

This month, My Cozy Room, a spa housed in a pre-war shophouse in the Cairnhill conservation area and nominated in the 2014 World Luxury Spa Awards, is giving away one of its signature Jet-lag Relief Massages to two lucky winners. The 90-minute massage includes a foot spa along with a soothing hot-stone massage back therapy to overcome jet lag and relieve stiffness, aches and pains. The session will finish with a relaxing eye massage that uses glacier crystals to reduce puffiness.

To enter, visit expatliving.sg/competitions.

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Dr. Imran Nawaz MBBS (S'pore), FRCS (Edin), FRCS (Glasg), FAMS Medical Director The Vein Centre

1 Orchard Boulevard, #11-03, Camden Medical Centre, Singapore 248649



NEW! BEAUTY TREATS The latest cosmetic releases you need to try now

EYEKO BROW GEL

Find brow pencils a hassle? Designed to perfectly groom even the most unruly of brows, this new tinted gel gives them a finish that is natural yet polished. The paraben-free formula contains keratin to condition and thicken the brows over time, and the colour is also suitable for both blondes and brunettes. Apply with short, upwards brush strokes, using the tip of the brush to shape and style your brows. **\$32.**



TARTE GOLDEN DAYS AND SULTRY NIGHTS

This gorgeous limited-edition collection pack includes a bright scarf, a collector's eye-shadow palette that uses mineral pigments, vitamin E and Amazonian clay for staying power, as well as a best-selling Lights, Camera, Splashes 4-in-1 waterproof mascara which comes with a luxe faux-snake exterior. **\$65**.

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CLINIQUE MOISTURE SURGE CC CREAM COMPACT WITH SPF 30

Clinique's best-selling CC (colour correcting) cream now comes in a handily portable compact. This complexion-enhancing base improves your skin's texture and balances its tone, boosting moisture levels for a natural and radiant finish. **\$53.**

PETER THOMAS ROTH CUCUMBER DETOXIFYING SERUM

This serum's super-concentrated dose of 78-percent refreshing cucumber extract and hyaluronic acid detoxifies, hydrates and soothes the skin after a long day. It's also absorbed easily, so there's no greasy residue. **\$120.**

CLINICAL SKIN CARE

ROTH

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TOO FACED MELTED LIPSTICK

We love this long-wear lipstick stain for its intense and bold colours plus a glossy shimmer. The precision tip makes application hassle-free, and the formula doesn't dry out the lips, like some long-wear products. Available in Nude, Peony, Coral, Violet, Ruby and Fuchsia. \$30 each.

LIVING PROOF PERFECT HAIR DAY 5-IN1 STYLING TREATMENT

Wouldn't it be ideal to get a perfect hair day in just one bottle? We think this could be the next best thing – a new styling product that helps you get beautiful, healthylooking hair in one swoop. Benefits include increased smoothness, volume and shine, and better conditioning and strength. Just apply to damp hair and comb through, then blow dry for even better results. **\$36.**

NEW FORMULA



It can be tough to find a good moisturiser, especially one for oily skin. Kiehl's new spin on its best-selling Ultra Facial cream has a non-sticky formula that promises to manage shine as well as moisture levels for 24 hours. Available now at all Kiehl's stores. \$48 for 50ml, \$82 for 125ml. <



COMBAT DRY ENDS

To complete its best-selling Total Repair 5 range, L'Oréal has introduced the Emergency Care Miracle Split End Sealer (\$16), a new rinse-off treatment touted to strengthen the hair fibre and seal up to 6,500 split ends in one use. **Available now at personal care stores and major supermarkets island-wide.**

Beauty 101

MAKE-UP GURU KELLY BILIMORIA OF Paparazzi black shares the tips and tricks of her trade.

HOW TO: COVER DARK CIRCLES

Covering dark circles under your eyes is one of the quickest and most effective ways to look and feel gorgeous. Whether they're due to your genes, lack of sleep or just getting older, they can be concealed to give an instantly brighter complexion. Here are a few simple steps to hide dark circles like a pro.

QUICK & EASY: LIGHT TO MEDIUM COVERAGE

Tools you need: A concealer or brightener pen.

Step 1: Press the flat side of the concealer pen on the centre of the dark circle.

Step 2: Continue in a light feathering or dabbing motion as you move the brush along the dark area. Be careful not to apply too much at once.

Step 3: Continue this motion, making sure you cover every patch of darkness, even the inner and outer corners. Step 4: Gently blend the outer edges

flawless look

with your finger for a

11111111

Product recommendations: **Bobbi Brown Tinted Eye Brightener;** Lancôme Teint Miracle Concealer Pen; Clinique Airbrush Concealer Pen

LOOK WELL-RESTED: MEDIUM TO FULL COVERAGE

Tools you need: Concealer or foundation and powder.

Step 1: Dip the brush into the concealer. For fuller coverage on a larger area, use a foundation brush. For quick and easy coverage, use a concealer brush.

Quick tip: If you don't have a concealer, use a liquid foundation; squeeze a tiny bit onto your hand and let it oxidise. The longer it is exposed to the air, the more concentrated the pigment will become and you can then easily use it as a concealer. If you use a cream foundation, then build up light layers of the product.

Step 2: Press the flat side of the brush on the centre of the dark circle.

Step 3: Continue dabbing or pressing as you move the brush along the dark area.

Step 4: Continue this motion, making sure you apply it to every patch of darkness, even the inner and outer corners.

Step 5: Gently blend with your finger or use your brush on the outer edges for a flawless look. Now you're ready to go!

Product recommendations – medium coverage: Benefit Erase Paste; Make Up For Ever HD Concealer; Tarte Maracuja Creaseless Concealer If you want to look completely rested, now is the time to apply foundation all over your face, including over the concealer to mask any imperfections or blending lines. Finish by setting with powder.



MAC Studio Finish Pure Orange Skin Corrector; NYX Above and Beyond Full Coverage Concealer; Make Up For Ever Full Cover

PRO TIPS

For staying power in the heat, always set your makeup: Use either loose powder or a compact.

Always pick a creamy concealer; neither too dry nor too runny: A light, creamy concealer that won't crack or seep into the fine lines around the eyes works best. Always choose a yellow-base concealer,

in a tone that's a bit lighter than your skin colour: This will cancel out any blue or purple hues and also brighten the eye area.



kellybilimoria.com





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Your SpaTea afternoon experience includes:

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- · Complimentary upgrade to a couple's treatment suite
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For booking and enquiries, please contact the Damai Concierge at Tel: +65 6416 7156 or email: damai.sg@hyatt.com

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FACE: THE FACTS

It's a fairly normal desire to look fresher and better, no matter what age we are. The good thing about developments in modern aesthetics is that it's now easier to create a more natural look. I spoke with DR YVONNE GOH and discovered that it's not about how much we do, but rather how effective the treatment is. Now, just a subtle tweak can improve proportions and help battle "the three Ds" – Deflation, Deterioration and Descent – right around the face.

FOREHEAD

The latest research shows that a full forehead reflects youth. Using soft fillers to smooth and curve the forehead is a subtle way of freshening you up while still allowing for natural expression. Botox and fillers soften frown lines that can make you look negative and unapproachable.

SAGGY EYELIDS

Ultherapy (with ultrasound) appplied above the brow gives the brow a lift - which in turn lifts the eyelids. The ultrasound diagnosis makes sure the right level of the dermis is targeted to make the area tighten. Doing this once a year will help you look brighter.

CROW'S FEET-

Botox will do the trick on not letting the lines around the eyes get too deep. Once or twice a year is enough to help prevent it.

UNDER EYES

Dr Goh uses revolutionary fillers by the same company that produces Botox to address dark areas under the eyes. These super light and smooth fillers can also plump up any areas that might be sagging.

LIPS

Soft lips are an important hallmark of youth but overfilled pouts on adults can look unattractive. With these new fillers, Dr Goh can deliver a very naturally plumped look.

NECK

Ultherapy is FDA approved for neck lifts, or if you have that banding effect on your neck then it can be another job for fillers. Dr Goh's fillers all have anaesthetising properties which help numb the area.

COMPLEXION

By Rebecca Bisset

Methods for keeping your skin as clear of broken veins, pigmentation and dull areas as possible include laser toning, pigmentation creams and chemical peels. All of these have no downtime, though they generally require a couple of sessions to do the job properly and gently.

- NOSE

Fillers and Botox can now be used to mould, shape and narrow the nose, so no more nose-jobs! You can even ask for a little lift at the end of it – amazing.

NASOLABIAL FOLDS

Lines around the mouth can make some people look meanspirited or uptight. Fillers are perfect for these areas.

JAWLINE

If you're sagging here, then Ultherapy and fillers can be used to sculpt the jawline for a more "chiselled" look and to give definition to a weak chin.

Dr Yvonne Goh Aesthetics has moved from Cluny Court to a lovely new clinic with private treatment and waiting rooms in the Camden Medical Centre (1 Orchard Boulevard #09-05).

For more information about the services and products offered at the clinic, visit the website.

6462 2559 | dryvonnegoh.com

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CC CREAMS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Lighter than their BB (beauty balm) sisters, CC (colour correcting) creams are typically formulated to correct complexion problem areas such as uneven skin tone, redness and dullness.
- Lighter in texture than a BB, they provide light to medium base coverage.
- They leave a more matte finish.
- Over time, they're more effective in treating skin issues such as discolouration, hyper-pigmentation, wrinkles and sunspots.

SEPHORA CC CRÈME CORRECTION & RADIANCE CREAM WITH SPF 30, \$28

WHAT I LIKED: It's incredibly light but provides great coverage, and it contains SPF so there's no need for that extra layer of sunblock. It's non-greasy, but sometimes I'll just dab some powder on top to help prevent shine, and I'm good to go – though I do often wear the cream without powder.

VERDICT: I'm always wary of trying new facial products, but was glad I gave this one a go. I was so pleasantly surprised by the coverage and light texture that I've officially made the switch over from my old foundation. This cream exceeded my expectations! Amy Greenburg, 30, Health & Fitness, Arts &

Leisure Editor 5/5

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PETER THOMAS ROTH CC WHAT I LIKED: The cream

is light, but gives fantastic coverage along with a slightly dewy glow; perfect, especially for a normal to dry complexion. VERDICT: One of the best CC creams I've tried. this has a smooth, light and creamy texture that blends easily and sets like satin on the skin. It lasted all day and looked fresh while aiving me fantastic coverage much better than a tinted moisturiser or BB cream. I also like the anti-ageing and brightening benefits from its key ingredient, camu camu berries. Natalie Whittell. 26. Brand Communications Manager

RACHEL K CC RENEW CREAM WITH SPF 35 PA ++, \$48

What I liked: The texture of this cream was thicker than I expected, but it blends well and smells gorgeous. It gave me a light to medium, buildable coverage and stayed put all day, and provided moisture to the skin without feeling sticky. Verdict: I definitely prefer this formula to a BB cream, as it looks and feels much more natural, yet still gives me virtually the same coverage. Susannah Jaffer, 23, Fashion, Hair & Beauty Editor





CLINIQUE MOISTURE SURGE CC CREAM WITH SPF 30, \$53

What I liked: I mix this CC cream with my own Clinique moisturiser and head out the door. It covers some of my blemishes, making them appear much less obvious. I also love the additional layer of sunscreen, which saves me time in the morning.

Verdict: The packaging states that the cream can be used under foundation, but since I don't wear much makeup, this alone is fine for me – it's not obvious that I've applied anything, but it gives me a healthy glow, which I like.

Beatrice Ng, 29, Graphic Designer

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Sometimes there's nothing like a relaxing massage to help you feel refreshed and rejuvenated. Turn the page to find your next pampering treat in our comprehensive annual spa roundup.



If you're looking for a true retreat from the daily grind, head to ESPA, set against a backdrop of manicured lawns and lush greenery next to a rainforest and opposite the luxury Equarius Hotel and Beach Villas.

The 10,000-square-foot spa, which boasts numerous treatment rooms, a big 24-hour gym, sleep rooms, and full spa facilities including hot and cold pools, offers holistic "spa-cations" with tailored programmes to energise and recharge you.

With ESPA's day retreats, you can choose one of four programmes: Destress, Introduction to Detox, Fit for Life, or Weight Management. All programmes include a lifestyle consultation, full use of the spa facilities before your treatment, one 60-minute and one 45-minute treatment, and a nutritious meal in Tangerine restaurant run by celebrity chef Sam Leong.

After filling out a detailed questionnaire about your lifestyle and general health, your retreat begins with a lifestyle consultation with a qualified naturopath who talks you through any specific issues you may have, and helps give tailored advice. If you'd like to book a more detailed session for another time, the spa also offers naturopathic and nutritional counselling.

Next, move on to use the expansive spa facilities – or even have a workout in the gym before your treatment. (After you've advance-booked your treatment time, you'll be advised to arrive an hour or so earlier to enjoy all the spa has to offer.) Cleanse yourself of impurities in the hammam steam room, or zone out in the spacious sauna area with its picturesque garden views.

Then it's onto your personalised treatment and massage, which includes a 60-minute tailored treatment (ranging from long massages to anti-cellulite body wraps) according to your programme. You'll also be treated to a salt and oil scrub, along with a relaxing, 45-minute reflexology foot massage.



KEY BENEFITS:

- Programmes are tailored and include useful advice and tips by experts for healthy lifestyle maintenance
- You're allowed full use of ESPA's extensive facilities pre-treatment, which will also help to loosen and relax the muscles before your massage

ESPA day retreat programmes cost \$450. Overnight retreats (including a room at Equarius Hotel, spa treatments and three meals) start from \$718. 8 Sentosa Gateway.

6577 8880 | rwsentosa.com/homepage/hotelsandspas/ESPA



Damai Spa Perk Me Up Treatment

The rejuvenating Perk Me Up treatment includes a 45-minute scrub using coffee as a key ingredient. The caffeine helps to break down fatty deposits that can cause cellulite, and also contains vitamin B3 and E to increase the skin's elasticity and help protect it from external aggressors such as ultraviolet rays.

The firm, flowing massage that follows focuses on nodes of tension and stimulates meridian points to revive and energise. The organic Argan oil used is thick, luscious and creamy – a hydrating treat.

This is just one of the Damai Spa's speciality massages. Each masseuse has her own area of expertise – for the Perk Me Up treatment, therapist Jennifer uses her forearms to smooth the Argan oil into the muscles and achy bits with a wonderful surety; Yatti, meanwhile, is a whizz at stretching the joints; a third speciality is the hot stone massage.

Above all, Damai is a real destination spa. Before or after your treatment you can make full use of the spa facilities, including the steam or sauna room, plunge pool and chill room, all of which have a wonderful contemporary Asian feel.



KEY BENEFITS:

- Skin is thoroughly exfoliated and is left feeling soft and silky
- Thanks to the coffee mix, you'll leave the treatment feeling significantly reenergised and ready to face the day

The Perk Me Up treatment is priced from \$198 for 100 minutes, and is available until 31 June 2014 only. The Damai Spa, Grand Hyatt Hotel, 10 Scotts Road.

6416 7156 | singapore.grand.hyatt.com



Auriga Spa at Capella Hotel Senja Sunyi Massage

Once you're robed and hydrated with a cooling peppermint tea, the masseuse will ensure everything is to your satisfaction before the treatment begins. From the room lighting and temperature to your preferred scents, your private room is a customised haven for the next 90 minutes. The treatment begins with a dry massage over a thin sheet: 10 minutes of long strokes coupled with guided breathing directives; it's a quick way to loosen the limbs.

The next 60 minutes are dedicated to soothing and relieving tension from top to toe. Each part of the body is isolated and kneaded with a rose and pomegranate scented balm, followed by long strokes using warm "moon stones". The treatment combines a few traditional Asian therapeutic methods: the long strokes are typical of Javanese techniques, while Chinese tui na focuses on specific pressure points to release built-up tension. Stretching elements, typical of Thai massage, are also brought in at times – legs and arms are tugged, folded and pushed to their limits for maximum benefit. The warm stones are left just below the shoulder blades, while the final 15 minutes are dedicated to the head and neck, and delicately massaging an organic serum into the scalp and through the hair.

Afterwards, you're escorted to a relaxation area stocked with snacks and sound-wave lounge chairs. Enjoy a magazine and ginger tea while your skin continues to absorb the nutrients.



KEY BENEFITS:

- Pomegranate and rose balm encourage anti-ageing and will soothe sun-kissed skin
- Warm moon stones successfully smooth out muscle kinks and any trapped nerves
- Organic hair serum replenishes locks and treats the scalp

The Senja Sunyi Massage is \$230 for a 90-minute treatment. Capella Singapore, 1 The Knolls.

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FACE & BODY:

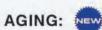
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This complete head-to-toe experience is comprised of the CHI's signature Balance Massage along with a luxurious, customised facial.

It all starts with a quick chat with a beauty consultant to assess your areas of concern (lower back pain and dry skin, for example) and to tailor the treatments to suit your specific needs. Then, after choosing from a selection of scented oils, it's time to surrender yourself to total bliss in the form of a full body massage, beginning with the Foot Ritual – a wiping down of your legs and feet with a warm towel to clean and soothe. Next comes the Balance Massage, incorporating acupressure techniques to improve circulation and calm the senses; 90 minutes of pure relaxation.

The second half of the "journey" is a 90-minute personalised facial with handpicked products based on your skin type. The decadent caviar facial – best for dry and normal skin – is a popular spa favourite, aimed at firming, refining and hydrating the skin with antioxidants, protein-rich caviar and other luxurious ingredients. It also includes a thick enzyme mask that's smothered on the face to tone and brighten with its age-defying components – and you'll be treated to another leg and hand massage as the mask dries.

The next step involves a hydrating Marine Biomatrix Sheet, applied to the face in between sprays of rose water, with "beauty globes" – chilled, golf ball-sized spheres of liquid – rolled over the sheet to create a calming, cooling effect that helps deliver nutrients deep into the skin. Just as you're dozing off, layers of Kerstin Florian skincare products are applied to the face – from moisture balms and age-defence serums to multivitamin creams and a dab of vitamin C lip balm as the final touch.

The result is quite impressive: skin that looks healthy and radiant. The corrective serums effectively even out skin tone, and help lighten the darker pigmented areas of the face – above the upper lip, for instance. Not only will your face look luminescent, but you'll also feel refreshed and rejuvenated. The experience culminates with a delicious lemongrass tea in the tranquil posttreatment lounge, where you can recline on a chaise sofa, snack on fruit and read magazines – the perfect ending to a premium pampering experience.



KEY BENEFITS:

- The massage increases blood circulation and promotes a sense of calm and bodily restoration
- It helps remedy skin concerns, with anti-ageing and skin-correcting effects
- It firms, refines, tones and brightens skin

The CHI Enchanted Journey costs \$440 for the threehour treatment. CHI, The Spa, Shangri-La Hotel, 22 Orange Grove Road, Level 1 Garden Wing.

6213 4818 | shangri-la.com/singapore

SK-II Senze Lounge Aura Brightening Facial

Cate Blanchett's dewy skin is enough to make anyone want to visit premium Japanese brand SK-II – the brand Cate champions – for a bit of facial love. And Level Seven at Tangs is a self-indulgent floor entirely devoted to beauty, boasting six beauty brands with therapists and individual treatment capsules (rather than rooms).

After a skin exam to measure the five SK-II skin dimensions, the therapist begins the process of rectifying your problems. After double-cleansing, toning, moisturising and steaming, she performs a quick extraction. Best to get the uncomfortable bit out of the way before the glorious main event: a shoulder, neck and face massage.

Once you're lying down again, the therapist will knead away any problem knots and relieve any sore spots – it's bliss. A cold, sheet-like mask is then applied over the entire face, followed by a hot and cold massager to encourage maximum penetration of the product into the skin.

Next, a cold blast of air is applied to close and calm the open pores. A role call of whitening products is applied after the mask, finishing with a sunblock, and leaving skin that on close examination you'll find is definitely brighter.



KEY BENEFITS:

- · Evens out skin tone and lightens dark spots
- · Promotes circulation and enhances radiance

The SK-II Aura Brightening Facial costs \$169 dollars for 90 minutes at SK-II Lounge, Level 7, Tangs, Orchard Road.

6235 2671 | SK-II.com.sg





The Park Indulgence treatment is indeed indulgent, involving two hours of body polish, massage and a back masque in the comfort of a VIP treatment room at the Grand Park City Hall Hotel.

Bearing fragrant ginger tea, your therapist will meet you in the guest lounge to give a brief rundown of the treatments, and you'll be asked to fill out a questionnaire to determine the types of oils and massage technique you'd like to be used.

The pampering session begins with a beady exfoliation scrub to promote circulation. Steaming towels are then used to remove the scrub, providing a nice prelude to the next treat, the massage. The head-to-toe rubdown alleviates not only pent-up physiological tension, but is also a great mental stress-reliever.

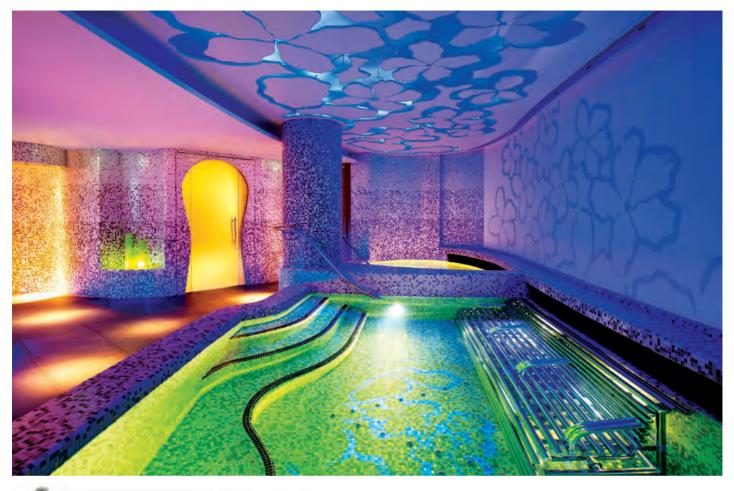
Next up is the self-heating back masque, which serves to detox the body. After a few minutes to yourself, the chime of a Tibetan bell signals the end to the treatment.

KEY BENEFITS:

- Lavender aromatherapy paired with moderate pressure massage calms the senses
- Each of the five treatment rooms feels intimate, so you never feel you're intruding on someone else's spa day
- You can opt to upgrade to the Park Indulgence Treatment's Gold Lava Shell Massage and Gold Mineral Exfoliation, which incorporates the ion-reducing benefits of gold to stimulate circulation, slow down collagen depletion and stimulate skin repair

The Park Indulgence Treatment costs \$258 for a 120-minute treatment. Spa Park Asia, Grand Park City Hall Hotel, 10 Coleman Street.

6432 5588 | parkhotelgroup.com/lifestyle/spa-park-asia





For the stressed and harried couple who seldom have time out together, this is a rare experience in a get-away-from-it-all environment. The AWAY Body Treat comprises a stress-alleviating scrub, an energising wrap and an invigorating massage, either for an individual or for a couple.

After you've passed through the grand entrance to the W, you'll find the gorgeous spa tucked discreetly away on the lower level. Treatment rooms are spacious, with a secluded outdoor shower and bath area – there, you'll rinse off the Himalayan rock salt scrub together with countless billions of dead and useless skin cells, prior to the second part of the treatment – the massage.

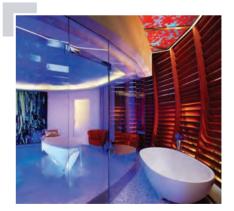
Masseuses at the AWAY spa are outstanding, with incredibly strong hands; and you can always ask for a lighter touch if that's what you prefer.

The cold wrap that follows the massage smells like a tropical fruit yoghurt, and is bursting with rejuvenating enzymes. While you stew in this concoction, growing steadily steamier, you'll be treated to a pressure point head massage.

Tips: Set aside extra time to use the spa facilities, which include a sauna, steam room, rain showers, hydrotherapy baths and more. Also, ask for 15 or 20 private minutes together in your outdoor bathing area after washing off the scrub. And to top it all off, why not order a glass of bubbly to toast the moment?

The AWAY Body Treat costs \$760 per couple for 120 minutes. AWAY Spa, W Singapore Sentosa Cove, 21 Ocean Way.

6808 7288 | wsingaporesentosacove.com



KEY BENEFITS:

- Stunning surroundings make the experience feel like a mini-break
- Skilled therapists will iron out every single knot in your body





Heavenly Spa The Heavenly Massage

The building that houses the relatively new Westin Hotel located in the heart of the financial district is part office block (for most of the first 31 floors) and part hotel (from the 32nd floor up). This means the lobby is, unusually, located on the 32nd floor, and to reach the Heavenly Spa you'll need to take a second lift to the 35th floor – also where the hotel's outdoor infinity pool and gym can be found.

The Heavenly Massage follows the Swedish technique, and uses a heated compress on the back to relax the muscles before the massage itself. The treatment rooms here are surprisingly large – bigger than some standard hotel bedrooms. Aside from the treatment room itself there's a separate and large bathroom, including a shower, toilet and double sink, as well as a wardrobe to store belongings. Before the treatment, you can choose a body butter from a range of scents including jasmine and vanilla; there's also a choice of stones bearing words such as "love" and "gratitude", one of which is then placed under the massage table for "good vibes". Before you lie on the table, though, the treatment begins with a foot wash.

The spa's relaxation area, which you can use pre- and post-massage, has a number of large chairs screened off from one another for privacy, as well as The Westin's super-foods menu offering dried fruit, walnuts and ginger tea. Unusually, it's the changing rooms that have the real wow factor, with floor-to-ceiling windows and views over the CBD and the marina. This is also where the steam bath, experience shower and vitality pool are located, again with panoramic city views. Guests are advised to lower the blinds before changing.

Gastro bar Cook & Brew, on the 33rd level, serves food and drinks and has an open terrace. You can also grab a drink at the Lobby Lounge on the floor below. We suggest you put aside some time before or after a treatment to take advantage of these hotel facilities.



KEY BENEFITS:

- The treatment truly relaxes the muscles and relieves pent-up tension
- The panoramic city views from the spa are incomparable

The Heavenly Massage costs \$220 for the 90-minute treatment. Heavenly Spa by Westin, The Westin Hotel, 12 Marina View, Asia Square Tower 2, Level 35.

6922 6977 | thewestinsingapore.com



Willow Stream Spa Pure Ener.g Body Experience

A warm and revitalising footbath kick-starts your treatment, polishing the feet gently with an organic scrub, before the action shifts to the treatment beds where, after asking you to take three deep breaths of a blend of relaxing chamomile scents, the wonderfully professional therapist Lynne begins a total body exfoliation using re-mineralised salts.

The thorough and brisk exfoliation finishes with excess salt being gently rubbed away with a warm damp towel that heightens the skin's senses and leaves a tingly but refreshing sensation across the whole body. After a quick shower in the corner of the treatment room – slightly less relaxing – the glorious full-body massage begins.

The soothing massage uses an exclusive blend of bergamot, rose geranium, clary sage and chamomile, and works from head to toe, focusing on problem areas such as the shoulders and neck – or any areas you might mention in discussion during the initial footbath. You'll be drifting gradually in and out of a tranquil slumber in no time. As the massage comes to an end, two small, cold round glass bottles are gently rolled across your face to refresh the skin; then to finish, a crystal is placed on the forehead – on the "third eye" – for a few minutes to bring balance to the body.

Refreshed and recuperated, you'll then have time to sit back and sip a herbal cuppa in the relaxation room.



KEY BENEFITS:

- The top-to-toe treatment leaves the skin silkysmooth and nourished
- The organic essential oils are calming and restorative

The Pure Ener.g Body Experience costs from \$289 for a 90-minute treatment. Willow Stream Spa, The Fairmont Hotel, 80 Bras Basah Road.

6339 7777 | fairmont.com/singapore/willow-stream

St. Gregory Spa Get Up and Go Treatment

Tucked next to the Pan Pacific Singapore's oh-so-edgy outdoor pool is St. Gregory Spa, a sanctuary that offers the Get Up and Go treatment – a new, multi-element ritual lasting a fabulous 120 minutes.

Part One consists of a 45-minute deep tissue or "body bliss" massage, which can be customised according to which parts of your body are crying for extra TLC. You could opt for a deeper massage to relieve tired legs, followed by rhythmic Swedish-style rub. At one point, your masseuse might even clamber onto the table for some superb Thai-style limbering.

Next up is the Elemis Skin Specific Facial, which could turn out to be the most attention your skin has enjoyed for a long time. The face is cleansed, toned and exfoliated and pore blockages extracted, with plenty of delicious temple, head and shoulder massaging along the way. Elemis products are used throughout the 75-minute treatment, which is based on your particular skin type.

You'll finish off with a brightening lavender mask and a final heavenly massage.

The Get Up and Go treatment costs \$240 for 120 minutes. St. Gregory Spa, Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Boulevard, Level 4.

6826 8140 | stgregoryspa.com



KEY BENEFITS:

- The treatment focuses on stressedout parts of the body, delivering ultimate relaxation
- It promises a bright, tight, clean complexion with soft, renewed skin





Mandarin Oriental Baby and You Pregnancy Massage

Unless you're an expectant mum with a lot of help, having anybody spend time massaging your tense shoulders and inflated feet is a real bonus.

First, slip into a snug bathrobe and slippers and then you'll decide which

Aromatherapy Associates' massage oil to use – we recommend the Renew Rose Massage and Body Oil.

Once you're settled on your side on a heated bed, with plump pillows supporting your tum, the treatment begins. Long, smooth strokes on your back are followed by perfect pressure on your shoulders, and then you're plopped over on to the other side for a repeat performance.

Next, you're rolled onto your back while the nifty high-tech bed realigns your body so that you're not lying completely flat. Then for the best bit – which is optional: a soothing, circular tummy-rub.

Finally, you'll be treated to a refreshment and dried fruit in the tea lounge while you flick through a magazine or two.

KEY BENEFITS:

- Eases tension in the upper back and shoulders, and pampers swollen legs and puffed-up feet
- Provides an opportunity for you to bond with your bump

The Baby and You Pregnancy massage costs \$190 for 50 minutes. 5 Raffles Avenue, Marina Square.

6338 0066 | mandarinoriental.com



Remède Spa White Cellular Brightening Facial

You've heard it before: leave off the heavy makeup and lotions every once in a while, and let your poor skin breathe. This facial takes this concept to the next level by shooting a stream of pure oxygen straight into your pores.

First, the skin is cleansed with luxurious Babor products from Germany before light phototherapy is used to brighten the complexion, tackle sun damage and help keep acne at bay. (Note: this therapy is not recommended for pregnant women). Next, a pressurised wand delivers a mixture of hyperbaric oxygen and rejuvenating serum on to your face and lips and under your chin. It's like a high-powered carwash for the pores, as the serum deeply penetrates the skin. Plus, your entire body gets a boost from breathing the surrounding air (apparently it's the same type of air that Michael Jackson used in his infamous sleeping chamber). The result is skin so soft and supple that it feels "juicy" when you leave.

Another bonus: the techniques used here are extremely gentle – brushes are used to apply masks, and makeup is removed with meticulous care.

The 90-minute White Cellular Brightening Facial costs \$370. Remède Spa, The St. Regis Singapore, 29 Tanglin Road.

6506 6896 | remedespasingapore.com



KEY BENEFITS:

- Diminishes facial pigmentation and removes dead skin
- Gives your face and lungs a jolt of pure O2
- Can be undertaken on the same day as a big event

Estheva Spa Choc De-ager Treatment



Raffles Hotel has to be one of Singapore's best locations for a day spa: soaring ceilings, period chandeliers and that sense of colonial *je ne sais quoi* will quickly put you in the mood for some serious pampering.

Billed as "an indulgent chocolate de-ageing experience", this 150-minute treatment is a trilogy of exfoliating scrub, relaxing massage and rejuvenating wrap. Therapist Juliani applies the Thermal Gommage scrub carefully and methodically. After you've rinsed off the residue in your in-room shower cubicle, it's time for the Chocolatier's Massage. The stuff smells so good that you could be in danger of chewing off your own arm, like a mountaineer

trapped in the Andes. You won't get a strong massage from this particular therapist, though, as she has a uniformly light touch.

Loosely wrapped with plastic clingfilm, you're treated to a quick head, neck and face pressure-point massage and then left to marinate for 20 minutes. Then it's back into the shower to wash it all off, before a full-body moisturising rub to maximise the glow factor.

KEY BENEFITS:

- Exfoliated skin more easily absorbs the active ingredients in the chocolatey wrap
- Chocolate has outstanding emollient properties, and is said to have four times more antioxidants than green tea; its phenolic compounds seek out and destroy free radicals, and protect body tissues from the effects of metabolic waste

The Choc De-ager treatment costs \$380 for 160 minutes. #01-30/31 Raffles Hotel Shopping Arcade, 328 North Bridge Road.

6338 3318 | estheva.com





The Yang Sheng treatment, which makes use of Chinese herbal remedies, begins with the Imperial Tea Herbal Scrub all over the body to reduce stress and beautify the skin through detoxification. The aromatic herbs promote a sense of relaxation and wellbeing, and they aren't overpowering. After the full body exfoliation, it's time to shower before the massage.

The Purifying Herbal Wrap uses mung beans to eliminate toxins and purify the skin. According to Chinese medicine, they help to remove "heatiness" in your body that can lead to acne and other skin blemishes.

Once the mixture has been applied all over the body, you're wrapped up in sheets and the heated massage bed is turned on to aid absorption. This is your chance to close your eyes and relax alone for half an hour, before you sip on a soothing hot tea and your cup-gliding therapy begins.

Cupping is an ancient Chinese form of alternative medicine that involves placing cups with strong suction on to the skin to mobilise blood flow, promote healing and draw out harmful toxins from the body. If you're not keen to try this traditional method, you can swap it for an extra half hour of the therapeutic massage that follows. The therapists meticulously establish where your problem areas lie, and are trained to change the massage pressure as you may require over different areas of the body.



KEY BENEFITS:

- Encourages skin detoxification through the use of therapeutic herbs, promoting a clearer and brighter skin tone
- Removes "heatiness" and toxins from the body

The 150-minute Yang Sheng package costs \$280 for single treatment and \$480 for a double (couple's) treatment. The Spa Artisan, Fullerton Hotel Singapore, 1 Fullerton Square, Mezzanine Floor (M1).

6423 1382 | thespaartisan.com

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Body With Soul Osteopathy Massage



Body With Soul Total Healthcare Network has a host of medically trained professionals who can release knots and tension in a safe way, taking into account any specific injuries or issues – great if you've got a pre-existing medical condition that makes visiting a regular spa a worry.

Osteopath Jenny Mullen and Physiotherapist Monica Donaldson are available to carry out a full-body assessment to find out the cause of your pain and tension (e.g., one leg longer than other, pelvis rotated, scoliosis), and then will treat you through a combination of deep-tissue massage and postural and movement re-education.

Monica has a special interest in women's physiotherapy, and is the go-to person for pregnant women with back and pelvic girdle pain (or pelvic floor problems) and postnatal separated abdominal muscles. Jenny, meanwhile, is an expert in sports injuries and sports massage, as well as other mobility or post-surgery conditions.

A real benefit of each treatment is that you can find and understand the cause of your pain, and learn how to manage it at home as part of a rehabilitative programme. The deeptissue massage and muscle manipulation offered is not always "relaxing" – it can be painful at points, but knowing that your problem is being corrected makes it worth while.

KEY BENEFITS:

- · Diagnosis with a full-body assessment
- Treatments by medically trained professionals that get to the heart of the problem
- Informative tips and "homework" are provided for you to continue treatment at home by stretching or exercise

Physiotherapy prices: \$150 for a 60-minute initial consultation assessment and treatment; follow-up treatment, \$120 for 30 to 45 minutes with massage if required. Osteopathy prices: \$130 for a 30-minute initial assessment; follow-up treatment, \$110 for 30 minutes. 44/45 Rochester Park

6779 0660 | bodywithsoul.com

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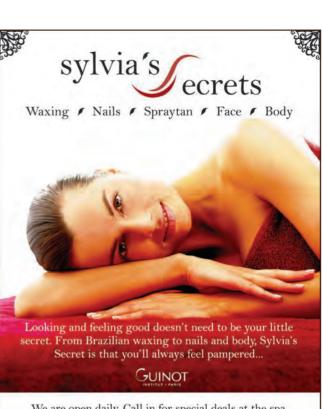
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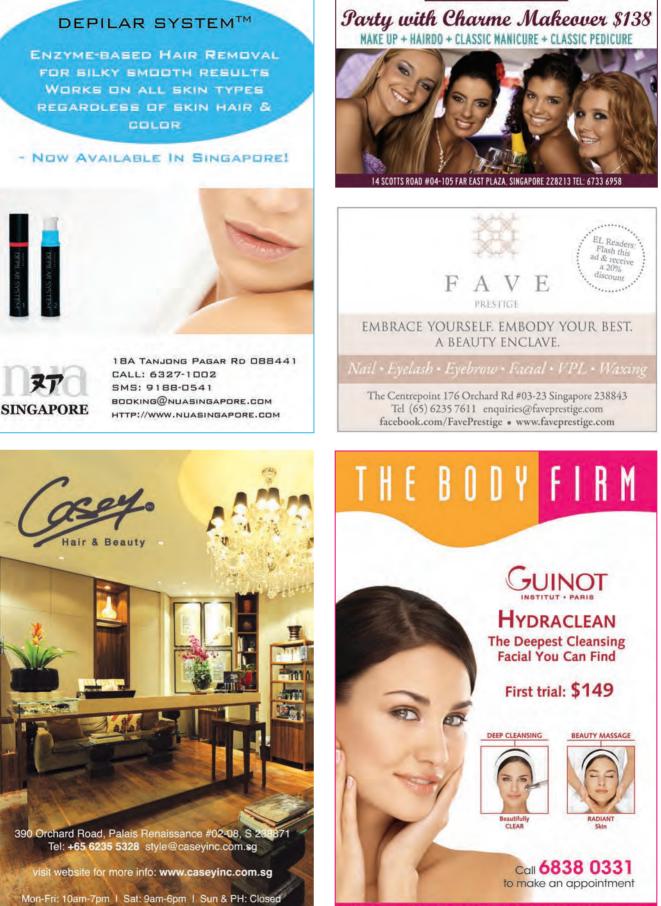


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Consultant Surgeon General, Vascular & Endovascular Surgery Adj Asst. Professor Dept. of Surgery NUS MBBS (Hons) (UNSW), M.Med (Surg), FRCS Edin (Gen Surg)

- 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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WHAT'S NEW Everything you need to feel good



Tee Time

Golf lovers can enjoy taking in a tournament between longstanding rivals, Singapore and Malaysia, as they battle it out in the second annual Prudential Causeway Trophy, a three-day tournament in which four ball, foursome and single games are played on the Laguna National Golf and Country Club course. This year's addition of the Prudential Junior Causeway Trophy will also give some of the countries' most promising junior golfers the chance to play in a professional-standard competition. Entry is free to the public. 8am on 4 June and 6 to 8 June at Laguna National Golf and Country Club, 11 Laguna Golf Green. **causewaytrophy.com**

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWBIE

Complete Healthcare International, a practice specialising in family medicine and preventative care, has launched a second location on Singapore's East Coast; its Rochester Park location has been serving expat and local patients for 8 years. The new branch's resident physician, Dr Lin Kai Wei, offers general practice services, plus health screenings, minor surgical procedures and travel medicine expertise. **22 East Coast Road. 6447 4477 | chi-health.com.sg**

SAFE MEDS FOR MUMS

There's a bit of uncertainty about which medications can be taken during pregnancy, prenatally and while breastfeeding – from over-the-counter and prescription drugs to dietary supplements and herbal remedies. One reason is that pregnant women aren't often included in studies to determine the safety of drugs before they hit the market. Surprisingly, less than 10 percent of FDA-approved drugs have been sufficiently tested to determine their risks for birth defects, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US.

To help women make more informed decisions, the CDC recently launched **Treating for Two: Safer Medication Use in Pregnancy**, aimed at improving the health of pregnant women and preventing birth defects. In partnership with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other organisations, the CDC is working to expand and streamline research efforts, and compare treatments for common conditions like asthma and depression in order to identify the safest options and available alternatives. For research studies, articles and other resources, visit **cdc.gov/pregnancy/meds**.



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GLAM GEAR

Looking to add some flair to your fitness-wear? Juicy Couture's first-ever active-wear collection, **Juicy Couture Sport**, includes lightweight tanks, tees, sports bras, shorts, sweatshirts and leggings. Done in bright colours, leopard print and other bold patterns, they reflect the Los Angeles-based brand's fun-loving spirit. Mixing fashion and function, each piece is designed to keep you cool and dry with breathable, moisture-wicking and water-repellent fabrics. Prices range from \$60 to \$260. Available at Juicy Couture stores. **juicycouture.com**

THROAT THERAPY



When a sore throat gets you down, an ordinary lozenge won't always do. Strepsils new prescription-only lozenge, **Strepsils Max Pro**, contains

an analgesic, so as to provide dual-action relief by combining the soothing properties of a lozenge with flurbiprofen, a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory painkiller. The Honey and Lemon-flavoured lozenge fights the source of inflammation, coats the throat within just two minutes and provides pain relief for up to six hours. Available at general practice clinics, hospitals and pharmacies island-wide.

NEXT MONTH



GO BARE

Back for its sixth year on 12 July, the Bare Your Sole walkathon will raise funds for Habitat for Humanity Singapore's local programme, Project HomeWorks, an initiative designed to improve the living conditions of the elderly, sick and physically challenged living in one-room flats across the country. The 2.5K and 5K charity walk, which encourages participants to go barefoot in support of those unable to afford basic amenities, will include balloon sculptors, stilt-walkers and other activities for kids, and feature food stations from Dean & DeLuca and Cold Stone Creamery, among others. 9am to 12pm at Gardens by the Bay. Register by 15 June at bareyoursole.org.sg.



RUN-WORTHY CAUSE

Back for its second year, the **Run for Life** charity on 19 July will benefit disadvantaged youth, including those from low-income families and many whose parents are incarcerated. Coorganised by Life Community Services Society (LCSS) and Noel Gifts, the run aims to help these kids escape cycles of crime and drugs, and get on track to graduate and become productive members of society. In fact, children from LCSS programmes will be participating in this year's run. 7.30am at Angsana Green, East Coast Park. Register by 19 June at **runforlife.sg.**

DARE TO DEUX

Running and cycling enthusiasts can look forward to a brand new challenge in Singapore when the KM Duathlon makes its debut on 20 Julv as the country's longest-ever distance duathlon. Participants in the race, which starts from Changi Exhibition Centre, can choose from two distance options: the KM60 - a 10K run, 40K cycle followed by another 10K run; and the KM30 category, which is half the distance - 5K, 20K and 5K. Compete as an individual, partner up with a buddy for the KM60, or enter the four-member KM Team Challenge. Register at kmduathlon.com.

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RUNNING COMMENTARY: The Great Water Debate

In our regular running column, we share favourite routes and talk about shoes, gadgets, treadmills, nutrition, racing, hashing, children's running and more. This month, VERNE MAREE taps into the water debate.

y favourite East Coast drinking fountain – the one near Changi Sailing Club – wasn't working this Sunday morning. Blazing from a blue sky, the sun delivered its usual 33°C (real feel 44°, said accuweather.com). Luckily, having to run three or four kilometres to the next water point isn't a problem. We can thank evolution for bodies that are perfectly designed to run in the heat – and on much smaller amounts of water than previously thought.

The dehydration myth

Yes, runners need water, and yes, we should drink enough of it. But drinking too *much* water can be more dangerous than not drinking enough, as explained below.

Why I think it's still worth addressing the point here is that popular wisdom often lags way behind scientific research. In fact, the health and fitness industry is still urging eight or more large glasses of water a day.

"If you wait till you're thirsty to drink," they say, "it's too late - you're already



dehydrated." They're dead wrong, as it turns out. Your body knows best, and thirst is the mechanism it uses to tell you when to drink; and that's as true for an ordinary day at the office as it is when you're out there pounding the pavements.

Quoted in runnersworld.com, "The eight glasses a day is totally arbitrary," says Susan Yeargin, PhD, assistant professor of athletic training at the University of South Carolina. "Everybody, especially athletes, has different needs."

Evolution

We're born to run, declares Tim Noakes, the acclaimed South African sports scientist. He argues that our species, *Homo sapiens*, having evolved on the arid African savannah, is perfectly designed to run long distances in the heat.

Four main adaptations gave us the evolutionary edge: **bipedalism** (walking on two feet rather than on the hands and feet) reduced our exposure to sun and heat, and made us more effective runners; our prodigious **sweating** capacity kept us cool during exercise; so does being **furless**; and our **brain** protects us from heat injury by making sure that we only ever exercise at an intensity or for a duration that won't allow our body temperature to rise to a dangerous level.

Until the 1950s or so, elite runners drank according to thirst. In fact, not drinking *at all* during a marathon was regarded as an ultimate aim! Jim Peters, perhaps the greatest marathoner of all time, wrote: "In the marathon... every effort should also be made to do without liquid." And American Matthew Maloney, who set a marathon record of 2:36:26 in New York in 1908 said: "As to what I use when in a marathon race, I only chew gum. I take no drink at all."

Now, it would be unthinkable to suggest that runners shouldn't drink while training or racing. But how did we go from pre-1950s practice to believing we had to glug down as much as humanly possible in order to avoid death from dehydration or heatstroke?

The running boom

The big change happened in the 1960s, when the running scene exploded, millions of Americans took to the road, and – surprise, surprise – big business saw the vast opportunity in this huge new market.

Gatorade, first marketed in the 60s, became the main sponsor of international sports bodies like the ACSM in the US. It's also the first platinum sponsor of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), one of the provisions being that AIS-sponsored athletes may not promote the drinking of water over the drinking of sports drinks – and that Gatorade is the only sports drink they may promote. This little nugget only came out after legal action in terms of the Freedom of Information Act in Australia.

It wasn't long before a slew of sponsored scientific studies purported to prove exactly what would send Gatorade sales through the roof: that any level of dehydration would impair performance and even lead to death.

Tim Noakes spills the beans in his book Waterlogged: The Serious Problem of Overhydration in Endurance Sports. Amongst other findings, his own studies in the early 1980s showed that those who became the most dehydrated during performance (more than minus three percent) also ran the fastest – and that it did them no harm.

Noakes and others kept up the pressure, but it took the ACSM 25 years to acknowledge the error in its 1976 guidelines – that in order to optimise performance and avoid catastrophic heat injuries, athletes should "drink as much as is tolerable" – and instead to encourage them to drink according to the dictates of their thirst.

And so?

For an average runner like me (and possibly you), the facts are really good news. I don't have to carry a bottle of water around MacRitchie Reservoir, because the sole drinking fountain en route will do the trick. Before a race, I won't have to queue for the porta-loo after drinking too much water. Even better, I won't be wasting time stopping at every water-point along the way.

And finally, most elite runners still drink according to their thirst, as elite runners have always done. That's good enough for me.

How too much water can kill you

Exercise-associated hyponatraemia, or EHA, happens when the body retains too much water, Tim Noakes explains. Most people simply excrete the excess fluid, but around 30 percent of those who over-drink will retain it. This happens because their brains continue to secrete a hormone called ADH (anti-diuretic hormone) when its production should have been turned off. Excessive fluid accumulates in the blood, sodium levels fall and the brain swells, with disastrous effects that can include sudden death.



COMING UP

JUNE

- Lion Dash Sprint, 8.30am, 5K trail run
 Lion Dash Beast, 12 noon,
- total 5K laps in 4 hours 8 Pocari Sweat Run, 6.30am,
- 5/10K, Marina Bay
- 8 National Vertical Marathon, 63 storeys, One Raffles Place
- 8 Toa Payoh Central Vertical Challenge, Block 79, 400 storeys
- 22 MR25 Cross Country Marathon, 42.2K, MacRitchie
- **21** Jurong Lake Run, 5.30pm, 10/6/2.5K
- **22** Banana Relay 6th Edition, 100 teams, 8am

JULY

- 5 Run & Raisin', 7am, 10/5/2.4K Family Run, Gardens by the Bay
- 6 Reebok ONE Challenge, 9am, 5K, Gardens by the Bay
- 19 Run for Life, 7.30am, 10/2.4K, Family, Kids' Dash, East Coast Park
- **19 Garfield Run**, 4pm, 5/3/1.5K, Marina Bay
- **20** GK Run to Build, 6.30am, 8.6/4.3K, Bedok Reservoir
- **20** Mizuno Passion Wave Run, 7.30am, 16K, Bukit Merah View
- 26 Energizer Singapore Night Trail, 3pm, 18/12/6/3/1.5K, Mandai

AUGUST

- **3 TRI-Factor Run**, 31.5/21/10.5/5/1.5KM, Punggol Waterways
- 3 SingTel Race Against Cancer, 7am, 15/10/5K, East Coast Park
- 16 Bedok Reservoir Ultramarathon, 7am, most laps in 12 hrs, minimum 51.6K
- **17** Shape Run, 10/5K
- 23 Frost & Sullivan Corporate Challenge, 7.15am, 10/5K, MacRitchie Reservoir
- **23 RunNUS**, 10/5K Family Challenge
- **31** SAFRA Singapore Bay Run, 5.15am, 21.1/10/5K, Esplanade Bridge **2**









Skin Cancer Screening

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Our Doctors



Dr Lim Kar Seng MBBS (Singapore), MRCP (UK), FAMS (Dermatology)

A consultant dermatologist with The Dermatology Practice, Dr Lim Kar Seng has more than 14 years of medical experience both locally and internationally including

centres such as St Vincent's Hospital and The Skin and Cancer Foundation Australia. His subspecialties are in skin cancers, phototherapy and psoriasis.



Dr Lynn Teo MBBS (London), MRCP (UK), FAMS (Dermatology)

Dr Lynn Teo is a consultant dermatologist at The Dermatology Practice with more than 14 years of medical experience, having trained and worked in London

and Singapore. Her clinical interests are in hair loss and scalp disorders, and in immune system conditions affecting the skin. She has trained in hair transplant procedures and dermatosurgery at Mount Sinai Medical Centre, New York.

Tel: (65) 6694 3290 Email: appt@thedermatologypractice.com www.thedermatologypractice.com



On the Cutting Edge

On one hand, we're warned that diabetes, cardiovascular and other metabolic diseases are spiralling alarmingly, mainly due to poor eating habits. On the other hand, we're told that more people than ever can expect to live until the age of 100 or more. How can *both* of these scenarios be true? VERNE MAREE looks at some remarkable new developments in medicine and chats to four Singapore surgeons. ecent news reports reveal that heart repair breakthroughs have in some cases replaced the surgeon's knife: some patients can now have faulty valves, irregular heartbeats, holes in the heart and other defects repaired without having to undergo major surgery.

Balloon angioplasty is used to widen a narrow or obstructed blood vessel. A leaky aortic valve can now be replaced by an artificial one that's flexible enough to be fitted into a catheter and wedged inside the faulty one. Catheters can also be used to introduce tools to remove heart tissue that's causing atrial fibrillation, the most common heart rhythm problem.

Instead of opening the chest, they're able to put catheters in through the leg, or sometimes through the arm. Often, this means being able to go home in a day or two.

But catheter treatment is not possible for everyone or every condition, as a good South African friend of mine can attest: just three months ago, he was "spatchcocked" – his own expression, not mine! – in a double heart-bypass operation.

High blood pressure? They're talking about devices that employ a catheter and radio waves to neutralise certain nerves, near the kidneys, which promote high blood pressure. Need a fresh pair of knees? New digital mapping technology is allowing doctors to dramatically improve the outcome of knee surgeries by improving the fit of new knees on patients' bodies. But that's not all...

WEIGHT TO GO

To treat severe obesity, gastric banding and similar procedures that restrict the amount of food you're able to eat have been around for some time, agrees DR LIM KHONG HEE, a general surgeon with a longstanding interest in upper gastrointestinal and advanced laparoscopic procedures.

But there's an exciting new approach to this area, he says, which is now being called metabolic surgery. Earlier regarded by some as a purely cosmetic procedure, and wrongly grouped together with techniques such as liposuction, the emphasis has changed:

"It is now increasingly recognised that obesity is linked with life-threatening conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnoea and more."

Over the years, he says, surgery has been very effective in helping severely

obese patients lose weight. Compared with conservative treatment with diet and exercise alone, which has a success rate of around five percent, adding surgical options increases the rate of success in the long term to around 50 to 70 percent.

That's not in itself surprising. What *is* surprising is that metabolic surgery has been shown to send diabetes into remission almost immediately, even before patients lose weight. Very often – and almost mysteriously – they become asymptomatic and are able to either dramatically reduce their medication or even go off it altogether. This improves their quality of life and even lengthens life expectancy.

How does it work?

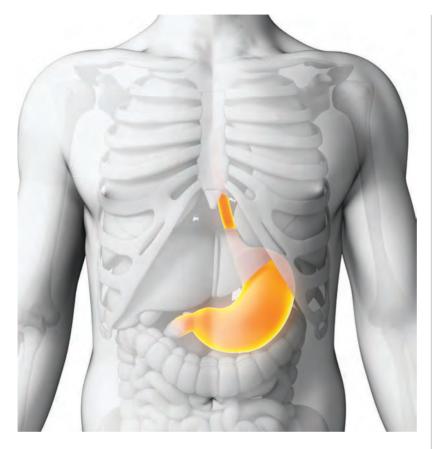
"There are a few theories," says Dr Lim. "One is that rerouting food along the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, allowing it to be directly delivered to the later part of the small intestine, affects the release of different hormones along the way. This could enhance the effectiveness of the patient's insulin."

Options

Gastric banding surgery is very popular in Australia and increasingly so in the US, too, explains Dr Lim. He used to do this regularly, but less so nowadays because of band-related complications, such as band erosion, that later require surgical removal.

"Nowadays, I tend more often to perform **sleeve gastrectomy**, the removal of 75 to 85 percent of the stomach. Not only does it restrict the amount of food the patient can eat, but the upper part of the stomach releases an appetite-regulating hormone called





ghrelin; removing it will considerably reduce the patient's appetite."

In terms of weight loss and diabetes remission, he says, it delivers better results than gastric banding does. It's very safe, too, and it avoids the introduction of a foreign body and the likelihood of needing to go in again.

Any downside? Yes – if the patient continues to eat excessively, the stomach can stretch. "For good, long-term results, we emphasise the importance of a lifestyle change with regard to diet and exercise."

A third option is **gastric bypass** surgery. Rerouting food from the oesophagus and the small, upper stomach pouch, bypassing the rest of the stomach and delivering it directly to the intestines sounds radical to me, and it is, Dr Lim agrees.

"But the patients we're looking at here may have BMIs of up to 40 or even 45, so their severe obesity is already having a serious effect of their mobility, their quality of life and their life expectancy. In these cases, radical surgery is justifiable and can be very beneficial."

In through the keyhole

Good news is that **keyhole or laparoscopic surgery** has made real advances in this area, and can successfully be used on 95 percent of patients.

"Being able to access the stomach through small incisions into the abdominal cavity means far less pain and trauma, less time in hospital and much faster recovery. With the latest optics and HD cameras we get a very clear view of what we are doing."

A new development is **single-incision laparoscopic surgery**. "Instead of going through three or four different ports, we go in through just one, slightly bigger port, with all the instruments and the camera." Going through the umbilicus, or belly button, gives a good cosmetic outcome. One possible downside for many patients, concludes Dr Lim, is that they have to buy a whole new wardrobe.

BEST OF THE BREAST

Most women who have breast cancer require surgery, so – with the incidence of breast cancer increasing throughout the developed world – any new breakthroughs in this area are very good news indeed.

DR GEORGETTE CHAN, who has published widely in the field of breast surgery and surgical oncology, gave me her views on four major advances in her field: sparing the nipple, sentinel node biopsy, radiation *during* surgery, and using chemotherapy to shrink larger tumours *before* surgery.

#1 Nipple-sparing mastectomy

"In my opinion," she says, "a nipplesparing mastectomy is the nicest form of reconstruction that we can do for a patient with breast cancer. It's a real refinement on other techniques, and such a boon for women who are good candidates for it (and not everyone is). I've been doing this procedure for the past eight or nine years, and patients are usually very satisfied with the outcome." HOW IT'S DONE: "We remove all the breast tissue - so it's as oncologically clean as possible, but we save the skin and also the nipple. The nipple-areolar complex is a challenging area for the plastic surgeon to reconstruct, so it's ideal if we can save the nipple.

"The intact breast skin serves as an envelope to receive the reconstructive material immediately; be it an implant or muscle going in, the plastic surgery can balance it with the patient's other breast." WHO IT'S FOR: "The breast tumour should be situated well away from the nipple," says Georgette, and the nipple itself must be healthy and normal. "In addition, at the time of surgery, I shave off tissue just behind the nipple and have it tested on the spot: if the pathologist confirms that it's free of tumour cells, I will then save the nipple." **COMMENT:** "Psychologically, a nice surgical outcome does wonders for the patient's outlook and self-esteem."

#2 Sentinel node biopsy – a less drastic lymph node surgery

"In order to determine what stage the cancer has reached," she explains, "we



need to examine the axillary (armpit) lymph nodes – each of the 20 or more nodes is about the size of a mung bean – because that's the first place the breast cancer cells migrate to."

HOW IT'S DONE: "After injecting a blue dye into the breast and massaging it, we can then make just a small incision at the armpit area in order to identify the sentinel lymph node (SLN), the first one that receives the lymphatic drainage. If testing shows the SLN to be cancer-free, we know that the cancer is in its early stage, so there's no need to remove any other lymph nodes.

COMMENT: "This advance makes a big difference to the patient's long-term comfort. That's because our lymphatic system regulates fluid drainage from the arms, and disrupting it through the wholesale removal of lymph nodes can leave you with a swollen arm or stiff shoulder for life."

#3 Radiation during surgery, rather than at a later stage

"Radiation during surgery is a pet topic of mine," says Georgette, who has had experience of performing this technique at the European Institute of Oncology in Milan, where it was first developed.

"The usual procedure," she explains, "is to apply radiation to the whole chest wall, in repeated small doses over the course of a month – after their breastconserving surgery, after the wound has healed and after chemotherapy. So, for three to four weeks, the patient has to visit the radiation centre every day.

"But now, for selected cases – often older patients with less aggressive tumours – the radiation can be done during the surgery itself, and that will be the only radiation that's required."

HOW IT'S DONE: "Within the operating theatre, the surgeon uses a light-weight, mobile radiation machine that emits a beam of electrons. Depending on the machine used, it can take from 10 minutes to 45 minutes to deliver the required dose.

"The beauty of this is that one can focus exactly on the affected location, thus sparing other areas from the effects of radiation. And it can be done while the surgical team is waiting for the pathology report. To calculate the dose of radiation, a radiation physicist plus a radiation oncologist are on hand, too, so it can get pretty crowded in there!" **COMMENT:** "So far, there's only one such unit in Singapore so far, and it's at the National Cancer Centre."

#4 Shrinking tumours before surgery

Usually done by the medical oncologist, this is also a very exciting development, says Georgette. "It's especially useful for big tumours, where we don't have enough skin to close the mastectomy wound, or if the patient is very keen to have breast-conserving surgery."

HOW IT'S DONE: "After doing a biopsy, we work with the medical oncologist to tailor a chemotherapy that will shrink the tumour to a more manageable size. In the space of three to four months, after four rounds of chemo, some tumours will shrink to half their size; others shrink so effectively that you can hardly feel them through the skin. Occasionally, we have to put a clip into the middle of the tumour before starting chemotherapy, so as to be able to find the tumour at the time of surgery."

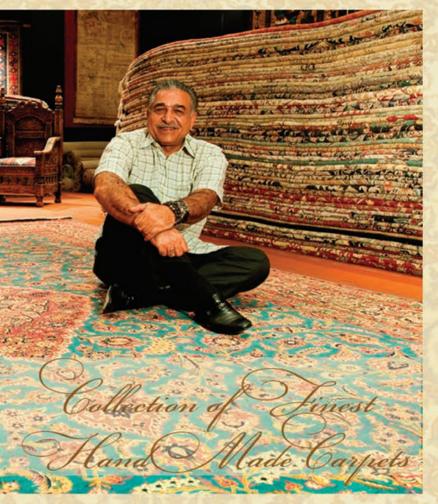
COMMENT: "Being able to shrink the tumour in size can mean converting the treatment from a full mastectomy to breast-conserving surgery."



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MELANOMA MAGIC

Literally in the last five years, says surgical oncologist DR DENNIS LIM, exciting breakthroughs have been made in melanoma research. Until very recently, the diagnosis of a melanoma that had metastasised – that is, gone beyond its original skin location into other organs of the body – was more-or-less a death sentence. "Now," he says, "we can look forward to effective oral immunotherapy, even for Stage IV patients."

MELANOMA...

- Is the most deadly of skin cancers, but entirely treatable if caught early enough
- Originates in skin cells called melanocytes that produce melanin, the substance that gives skin its colour
- Can start in an existing mole or in clear skin
- Is more readily identified on the front of the body, where you can see it; so you should get your doctor, your partner or a friend to check your back regularly, too
- Risk factors include family history, fair complexion and severe sunburns

Setting the stage

"Nowadays, we have good treatment available for patients at any stage of melanoma," says Dennis. "But because these treatments are so different, it's crucial to identify accurately exactly what stage the patient is at."

In the **early stage**, the melanoma has not spread beyond its primary site and can simply be surgically removed. To catch it in good time calls for regular screening: first from a dermatologist, and then ongoing surveillance to watch for any telltale changes. "The **intermediate stage** is mainly where my work and interest lie," says Dennis. "It is vital to establish whether and how far the tumour cells have spread along the lymphatic pathway. If they have reached the lymph nodes in the groin or the armpits, for example, it is necessary to remove all those lymph nodes to prevent further spread, but we don't want to perform this aggressive treatment unless we need to."

Sentinel node mapping was used for melanoma as far back as the 1980s, he tells me, long before it was widely used in the treatment of breast cancer. "The concept is that when a cancer 'walks' from the skin to the lymph nodes, it always goes through the sentinel lymph node; and the sentinel lymph node predicts accurately for the rest of the nodes: if it's clear of tumour, so are the others."

The **metastatic stage** is where most of the recent breakthroughs in drug treatment have been made: "We've gone from very physiologically impactful intravenous chemotherapy, to orally active medication that merely requires you to take a tablet."

One of the main thrusts is the use of our own immune system to treat melanoma, and many of the recent advances come from here. New immunotherapy treatments capitalise on this self-healing tendency, by giving the body a helping hand to eradicate cancer cells.

"The good news is that the body is quite good at fighting melanoma itself: in fact, we do see cases where a biopsydiagnosed tumour spontaneously regresses," says Dennis. This has particularly been noted in association with white patches on the skin called vitiligo, which are more clearly seen in darker skins – they are evidence the work of the immune system having killed off the cancerous melanocytes.

> It is even thought that, in time, melanoma will, like HIV-AIDS and diabetes, be treatable as a chronic disease – one that you live with, rather than die from.

Individualised, personalised and customised

As you'd expect, doctors generally work according to the treatment guidelines suggested by various authorities. Governments, medical authorities and insurers are very keen on these guidelines, says Dennis, but he firmly believes they are not the be-all and end-all.

"As the patient, *you* don't need rigid guidelines," he says. "You are an individual."

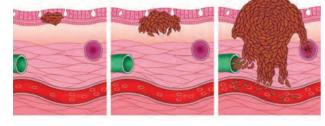
That's why he both advocates and follows a personalised approach that takes into account the whole person, including his or her stage of life. As a result, two patients with the same degree of advanced melanoma might receive very different advice from him.

"If you were an 85-year-old stroke victim with advanced melanoma, I would surgically remove the primary tumour, but suggest that we treat your symptoms rather than go for the most aggressive treatment. But for a 35-year-old breadwinner in the prime of his or her life, I would probably recommend more aggressive treatment – even beyond the guidelines for the stage of their cancer – and be prepared to fight a long and drawn out campaign in order to give them the best possible chance of long term survival."

Outlook

About 50 percent of melanoma is caused by a mutation in the BRAF gene. "This mutation is what causes the cells to grow uncontrollably," Dennis explains, "and we can test for this specific mutation." Once the mutation has been identified, orally active drugs (in tablet form) are available to target the BRAF protein cells; this form of treatment is known as **targeted therapy**.

"I am especially excited by the **immunotherapy** approach, though," Dennis says, "because it essentially boosts your immunity against *any* cancer. What's more, some of the new orally active treatments are being found to be effective against more than one type of cancer, rather like the way aspirin can treat a wide range of diseases and conditions." Utopia, he says, would be a pill a day to control cancer.



EYEING THE FUTURE

Eye surgery technology just keeps getting better. Undergoing Lasik surgery about five years ago is one of the best things I ever did, and my Singaporean surgeon used the most advanced method available anywhere. One eye was corrected for distance, and the other for near vision. But when our daughter Blaire did the same in Sweden last year – just four years later – she had the benefit of a newer, better and even less risky technology called ReLEx Smile. (That seems to be the current standard here, too.)

Surgical vision correction has come a long way, says eye surgeon DR ALICIA HOW, who specialises in cataract and comprehensive ophthalmology. Early techniques involved reshaping the cornea by means of radial keratotomy (RK). Then came photorefractive keratectomy (PRK), which did the same job, but by means of a laser. Lens implantation followed, and the next evolutionary step is something called corneal inlay surgery.

By restoring the proper curvature of the cornea, Alicia explains, **corneal inlay surgery** overcomes the presbyopia that bedevils us in middle age. Designed to allow you to see both far and near with the same eye (unlike my procedure, which corrected one eye for reading and the other for distance vision), it could mean saying goodbye forever to those pesky reading glasses.

Another recent advance in treating presbyopia, and also cataracts, is **trifocal lens implants**. Unlike bifocal lens implants, which correct only near vision (reading the paper) and distance vision (reading the number on the approaching bus), these also correct intermediate vision – what you need to read your computer monitor, your phone or your iPad.

"With Lasik," explains Alicia, "we can correct for far and near, as in your case, or for far and intermediate if that's what you want – but you'd have to hold your newspaper at arm's length in order to read it!

"I've done a number of trifocal implant surgeries, with good results. It gives



patients the option to be spectaclefree, but I wouldn't say the technology has been perfected yet: there are still a couple of compromises such as glare, haloes and contrast sensitivity.

"Also, it's not suitable for everyone: if you do a lot of night driving, for example, or precision engineering work, it may not be the best choice. But we can certainly look forward to further advances and improvements."

Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve that affects vision and can lead to blindness. The problem is that it comes on gradually, affecting your peripheral vision first, so it is often not noticed until it's in quite an advanced stage. Unfortunately, any damage already done is irreversible. "Regular screening is a good idea, especially if one of your parents has the disease," Alicia recommends.

As high pressure within the eye is often the cause of glaucoma, treatment usually involves one of various methods to lower that pressure – medication, laser, or conventional surgery – to improve the outflow of fluids from the eye and thus prevent the disease progressing. Recent advances in this field include improved lasers that leave far less scarring, says Alicia, and better drugs.

"We now have an eye drop that has a neuro-protective function: it works to protect the optic nerve. But this is still a new and therefore slightly controversial development," she adds.

More common than glaucoma is **dry** eye syndrome, estimated to affect up to 30 percent of middle-aged and older people – including myself, as it happens. Fortunately, there's a drug that can help for this annoying and potentially damaging condition, which is apparently caused by an inflammatory condition of the cornea that causes the eyes to produce fewer tears.

Rather than merely lubricating the eye, **non-steroidal anti-inflammatory**

eye drops contain a very low dose of an anti-inflammatory drug. Used twice daily for three to six months, they stimulate the eye to eventually return to normal tear production.

They've been around for a while, according to Alicia. "But they've become more popular of late as we have realised what the real cause of dry eye is. These drops work to treat the cause, rather than just temporarily alleviating the symptoms."

I strongly suspect that my own eye dryness is related to the Lasik surgery I underwent, and Alicia agrees that this might well be the case. After a few tests to establish that I do indeed have dry eye syndrome, she gives me a prescription and I walk out with my first month's supply.





Dr Lim Khong Hee Nexus Surgical Associates #08-06 Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre 6235 8633 | nexussurgical.sg



Dr Georgette Chan #11-09 Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre 6836 5167 | georgettechan.com



Dr Dennis Lim #11-09 Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre 6836 5167 | dennislim.com.sg



Dr Alicia How The Eye Surgery Partners #07-01 Gleneagles Medical Centre 6479 8887 | eyedr.com.sg



CONCLUSION

Talking to these four high specialised surgeons has been fascinating – and especially so for someone like me who tends to concentrate more on the importance of preventing disease though good nutrition, supplements, sunshine, exercise and so on. However vital prevention is, and whatever the pitfalls of the pharmaceutical industry, medical science should be recognised for its brilliant efforts, and for the life-saving discoveries that it continues to make.





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Wise Counsel

Mens sana in corpore sano, as the famous Latin phrase goes – a healthy mind in a healthy body. VERNE MAREE asked several Singapore-based psychologists about some of the issues that particularly affect expats.

ew expats can face a steep learning curve when it comes to staying healthy in Singapore: how to protect the family against foot-and-mouth, dengue and other tropical diseases; how to keep fit in this relentlessly hot and humid climate; where to shop for fresh, nutritious, preferably organic yet affordable produce in a country that grows only a minute fraction of what it consumes. (Not to mention finding shoes or shorts or swimsuits that fit, and managing your suddenly demon-possessed hair.)

While change is exciting, it's also stressful – and stress is known for taking a toll on mental health. Seeking psychotherapy or counselling may or may not have been a likely option in your home country. However, says **Shrimathi Swaminathan**, a clinical psychologist with over 20 years of experience in various clinical settings, living away from home means that we have to manage the stress of an unfamiliar cultural, socio-political and work environment without the usual resources of family and friends. Says Shri: "It takes conscious hard work to make new social connections, to continue favourite hobbies and leisure activities or develop new interests and thrive in a new environment."

Anxiety and depression are common in the expat community, and it's obvious that long working hours and a lot of business travel can place an enormous strain on marriages and relationships. What we don't always realise is that even common life challenges experienced in the context of living in a foreign country can leave one feeling lost and confused.

For example, a couple might have their first baby here and struggle through the first year of parenting without the extended family. A breadwinner might enter middle age and question why he or she has been in the same job for 20 years, or an empty-nester might miss grown-up children who have left home to study or work abroad. Teenagers might be missing their best friends deeply, and struggle to make new friends.

Working with a psychologist can be an effective way to resolve stresses and overcome challenges, believes Shri. However, it can equally be a dynamic and positive path to personal growth and development. For instance, simply talking about your life experiences allows you to process the meaning they hold for you and create a vision for a wonderful future. "Psychotherapy is not always about problems and treatments," she adds. "It's also about propelling you out of your comfort zone by enhancing your unique strengths and talents!"

ARE YOU DEPRESSED?

SHRI SWAMINATHAN answers our questions:

What is depression?

Depression is a treatable psychological disorder that is the leading cause of



disability worldwide. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide, so it's important to seek help.

What are the symptoms of depression?

Sadness is a normal human emotion and feeling sad is in itself not clinical depression. Signs of depression are depressed or sad mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy and poor concentration. These problems can become chronic or recurrent and affect one's ability to take care of everyday responsibilities.

What causes it?

Many factors work together to cause depression.

- Some persons have a **biological vulnerability** in the form of abnormalities in neurotransmitters and other chemicals in the brain.
- Negative thinking patterns associated with low self-esteem, unrealistic expectations and sensitivity to criticism can make depression more likely.
- A stressful life event such as a relationship breakup, being bullied, the death of a loved one, the loss of job or even the birth of a baby can trigger depression.

Most people cope with stressors adequately and even learn new skills from the experience. For some however, these events lead to clinical depression.

How is chronic or severe depression treated?

A combination of medication and psychotherapy is often most effective. Psychotherapy facilitates the learning of new cognitive (thinking) skills and improves long-term coping. It even leads to changes in the functioning and the structure of the brain, in ways that are similar to what medication achieves!

I think I may be depressed. What should I do?

Consult a psychologist or other mental health professional. A healthy diet, good sleep habits and regular exercise will go a long way to help you beat depression. Exercise is an effective anti-depressant, and is the cheapest and most easily available!

TWO'S COMPANY

A couple with relationship issues in Baltimore, Berne or Brisbane won't necessarily be better off in Bukit Timah. The strains of living abroad can be many and varied, and problems that exist even *before* you embark on an overseas posting are not likely to go away – in fact, they're more likely to be exacerbated by the stress of adjusting to an unfamiliar environment.

How could it be otherwise? Long working hours can put a strain on even the best of marriages. What's more, especially in this part of the world, opportunities for infidelity abound for an unhappy breadwinner, especially one who spends more time in foreign cities than at home.

Psychologists **Rachael Walden** (Brazilian) and **Kirstyn Mitchell** (a New Zealander) have extensive experience working with infidelity, communication problems between partners, and intimacy issues.

"Topping the list," says Rachael, "is the feeling that they have grown apart, along with issues relating to being a trailing spouse. Communication suffers, and they find themselves arguing frequently and unconstructively."

All need not be lost though, she adds. "Couple therapy can address whatever problems exist, and help to get a once-wonderful relationship back on track, so that it's again fulfilling for both partners."

Both Rachael and Kirstyn have received Level 3 training in the Gottman Method of Couple's Therapy, and utilise these skills in their work. This research-based intervention is for all couples, not just those in crisis; it focuses on strengthening the bonds between people and helping couples recognise when things get "off track".

What is the Gottman Method?

It's a therapy that focuses on the individuals learning skills to keep connected and refrain from causing pain to each other.

The therapist is present, but on the sideline – a bit like a sporting coach would be.

In a 90-minute interview, the therapist assesses the "state of play" of the relationship.

Take-home questionnaires are completed individually and returned to the therapist. A one-on-one session allows the individual's feelings, behaviours, and their commitment to the relationship to be explored.

Together, the couple and the therapist then resume sessions, with the aim of agreeing on goals and what the focus of the "training" will be.

In each session, the therapist explains a new approach, and why it works to repair a relationship, and then observes as the couple put the new skills into play.

The result is the couple feeling empowered to make a difference in their own lives, an increased connection between them, and pride that they have successfully turned their relationship into something they once again feel good about.

CHILDREN & TEENS

Expatriate children live the experience of moving between cultures before they have had the opportunity to fully develop their personal and cultural identity, say Brazilian clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst **Gisela Guttman** and her colleague, Belgian counsellor **Sanaa Hdidinou**. "This exposure to a variety of perceptions and lifestyles is generally positive in that it allows them to expand their worldview – yet challenges remain."

The first and most obvious challenge is to adjust to the new country. "This holds true whether or not it is their first time outside their home country," according to Gisela. And if they have difficulty adapting to the new culture, they may start to feel like perpetual outsiders. The result is emotional or behavioural symptoms that vary from sadness and frequent crying, anxiety or nervousness, headache and tummyache complaints to refusing to go to school.

It's important to understand that moving to another country involves losses of some kind or another, regardless of the advantages that this new phase may hold for the child and his or her family. Children feel grief at the loss of their safe and predictable world – their friends, their home, extended family and community, even the food and the climate that they are used to. All this can negatively affect their basic need for belonging, recognition and connection.

If and when you do relocate to your country of origin, after many years, says Sanaa, you may not be home and dry. Repatriation can also be challenging for kids who feel that they don't belong in their home country, or what they may perceive as their parents' country.

What about serial expat families, those who spend many years, even decades, in a series of expat postings? There are those who seem to thrive on this lifestyle, but for others, constant mobility can lead to identity issues. In Sanaa's view: "Parents should provide close support to their children and if needed, should seek professional help to assist them to cope with these challenges."

For children, just as for their parents, social issues can arise. Many adult expats find themselves having to relearn the lost skill of making new friends, but past experience arguably makes us better equipped to deal with the loss when either we or our new friends move on.





"For children in the international school arena," says Sanaa, "making new friends and then having to say goodbye to them becomes routine. And the consequence is some expatriate kids can find it difficult to maintain close friendships and relationships. Some may even develop the protective mechanism of not getting too close to their peers, for fear of feeling pain or abandonment when they or their friends move on."

If you believe your child is experiencing adjustment issues, social problems or anxiety about relocating, you should consult a child psychologist or a counsellor. Sanaa has wide experience in areas such as adjustment, depression, bullying, body issues, parenting and more; while Gisela's clinical work with children, teenagers and families focuses on changes in family dynamics and the opening of new personal perspectives via counselling and psychotherapy.

Shrimathi Swaminathan, Psynaptica Body with Soul Total Healthcare Network 44 Rochester Park 6779 0660 | psynaptica.com

Rachael Walden and Kirstyn Mitchell The Counsellors: Expat Psychological Services #01-01 The Science Hub 87 Science Park Drive 9385 0963 | theexpatcounsellors.com

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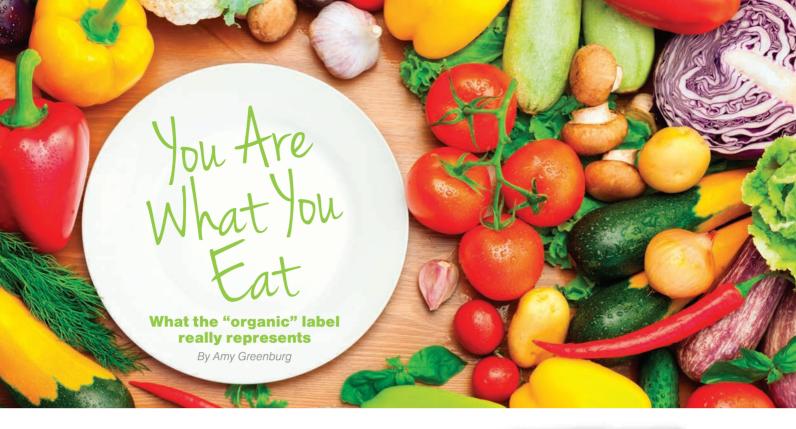


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I'll admit, I knew eating organic food was a healthy lifestyle choice, but remained sceptical about it being more of a trend than necessity – and a scheme to get consumers to shell out some extra cash for groceries. It turns out, however, that going organic is one of the best things we can do for our bodies. Naturopathic doctor, SIGRID GROBYS – Canadian expat and resident naturopath at COMO Shambhala Urban Escape – explained to me the benefits of buying organic, and what actually certifies a product as organic.

What does the term "organic" actually mean?

Something's officially organic when more than 95 percent of its ingredients are labelled "certified organic" by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or another accredited certifying agent. A product that's "made with organic ingredients" contains only 70 percent or less of certified organic products.

Only a handful of countries issue organic certifications through accredited third-party organisations. They include the US, Canada, members of the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Thailand.

What if something is labelled as "all natural"?

The "all natural" description is not associated with legal guidelines and is mostly just a marketing ploy. We can only be sure of the "natural" aspect of a product if we carefully read the food label or if it boasts an official organic certification logo.

So, what makes something "certified organic"?

Organic agriculture prohibits the use of synthetic pesticides, whereas industrial agriculture practices focus on productivity, utilising synthetic fertilisers and pesticides to create visually appealing produce, free from imperfections, that consumers want to buy. USDA organic standards also require that farmers employ methods that maximise soil health, conserve water and reduce air pollution.

Conventional livestock production generally involves raising animals in cramped conditions, and regularly using antibiotics to prevent the infections that strike animals raised in such confined spaces. Growth hormones are used to speed up development, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are used in the animal feed, so you end up consuming them. Meat is certified organic when animals are free to roam, have access to the outdoors and are given only organic feed. Farmers aren't the only ones who must comply with organiccertified criteria. Companies that process or handle organic products must meet USDA standards to become officially certified, too, making the entire process – from planting, to processing, to delivering – certified organic.

What's the difference between organic meat versus grain-fed or grass-fed meat?

While certified organic means the animals are fed an organic diet, "grassfed" is when the animals are given grass to eat instead of organic feed or grains. Grass-fed animals are healthier, with a more balanced ratio of muscle to fat. "Grain-fed" animals are given grain in their diets, making for faster weight gain and fattier, more marbled meat.

Are "free-range eggs" considered organic?

Eggs with no special label come from caged hens that have no space to roam or spread their wings. "Cage-free eggs" means the same thing as "free-range" eggs – the hens are allowed to roam and socialise, but do not necessarily have access to outdoors. "Organic-feed" eggs means that the hens are fed an organic diet, with no pesticides, hormones or antibiotics, but they are likely to be either caged or free-range. "Certified organic eggs" means the hens are free-roaming, have access to outdoors and are fed an organic diet.

Are organic foods truly more nutritious than non-organic foods?

This question remains controversial, as some studies have shown organic foods to be more nutritious than non-organic, while other studies have shown similar health benefits for both. What is very clear, however, is that non-organic foods have much higher pesticide, growth hormone and antibiotic residues than organic foods. It is widely thought that these chemical residues, taken over a lifetime, even in small amounts at a time, may be a key contributor to the development of cancers and other chronic degenerative diseases.

Often, there are more antioxidant compounds in organic produce than in conventional produce, but the rest of the nutritional profile is similar.

It's really important for children, pregnant and lactating women to eat organic foods, and also for cancer patients, who are likely to be more affected by pesticide and hormonal residues.

Why is organic more expensive than non-organic?

Organic agriculture is more expensive than conventional agriculture, because more labour is often required, farms are generally smaller and not subsidised by government schemes, and the certification process can be expensive for farmers.

So, if I can't afford to buy only organic products, which are the key food items to purchase?

The "dirty dozen" is a term used by the Environmental Working Group (EWG) to describe produce most contaminated with pesticides. It includes apples, celery, strawberries, sweet bell peppers, lettuce, cherry tomatoes, potatoes, hot peppers, nectarines and peaches, grapes, cucumbers and kale and collard greens. These are the cases where it's most useful to buy organic.

The "Clean Fifteen"

The EWG devised this list of 15 items likely to contain the least amount of pesticide, when grown either conventionally or organically. These are your safest bets.

- Asparagus
- Avocado
- Cabbage
- Cantaloupe
- Eggplant
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi fruit
- Mangos
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Papava
- Pineapple
- Sweet corn
- Sweet peas (frozen)
- · Sweet potatoes

Is all soymilk organic?

Most soymilk is, in fact, not organic. This is a concern since a large percentage of the soy crops worldwide are genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and the true health impact of such organisms is currently unknown and hotly debated. To ensure that the soymilk we consume is non-GMO, it's important for a soymilk brand to carry either the "non-GMO Project Verified Seal" or an official "organic" seal.

Why doesn't Singapore have organic certified products?

Singapore is unable to get a real organic certification logo because of the density of its air traffic at relatively low altitudes. Due to the island's small size, airplanes landing in Changi and at military sites fly over the whole island, depositing pollutants in the atmosphere and on potential agricultural sites.

Some farmers, like Zenxin Organic for example, are as close to "organic" as we can get here in Singapore. "Freedom Eggs", from hens raised in Singapore, are not far from being true organic eggs, as the hens aren't caged or given hormones or antibiotics in their feed. All truly organic products found in Singapore, however, come from abroad. Thailand is the closest country with a reliable organic certification logo.

GUILT-FREE Snack

Looking for a new and healthy way to satisfy your snack attack? **Body Temple**, a holistic women's wellness centre in Singapore which offers fitness classes, personal training and nutritional guidance, recently challenged its members to share some of their best ideas for snacks containing up to 200 calories. With just four simple ingredients, this one – courtesy of South African expat BELINDA ARAUJO – is easy to make and bursts with fresh, summer flavours.



Ingredients:

- Organic rice cracker
- Avocado
- Pomegranate
- Organic lemon

Method:

Mash a ripe avocado with a dash of fresh lemon juice and spread it generously on an organic rice cracker (each cracker uses approximately one quarter of an avocado). Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds and enjoy.

For more sensible snack ideas, visit **expatiiving.sg**.



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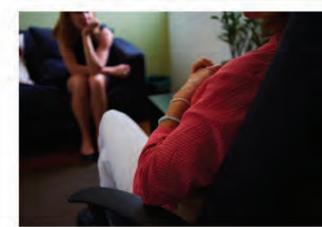
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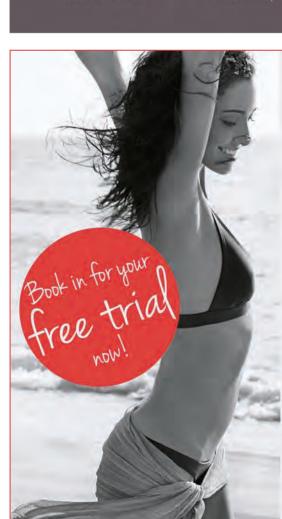
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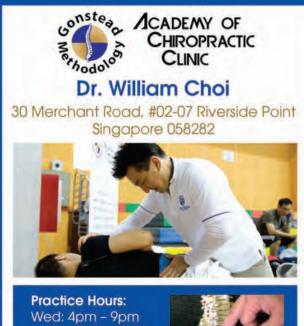
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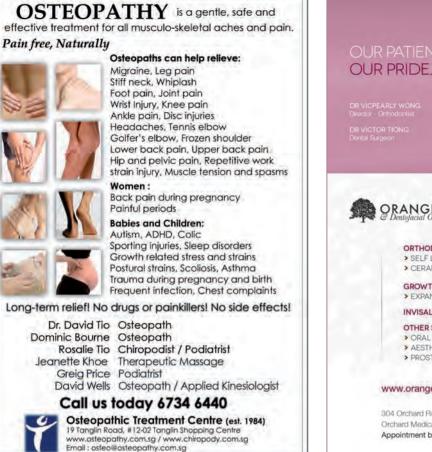
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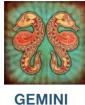
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May 21 – June 20

After an unsettled year, you've many questions. Happily, the Gemini New Moon on 28 May offers valuable insights about what should stay and what must go. Thus as June unfolds, you deal with the month's numerous twists and turns with a clear mind. While you know what's going, what's next is less clear. Knowing that, explore everything and if you make plans, ensure they can be easily rethought as your priorities shift, which they will, and often, during June.



June 21 – July 21

Obviously, life would be a lot easier if the exciting plans streaming through your life could be confirmed. But things are frustratingly unreliable. Actually, that's best, as you'll realise around the Cancer New Moon, on 27 June, which brings past ideas and fresh insights together. During the month itself, therefore, make a point of learning from every experience and encounter, even if that knowledge seems useless at the time. Most of all, you'll learn to enjoy each day for what it offers.



July 22 – August 22

Every Leo adores and is adored by many – family, friends and often colleagues. Yet now your affection for these individuals is being challenged by a combination of constant and often unreasonable demands. Saying no isn't easy, but if you don't draw the line now, it will only be more difficult later. Besides, you've some potentially time-consuming projects in the works, so are being more thoughtful about what you do and agree to. This is wise now and, by late 2014, will be essential.

Do you want to know more about who you are and what you're meant to be doing? The answer is to have your personal year and chart done. Visit www.shelleyvonstrunckel.com for more information.



VIRGO August 23 – September 22

Few things annoy you more than when others either can't be bothered to deal with their end of responsibilities or, worse, say they have but don't really make an effort. However, this is as much about the difference between your nature, as a painstaking Virgo, and what certain individuals regard as good enough. Of course, you love others not because they're like you but for their unique characteristics, which could mean appreciating what you enjoy and being more tolerant of the rest.



LIBRA September 23 – October 22

This is a tricky month, during which even those who're cautious and responsible could run into problems, and carefully organised plans could go wrong. Understand that and instead of worrying, you'll focus on learning from everything. You may even become so relaxed you laugh about those twists and turns. This isn't just wise, it allows you to focus on the relationships that are core to this pivotal month. And the chaos? In retrospect, you'll recognise it as having led to vital breakthroughs.



SCORPIO October 23 – November 21

Hopefully, by the time June begins, you'll have recognised recent setbacks as an opportunity to edit certain unworkable arrangements, personal and otherwise, from your life. While you've had suspicions about some, you were fighting to keep others going. First, you realise these were distracting you from other, more promising, ideas, pursuits and individuals. Then, during June, invest serious time and, perhaps, heart, in exploring these. Take this slowly, since the foundation on which these plans would be based is itself changing.



SAGITTARIUS November 22 – December 20

There's a difference between the confused state of the world around you and the decisions you'll have to make, and certain far more personal, emotional and possibly romantic matters. That may seem obvious. But once you're in the midst of the heightened feelings roused by the Sagittarius Full Moon on 13 June, you'll realise why separating hard facts and your shifting mood is vital. It's also not easy. Ironically, what you learn doesn't just clarify those issues, you learn a great deal about yourself.



CAPRICORN December 21 – January 19

You can invest only so much time in analysing why, over the past couple of months, certain things went so wrong. Astrologically speaking, they were meant to, because the old had to go before the new could appear, as it's now doing. Consequently, the more swiftly you say farewell to the past, the sooner you'll be able to recognise, and focus on, the rather wonderful ideas and offers already coming your way. Temporarily set aside that Capricorn analysis, and trust your instincts.



AQUARIUS January 20 – February 17

The difficulties you're having getting a clear picture of the future mean you're still short of information. Understand that and you'll focus on exploration and will let the rest of those facts surface in good time. This makes little logical sense until you realise the actual circumstances are changing, and will continue to until later in the year. Regard life as an extended course of study and when you learn something new, you'll celebrate, as if you'd just graduated. In a way, you have.





PISCES February 18 – March 19

If you allow them to, complex practical issues or serious issues with others could upset you, and deeply. Somehow you believe they're your fault when, in fact, they're merely a matter of circumstance. Do what you can about them, encourage others to do the same, then move on. This takes enormous discipline but disentangles you from a network of obligations and frees you to explore, with your mind and heart, in a way that's been impossible for a long time. Now, finally, you can.



ARIES March 20 – April 19

By no means are you rigid in your thinking or attitude. Yet what arises during June makes you realise how you dismiss certain ideas and even individuals as uninteresting, and without properly considering them. While the resulting insights aren't immediate, and some take you down unexpected avenues of exploration, by late June you're amazed how much you've learned. Your world's a broader place. Betteryet, you're embracing ideas or even alliances, personal, professional or otherwise, that would never before have crossed your mind.



TAURUS April 20 – May 20

Now that you're able to view the changes of the past months with the clarity of retrospect, you're relieved that some things are over and are eagerly exploring new options. Don't rush. The circumstances in question have changed but so have you, more than you realise. What you learn and who you meet will be informative and could shape your future. While, obviously, you'd like to settle on new arrangements, move too swiftly and you'll only have to rethink them.

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The only

By Liz McCabe

in Singapore? barely gualify as a hippie - I hate tie-dye and I don't know how to cook quinoa. But it doesn't take much to be a hippie in Singapore; let's be honest, it's not the most environmentally aware country. Here, the fact that I compost my kitchen scraps and give dreamcatchers as kids' birthday presents sets me apart as a bit "earthy".

I'm not without some alternative credentials, mind you. My father is a nudist who grows his own vegetables (he obviously doesn't live in Singapore) and, prior to our move here, I lived in one of Australia's most rainbow-loving country towns, a place called Bellingen. You could get run out of that town for having lollies at a birthday party.

But we could all embrace our inner hippie in light of the recent UN Climate Report which predicts "virtually certain" climate change, leading to rising seas, acidified oceans, longer heat waves and severe crop failures. Not till next year, thankfully.

Yes, it's the job of governments to cut global greenhouse gas emissions and research alternative energy sources, but that's not an excuse for doing nothing on the home front. So, here are my top five tips for being a hippie in Singapore:

- 1. Say no to plastic bags. Watch the confusion unfold at the supermarket when you produce your own reusable bags. Add to the poor Aunty's anxiety by repacking anything she tries to sneak into a plastic bag. You can make an exception for leaking packets of meat.
- 2. Eat less meat. The meat industry is apparently the second-biggest environmental hazard facing the earth. (Number one is fossil-fuel vehicles.) A staggering 51 percent or more of global greenhouse-gas emissions is caused by animal agriculture. It also solves the problem mentioned in the first tip.
- 3. Reduce your waste. Boring I know, but important. Compost if you can, recycle of course, and think about what you buy. Individually packed single serves of biscuits might seem convenient for school lunches, but you are paying for extra air and plastic. Buy in bulk and use Tupperware to separate portions. If that seems like a stretch, just remember, polar bears are at stake here.
- 4. Don't drive a car or do any air travel. Only joking! But I do seriously recommend the public transport here in Singapore; you can travel 40km on a bus for \$2, and that's taking into account the 2014 fare hike. If you're a child under 0.9m, or a short adult who can pass yourself off as a kid, it's free. Find a double-decker public bus, take the kids upstairs and head across Singapore. Pretend it's a tour, bore them with some made-up facts - it's a cheaper family day out than going to Sentosa.
- 5. Go nude. Not sure how it helps the environment, but as long as you're making the peace sign it should identify you as a hippie (or a lunatic). Make sure plenty of people see you before you get arrested!

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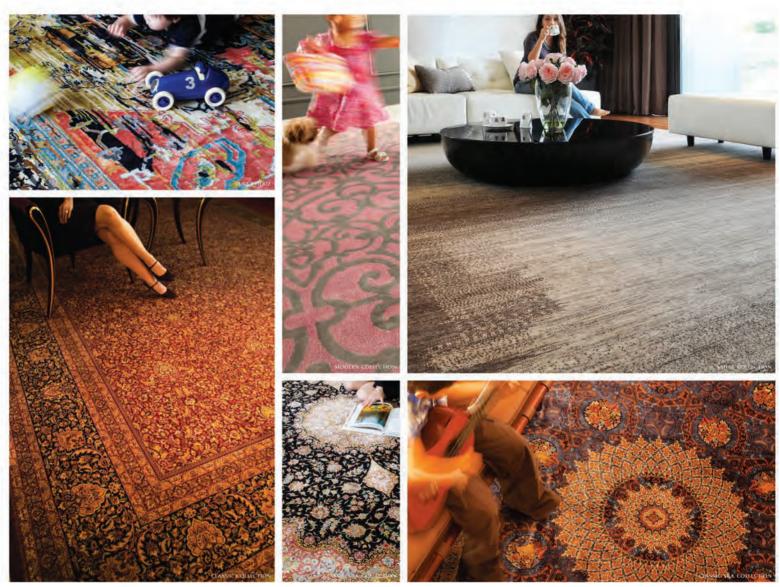
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